

# TRUCK NEWS

July 2012 Volume 32, Issue 7

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

## No limit?

*Latest court ruling gives new hope to those who oppose speed limiter law*

By James Menzies

**WELLAND, Ont.** – An Ontario Justice of the Peace ruled June 6 that the province's speed limiter law for heavy trucks is unconstitutional, and dismissed a charge against truck driver Gene Michaud.

In an e-mail to clients and allies, lawyer David Crocker said: "We received judgment today in Gene Michaud's case where we challenged the speed limiter legislation. We won. The court held that the legislation violates Section 7 of the Charter of Rights."

The ruling was lauded by the Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association (OOIDA), which covered the cost of Michaud's court challenge. In a press release, president Jim Johnston said the ruling was significant.

"This is really the reason we took this case on to start with, and funded it, not only because of the impact on our Canadian members, but the even greater impact it could have on our US members, both those who travel in Canada as well as those who may be subject to similar types of rulings in the US," Johnston said. "Right now, we're battling with ATA and other interests that very much want to see speed limiters put on trucks."

But David Bradley, head of the Ontario Trucking Association and

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**LOOKS GOOD IN DAYLIGHT, TOO:** The fourth annual Road Today Truck Show featured a variety of exhibitors, entertainment and, of course, trucks during the two-day event in Brampton. Pictured is Sukhi Mann of Kiranpal Goods Carrier, winner of Best Lights during the show'n'shine competition.

Photo by Adam Ledlow

## Show season officially underway

### Road Today Truck Show kicks things off

By Adam Ledlow

**BRAMPTON, Ont.** – The Road Today Truck Show was back at the Powerade Centre in Brampton for

its fourth installment May 26-27, attracting about 6,000 attendees over the course of the weekend.

The event, organized by Road To-

day Media Group, featured about 100 exhibitors from a variety of sectors of the trucking and transportation industry, including companies focused on trucks (used and new), trailers, heavy-duty parts and accessories, servicing

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## The Cascadia evolves

Ten mpg no longer out of reach, Daimler chief says **Page 58**



### Inside This Issue...

- **Becoming a best fleet:** What does it take to become a Best Fleet to Drive For? Contest administrator Mark Murrell shares some insight in a cross-country seminar series. **Page 24**
- **Big believers:** It's a testament to the entrepreneurial spirit of the trucking industry that so many execs buy into the products that most impress them. **Page 52**
- **Going to gas:** We take the Kenworth T440 with ISL G natural gas engine on the road for a drive. **Page 60**
- **Human traffic on the road:** Mark Dalton notices some suspicious behaviour at the truck stop. **Page 68**

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# CLASS 8 TRUCK SALES TRENDS

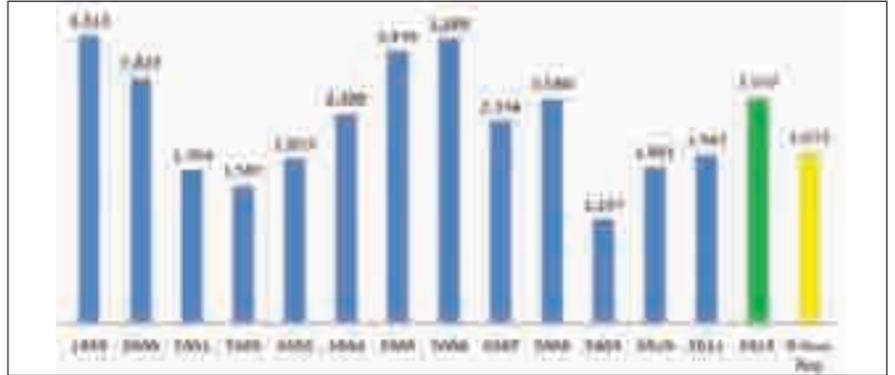
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### Monthly Class 8 Sales – Apr 12

OEM	This Month	Last Year
Freightliner	556	513
International	400	411
Kenworth	550	342
Mack	228	164
Peterbilt	425	219
Volvo	273	191
Western Star	165	102
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>2597</b>	<b>1942</b>

Every Class 8 truck manufacturer increased its sales this April compared to the previous year, with Navistar being the only exception. In total, the 2,597 Class 8 trucks sold in the Canadian market in April was more than 600 above last year's totals and continued the strong start to this year's sales. It also surpassed the five-year average by more than 600 units. The Canadian market had not seen an April this strong since the record-breaking years of 2005 and 2006.

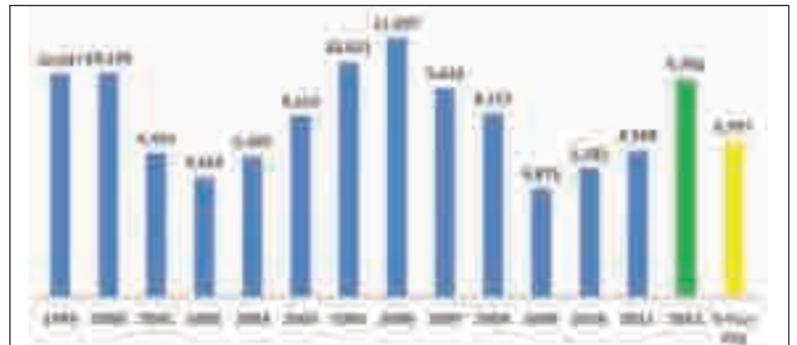
### Historical Comparison – Apr 12 Sales



### Class 8 Sales (YTD Apr 12) by Province and OEM

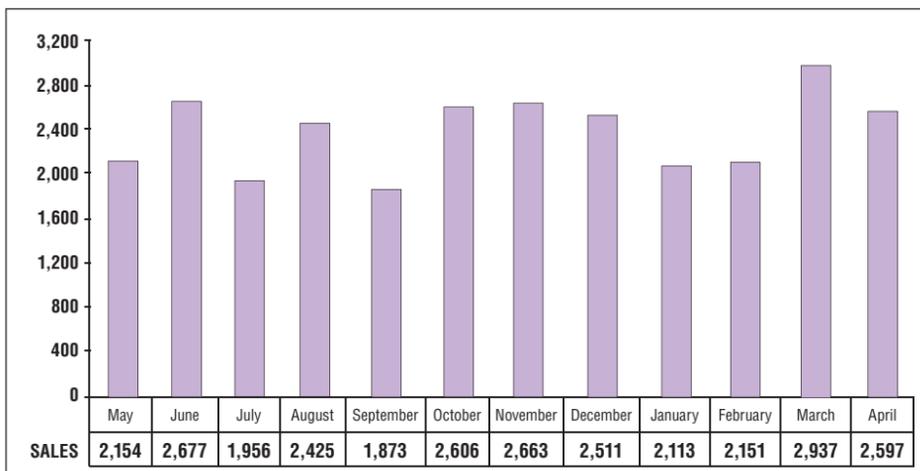
OEM	BC	ALTA	SASK	MAN	ONT	QUE	NB	NS	PEI	NF	CDA
Freightliner	160	219	80	215	1,359	377	78	63	1	6	2,558
Kenworth	205	875	101	81	360	362	36	0	0	0	2,020
Mack	28	108	68	45	271	112	20	13	0	4	669
International	56	205	33	99	676	340	68	26	2	26	1,531
Peterbilt	134	449	77	220	224	176	24	9	0	0	1,313
Volvo	72	90	41	92	501	206	27	8	0	1	1,038
Western Star	138	248	34	13	84	90	16	44	0	0	667
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>793</b>	<b>2,194</b>	<b>434</b>	<b>765</b>	<b>3,475</b>	<b>1,663</b>	<b>269</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>9,796</b>

### Historical Comparison – YTD Apr 12

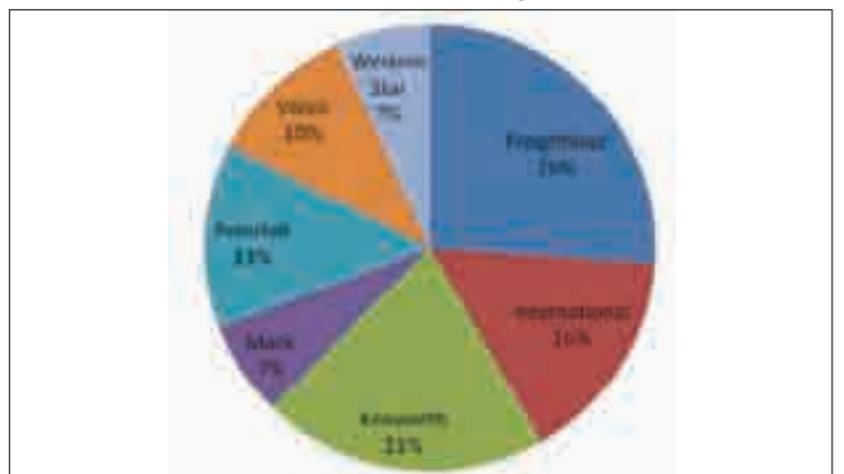


The 9,796 trucks sold so far in the Canadian market in the midst of a slowing North American economy and economic uncertainty indicates the importance of not falling prey to the daily fears of the stock market. Although not growing by leaps and bounds, there is significant growth in the Canadian truck market. The YTD totals are almost 3,000 better than the five-year average and more than 3,000 above last year's totals. To date, 2012 is shaping up as the 5th best year since 1999.

### 12 – Month Sales Trend



### Market Share Class 8 – Apr 12 YTD



For the seventh straight month, sales climbed above the 2,000 mark, reminiscent of the industry's capacity boom years of 2005 to 2007. Our Transportation Buying Trends Survey found that 46% of Canadian carriers expect to purchase new Class 8 trucks in 2012. Question is, if most carriers are looking to simply replace older equipment rather than add capacity, how long will the buying spree continue?

Western Star, Volvo, Peterbilt, Mack and Kenworth all made small gains to their market share with April's Class 8 sales. Freightliner, last year's Canadian market leader, saw its share nipped but it still retains a commanding 26% share of Class 8 sales so far this year. Navistar International is now down to 16% of the market.

Source: Canadian Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association

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# TRUCK NEWS

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### 2002 GREAT DANE 53' HIGH CUBE REEFERS

53', Tandem Air Ride, 11 R 22.5 Tires, Steel Wheels, Aluminum Exterior, Swing Rear Doors, Aluminum Duct Floor, High Cube Interior, High Powered Carrier Ultima 53 Reefer units with under 10,000 hours. Certified.



### (5) 2006 GREAT DANE 53' AIR RIDE VANS

53', Tandem Air Ride, 11 R 22.5 Tires, White Aluminum Sides, Swing Rear Doors, Logistic Posts, Aluminum Roof, Heavy Duty Scuff Liner, 110" Inside Height, Safety Certified. Arriving in July.



### 2010 TROUT RIVER TRI-AXLE LIVE BOTTOM

39", SPIF Tri-Axle (Tandem Air Ride with Steer Axle), 11 R 22.5 Tires, Steel Wheels, 39" Wide Belt, Electric Tarp, Bin Liner, Flip Up Hi-Lift Door, Reversing Belt, Spray Tank. Certified.



### (2) 2008 GREAT DANE 36' MULTI-TEMP REEFERS

36', Tandem Air Ride, Roll Up Rear Door, (1) Curb Side Door, Heavy Duty Flat Aluminum Floor, (3) Rows of Logistic Track, Interior Lights, (1) Movable Coldwall, Maxon 3,500lb Rail Lift, Thermo King Super II Spectrum Multi-Temp Reefer.



### 2001 FREUHAUF 53' DRY VAN

53', Tandem Air Ride, 22.5 Tires on Steel Wheels, Newer Swing Rear Doors, Aluminum Sides, Logistic Post Interior, Translucent Roof, Thermo King Diesel Heater. 6 months left on the safety.



### 2008 CAPACITY TJ5000 SHUNT TRUCK

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### (2) 2008 MAXON BMR-35 TAILGATES

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### 2006 GREAT DANE 53' REEFER

53', Tandem Air Ride, 22.5 Tires on Aluminum Wheels, Stainless Front & Rear, Swing Doors, PunctureGuard Interior with (2) rows of logistic track, High Cube Interior, Duct Floor, Thermo King SB-210.

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# Reaching my limit with speed limiter debate

Oh, look what's back in the news. It's everyone's favourite debate topic: speed limiters. I visibly cringed when I first heard about a ruling by an Ontario court in which the Justice of the Peace found the controversial '105 Law' to be unconstitutional.

I'm neither for, nor against the law. My feelings haven't changed. I think it was an unnecessary law and that the arguments both for and against the legislation are grossly exaggerated and lack substance.

What I do know is in the three years since the law was first put on the books, the sky hasn't fallen. Road safety doesn't appear to have been compromised, though manners may have suffered as drivers now spend several kilometres at a time trying to complete a pass. For the most part I think four-wheelers understand the limitations of these trucks and have adapted their own driving to accommodate speed-limited truck traffic.

Frankly, I don't care if the law stays or if it goes. What induced my cringe was the thought of spending months on end debating the merits of the law and rehashing every tired argument



both for and against.

As an editor covering the Canadian trucking industry, there is no shortage of compelling stories for me to write about. I don't want it to be all about the speed limiters. Been there, done that. I'm not getting into it anymore.

Of course as your dutiful editor, I'll continue covering the court cases and will report on the implications as necessary. But that's it. I'm not getting emotionally invested in the matter this time. Nope, no way.

I'm pulling a Switzerland and staying neutral. Just try me. Not even Lou can goad me into a debate on this subject despite his thinly veiled attempt below. You want to talk speed limiters? Give Lou a call. And do it quick, before he changes his phone number.

In all seriousness, not much has changed since this issue was debated ad nauseum from late 2005 when OTA

first floated the idea to 2009, when the maligned law finally went into effect. I still feel the law was unnecessary and that speeding trucks weren't a huge issue; soaring diesel prices saw to that.

I think the claim that the speed limiter law resulted in an immediate 24% reduction in truck-related fatalities in 2009, as the Ministry of Transport has stated, is highly debatable. I think the arguments that road safety has been somehow compromised by the speed limiter requirement is equally disingenuous – maybe even more so.

Those who hate the speed limiter requirement are buoyed by the judgment and who can blame them? My personal feeling is that the judgment doesn't spell the end of the law; it just assures a longer, costlier legal battle.

In one corner you have OOIDA with its deep pockets, bankrolling the case against speed limiters. In the other you have the province of Ontario, flat broke,

but governed by hardheaded Liberals who'll defend this thing to the end. It may sound like a compelling battle, but to me it's just two shot fighters, well past their prime, who don't know when to hang'em up. Whichever side wins, may the decision come quickly. □

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



# The real case on truck speed limiters

If you drive truck for a living in Ontario or Quebec, should you be enthused about the dismissal in an Ontario court this month of a speed limiter ticket given to driver Gene Michaud because the Justice of the Peace ruled the province's speed limiter law for heavy trucks is unconstitutional?

The Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association (OOIDA), which funded the legal challenge, and the Owner-Operators' Business Association of Canada (OBAC) certainly are enthused about what they see as "the first nail in the coffin of this useless law." The MTO thinks otherwise and plans to keep on enforcing the law and Canadian Trucking Alliance CEO David Bradley, whose association pushed for the legislation, says he's not worried this decision will set a precedent.

I'm not so sure about that. I think it can only lead to more court challenges



every time a trucker is caught without a speed limiter in Ontario or Quebec.

What I am sure about is that fighting the speed limiter law is NOT in the best interests of our industry. I don't have to tell you about the negative impact high diesel costs have on fleets and owner/operators alike. Nor do I have to tell you that trucking has a big X on its back because of its contribution to greenhouse gas emissions. (The commercial highway freight sector has the fastest growing energy demand of any economic sector in Canada).

Reducing speed is a proven way to significantly reduce both fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. And it actually leaves more

money in your pocket at the end of the day. Why fight such a law?

You may argue that fuel costs are a pass-through expense – the shipper pays a fuel surcharge. Well, shippers are getting wiser and starting to question what exactly they are paying for. They may not mind helping carriers survive the volatility of fuel pricing but they sure as heck are not going to pay fuel surcharges to carriers who are not serious about fuel conservation. Why should they?

You may argue, as do OBAC and OOIDA, that speed limiters are not safe. Justice of the Peace Brett Kelly raised that issue in his decision.

Okay, in that case OBAC and OOIDA need to outline the situations that would require a driver to accelerate above 105 km/h in order to be safe and how common such circumstances would be. Based on everything I've read from the two associations on this issue over the past few years, their

claims on the negative safety impacts are much ado about nothing. What happened to all the traffic mayhem we were guaranteed we would see if this legislation came into effect? Could it be that it didn't materialize because it was just fear mongering masquerading as valid concern?

I won't even bother to mention that Ontario road fatalities reached their lowest levels in the past 68 years, making the province the safest jurisdiction in North America, the year the legislation was brought into effect.

Maybe it was just a good year, even though large truck fatalities dropped by 24%. I will ask you to consider this, however: If speed limiters are so unsafe why is the insurance industry, which ultimately pays for the cost of accidents, not speaking out against speed limiters? □

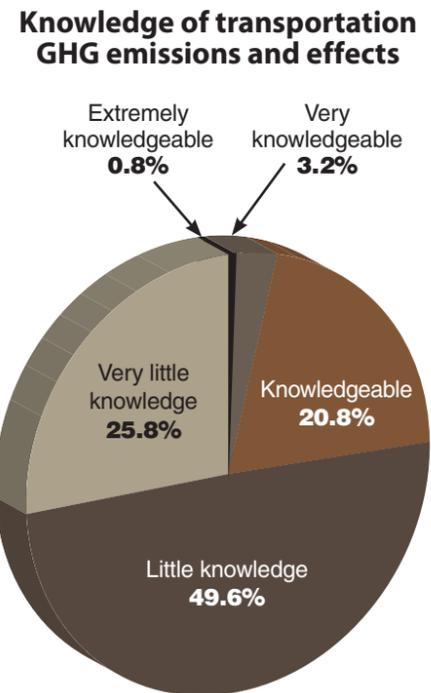
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## Did you know?

### The degree to which environmental concerns affect carrier selection

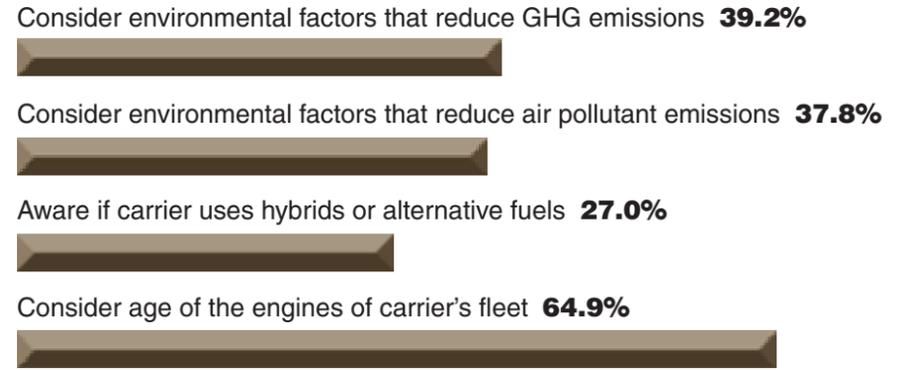
Canadian shippers are starting to include environmental considerations in their carrier selection process. The latest *Shippers' Pulse Survey*, conducted by the Canadian Industrial Transportation Association in partnership with our sister publication *Canadian Transportation and Logistics*, documents the level of awareness of environmental issues among shippers and the degree to which such considerations shape their carrier selection.

Almost six in 10 shippers now have an environmental management plan and a third of them in-



clude transportation emissions in that plan, the survey found. Close to 40% consider GHG and air pollutant emissions during their carrier selection. However, the vast major-

### Environmental considerations in carrier selection



ity admits that their knowledge of both GHG emissions and air pollutant emissions and their effects is negligible.

This presents an opportunity for carriers willing to help shippers understand the issues and best practices involved with sustainable transportation practices.

The full *Shippers' Pulse* report, which includes other quality as-

essment metrics, as well as projections on shipper volumes, pricing, priorities and more, is available at [www.ctl.ca](http://www.ctl.ca) for just \$49.99. On the top navigation bar, click on reports and select Pulse Survey Report from the drop-down menu. □



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IN BRIEF

## June marked by an award and a couple of Web site milestones

**TORONTO, Ont.** – *Truck News* executive editor James Menzies has won a Silver KRW Award for a profile on L. Ritchie Cartage, which appeared in the March 2011 issue.

The award, for the article entitled ‘Winds of change,’ was presented in the Best Profile of a Company category.

The KRW Awards, which have been described as the Pulitzer Prize of Canadian business journalism, celebrate editorial excellence in business-to-business publishing. *Truck News* was the only trucking magazine to receive an award. It also received more nominations than any other trucking publication.

*Truck News* was nominated for three awards in total. It also received honourable mentions for: ‘If tires could talk,’ a feature on scrap tire analysis (Best Resource/Infrastructure category) and for ‘Beware the Wreckhouse winds,’ (Best News Coverage),

about the havoc gusting winds cause for truck traffic in the Wreckhouse region of Newfoundland.

Meanwhile, Trucknews.com celebrated a couple important milestones in recent weeks.

The site’s weekly WebTV show *Transportation Matters* (TMTV) has garnered more than 200,000 views on its YouTube channel.

The award-winning show is North America’s premiere online WebTV show with a focus on the trucking industry. The weekly show combines humour, information and insightfulness to provide a thought-provoking and entertaining addition to the print product. Since its launch in 2008, *Transportation Matters* has earned several industry awards.

“This YouTube milestone is yet another notch in our belt for both *Truck News* and *Transportation Matters*,” said senior publisher Rob Wilkins. “Our editorial team has been pro-

ducing high-quality video content for more than four years now, and the attention we receive via both our own Web site and YouTube is a testament to the show’s widespread popularity and appeal.”

To view *Transportation Matters’* video archive on Trucknews.com, visit [www.trucknews.com/videos](http://www.trucknews.com/videos).

Also this month, the Industry Blogs section of Trucknews.com hit a milestone, with the posting of its 2,000th reader comment.

Launched in 2007, the blog section of Trucknews.com has grown to include a full roster of industry experts.

The Trucknews.com blogs include more than 500 individual entries and 2,000 reader responses. Tony Godsoe posted the 2,000th comment and wins a \$100 Tim Horton’s gift card to mark the occasion. His comment was the 18th to be posted to Dan Goodwill’s entry, entitled ‘Some thoughts on the driver shortage issue.’ □

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## BORDER

# Parkway project dump truck drivers snub Teamsters...for now

By Ron Stang

**WINDSOR, Ont.** – About 140 dump truck drivers – both owner/operators and those working for small companies – seem resistant to an organizing drive by the local Teamsters union.

The drivers have started hauling the 3.9 million cubic metres of earth for excavation of the mostly below-grade, six-lane, \$1.4-billion Windsor-Essex Parkway construction project.

The 11-km highway, the largest such infrastructure project taking place in Ontario, got underway late last year and is expected to be completed by 2014. The road is planned to link Hwy. 401 with a new bridge to Detroit and US freeways. The bridge still has not been approved by the state of Michigan as some legislators questions the financial implications for taxpayers should the bridge not make money.

Teamsters business agent Rick Parent started handing out cards to a few

dozen drivers in early May following a brief work stoppage by the drivers, who were upset with the \$63/hour they were being paid.

The drivers are under contract to Windsor's Amico Infrastructure, which has the excavation job as part of a consortium of companies, under the umbrella of Parkway Infrastructure Constructors, an international consortium building the highway.

"It's not going well," Parent said of the drive, though he's not all that surprised.

"They're owner/operators and I think it's got to do with dues and stuff like that," he said.

During the work stoppage, Amico president Domenic Amicone personally went to the site and spoke with drivers. Negotiations a couple of days later saw the hourly rate bumped to \$65. Amicone says the rate will remain in place until the end of the year.

Parent says he figures the drivers

want to continue negotiating with Amico, and not take the union up on its offer, at least for the time being.

"They want to go through the process with Amico right now and see if they can negotiate a collective agreement or a contract with them that gives them what they want," he said.

The \$65 tri-axle rate is quite low for Ontario, with the rate being as high as \$80- or \$100-per-hour elsewhere in the province.

George Rumble of the Toronto-based Associated Earth Movers of Ontario said he was "surprised" it was so low.

"You're probably not even covering your expenses," he said.

Drivers have complained of frequent breakdowns and tire and axle replacements due to the soft clay earth on site. Most of the fill is being redistributed along the project but some will likely be moved to various

locations including a few kilometres east of the project and as far as 20 kms away to cap a former landfill site, still pending negotiation.

Rumble said the money paid is probably the "minimum" they're making.

"If you ever took a look at the hours that these guys put in behind the scenes after the day's work is done – they have to maintain the trucks, they have to look after them," he said. "If you ever gathered all their hours and expected to be paid for them they wouldn't...be getting the minimum wage."

The rate must cover diesel – which started to go up in price as the work began – maintenance, and insurance. The greater the hauling distance is, the more costly it is for drivers.

Amicone said the Windsor rates are lower than elsewhere because of local economic conditions.

He said the \$63 rate "has been the indicative rate (and) is even higher than it's been for the last couple of years here."

Parent's union has not organized owner/operators locally but does have agreements with Windsor contractors such as Coco Paving Inc., Danruss and Spurr Contractors Inc.

He said drivers pay monthly union dues three times the hourly wage rate, which might be \$25.

Should the union eventually organize the Parkway truck drivers, Parent said a different formula would be worked out but the same amount in dues would be paid. □

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† Based on DOE/Argonne National Laboratory estimates: 1,500 hours overnight idling.

## OOIDA slams Teamsters' change of heart on EOBRs

**GRAIN VALLEY, Mo.** – The Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association (OOIDA) has condemned the International Brotherhood of Teamsters' recent decision to support the US Senate's proposed bill that would mandate electronic on-board recorders (EOBRs) for heavy trucks.

OOIDA says it views support of EOBRs by organized labour as a change of heart driven by their desire to ban owner/operators and replace them with employee drivers who can be organized.

"Support coming from the Teamsters, who filed comments to the government in 2007 opposing EOBRs, proves that this is more about attacking independent contractors and small businesses than safety," said OOIDA executive vice-president Todd Spencer. "It could open up a huge Pandora's box with the IRS on misclassification of colossal proportions."

OOIDA officials also noted that the current EOBR rulemaking has been estimated by the Obama administration to cost the industry \$2 billion, as one of the seven most expensive regulations pursued by the administration.

"EOBRs are no more reliable than paper logbooks for tracking hours-of-service and are actually a possible danger to our highways," Spencer said. □

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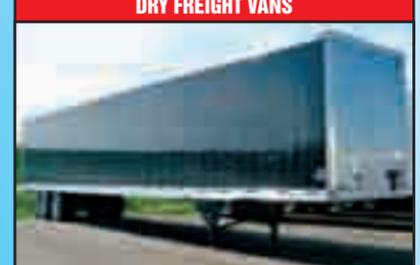
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**BORDER**

# Michigan opens long-delayed bridge truck road

By Ron Stang

**DETROIT, Mich.** – A dedicated truck road, long in the planning, has finally opened on the Detroit side of the Ambassador Bridge, a win-win for truckers who no longer have to navigate the streets of inner city Detroit, and for neighbourhood residents long upset about truck noise and fumes.

The 2,500-ft., two-lane road means truckers will no longer have to navigate streets such as 15th, Lafayette and Rosa Parks going east and north, and Fort St. running south, to connect to Inter-

states 75 and 96.

All trucks, regardless of whether they had expedited cargo, were subject to the meandering routes. Now, when they exit US Customs they turn right and head south parallel to Fort St. until the road loops northeast and connects to ramps to I-75 north and south, and to I-96 north.

At a ceremony to mark the opening, project consulting engineer Victor Judnic said truckers, “have got to be happy because what took them probably five to 10 minutes to get to a freeway, now



**BIG IMPROVEMENT:** One of the first trucks to use the new access roads on the US side of the Ambassador Bridge.

they’re within a couple of minutes. I mean, just the time and the fuel, they’ve got to be tickled pink. (The road) is dedicated to them and they hop on the freeway and they’re flying. This is going to have an economic impact no doubt.”

Indeed, truckers were honking their horns and waving at dignitaries and media as they drove past along the road. But while the US-inbound road and ramps are now complete, work still has to be done to make a seamless entrance from US freeways heading across the Ambassador to Canada.

“There’s a lot of work left to complete,” Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) project engineer Tia Klein said. “There’s ramps that we have completed but we can’t open yet until there’s a roadway that we have to construct” within the Customs plaza itself.

That’s expected to be completed by September or October.

The truck road announcement came after a prolonged court battle between the Michigan government and the ownership of the Ambassador Bridge over the building of the road.

Finally, on March 8, a Detroit judge ordered the state to take over work after the company did not complete the job.

The court said the company was in defiance of an agreement with MDOT to build certain facilities as part of the \$230-million Gateway project, a vast reconfiguration of ramps and freeways making it easier to enter and exit the bridge.

“Unfortunately after repeated attempts to get (the company) to cooperate we were forced to go to court and enforce the contract,” Tony Kratofil, MDOT Detroit regional engineer, said.

The company maintains it was proceeding on the road but the state kept changing specifications. Twice the company was found in contempt and its two top officials briefly jailed.

Finally the court ordered the state to take over the project and the company to deposit \$16 million to pay for the work.

After the announcement the company immediately mocked the state for its one-sidedness.

Detroit International Bridge Company (DIBC) president Dan Stamper said in a statement, “If the opening of a single truck ramp by MDOT causes a ceremony just think of the major party we could have if MDOT opened the other three connecting ramps they have barricaded for the last three-and-a-half years,” a reference to what the company alleges has been a deliberate attempt by MDOT to block inbound ramps to the bridge, in an effort to put pressure on DIBC.

The truck road and Gateway project is separate from a planned new Windsor-Detroit bridge, which still has not been approved by the Michigan Legislature.

The truck road announcement was made the morning of May 15 but the route actually opened the day before, as the contractor completed work ahead of schedule.

“As of 3:40 p.m. yesterday and forevermore, never again will trucks use (Fort St.) to go directly to I-75 and I-96,” Kratofil said. “MDOT has done everything in our power to expedite every step of this process and complete the truck road as quickly as possible.” Construction began April 14.

The announcement was greeted positively by neighbourhood activists, who held signs saying “Community Health.”

“I’m so happy for the people who had to live hour-by-hour, day-by-day, year-by-year with a constant stream of heavy traffic causing noise and vibration and pollution, stopping in their neighbourhoods,” said state Lt. Gov. Brian Calley.

Elected state representative for southwest Detroit Rashida Tlaib said her community used “unorthodox ways of trying to get attention to this issue and it was fun. We blocked trucks. We sent these beautiful, ‘We have the right to breathe’ cards out to our elected officials. We did everything from tearing down fences, to blocking the trucks, to calling out elected officials for not standing up for us.”

Tlaib said that, “for the trucking community this means easier access to the freeways after delivery of goods.” □



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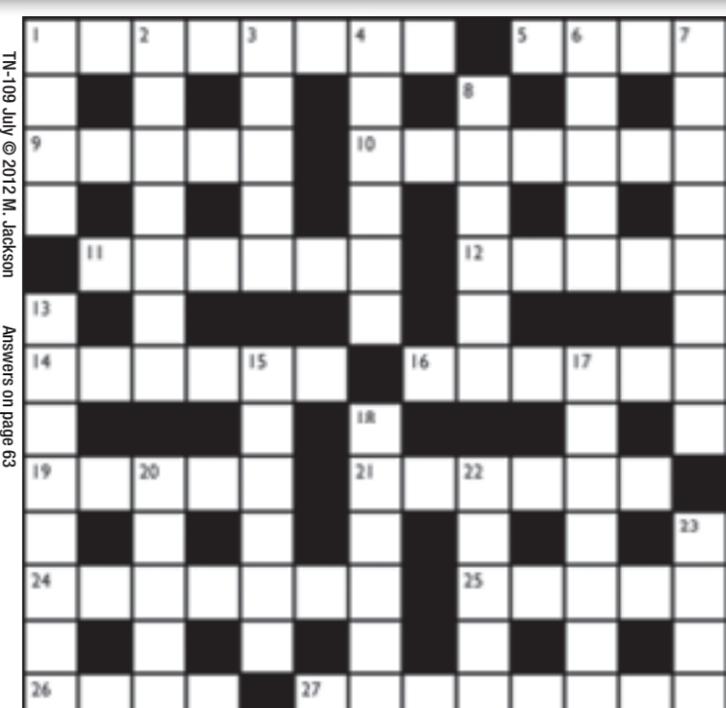
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## THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD PUZZLE

TN-109 July © 2012 M. Jackson



Answers on page 63

**Across**

1. Truck-eating highway coating (4,4)
5. Fixer-upper truck-ad words (2,2)
9. Truckmaker with Swedish HQ
10. One-way-out street (4,3)
11. Transport-company type, \_\_\_ carrier
12. Single or twin \_\_\_ axle types
14. Temporary traffic diverters
16. Truck-loan APR is \_\_\_ percentage rate
19. Flexible cooling-system components
21. Extra-cost item on new truck
24. “Ten \_\_\_ gears and a Georgia overdrive”
25. Toddler’s dump-truck brand
26. Terrain for 25-Across vehicle
27. Driver’s seat features, sometimes

**Down**

1. Tach readout, briefly
2. Hypoid lubricant, in other words (4,3)
3. Winter event causing traffic chaos
4. Bill of \_\_\_\_, cargo-control document
6. Tractor-tire type
7. Info-laden tire section
8. CB query, “Got your \_\_\_?” (4,2)
13. Selects a higher gear
15. US stock-car-racing association
17. Flexible driveshaft components (1,6)
18. It measures 8,891 km.
20. Clear-the-road sound
22. Truck for mobile-home transport
23. Truckers’ workplaces

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# US issues NPRM mandating electronic stability control systems

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The US National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has issued a long-awaited notice of proposed rulemaking that will mandate the use of electronic stability control (ESC) systems on heavy vehicles. The rule would require full-stability systems on tractors with a gross vehicle weight rating of greater than 26,000 lbs (11,793 kgs).

The announcement was welcomed by suppliers of the systems, including Bendix, which had been pushing hard for a full-stability requirement rather than a roll-only stability mandate, which would protect against rollovers but do little to prevent loss-of-control incidents such as jackknives.

“The government’s notice makes a clear statement, underscoring the advantages of full-stability technology, as opposed to roll-only technology,” said Fred Andersky, Bendix director of government and industry affairs. “While our preference is always to let the overall market drive choice, we support NHTSA’s selection of full-stability technology to mandate. We believe full-stability technology on tractor-trailers, highway motorcoaches and other large buses is critical to the safety of today’s highways. Bendix produces both roll-only and full-stability systems, but in our view, full stability is the superior technology, and the cost it adds is minimal.”

Meritor Wabco, which also produces electronic stability systems in addition to roll-only stability systems, is also on-board with the proposed rule.

“At Meritor Wabco, we take extreme pride in putting safety first and have long been at the forefront of ESC technology in North America,” said Jon Morrison, president and general manager, Meritor Wabco. “We continue to develop leading technology that will help our customers save lives, save property, and make our highways safer. We agree with NHTSA’s recognition of the benefits of ESC technology.”

Many fleets are already using stability systems.

Several OEMs, including Volvo and Mack, have made stability standard for several years.

Bendix says it has sold more than 175,000 units to date while Meritor claims to have placed 150,000 of its SmarTrac electronic stability control units into the field.

Still, Bendix estimates 70-75% of Classes 6-8 trucks are built and delivered without electronic stability systems every year.

NHTSA has conducted detailed research on both full- and roll-only stability systems and found that full-stability technology could prevent up to 56% of rollovers each year as well as 14% of loss-of-control crashes. It’s estimated that the new requirement could prevent up to 2,329 crashes in the US each year while saving 49-60 lives per year.

“When implemented, the proposed NHTSA ruling will help save lives on our roadways,” An-



**MANDATE COMING:** A law requiring the use of electronic stability control systems on heavy trucks is on its way.

dersky said. “The ruling reinforces our belief that full-stability technology offers the best choice to help prevent heavy truck accidents. And it demonstrates the importance of full stability as the platform for tomorrow’s active safety systems.”

The news was welcomed here in Canada as well, where the Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA) has been pushing for a similar requirement.

“For years now CTA has been calling for stability control systems such as electronic stability

control (ESC) to become non-optional standard equipment on all new tractors,” said David Bradley, president and CEO of the CTA. “It will probably take a couple of years to become law, but the fact is the technology works and for the growing proportion of carriers that are spec’ing new tractors with ESC, it’s cheap insurance.”

*(For more thoughts from the CTA, see Bradley’s column on pg. 30).*

The American Trucking Associations’, too, welcomed the announcement upon first glance.

“Safety is, and always has been, ATA’s highest calling,” association president and CEO Bill Graves said. “We’re encouraged that NHTSA is looking at this important area of truck safety. Technology, whether it is ESC, roll stability control or electronic on-board recorders, can help our industry improve on its already impressive safety record.”

Graves said ATA will examine the NHTSA proposal in detail and provide “strong, substantive” comments to the agency’s docket later this year. □

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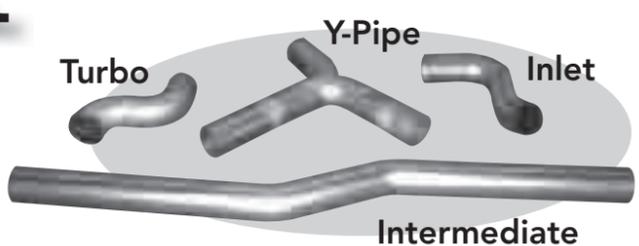
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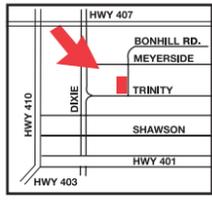
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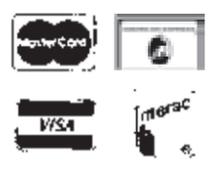


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# BEAT the HEAT

## Conquering the challenges of summer driving. By Harry Rudolfs

Canada might be known as the Great White North but the summer months can be equally challenging for our nation's truckers. This is a land of vast distances, diverse geographies, and consuming landscapes. Quirky and rapidly changing weather patterns can transform a minor squall into a violent event. On any given summer day, drivers from coast to coast might experience sleet, cutting winds, floods, extreme heat, hail, mudslides, deluges or pea soup fog.

Summer also brings increased traffic demands. Cottage-bound traffic, including inexperienced recreational drivers, snarl the highways. Just getting into and out of metropolitan areas on weekends can be a nightmare. And as summer road construction season ramps up, hard-working truck drivers have to deal with longer travel times, stopped traffic, crimped lanes, overheated drivers and four-wheelers looking to sneak around your bumper at the merest hint of an opening between lanes.

We wanted to find out how truck drivers deal with the stresses of summer driving. On-road editor Harry Rudolfs, with Shell's support, consulted blogs, email, Twitter, Facebook, and the good old-fashioned CB radio to find out how other drivers survive the dog days of summer.

### Preparedness, defensive driving your best strategy

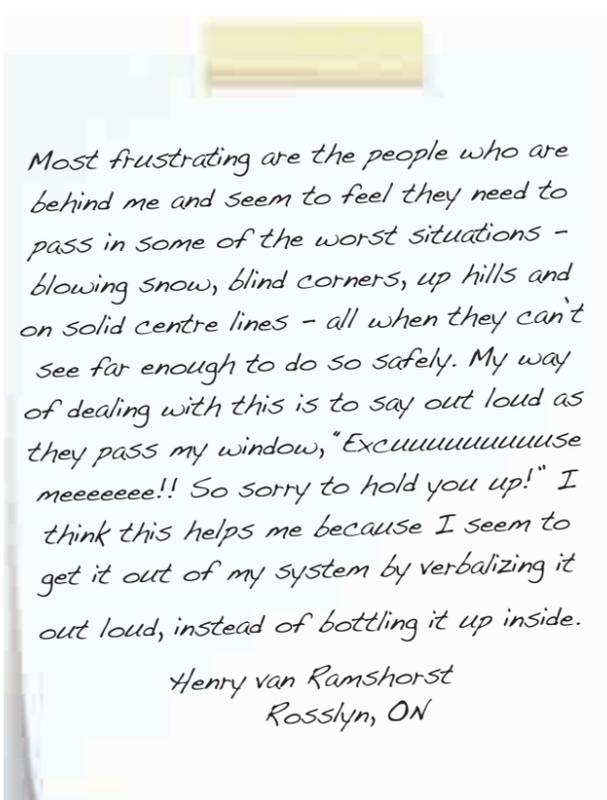
Edgar Murdoch drives for C & E Driver Services of Enderby, B.C., and is a proponent of defensive driving. "In a tight spot it is always in your best interest to give the other driver the benefit of the doubt. No one in another vehicle has the ability to make you angry. Relax. Driving aggressively is tiring, both mentally and physically."

Above all, Murdoch adds, "Never initiate the middle-finger salute, and by the same token, ignore it when directed towards you...enjoy the scenery or listen to a talk show. Do anything to avoid frustration, which is self-induced."

Daniel Brown of Moncton N.B., thinks that preparedness is the ticket to a successful run. "My best tip is to lay off the Red Bulls, get your proper rest. Get prepared before you hit the road while you're on your off-duty cycle. Do your paperwork, faxes, phone calls, etc. Make a little lunch, be sure you have drinking water and snacks handy. Then you're going down the road with peace of mind."

Brown also advises backing off a few km/h in congested stretches. "When the traffic is heavy, slow down 5-8 km/h, let the traffic go. It will ease up in a little bit, then you can pick up your pace."

Kevin Weston of Stayner, Ont. has been an owner/operator for 20 years. He's learned how to navigate intense driving conditions. "After going through a time of stress, I will stop at the next or nearest rest area or truck stop and get out and walk around the vehicle and get a drink of juice or coffee, then get in and go again," he says.



*Most frustrating are the people who are behind me and seem to feel they need to pass in some of the worst situations - blowing snow, blind corners, up hills and on solid centre lines - all when they can't see far enough to do so safely. My way of dealing with this is to say out loud as they pass my window, "Excuuuuuuuuuse meeeeeee!! So sorry to hold you up!" I think this helps me because I seem to get it out of my system by verbalizing it out loud, instead of bottling it up inside.*

*Henry van Ramshorst  
Rosslyn, ON*

### Sharing the road with campers and RVs

Summer is also the time when flotillas of camper vans, recreational trailers and RVs take to the highways. Professional drivers suddenly have to share space with a legion of inexperienced recreational users, some of them pulling trailers as long as their own.

These days, J D McCallum of Hudson, Que., delivers tankers of compressed gas around Quebec. But he got much of his highway experience running Montreal to Vancouver as a team driver. "We'd be running a set of trains with a nine-speed 350 and with maybe 110,000 lbs on the back. Every hill we slowed up, and 10 or 15 RVs or trailers would get by and then put on the brakes on the next downgrade. The very next hill, another 10 would get around. It would drive you crazy. Three-and-a-half days of this, all the way to Vancouver. There were six weeks of the year that were particularly bad."

Bruce Rutledge, a driver trainer for Ontario Truck Safety of Gloucester, Ont., agrees that some recreational vehicles do cause a problem.

"Some don't know how or haven't had to pull a camping trailer before. A GPS could have saved everyone a lot of stress because they seem to be lost or just don't know where they're going," he claims.

Stephen Large, an owner/operator and heavy hauler from Czar, Alta. and a two-time Shell Rotella Haul of Fame member, errs on the side of caution around RVs and campers. "I tend to expect the unexpected with those guys. I give them lots of room because they're capable of anything."

### It's getting hot out there

All truck drivers have to spend some time working outside their truck every day. Whether shunting trailers or doing P&D work, ramping cars, securing deck loads or unloading tankers, trucking is partly done outdoors and always will be.



**"I run the engine between 1,500 and 1,800 rpm religiously and watch the exhaust temperature and try to keep it under 1,000 degrees. Any higher and I drop a gear."**

**Stephen Large**

Trevor Croft of Smithville, Ont., believes that the arrival of air-conditioning has been a boon to drivers. "After 18 years of driving, I have found that the best way of dealing with summer driving is air-conditioning," he says. "I drove many, many years without it, and now as equipment gets more efficient it does not have that old stigma as fuel burning, unnecessary equipment."

But widespread use of A/C is only a relatively new phenomenon in the trucking community. Bill Weatherstone drove B-61 Macks right up until the 1970s, and '22 Model Whites back in the day before this option was heard of. He remembers trying to sleep on the bench seats on a hot afternoon after driving all night and getting unloaded.

"The temperatures would be in the high 80s and 90s in the early afternoon. I would be soaking wet from sweating. Both windows would be open on the B-61 (no sleeper), head down under the steering wheel on my back with my feet out on the mirror arms," Weatherstone recalls. "When you stop and shut the engine off, the heat would come up through the floor and make it well over 100 degrees F the cab. Before laying down I would open the hood on both sides and let the heat out. In a '22 White I would tie a piece of wood to the steel throttle peddle with wire because the floor of the cab was so hot it would burn right through your boot."

My personal baptism under fire came several years ago while delivering freight under contract for a national auto parts tire retailer around southern Ontario. At that time, most of those stores used rollers rather than forklifts. Every piece had to be lifted by hand onto rollers and fed into the receiving dock. Needless to say, the job got hotter as the sun beat down on the unvented trailer.

You had to look after yourself and bring some water into the trailer. When the rollers got backed up, I'd take the opportunity to squat beside the rear door and suck in some fresh air. Heat exhaustion wasn't an issue in those days. If there was another load in the yard when you got back, you did that one too.

## Keeping your cool with APUs

APUs (Auxiliary Power Units) are auxiliary generators that usually run directly off a truck's fuel supply but only burn a fraction of the fuel required to keep an engine running. These are robust units that offer plenty of juice to operate heating, air-conditioning and in-cab electrical demands while the driver is sleeping or off duty. APUs come in a variety of configurations and models. Most run on diesel fuel, but propane and electrical models are also available.

Despite the fact that many jurisdictions now have anti-idling laws that prohibit engine idling over five minutes, studies have shown that some drivers continue to idle their machines for long periods. Many do so just to keep the air conditioning running during a layover.

All idling, with the exception of trucks using PTOs, is unnecessary. Despite the extra expense in fuel costs, it also creates unwanted emissions and greenhouse gases, as well as increased maintenance costs and unwanted wear on the motor.

Idling a diesel engine can burn up to 4.5 litres per hour, depending on its size. Conceivably, a driver running the engine to keep cool all night can waste up to 45 litres of fuel during a ten hour layover. However, a driver running an APU during the same period can drastically cut fuel consumption by 75-90%!

**Beating the heat**

"I learned from watching the folks who work in the fields in California to work steady, but not too fast and drink LOTS of water or Gatorade," says Large. "They knew how hard and fast to do things so that they could keep going. If I was going to load where I knew it was going to be really hot, like Houston or Laredo, Texas, or Phoenix or Albuquerque, I would stop at Wal-Mart the night before and buy those one-gallon jugs of Gatorade and sometimes drink a couple of them by the time I was loaded and chained down, especially if I was loading equipment onto a rail trailer."

Watching a good shunt driver work a trailer into a tight spot is like watching a performance artist. Mike MacLellan, a top shunter for National Shunt Service of Cobourg, Ont., calls it "dancing with the 53." He prides himself in squeezing 50 trailers into a yard designed to hold 40.

"Hot humid days are very hard on shunters," he says. "Your body feels 50 lbs heavier. Dust is another problem, as a lot of yards aren't paved. The best thing is to keep hydrated. Some places will let you wear shorts, so take advantage of that. Most shunt trucks these days have air-conditioning but I rarely use it, though I usually have the auxiliary fan on. I don't like to get suddenly hot and cold."



**"Hot humid days are very hard on shunters. Your body feels 50 lbs heavier."**

Mike MacLellan

**Be kind to your ride**

MacLellan is not the only driver I talked to who wasn't a big fan of air-conditioning. Sandy Cooper is a 38-year-old trucker with a blemish-free driving record. She works 10- to 14-hour days in her 2011 Kenworth T800 (18-speed, 500-hp Cummins) drawing aggregates in a set of side unloading Super B-trains. Currently, she's working on the Port Mann bridge project on Hwy. 1, just east of Vancouver.

So why does she so seldom use A/C? "It uses too much energy output, and overheats on long uphill grades. Turning the A/C off before the grade and putting the engine fan on 'til the top, keeps it below 200 degrees F."

Cooper goes on to explain more about her working conditions. "My tarps are self-loading, but I do have to push a shovel to clean out the boxes. I usually just give'er, and take a drink of juice after to replace the things lost with a good work-out. Funny how you just get'er done when you've got no choice, eh?"

Large is another driver who's gentle with his motor on hot days. He has three trucks in his heavy-haul operation but his favourite is a 1990 Kenworth W900L. In 22 years, Large has put 3.5 million kilometres on the truck and over 60,000 hours.

"I run the engine between 1,500 and 1,800 rpm religiously and watch the exhaust temperature and try to keep it under 1,000 degrees. Any higher and I drop a gear. Take your time and drive steady and allow the truck to cool off a bit after climbing a big pull before working the crap out of it again."

Large also pays special attention to the rad. "Each spring, I steam out the radiator and about once a month during summer," he says. "Every couple years, I drain the coolant and remove the radiator and take it to a rad shop and have it dipped in their tank to clean it and check it and reseal the tanks. Then I replace the coolant."

**Attitude is key**

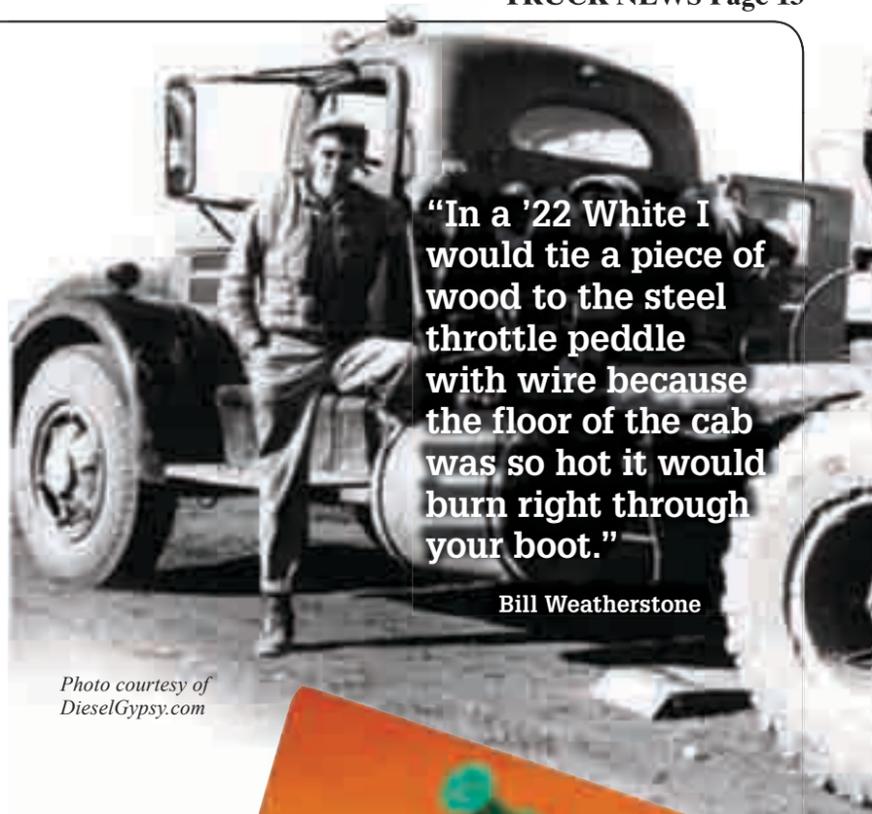
A few years ago, Robert W. Elliot of Wingham, Ont. had an epiphany: "I realized that the majority of my stress came from not being able to manage my time, my way, to meet delivery schedules. Highway closures by police, road construction, detours, border issues and congestion made my life miserable. When I finally acknowledged that I didn't have full control, I controlled what I could," Elliot explains.

"I allowed more time for trips, ran 90% of my highway miles in the 'granny' lane following the flow, never hit a speed zone more than 10 km/h over the posted limit, and stopped listening to the CBC and talk radio. It probably took me a year to complete the transition, but when I did, the enjoyment of trucking returned to displace the negative stuff."

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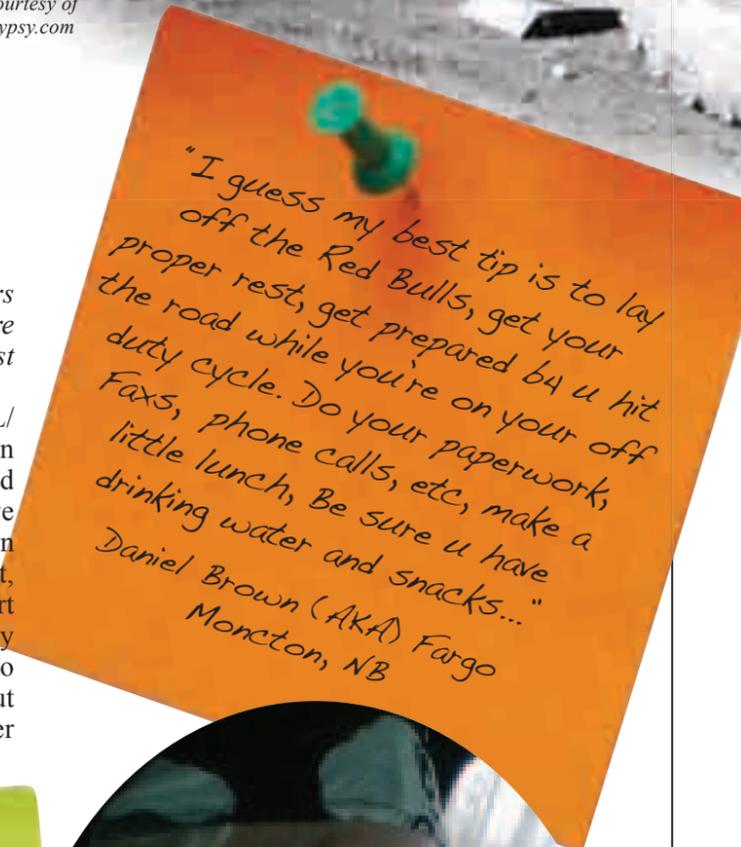
Mark Murray loves his job hauling for RTL/Westcan. "For the past year and a bit I have been driving north of 60. My stress level has dropped dramatically from driving south of 60. I would have to say the biggest stress of the day is dodging bison on Hwy. 3 north to Yellowknife. Other than that, summer in the Northwest Territories is nothing short of amazing, with endless hours of daylight to enjoy in June, July and most of August. Fast forward to winter, however, and it is endless hours of dark, but you take the good with the bad and I enjoy summer to its fullest."



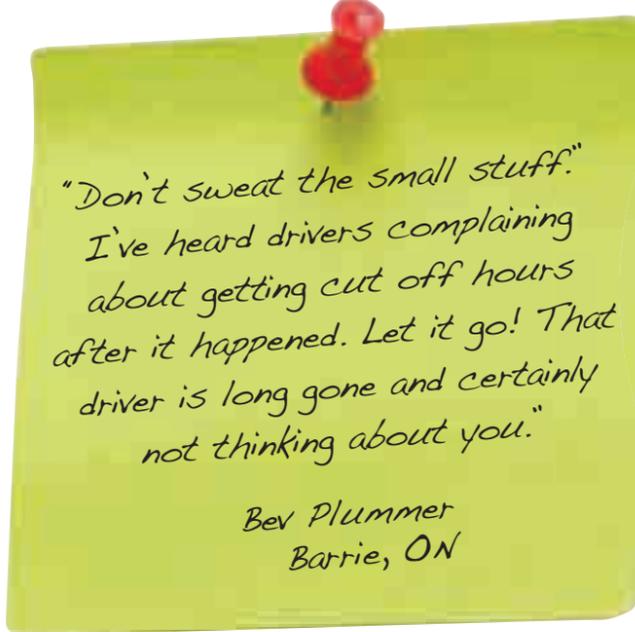
**"In a '22 White I would tie a piece of wood to the steel throttle peddle with wire because the floor of the cab was so hot it would burn right through your boot."**

Bill Weatherstone

Photo courtesy of DieselGypsy.com

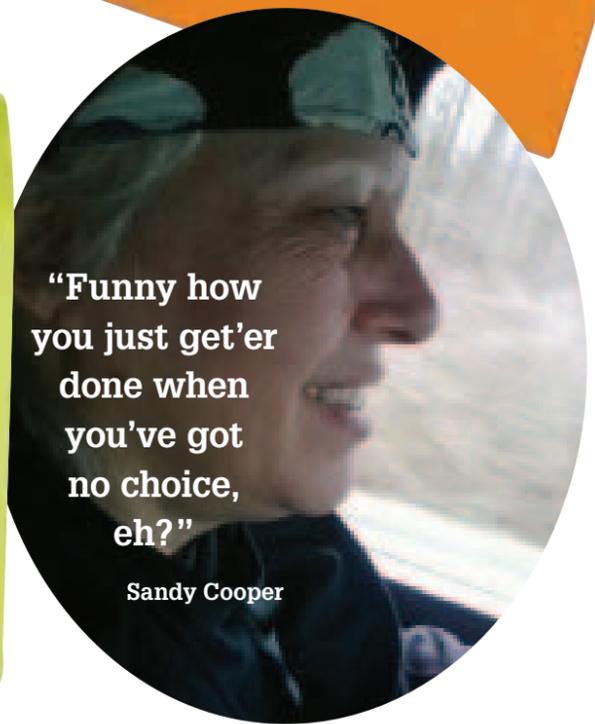


*"I guess my best tip is to lay off the Red Bulls, get your proper rest, get prepared b4 u hit the road while you're on your off duty cycle. Do your paperwork, Faxes, phone calls, etc, make a little lunch, Be sure u have drinking water and snacks..."*  
Daniel Brown (AKA) Fargo  
Moncton, NB



*"Don't sweat the small stuff." I've heard drivers complaining about getting cut off hours after it happened. Let it go! That driver is long gone and certainly not thinking about you."*

Bev Plummer  
Barrie, ON



**"Funny how you just get'er done when you've got no choice, eh?"**

Sandy Cooper

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# Shell SuperRigs winners donate \$10K top prize to local YMCA

**JOPLIN, Mo.** – A 2007 Peterbilt 379 EXHD Legacy shown by driver John O’Keefe won Best in Show honours at this year’s Shell Rotella SuperRigs competition.

The truck, called ‘Low Life,’ also finished first in the Best Interior, Best Theme, Best Chrome, Best Lights and Best Engines categories.

Several Canadians were among the entrants at this year’s SuperRigs competition, which saw working trucks from across Canada and the US compete for about

\$25,000 in prizes and a chance to appear in the popular SuperRigs calendar.

The event also raised \$100,000 for the All Roads Lead to Joplin



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initiative, which aims to rebuild the local YMCA after it was destroyed by a tornado last year. Todd and Beth Roccapriore, owners of the Best in Show-winning Low Life, donated their \$10,000 cash prize to the cause.

Paul Rissler of California, Mo. won Best in Show first runner-up with his 1996 Peterbilt 379 and TJ Timblin of West Bend, Wis. was awarded Best of Show second runner-up for his 2005 Kenworth 900L.

Other first place category winners included: Wayne Vogt of Hesston, Kan. in the Tractor-Trailer Division; Pat Eilen of Hampton, Minn. in the Tractor Division; and Travis Headley of Lebanon, Mo. in the Classic Division.

The 2012 Peterbilt 389 of Shane Price of Lebo, Kan. won the People's Choice Award, which is voted on throughout the event by all contestants and spectators



**LOW LIFE:** The winning Peterbilt 379.

New categories included the Hardworking Award, won by Ronald Millsap of Statesville, N.C., while Paul McMasters of Bristow, Okla. won the first Shell Rotella Virtual SuperRigs award.

As for the Canadians, Randy and Jona Rebillard of Gimli, Man. finished third in the Tractor Division; Brent Greer took fifth place honours in the Classic Division; and Larry and Kim Dyck of Winnipeg, Man. won the Best Show Truck category. □



**STUNNING GENEROSITY:** Todd and Beth Roccapriore, owners of the Best in Show winner Low Life immediately signed their \$10,000 winnings over to the local YMCA, which was destroyed by last year's tornadoes. The truck was entered and shown by its driver John O'Keefe.

## ATA calls on feds to fix CSA flaw

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – The American Trucking Associations (ATA) says it wants to see the results of a Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) study that examines the reliability of police reports in determining crash accountability.

The request stems from a flawed policy under FMCSA's Compliance, Safety, Accountability (CSA) regime, that assigns fault to the motor carrier even in accidents they did not cause and in some cases could not avoid.

"FMCSA continues to use crashes that motor carriers did not cause nor could have prevented in measuring motor carrier safety performance," ATA president and CEO Bill Graves said recently.

"Several weeks ago, the agency indefinitely placed on hold a process to correct this fundamental flaw in the system, citing, in part, concerns with the reliability and usefulness of police accident reports. To better understand FMCSA's reluctance to act, the public should see the results of the study the agency promised almost two years ago."

CSA currently ranks carriers based on all truck-involved crashes, even if they were not at fault. FMCSA has already conducted a study of the feasibility of using police reports to determine fault, however ATA says the results have not been made public.

The association was alarmed when the FMCSA backtracked on a promise to incorporate police reports into crash accountability decisions.

Now, it wants to see the results of the study.

"To live up to its goal to be open and transparent, FMCSA should release the results of its study, identify the specific concerns that caused it to place the planned solution on hold, and commit to a timeline for addressing this issue," said Graves. □

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## EAST



**TRUCKING ANGELS:** The Nova Scotia Trucking Safety Association's Trucking Angels team raised nearly \$1,300 for Threads of Life during a recent charity walk. Pictured holding the cheque on far left and right are Jennifer Bonin, team coordinator, and Linda Corkum, team captain, respectively.

## NSTSA raises nearly \$1,300 for charity

By Adam Ledlow

**DARTMOUTH, N.S.** – The Nova Scotia Trucking Safety Association (NSTSA) has raised nearly \$1,300 for Threads of Life, a non-profit organization that provides support programs and services to families affected by a workplace fatality, life-altering injury or occupational disease.

For the second year in a row, NSTSA entered a team – named the Trucking Angels – in the Steps for Life 5K walk (the main fundraiser for the Threads of Life charity).

This year's event, which took place at Halifax's Point Pleasant Park May 6, saw the NSTSA team raise \$1,286.50, more than doubling its total from last year.

"We are so proud of our team and sincerely thank all those who supported our team for this event," officials said in a release.

Trucking Angels team coordinator Jennifer Bonin got involved with Threads of Life after her boyfriend, Gerry, and his father, Gerald, died at work May 27, 2008.

Bonin volunteers as a guest speaker for the organization, sharing her story with Nova Scotia employers.

To honour the five-year anniversary of Gerry and Gerald's deaths, next May Jennifer and her current partner Corey MacDonald will participate in a 42-km marathon in Italy.

Their goal is to raise \$15,000 for Threads of Life. □

## East Coast truckers vie for spot in nationals

**MASSTOWN, N.S.** – Professional drivers from the Atlantic provinces competed June 2 to earn a spot in the National Professional Truck Driving Championships, which this year will be hosted by their home association.

Winners in the provincial competition included: Roy Mattinson, Roy Mattinson and Sons, two-axle; Steve MacPhee, Day & Ross Transportation Group, four-axle; Robert Richard, Midland Transport, five-axle; and Shawn Pieschke, TDL Group, B-train.

Midland Transport won the Team Award while Michael Gaudet of Day & Ross was named Rookie of the Year.

A total of 48 drivers took part in the competition and category winners will comprise Team Atlantic at the nationals to be held Sept. 6-9 in Moncton. □

## Truckers won't have to travel with their vehicle on Grand Manan ferry: Report

**GRAND MANAN, N.B.** – Truckers appear to have won a dispute with the operator of the Grand Manan ferry, which had reportedly implemented a new policy requiring commercial truckers to travel with their truck while onboard the vessel.

Traditionally, trucking firms would have separate drivers handle the truck on either side of the ferry trip, saving the cost of paying a driver to travel with the truck while it's sailing.

Truck fleet managers decried the change, noting it would add significant costs to their operation.

CBC has reported their concerns have been heard.

"We have met with Coastal

Transport (operator of the ferry service) and they have agreed to allow truckers to continue past practices until a solution can be found," a Department of Transportation spokesperson said in an e-mail to *CBC News* in early June.

"They will be bringing us a proposal to resolve this issue."

Reports indicate Coastal Transport was unhappy with delays in offloading trucks and trailers, which would cause the ferry service itself to go off schedule.

It was also reported by CBC that Coastal Transport was nervous about being held liable for any damage to equipment or cargo while the truck is onboard the ferry. □

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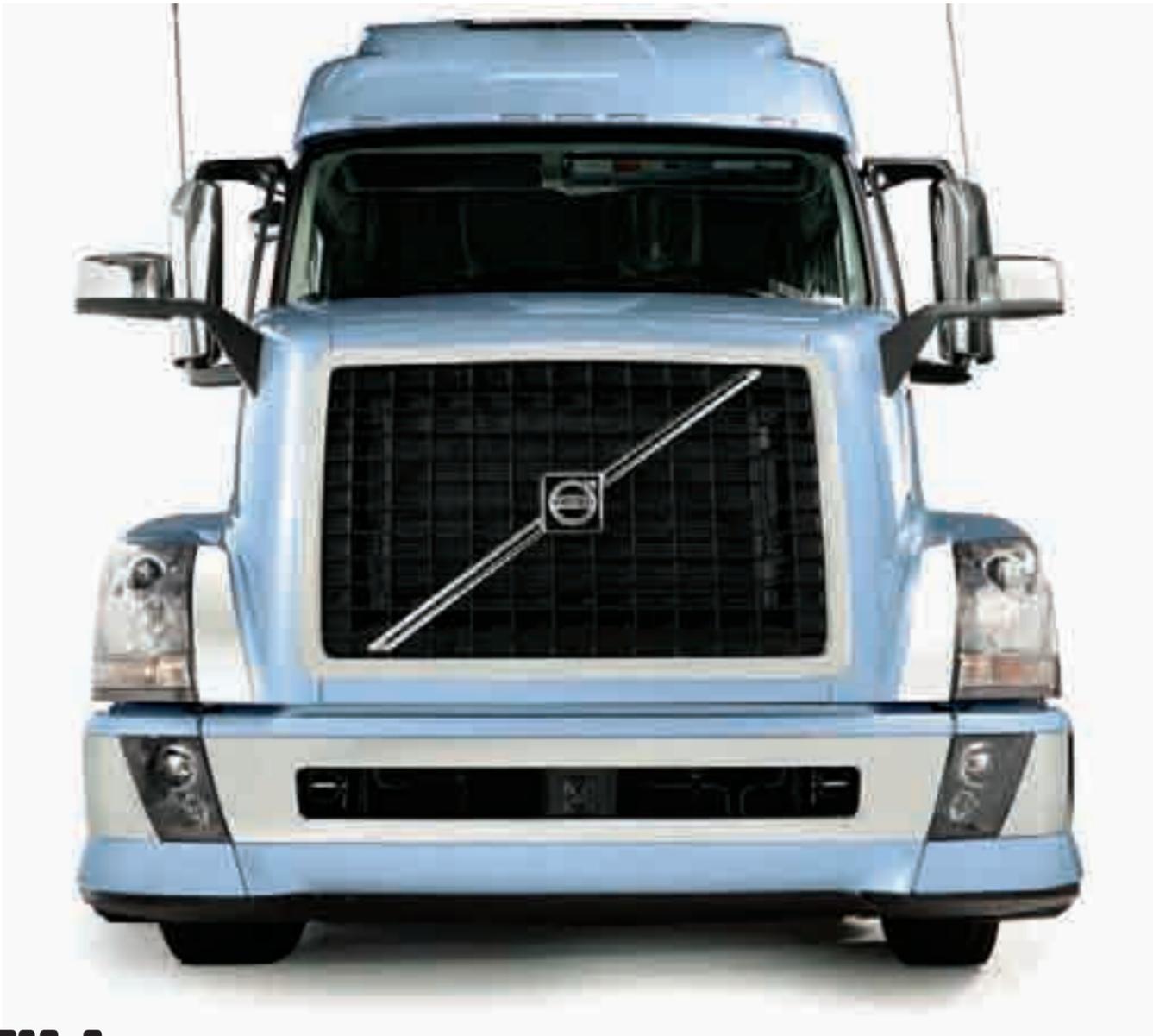


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# Choppy seas for East Coast carriers as costs soar

## Marine Atlantic fee increases especially hard to stomach, trucking officials say

**By Carroll McCormick**  
**DIEPPE, N.B.** – Truckers in the Atlantic provinces have seen rate creep this year, but new and higher fees in four areas – fuel surcharges, cost of living, drop trailer and security – at Marine Atlantic keep that ferry operator way out in front in the trucking industry's "fond thoughts" department.

Some increases more or less track the increase in the cost of living; i.e., the cost of getting off Prince Edward Island via the Confederation Bridge went up by 2.3% this year.

The cost of the first two axles is up a dollar to \$44.25 and the cost for each additional axle rose a quarter to \$7.25 per axle.

"Toll rates are reviewed annually at the Confederation Bridge and are adjusted based on the rate of inflation, subject to approval by the federal government through Transport Canada," explains Laurel Lea, coordinator, marketing and community affairs, Strait Crossing Bridge Limited.

Northumberland Ferries raised its rates for commercial vehicles crossing between Caribou, N.S. and Wood Islands, P.E.I. and between Digby, N.S. and Saint John N.B. by less than 2%. It did not raise its fuel surcharge, which is \$10 and \$50, respectively, for its two ferries.

"We are controlling our fuel costs internally with measures such as slightly longer crossing times, running on two engines instead of four between Digby and Saint John, keeping our hulls polished and turning off generators that are not needed," says Don Cormier, vice-president, operations and safety management, Northumberland Ferries.

The Halifax-Dartmouth Bridge Commission raised its MacPass tolls for crossing the MacKay and MacDonald bridges by 14%. The increases range from 29 cents for vehicles with two axles and dual rear wheels, to \$1.05 for eight-axle vehicles.

"This is kind of significant to us because we could do 16 crossings a day on the bridges. Ninety per cent of our work is in the Metro area. If you utilize owner/operators, this is a big hit for them," says Colleen O'Toole, finance officer, Lighthouse Transport Services in Dartmouth.

New Brunswick-based carriers saw a rude increase in their International Fuel Tax Agreement registration fees. Last year it was nothing but a \$5 decal charge. The new annual fee structure runs from \$25 for carriers with one vehicle to \$1,500 for those with 50 or more vehicles.

"We went from the lowest to the highest in Canada," notes Jean-Marc Picard, executive director, Atlantic Provinces Trucking Association.

There may be some other nickel and dime fee increases in the Maritimes, but the real stinger is that packet of Marine Atlantic rate increases. For starters, on Feb. 13 it imposed an across-the-board increase of 4% over 2011 prices and a new \$3.50 security fee. Marine Atlantic has so far held its fuel surcharge at its 2011 rate of 21% of the general tariff rate for passengers and vehicles.

What has carriers steaming though is the \$50 increase in the drop trailer fee, from \$210 last year's to \$260. The fee was \$110 in 2010, by the way. The fee was initially scheduled to come into effect in February, but Marine Atlantic delayed the increase to Apr. 1 to allow commercial customers to better prepare for the adjustment.

"This rate increase is necessary to reflect the rising costs associated with materials, supplies and labour. Marine Atlantic has upgraded its equipment to continue providing this service to commercial customers and costs have increased," explains Tara Laing, communications officer, Marine Atlantic.

There are mutterings from the trucking side though that this explanation is codswallop, as in: 'Cry me a river that Marine Atlantic has had to replace some equipment.'

"The reasons for the increase in the drop trailer fee? I've heard them all. I think it is a federal government mandate to have a higher recovery for users for sailings between Newfoundland and Nova Scotia and a lower subsidy percentage," says Gordon Peddle, CEO of Rexton, N.B.-based Atlantica Diversified Transportation Systems. He doesn't swallow Marine Atlantic's justification for the increase. "It takes

15 minutes to jockey a trailer on the boat. The best I can charge is \$75 an hour. They are charging \$260."

The sharp drop fee increase also concerns grocers shipping to Newfoundland.

"We're not happy with the fee increases, especially since they seem to come out of nowhere. The feds are making these demands on Marine Atlantic and Marine Atlantic turns around and raises its rates. There is no justification for these increases," says Jim Cormier, director Atlantic Canada for the Retail Council of Canada.

The increase will cost Atlantica \$160,000 a year, which it will pass on to its clients. New Brunswick-based Day & Ross dealt with the increase by announcing a surcharge.

"We have no alternatives but to pass on the costs to our customer base," says Doug Harrison, president of Day & Ross General Freight. "Fifty dollars is not a big number over a whole trailer load, but as we see (various) fees, it adds up to a large number. No carrier can afford to absorb these costs."

There is speculation that carriers that cannot pass on the increase will drop the Newfoundland market and seek loads heading to destinations with lower overhead.

The increase is changing the way freight is shipped to Newfoundland. Atlantica, for example, is now shying away from drop trailers.

"Last year I was predominately us-

ing drop trailers. Now I try and go live as much as possible. I think it is cheaper," Peddle says. This also raises the question of driver availability.

There is also talk about shifting freight from Marine Atlantic to Oceanex, which is the only other marine carrier to Newfoundland. This is not a cut and dried option though.

Peddle comments, "Going to Oceanex is not an option. If we put just-in-time or perishables on Oceanex it jeopardizes the service and may be even the quality of the food. There is a capacity crunch on the Oceanex option. We need the Marine Atlantic option."

Cormier speaks favourably of Oceanex as an option.

"It is a valid option, depending on the product. Grocery retailers are using Oceanex and are tapping into it. But Marine Atlantic does two crossings a day. Oceanex does two crossings a week. When it comes to fresh produce, it means that there is no other option than Marine Atlantic."

Well now, that depends on the source of that fresh produce. As Captain Sidney Hynes, executive chairman and co-owner of Oceanex, explained to me once about his Montreal-St. John's container ship operation: "You will be in Toronto Friday morning and in St. John's Monday morning. The road from Toronto (to Sydney, N.S.), plus Marine Atlantic to Port aux Basques, then to St. John's? They simply can't match (us)." □

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QUEBEC

# New report details dire driver situation in Quebec

## Quebec needs 2,300 new Class 1 drivers by 2013. Where will they come from?

**By Carroll McCormick**  
**MONTREAL, Que.** – A strong demand for Class 1 drivers, an aging workforce and increased competition from other markets spell challenging times ahead for Quebec carriers.

This March, Camo-route, a Montreal research and resource company specializing in the trucking, bus and taxi industries, made public an overview of the manpower situation in Quebec's road transport industry. Dated January 2012, it is titled *Diagnostic de la main-d'oeuvre dans le secteur du transport routier de marchandises au Quebec*.

The overview, prepared last year by the Montreal firm Zins Beuchesne et associes, provides a snapshot of current manpower levels in the trucking industry, presents industry statistics, a prediction of upcoming manpower requirements, challenges and possible solutions.

Interviews with more than 100 employers reveal there is an overall lack of manpower and a lack of qualified manpower. As well, there is a cultural change among young employees: they show less interest in overtime and in itinerant, or long-haul trucking.

Unavoidably, drivers are a major concern in the overview. They

represent 72% of the 62,521 workers in the road transport industry. The study revealed 95.7% of Class 1 drivers work full-time and 89% of them have permanent jobs. Of Class 3 drivers (straight trucks), 91.2% work full-time and 92.2% have permanent positions. Among owner/operators, 90% work full-time and 89.7% have permanent positions.

Looking at the age distribution of Class 1 drivers, only 5.3% are less than 30 years old; 65.6% are between 30 and 49; 27.9% are ages 50-65; and just 1.2% are over 65. Of Class 3 drivers, 8.3% are under 30; 51.9% are between 30 and 49; 38% are between 50 and 65 and 1.9% are over 65. For owner/operators, just 2.6% are under 30; 66.2% are between 30 and 49; 27.3% are between 50 and 65; and 3.9% are over 65.

Women represent just 2.6% of Class 1 drivers, 11.9% of Class 3 drivers and 4.9% of owner/operator drivers.

In spite of the decrease in work in the trucking sectors, businesses have been hiring in the past three years. The report suggests that this may be explained by, for example, the replacement of workers who have retired or moved to other positions. On average, businesses

have replaced five to six employees a year, 47.5% of whom are Class 1 drivers.

A very high proportion of the companies contemplating hiring Class 1 drivers foresee that they will have trouble finding new drivers. That said, the 10 businesses contacted for in-depth interviews believe that driver turnover (in their direction) is enough to fill in the gap.

Competition is going to be stiff though: Between 2011 and 2013 an estimated 1,600 new Class 1 driver positions will be created. Retiring drivers will open up an additional 700 positions. Just 131 new Class 3 driver positions will be created. Larger carriers have the upper hand in attracting new hires, as they can offer more comfortable working conditions. As well, small carriers (84% of carriers have fewer than 10 employees) are generally worse-equipped to manage their human resources.

Hiring difficulties will be exacerbated by the increasing requirement by employers for experienced drivers and the lopsided dependence on men. Adding to the problem, recruitment issues are amplified by competition from sectors that offer better salaries and more interesting working conditions. The overview notes other discouraging constraints such as hours-of-service, speed limiters, issues with crossing the border into the US and a lack of recognition of the value of driv-

ing as a trade.

New markets are another source of competition to all of today's carriers. The overview specifically cites Plan Nord, a grand plan to open up northern Quebec to development in energy, minerals, forestry, wildlife, tourism and agriculture. The sales pitch on the Plan Nord Web site is that it will create or consolidate an average 20,000 jobs a year.

Schools in 12 regions of Quebec can graduate as many as 2,000 people annually with professional accreditation in truck transport. It is imperative, notes the overview, that the merchandise transport sector get the majority of these people.

There are other sources of drivers that need to be tapped, such as those who already hold Class 1 and Class 3 licences, those with chauffeur experience, those with experience driving buses and tow trucks, those with training from private companies, those with professional DEP accreditation and immigrants.

The overview suggests some possibilities for action by the industry, such as: analyzing possible ways to improve working conditions; making small carriers aware of the need for human resource management tools and promoting their use; and trumpeting the advantages of the trade.

The 170-page overview, available in French, can be downloaded from [www.camo-route.com](http://www.camo-route.com). Find it under Publications Speciales. □

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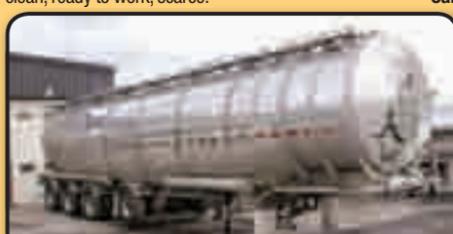
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**ONTARIO**

**Ontario speed limiter judgment raises questions**

The law sticks and enforcement will continue, MTO confirms. But lawyer, OOIDA claim the case sets a precedent.

**Continued from page 1**

Canadian Trucking Alliance, which lobbied for the law, saw it differently. Asked by *Truck News* how concerned he was on a scale of one to 10 that the ruling could result in the law being wiped from the books, Bradley seemed unfazed.

“On a scale of one to 10 my concern is zero,” he said. “There is no precedent value to the case. People challenge tickets every day and sometimes win. It means nothing; the law stands. You’d have to ask MTO whether they intend to appeal or not. I don’t think it makes a difference.”

MTO spokesman Bob Nichols told *Truck News* it would be up to the Ministry of the Attorney General to decide whether or not to appeal the ruling. He also said the speed limiter law will remain in place with uninterrupted enforcement.

“This case doesn’t change the law, and we’ll continue to enforce the law,” Nichols said.

Crocker, the lawyer who represented Michaud, told the *Canadian Press* that he feels the Ontario government should withdraw the legislation. He said limiting truck speed to 105 km/h jeopardizes driver safety, rather than enhance it.

Justice of the Peace Brett Kelly bought into Crocker’s argument: “Inability to accelerate, or not accelerate fully places a driver in a less

than safe situation because we have taken some of the tools required to drive properly away from the driver,” Kelly said in his judgment. “Mr. Michaud needs to be able to take certain precautions in the execution of his job that will take him out of harm’s way and keep him and those around him safe.”

Joanne Ritchie, executive director of the Owner-Operators Business Association of Canada, admitted this one ruling won’t be enough to overturn the law, but she said it was “the breakthrough we’ve been waiting for.”

“It could be the first nail in the coffin of this useless law that does nothing but divert resources away from policies and enforcement that could contribute to road safety,” Ritchie said.

“While this particular victory won’t strike down the law, it’s a move in the right direction. No doubt the province will appeal, wasting more time and money, but at least a superior court will have the benefit of this precedent-setting case to guide its judgment.”

The ruling comes on the heels of a new report indicating Ontario road safety improved in 2009, which the province attributed in part to its speed limiter legislation. The MTO says its inspections indicate a compliance rate of greater than 80%. □

**Sun shines on Road Today show**

**Continued from page 1**

equipment and supplies, engines and powertrain components, fuels and fuel additives, and financial services.

Nearly a dozen trucking companies were present, looking to recruit drivers and owner/operators, while staff from MTO commercial vehicle enforcement, OPP, Peel Police and CBSA eManifest directorate were there to answer queries of truckers.

The show also featured show’n’shine competition. This year’s winners were: Davinder Mann, Mackie Group, Best Company Truck; Ricky Thompson, Hunt Trucking, Best Fleet; Daljit Nij-

jar, Raj Transport, Best Dump Truck; Bruce Paul, Transpro Freight Systems, Best Owner/Operator Truck; Kevin Hunt, Hunt Trucking, Best Chrome and Custom; Laddi Mann, Key Point Carriers, Best Interior; Sukhi Mann, Kiranpal Goods Carrier, Best Lights; and Peterbilt of Ontario Truck Centres, Judge’s Choice.

The Brampton Road Safety Committee also launched a month-long Distracted Driving Campaign during the show, which is designed to make roads and rail crossings safer. The campaign adopts a three-pronged

**Continued on page 61**



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CANADA

# What does it take to become a Best Fleet to Drive For?

## Popular seminar series shares best practices of competition winners

By James Menzies

Becoming one of the best fleets to drive for is a lofty goal for any trucking company, but thanks to the emergence of the Best Fleets to Drive For competition, there's now a roadmap that can be followed to get there.

The Best Fleets to Drive For contest has been run by the Truckload Carriers Association and administered by Canadian online training firm CarriersEdge for four years now. Each year, CarriersEdge president Mark Murrell hits the road for a cross-Canada speaking tour during which he shares the best practices (and some of the worst) employed by carriers that were nominated through the program. The seminar series is hosted by Marsh Canada and sponsored by Kee Human Resources and *Truck News*. This year, it visited 10 Canadian cities and was attended by hundreds of fleet managers, company owners and recruiters.

To participate in the competition, a carrier must be nominated by one of its drivers. From there, Murrell and his team conduct an exhaustive evaluation of the nominated fleet and the programs and services they provide to their drivers. Drivers are surveyed to determine what it's really like to work there. This year, more than 80 fleets were nominated for the award and 51 went through the data collection process. More than 3,200 drivers and owner/operators were surveyed and in the end, 20 fleets were named Best Fleets to Drive For. From those, two grand champions were chosen: Paramount Freight Systems was named Best Fleet for Owner/Operators and Motor Carrier Service was named Best Fleet for Company Drivers. Seven of this year's finalists are based in Canada.

Only two companies have made the cut in each of the four years the contest has been run: Don Hummer Trucking out of Oxford, Iowa and Saskatoon, Sask.-based Yanke Group. Murrell offered some comforting words to carriers that have dropped off the list in past years: "I really want to underscore, not making the list isn't any sort of failure," he said. "There are about 50,000 fleets in North America that are eligible to be part of this program. Just getting nominated says a lot about a fleet."

So, what are some of the common characteristics among the fleets that consistently perform well in the program?

### Getting started

Murrell said a lot can be learned about a trucking company over the phone when they're first notified they've been nominated. Some carriers welcome the opportunity to participate and assign high-ranking executives to assist with the evaluation process while others are dismissive and hand the project off to a junior representative who isn't armed with all the necessary information.

"The companies that take this stuff seriously put a senior person onto it, in a lot of cases it's the owner of the company," Murrell said. "Other companies assign a junior

person who doesn't have the full information. That tells us a lot about the company and how seriously they're focused on HR issues."

When phone interviews are conducted, Murrell said interviewers are

"We need a program to help everyone get a laptop and printer on board every truck. It is the wireless age and all of us are part of it so let's make it so all can use it too."

"We need a plan to help the economically stressed to buy laptops and electronics."

"Shuttle service from terminal to a decent restaurant."

"Someone warm and fuzzy to talk to when you get lonely, tired or just sick of the bull."

"I believe that O/Os should be able to carry a concealed weapon on their person if they have the proper training and have a permit."

"Escort service."

## WHAT DRIVERS WANT

"UNRESTRICTED Internet to access social networking sites such as Facebook. Drivers who are away from their families for months at a time rely on sites like these to stay connected to their families."

"Would like to see online safety courses offered at no expense to drivers."

## ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

ing and other initiatives. Others, Murrell describes as "pessimists," working from a checklist of items that makes a prospective hire unemployable and actively seeking out their shortcomings. "They just move from one failure point to the next," Murrell explained. "The people looking for those failures tend to find them."

**How do you ensure your drivers are not subjected to, or contribute to, an inappropriate, hostile or toxic work environment?** Here, Murrell said, managers tend to gravitate towards one direction or another, focusing on either protecting employees from abuse or ensuring they aren't perpetrators of abuse themselves. Companies that have focused more on dealing with abusive employees may have a work environment where such behaviour is widespread, which can set off alarms.

**How many training days, on average, do drivers receive each year?** "We ask this question because everybody wants their drivers to stick around, but traditionally trucking has put most of its training in the first year," Murrell explained. But this appears to be changing, he added. "We're starting to see it average out more. Four to five days on average is typical in other industries and we're starting to see some fleets that do that."

### Trends and innovations

Conducting the carrier interviews, and also the driver surveys, has provided program administrators with a gold mine of information that can be used to identify trends on everything from driver compensation to employee benefits. This year, the survey found

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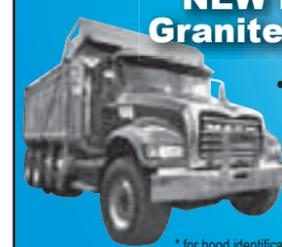
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## WHAT DRIVERS LIKE

“Thanks to the coaching of the on site nurse, I have lost almost three inches off my waistline.”

“Loving the electronic logs now.”

“The company provides a car to its drivers so they are able to run errands while they are at the terminal either on their personal time or if the truck is getting work done to it.”

company drivers working for nominated fleets averaged a salary of \$53,673 and ran 112,000 miles. Owner/operators grossed an average of \$162,985 and averaged 116,000 miles.

Year to year, Murrell said, the income of drivers and owner/operators hasn't changed much. Company drivers saw their earnings go up only 1% compared to the previous year while owner/operators enjoyed 5.5% higher income compared to the year before. (Some of that, however, could be attributed to higher fuel surcharges).

Murrell said more fleets are starting to pay their owner/operators a percentage of gross revenue rather than straight mileage.

Drivers continue to complain about running unpaid miles. Carriers have employed all kinds of tricks, such as paying from city limit-to-city limit or zip code-to-zip code. This cheats drivers out of pay for all the inner-city miles they run at either end of the delivery. Surveyed drivers also expressed frustration over tarping pay – or lack thereof – and some said that pay reductions put into place during the recession have yet to be restored, even as freight volumes have recovered.

Murrell also has noticed that fleets are becoming more sophisticated in how they track performance and distribute bonuses. Bonus structures used to be based on the number of miles run without an accident and/or fuel consumption. Now, Murrell said, fleets are measuring driver performance across a broader spectrum of indicators.

“This year, we saw the emergence of a much more comprehensive package of metrics used to calculate bonuses,” he said. Among the common considerations are: miles; collisions; infractions; idle-time; mpg; customer feedback; on-time percentage; and participation in safety meetings and training programs.

“It recognizes that there's more to being a driver than driving a lot of miles every quarter and doing it safely,” Murrell said. “It allows people to participate in a bonus program even if they have problems in one area. It's not an all-or-nothing bonus. It's less of a bonus and more performance-based pay.”

In most cases, Murrell said, fleets are using driver scorecards to measure performance and determine bonuses. Drivers seem to appreciate the new approach, he added.

What else do drivers like? Perhaps surprising to many readers, drivers who are provided with electronic logs tend to consider it a benefit.

“The drivers using electronic logs have great things to say about it,” Murrell said. Drivers seem to be getting more comfortable with technology and many voiced their desire for in-cab computers and printers. Drivers want unfettered access to the Internet, so they can use social

networking sites like Facebook to stay in touch with family, surveys indicated.

One item that caught Murrell's attention was that even at the best fleets to drive for, turnover remains an issue. Of the surveyed drivers, 28% had been with their current company for less than a year and more than two-thirds of drivers had been there for less than five years.

Another trend that emerged this year was that driver wellness has suddenly become a top of mind issue.

“It really changed this year,” Murrell said. “In the past, wellness was one of those things a few people were doing, the outliers. Wellness entered the mainstream this year and pretty much everybody we talked to has some kind of wellness program brought in for their drivers.”

Programs include everything from providing on-site nurses to installing inverters so drivers can have a fridge and microwave in their truck. Interestingly, many drivers voiced a desire for an in-ground swimming pool at their terminal so they could get some exercise and swim some laps between loads.

“This year, everybody wants indoor pools,” Murrell said.

Another trend Murrell noticed was that the best fleets are becoming more accommodating to minority drivers. Celadon Canada, which made the Top 20 list, has a large contingent of Muslim drivers, so it serves Muslim-friendly food at company events, takes care not to dispatch loads of cigarettes and alcohol to them, and even has tailored its owner/operator lease programs so that they don't have to pay interest, which is a violation of Sharia law.

Despite the positive trends, Murrell said some negative perceptions continue to linger, such as the notion women can't handle flatdeck work or that drivers don't understand technology.

### A Best Fleet: Motor Carrier Service

During his presentation, Murrell highlighted some of the programs that made the winning fleets so successful. Motor Carrier Service (MCS) won the Best Fleet for Company Drivers award, mostly by taking common programs and tweaking them for their own needs.

For instance, rather than issuing a fuel bonus only to the top-performing drivers, the company pays \$100 per month to every driver that averages seven mpg or better. The top five performers receive an additional \$100, but there's no limit to how many drivers can earn their bonus.

“They don't have to be the best, they just have to hit a certain thresh-

old,” Murrell said. About a third of MCS's drivers hit the mark each month. MCS also pays drivers \$200 for every clean inspection, as well as \$25 to the mechanic for both the tractor and the trailer when it passes an inspection.

This creates some camaraderie between driver and mechanic and has them both working towards the same goal, Murrell noted. As a result, MCS has mostly clean inspections.

When setting up a comprehensive bonus program, MCS asked the drivers what they wanted to be scored on. Drivers came back with some surprising suggestions, including attitude and cleanliness of their trucks.

MCS also has a driver liaison program, paying a bonus to longtime drivers who in turn assist newer hires with any difficulties that come up. It

also hosts twice-yearly safety rodeos, where drivers put their skills on display in front of their peers in a variety of challenges. It becomes a very interactive safety meeting, Murrell noted.

MCS developed an interesting wellness program dubbed The Walk to Las Vegas. Drivers and office staff were broken into teams and then convert various physical activities into a corresponding number of steps. The first team to walk the equivalent of a trip to Las Vegas wins \$2,000.

“It gets people moving, gets them active,” said Murrell. “It also allows them to bond as a community because office staff and drivers are working together.”

### A Best Fleet: Paramount Freight Systems

Many owner/operator-based fleets are afraid to provide programs to their people, for fear of blurring the line between company driver and in-

Continued on page 67

## WHAT DRIVERS DISLIKE

“Running empty miles within city limit that I have to legally log, but yet do not get paid.”

“I have had to go around my fleet manager to get problems resolved or it just doesn't happen.”

“Personally, I like the idea of dispatch 'rolling the dice' to see where I am going next.”



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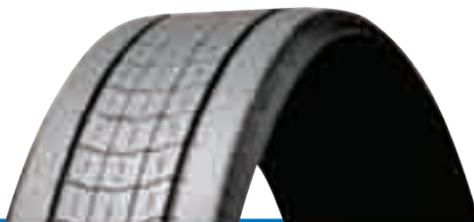
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### CANADA

## Canadian trucking CFOs 'optimistic' according to survey

**MISSISSAUGA, Ont.** – A recent survey of Canadian trucking chief financial officers (CFOs) indicates they are mostly positive about the overall health of the trucking industry.

The survey, conducted by GE Capital Canada, suggested Canadian trucking CFOs feel about the same as their peers in other industries about the overall domestic economy.

A total of 186 CFOs from across three major industries (metals, mining and metals fabrication; food, beverage and agribusiness; and retail) took part in the survey. Among the respondents were 44 trucking CFOs. The results were compared to a similar survey in the US conducted by GE Capital.

US transportation CFOs were less optimistic about the state of their industry and the economy than their Canadian peers, the surveys found. Sentiment on the global economy has also declined and US transportation CFOs voiced the least optimism of all industries when it came to the current state of the US and world economies, GE Capital reports.

Forty-seven per cent of US transportation CFOs said the US economy will grow over the next 12 months while 90% said their industry will grow or stay the same. Meanwhile, 55% of Canadian transportation CFOs said the Canadian economy will grow over the next 12 months, will 34% said it will stay about the same and 11% said the economy will shrink.

Asked to describe their business prospects for the next one to three years, 59% of respondents said their company will experience moderate growth while 20% said they anticipate a cyclical or limited growth phase.

Seventy-three per cent of Canadian transport CFOs said they expect their company's revenues to increase this year, which represented the most optimistic outlook of all the groups included in the survey.

In terms of profitability, 41% of responding Canadian transport CFOs said profitability will increase, while 45% said it would remain about the same.

Fifty-nine per cent of Canadian transportation CFOs said their new order pipeline was fuller in the first quarter of this year compared to the same period last year, while 30% said it remained about the same.

Seventy-seven per cent of respondents said they've been hiring new workers this year. Respondents were divided (41% each) on whether or not they'd be ramping up capital expenditures this year.

Asked what issues that directly affect their business cause them the most concern, transportation CFOs said their biggest worry is cash flow (48%), followed by concerns about their company's ability to recruit and retain quality drivers (45%) and truck safety (45%).

Half of transportation CFOs said they expect pricing of their services to go up this year, while 39% said it would remain about the same. □

# Early spring increases urea demand, drives up DEF prices

By James Menzies

**TORONTO, Ont.** – April showers bring...higher diesel exhaust fluid (DEF) prices? An early end to winter across much of North America has driven up agricultural demand for urea – the key ingredient in DEF – and in many cases has translated into higher DEF prices.

“An early planting season in some areas of North America has really put a strain on urea suppliers and therefore has pushed prices up quite considerably,” said Monica Bianchi Baker, senior analyst with Integer Research, which through its DEF Tracker Web site ([www.DiscoverDEF.com](http://www.DiscoverDEF.com)) monitors the fluid’s prices around the world. “The fertilizer business is a highly seasonal business, but the season came earlier than planned so the upward pressure on urea pricing has been very strong.”

About 88% of the urea produced globally is used as fertilizer, with the remaining 12% divided among industrial users, including for the production of DEF. Only high-grade urea can be used in the production of DEF, which means not all urea suppliers can meet the demands of DEF producers.

Industrial urea consumers typically take into account the agricultural demand cycles for urea when sourcing product but those expectations went out the window with this spring’s early planting season.

“Normally, industrial users look at the seasonality of the agricultural industry to understand where they could see some pressure on prices during the year, but this year because there’s been a mild end to the winter

and an early planting season, the pressure on urea itself has been quite exceptional,” Bianchi Baker explained. “From February onwards we’ve seen prices escalating.”

Prices appear to be softening now, but Bianchi Baker said another high-demand period is about to begin and so any pricing relief could be short-lived.

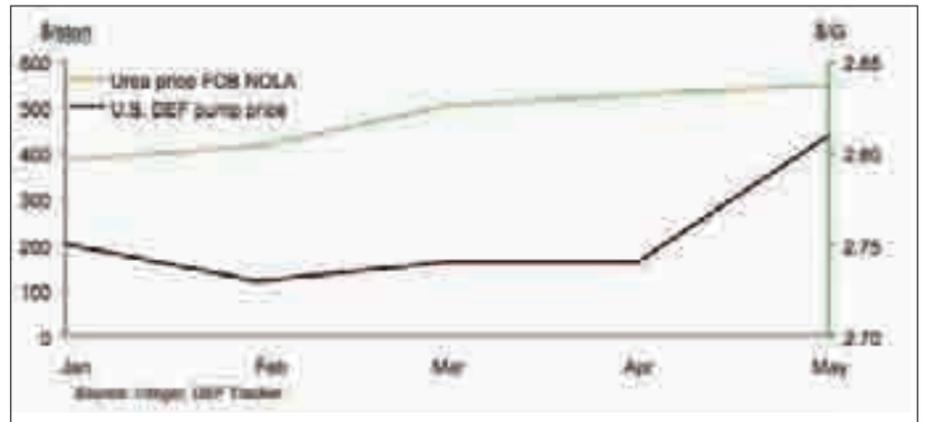
“The next planting season in some parts of the US will get underway soon, so we don’t expect prices to crash,” she said.

The fierce competition for urea has translated into higher prices and in turn, has affected DEF prices in the US and Canada, Bianchi Baker explained.

“What we have noticed is that in April and May, DEF suppliers have tabled some pretty hefty price increases, which to our knowledge have filtered through to the end users,” she said.

Chris Goodfellow, emissions analyst with Integer Research and editor of *DEF News*, said price increases generally ranged from 15 to 21 cents per gallon but in Canada, he said, the cost increases were “slightly lower” and with “less uniformity” than in the US.

Bulk DEF prices at US truck stops “at the pump” increased seven cents a gallon between April and May to \$2.81, or 73 cents a litre. That’s still seven cents per litre less than the average cost “at the pump” in Can-



**UREA ON THE RISE:** This chart, supplied by DEF Tracker, shows rising urea prices and the corresponding increase to US DEF pump prices. The fluid has increased in price in Canada as well, according to Integer Research, which tracks DEF prices around the world. Urea prices are indicated by short ton (ston).

ada, Goodfellow pointed out. In the States, there are more than 400 truck stops offering bulk DEF while in Canada there are only five locations – all of them in Ontario and Quebec – with an average price of 80 cents per litre, which has remained unchanged through the spring. By comparison, DEF deliveries to fleets via 1,000-litre totes averaged 65 cents per litre in May while packaged products cost about \$2.21 per litre, Goodfellow noted.

“Buying in bulk does offer significant savings,” he said. “A lot of the fleets in Canada at the moment are using the tote solution.”

Carriers looking to protect themselves from pricing volatility can purchase DEF in bulk and negoti-

ate fixed supply contracts with suppliers. While it’s not practical to purchase DEF only when agricultural demand is at a low point, Goodfellow said “Fleets that require higher volumes of DEF are in a position to negotiate medium- or long-term supply contracts to reduce their per gallon costs. In this case the ability to store and take deliveries of larger quantities of DEF will play a factor, and in some cases suppliers may be willing to assist with capital investments for storage facilities in an effort to secure high-volume business.”

According to the Web site DiscoverDEF.com, at the end of April there were 6,796 retail locations offering packaged DEF, including 635 in Canada. □

## Help available for fleets interested in natural gas

**OTTAWA, Ont.** – The Canadian Natural Gas Vehicle Alliance (CNGVA) says it has produced technical guidelines for fleet managers to help them transition to natural gas-fueled vehicles.

The guidelines, offered free of charge, provide all the necessary information in one place to help ease the transition, the organization says.

“Ensuring the safe maintenance, storage, and loading of compressed natural gas (CNG) and liquefied natural gas (LNG) vehicles in indoor facilities is an important enabler for market development in Canada,” said Alicia Milner, CNGVA president. “Natural gas is a proven and safe fuel for transportation, but its properties are different than those of liquid fuels. These differences need to be understood and addressed in indoor facilities where vehicles are maintained, stored or loaded.”

The organization says publishing the guidelines is the first of many capacity-building activities to come, which will make natural gas more accessible to Canadian truck fleets. The CNGVA says its goal is to lead the sustainable growth of natural gas as a primary transportation fuel for heavy vehicles. To access the guidelines, visit [www.cngva.org](http://www.cngva.org). □



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OVER THE ROAD

# Why profit-sharing may be the ultimate incentive program for owners and drivers

A few months ago I was asked by the Central Ontario chapter of the Fleet Safety Council if I would like to participate in an upcoming panel discussion about driver incentive programs. I accepted, always eager to offer my two cents from a driver's perspective.

As thoughts about this topic percolated in my mind over the months, I've had quite some difficulty coming to any type of concrete opinion on what a driver incentive program should look like. The best place to start is to gain some understanding of what is meant when we talk about driver incentives.

If you look up a dictionary definition of the word 'incentive' you will find something to this effect: *A reward offered for increased productivity.*

Increasing productivity is usually associated with an increase in the volume of work performed



Over the Road

AL GOODHALL

(usually accomplished by investing more time in the job), performing the same volume of work at a lower cost (fuel savings, accident-free miles), or meeting a higher standard of performance (improving CSA scores or carrier ratings). The reward to the driver is most often a financial one.

What I find interesting is that an increase in productivity requires an investment of additional time by the driver. Yet in recent years, changes to hours-of-service legislation (HoS) and the use of electronic on-board recorders (EOBRs) have tightened control over a driver's time.

At the same time, most of us

are still paid by the mile and by the drop. This system was put into place to encourage productivity also. Run more miles, do more drops, and you get paid more.

But that system was put into place when HoS rules were loosely enforced or non-existent.

So what we have now is the operations side of our business still paying drivers by the mile, encouraging them to work as quickly as possible in the name of productivity and incentive programs that are designed to slow us down and work more efficiently and safely.

This presents somewhat of a paradox for drivers. It's no wonder that drivers often express the feeling that they are stuck between a rock and a hard place, because the expectations of the operations side of the business and the safety and compliance side of the business clash.

As a driver are you going to

place your efforts on the operations side that pays you 40 cents a mile every week or on the safety and compliance side that presents you with the potential to earn up to another two to six cents per mile each quarter, if you meet the criteria?

It's no surprise that many drivers feel it's just not worth the effort. Maybe we're well past the time of looking for a new means of paying drivers for their efforts as well as developing new incentive programs?

What if I'm more interested in earning the same money but doing it in less time, allowing me more personal time? Is there an incentive program out there that will do that? Perhaps.

Some companies are implementing profit-sharing programs. These programs present the opportunity to involve all employees – not just drivers – in the incentive program. They have the potential to foster greater teamwork and break down communication barriers between departments.

A profit-sharing program fixes the cost of an incentive program as a percentage of net profit for the company, so it aids in financial forecasting and planning. But it requires diligent and consistent messaging from all levels of management to front-line employees. Everyone has to be working towards the same goal. I've learned over the years as a driver that communication with front-line employees is not a strength this industry possesses.

That's not a criticism; it's simply recognition of the difficulty we all face in developing relationships with one another when we rarely see each other.

That lack of social interaction is difficult to overcome in an industry that keeps managers and workers thousands of kilometres apart most of the time.

A successful profit-sharing program depends on constant interaction between all employees if there is to be a payoff. That payoff has the potential to be no less than a satisfactory set of HoS rules that recognizes the need for flexibility in a driver's daily routine and an end to downloading inefficiencies such as dock delays to the driver.

As an aging driver I find that I am increasingly frustrated by the lack of time I can spend with my family and invest in my own personal wellbeing. Issues of driver health and wellness are coming to the forefront and facing up to this reality is what incentive programs also have to address.

It does not seem reasonable to me to ask an aging driver pool to invest even more time in the name of productivity while also expecting them to take more time to care for themselves. You just can't have it both ways. □

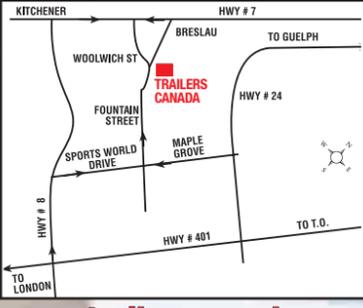
– Al Goodhall has been a professional long-haul driver since 1998. He shares his experiences via his 'Over the Road' blog at <http://truckingacrosscanada.blogspot.com>. You can also follow him on Twitter at [Twitter.com/Al\\_Goodhall](https://twitter.com/Al_Goodhall).



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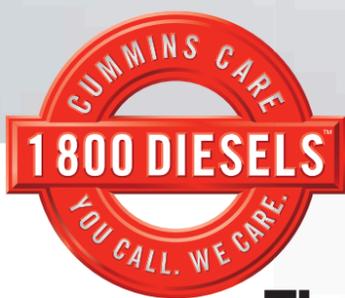
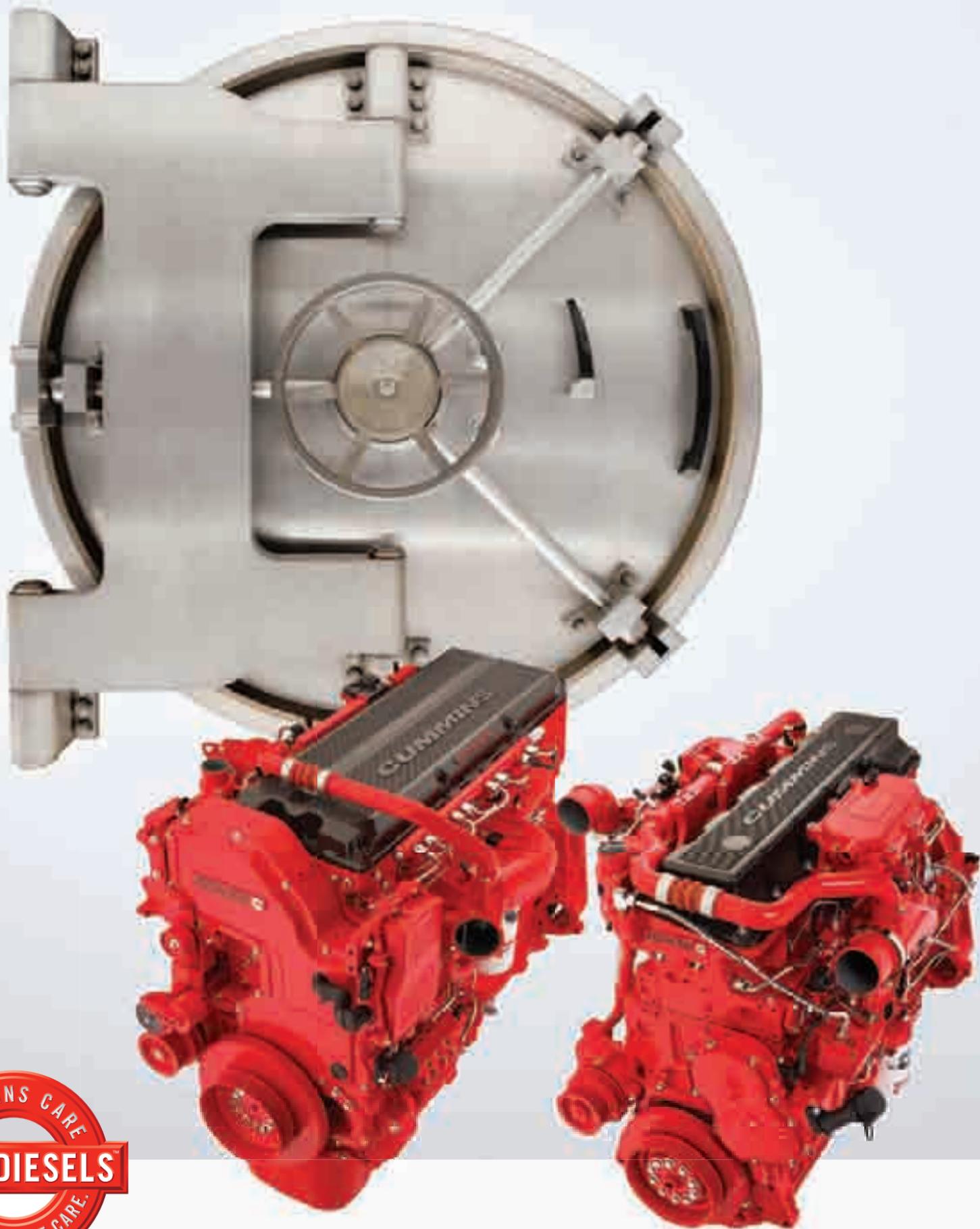
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**INDUSTRY**

# We can't continue to roll over and play dead

Over the past few months there have been a spate of truck rollover incidents all within about 20 kilometres of the Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA) head office in Toronto. Invariably these have occurred at on- or off-ramps to one of the 400-series highways and have led to long traffic snarl-ups – the cost of which is visited upon the trucking industry as much as it is other motorists.

Luckily, no one has been fatally injured, but the visuals of a truck hanging off an overpass or a woman's car crushed within an inch of her life have been all over the media and have exacted a toll on the industry's image.

As usual, because of a lack of data, we are unable to put our finger on the precise cause of each of these crashes or determine whether there are any trends. Maybe the truck was cut off. Maybe the shipper improperly loaded the trailer. Maybe the weather had something to do with it (one incident did occur during a very windy day).

But, while we know these things can happen, we also know that in most cases driver error is the cause with excessive speed a primary factor. The ramps where most of the recent incidents occurred are well known to most truckers. Police have also pointed to a lack of skill on the part of some of the drivers.

As an industry, we need to address the problem.



**Industry Issues**

DAVID BRADLEY

Technology will be part of the solution. For years now CTA has been calling for stability control systems such as electronic stability control (ESC) to become non-optional standard equipment on all new tractors.

This could be done voluntarily as three of the OEMs have already done or, more likely, via regulation. Indeed, the US National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) and Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration have published a notice of proposed rule-making to do just that (*see pg. 11*). Canada will have little choice but to follow.

It will probably take a couple of years to become law, but the fact is the technology works and for the growing proportion of carriers that are spec'ing new tractors with ESC, it's cheap insurance.

It is estimated that about 20-25% of the new heavy trucks sold in North America are equipped with ESC. Research conducted for NHTSA by the University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute (UMTRI) estimated that if all existing five-axle tractor-trailers

operating in the US were equipped with ESC, the expected annual combined rollover and directional (yaw) instability relevant safety benefit would be a reduction of 4,659 crashes, 126 fatalities and 5,909 injuries – representing annual savings of more than \$1.5 billion annually.

Additional net savings from loss-of-control crashes prevented were estimated at more than \$200 million annually. In Canada, where the industry is approximately 10% the size of the US, the combined annual savings from ESC could exceed \$170 million.

Tackling the skill issue could be more of a challenge. I don't think it's fair to paint any segment of the industry or of society with a broad brush and overall truck drivers, as a class, are the safest drivers on the road. There are relatively new drivers who are very skilled at what they do just as I am sure there are some "experienced" drivers whose skill and judgment leaves something to be desired.

Still, I don't think many would disagree with the assertion that it is a much bigger challenge finding qualified and skilled drivers today than it was 30 years ago.

I hear this from a lot of carriers and there are lots of reasons for it. The subject is too complex to get into now, but suffice it to say part of the solution lies with better training. CTA has taken the first step in

this direction by endorsing a recommendation from the *CTA Blue Ribbon Task Force on the Driver Shortage* calling for mandatory entry-level training and ongoing professional development and training throughout a driver's career.

This will drive the need for industry-endorsed training standards, certification of training schools and instructors and a tougher licence test.

It is also the only way that truck driving will ever be deemed a skilled occupation. It is astonishing that to become a forklift driver one needs to pass a mandatory test and then be recertified every year or so, but to get a commercial truck driver's licence you don't need to take any entry-level training, or ongoing training (beyond such things as dangerous goods transportation). All you have to do is pass a relatively simple test and you're in. That's not good enough anymore.

This sort of change won't happen quickly; there are lots of obstacles to overcome, not the least of which will be to convince all of the provincial governments to move in this direction at the same time. And the ESC mandate is likely not to become law for a while yet.

So, in the meantime, let's try to get everyone to pay a bit more attention, watch your speed and avoid the rollovers. □

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

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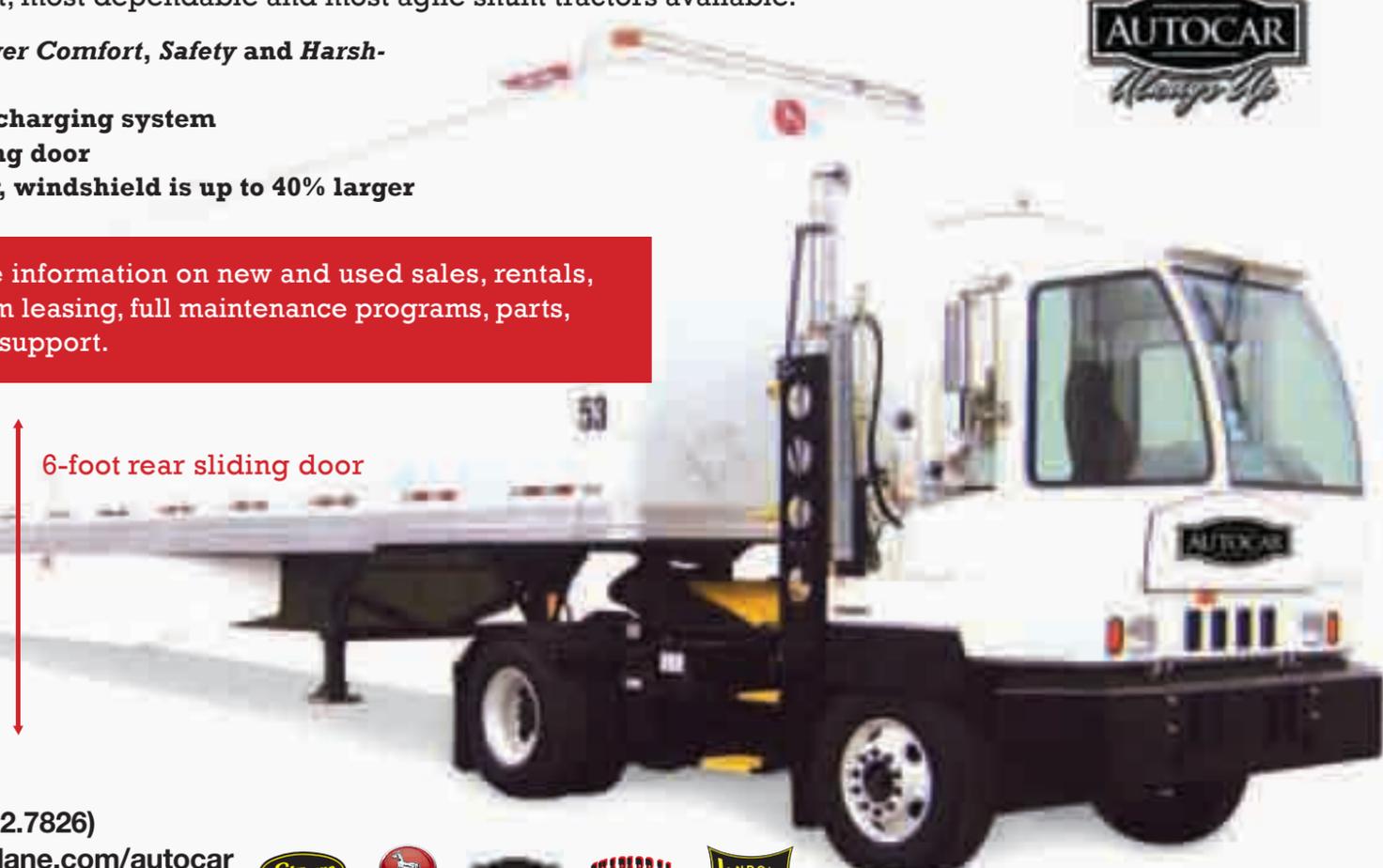
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## OPINION

# Why doesn't anyone want to be a trucker anymore?

## Let me tell you about my day

It is amazing how few people – even those from within the trucking industry – understand the realities of life behind the wheel.

For those of you who aren't living it every day, here's an example of a day in the life of a truck driver: I set off from my yard south of Winnipeg with a trailer going out to Lethbridge, Alta.

Once there I was to swap for a trailer going back to Winnipeg. An easy enough two days – plenty of miles and no concern over appointments at the shipper/receiver. I just had to get there, drop and hook, park for my break and then put her into the wind again.

### Another day at the office

My trip went like this: I got into the yard, loaded my stuff into the truck, did my pre-trip checks, hooked onto my trailer, checked the paperwork and set off.

I have what I consider to be a very nice truck. The ride was far from smooth though, as the winter and lack of maintenance have turned the roads into a shocking state.

In some sections warning signs for bumps have been erected, in others patches have had new asphalt laid over the worst of the

You say tomato,  
I say tomahto

MARK LEE



holes. Either way, I had to keep my mouth closed to avoid losing my fillings on some stretches.

After a few hours I made Brandon and pulled in at the first truck stop I encountered.

The lot was overflowing with trucks and it was also overflowing with puddles, as the ground was anything but smooth.

I had to lock my differentials to exit, as one pothole was so deep it lifted my drives clear off the ground.

Having not yet found a space to park, I ventured out onto the service road with the intention of walking back for coffee and a snack, however this was not a viable option as the service road was full of turnpike doubles unable, because of their length, to park anywhere else. So I put her into the wind again, thirsty and a little puckish.

Virden was up next, so I thought I'd stop there. Again it was impossible.

The service road on the south side of TC1 was full of other trucks with the same idea and the northern service road was full of turnpike doubles switching trailers and generally making a nuisance of themselves to a hungry driver like me, who just wanted a place to park for a few minutes.

Again, I carry on.

Next stop, Moosomin. There's a new gas station there with a Timmies next door. I make it there and find a place to park and set off in the direction of refreshment.

Now I'm faced with another problem: I almost have to duck to get through the doorway. It's a standard size doorway and I'm only a little over 6-ft., so what's the problem? The amount of mud that had collected on the soles of my shoes had turned them into platform soles! Frustrating, to say the least.

Lucky for me I managed to get in here as there were no other options before Regina.

The few places that do exist have been taken over as marshalling yards for turnpike doubles to do their relay switch.

Now I find myself in Regina, previous experience of trying to find somewhere to stop and get a coffee or a bite to eat here means I don't even bother.

It's next to impossible unless you're one of the lucky 50 or so drivers who manage to find a parking spot.

Seven hundred kilometres are under my bumper so far and I'm in Moose Jaw now and this time the truck needs some food.

I drive very slowly and carefully through the minefield of a parking lot and pull into the pumps, get out of the truck into another puddle only to find that the keypad on the card reader doesn't work properly.

So I try the place next door. I have better luck with the keypad, but the minefield of a parking lot is just the same.

Knowing what is ahead of me, I stop off and grab a burger and fries before I leave town; the next possible stopping places are in Swift Current and the last time I stopped to eat there it wasn't a

pleasant experience.

From Swift Current to Medicine Hat there's nowhere to stop at all anymore. Sure there are gas stations and a couple of restaurants, but each one has been taken over by the turnpike doubles as a place to switch trailers. From the Hat it's only a reasonably short ride to my destination. Lucky, really, as again there is absolutely nowhere to stop. Well, nowhere with any facilities, decent or otherwise.

### All in a day's work

Finally I arrive in Lethbridge, do my thing and pull into a quiet spot to park for the night.

A normal day's work down and in the books, a bit of messing around trying to get a coffee, a bit of messing around to get fuel, the truck and I got a little beaten up on the bumpy roads, but no real drama.

Just another day's trucking when you think about it. I've had many like it and I'm sure I'll have many more the same. I read for an hour or so and turn in for the night, ready to do it all again the next day.

Now look at this through the eyes of someone who doesn't drive truck and try to be honest about it. Do you see any part that would make you want to become a truck driver?

Throw a tight schedule or some weather into the mix and it would look even worse. Now don't get me wrong, I love trucking and always will.

But like many others, I've been through a lot worse than the worst of today's problems.

From our perspective as veterans of the road, the job has improved beyond recognition, but for someone looking at becoming a truck driver, they'd have to *really* want it to put up with what we put up with on a daily basis. □

– A fourth generation trucker and trucking journalist, Mark Lee uses his 25 years of transcontinental trucking in Europe, Asia, North Africa and now North America to provide an alternative view of life on the road. You can read his blog at [www.brandtruck.com/blog](http://www.brandtruck.com/blog).

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# The fight against fatigue begins with a trip plan

Discussions about a shipment often touch on little more than pick-up and delivery times, details about the freight, and ultimate destinations. The related scheduling efforts?

These are limited to calculating distances, assuming an average speed of 70-80 km/h, and asking about the status of logbooks.

Drivers are left to manage every hour of service along the way.

But fleet operations teams who search for a little more information can help drivers establish the detailed trip plans that create a better balance between customer demands, hours-of-service regulations, and the need to rest.

It is a process that begins with open conversations between dispatchers and drivers.

After all, a surprising number of challenges emerge because of simple misunderstandings.

A driver who is told to return to a fleet yard "as soon as possible" after delivering a load may assume he is being told to make the trip at all costs – even if that means bending hours-of-service rules or driving when fatigued. Clearly stated company policies can tell him otherwise.

Meanwhile, a dispatcher who assumes that an experienced driver will recognize an approaching limit on driving time may forget that the driver's last training session was based on an old version of the regulations. Specific information will leave nothing to chance.

Ongoing conversations can also help to uncover bad habits like the extended coffee breaks or delayed departures that conspire against the most reasonable delivery schedules.

Consider the length of every lunch break as an example. Hours-of-service rules clearly define minimum rest periods, but drivers are responsible for deciding how long a break might last.

Someone who chooses to spend three hours at a truck stop might technically be leaving enough time to reach a destination, but they may also be consuming the time that was built into the schedule to offset unexpected traffic jams, delays related to road construction, bad weather, or the need for an extended rest when feeling truly fatigued.

Suggestions about specific departure times can make a difference, too.

A trucker who tries to cross the Canada-US border when there is less than an hour of available driving time could certainly be squeezed into an hours-of-service violation if there is an unexpected delay.

And any hopes of staying at a particular truck stop will involve looking beyond the hours it will take to reach the destination, and consider the time of day when the related parking spaces tend to be filled. Otherwise, the off-duty

## Ask the Expert

KEVIN DUTCHAK



time may need to be spent on the shoulder of a road, far away from the environment that can ensure a more restful sleep.

Dispatchers who are informed about ongoing construction delays, collisions, or other time-crunching factors will even be able to share the details with other drivers in the fleet, and plan future routes accordingly.

Of course, shippers and receivers have a role in the trip planning process as well.

Operations personnel who commit to working with their customers can often address a number of challenges, ensuring that freight continues to arrive safely and on time.

Yes, this may be the era of just-in-time deliveries, but there is no secret that delays continue to be a fact of life. A few small changes can make a big difference in the impact these delays can have at any loading dock.

Drivers are often expected to sit close to a radio during any delay, waiting for instructions on when to head to the next available loading bay.

Receivers who become true partners in a trip planning process might be able to find a way to allow delayed drivers to climb into the sleeper for a defined period of time, creating an opportunity for some real rest.

And clear directions to secure parking areas could certainly offer a better alternative to situations in which drivers are told to move their equipment when the lines of a logbook dictate that it is time to park for a rest.

Trucking is a business, and freight must continue to move. Refined schedules or delivery procedures can also require changes to a corporate culture. But those who embrace the idea of trip planning will be able to help ensure that freight is protected, drivers are rested, and every highway becomes a little safer.

They are the plans that should help everyone to sleep a little bit easier. □

– *This month's expert is Kevin Dutchak, risk services specialist with Northbridge Insurance. Kevin has served the trucking industry for more than 25 years as a driver, in operations, safety, training and risk management services. Northbridge Insurance is a leading Canadian commercial insurer built on the strength of four companies with a long-standing history in the marketplace and has been serving the trucking industry for more than 60 years. You can visit them at [www.nbfc.com](http://www.nbfc.com).*

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TAX TALK

# Starting a business?

## Do some sole searching

Choosing a structure for your business is a very big deal, and your decision will have a significant effect on how you report your income, the type of returns you file each year, and how you support expenses.

In the last few columns I talked about the pros and cons of incorporating (also check out the *Tax Talk* videos I did with James Menzies at [Trucknews.com/videos](http://Trucknews.com/videos)). It's not hard to establish a corporation in Canada, and more owner/operators recognize the tax and legal advantages of doing so. That said, most start out as sole proprietors.

A sole proprietorship is owned by one person operating either as an individual ("Scott Taylor") or as a registered, unincorporated business ("Scott Taylor Cartage").

This type of structure is quick, cheap, easy to set up, and there's no mistaking who's in charge. As the owner, you're fully responsible for the profits, losses, expenses, and legal obligations of the company. You also assume any risks. That means claims may be made against you personally in order to settle debts and lawsuits associated with the business.

Because there's no legal distinction between you as an individual and your company, it's a good idea to sit down with an accountant to outline how to keep the two separate. This conver-



Tax Talk

SCOTT TAYLOR

sation should go beyond basic strategies – separate bank accounts, separate credit cards – and deal with areas where the lines will naturally blur.

### Paying taxes

One example: income tax reporting. As a sole proprietor, you report your business revenue as taxable income on your T1 personal income tax return. You submit a statement of business activities (form T2125) showing your gross business income less expenses (Canada Revenue Agency will accept other types of financial statements, but encourages you to use the T2125), and then add this net income figure to any other personal income or losses you have. Your federal and provincial taxes as well as your CPP are based on this amount.

Unlike an employee who has tax, CPP, and other payroll-related deductions shaved off a regular paycheque, you may have to pay your income tax and CPP contributions by installments. (The process is pretty straightforward; what trips up most new sole proprietors is budgeting for the payments).

Even GST/HST is easy for sole proprietors because registering is optional until you reach \$30,000 in sales. Typically, you should register immediately when you start the business.

### Taking on partners

When two or more people own and operate a business together, they form a partnership. Like a sole proprietorship, a partnership is easy to form. Most partnerships are governed by a written agreement setting out rules for the partners, but in fact a simple verbal agreement is all it takes. You don't have to file anything with the government until you hit that \$30,000 sales threshold and register for a GST/HST number. The business itself pays no income tax; instead, each individual partner is responsible for the tax on his or her share of the partnership's income or loss.

While they're simple in structure, what makes partnerships complicated are the personalities that emerge when there's money and property at stake. Partners are personally liable for the company's debts and obligations, and for the actions of the other partners. A legal or financial burden created by one partner will be borne by all. Likewise, if one partner walks away, the partnership is effectively dead. You will have to start over and will have to re-register for a new GST number and perhaps get new bank accounts and re-sign any contracts.

The number one concern with partnerships is the sharing of partnership income. If you and your partners agree to pay one another based on your individual contributions to the business during the year, how do you determine

what that amount should be? Who's to say whether each partner is pulling his weight? When times get tough, and there's not a lot of money in the pot, whose mortgage payment gets paid first? Even with written agreements, I can't tell you how many partnerships I've seen blow up over money, ripping families and friendships apart.

The most common partnership structure I see involves owner/operators and their spouse. They hope to pay less tax by splitting or sharing the business income on their individual tax returns.

It's not a bad idea. CRA is looking for a consistent approach: If your spouse is listed as a 10% partner one year, he or she should remain at that ownership percentage every year. You can't arbitrarily change the profit-splitting formula to suit your needs. In fact, CRA can revise a partner's share of the income (or loss) of the partnership to an amount that it deems reasonable.

In my opinion, the bigger issue is, do you really want to expose your spouse to the liabilities of the business? With your spouse as your partner, your entire family's personal assets may be on the line. If you're starting a business, sole proprietorships and partnerships can get you up and running fast, and they may be the best choice for you. Just beware of the pitfalls, like personal liability or conflicts with a partner. They may make incorporation worth the trouble. □

– Scott Taylor is v.p. of TFS Group, providing accounting, bookkeeping, tax return preparation, and other business services for O/Os. Learn more at [www.tfsgroup.com](http://www.tfsgroup.com).

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**OPINION**

# A cautionary tale down Mexico way

In 1992 the governments of Canada, the US and Mexico signed the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), creating one of the largest trading blocs in the world. Two years later, when the agreement came into force, the CEO of the first carrier to haul freight from Canada into Mexico, hailed that country as the “the next land of opportunity.”

Fast-forward a couple of decades and we find precious few drivers willing to take advantage of that opportunity. With more than 10,000 trucks hijacked last year on Mexico’s roadways, and an average of 47 people murdered there every day in 2011, crossing the Rio Grande is a scary prospect.

And yet, hundreds of Canadian and American truck drivers travel regularly in and out of the Mexico/US border zone to grab a share of surface transportation trade between the three countries that’s reached a record monthly value of \$86 billion.

Most of these drivers are seasoned veterans who are well aware of the dangers, and keep their wits about them to protect themselves and their loads. They’re especially on guard against become unwitting mules for drug dealers.

Less well known is the risk unsuspecting truckers face in being caught up in the crime of human smuggling.

They’re certainly aware of the enormous problem of illegal migrants crossing the Mexico/US border. Horrifying stories of “illegals” found concealed in vehicles make sensational headlines, often because of the appalling conditions in which they’re discovered.

What makes headlines far less often are stories where the driver of the vehicle is a victim as well; completely unaware that he or she has a stowaway on-board. After a Manitoba-based OBAC member became one such victim last month, I asked *Canada Calling* listeners if they’d ever heard of such a thing. My phone hasn’t stopped ringing.

Along the southern border, it’s not unusual for drivers to find they have cargo on-board they weren’t counting on.

Most often, the stowaways are discovered at a truck stop, hidden under tarps, inside trailers, and tucked into places you wouldn’t think a body or three could fit.

By the time they hop a north-bound truck, these desperate people have already crossed the porous Mexican border, usually with the help of a facilitator or “coyote,” and need safe transportation past some 22,000 US Border Patrol agents who, backed up by drug-sniffing dogs and a plethora of other enforcement folks, are authorized to check vehicles within 100 miles of the border.

Discovering stowaways is disturbing, but if they’re found by the drivers themselves before they reach a checkpoint, that’s usually the end of it.

Not so for our Manitoba driver. After loading near Edinburg, Texas, he stopped at the Flying J, went inside to grab his scale ticket, then headed out. At the checkpoint a few miles down the road he was greet-



**Voice of the O/O**

JOANNE RITCHIE

ed by a Border Patrol agent and a very excited dog. When the BP folks climbed up the side of his truck, his first thought was that someone had stashed drugs in his sleeper.

He watched in amazement as two terrified Mexican teenagers – a boy and a girl who had been tucked into the space on top of his sleeper, behind his roof faring – scrambled down. He was even more amazed at what happened next.

His truck and trailer were seized, he was stripped of his belongings, fingerprinted, and tossed in a cell where he was questioned for the next two hours.

The most frustrating thing, he told me, was that he was completely in the dark about what was happening to him. Could he make a call to his carrier? Absolutely not. Was he being arrested? No, he was being “processed.” Was he being charged? He’s “under investigation.”

Armed only with a piece of paper he signed acknowledging that his truck and trailer had been returned to him, it was a nerve-racking trip home for our driver. And it didn’t get any better at the Canadian border. After checking his paperwork and scanning his passport, the CBSA agent asked a curious question: “Did you have any problems on this trip?” He told his story, hoping the Canadian agent might shed some light on his ordeal. Not our department. Have a nice day.

Back in Canada, our driver called the US Customs and Border Protection folks at his usual border crossing in North Dakota, trying to determine his status in the computer system, and if he might experience any difficulty gaining entry or travelling in the US? Maybe, maybe not, they tell him. It’s an open investigation – a Homeland Security issue, and Homeland Security doesn’t answer any questions.

We’re also having trouble finding Canadian officials who even believe this is happening. While they’re a bit more sympathetic than their US counterparts, they’re certainly not very helpful.

The reaction of companies these drivers work for is also interesting. Some would really rather not know about it, and they *really* don’t want the Border Patrol to know about it. Other carriers take immediate steps to protect their drivers, by blocking any possible access points on the truck and continually reminding them to be aware, and to be vigilant, when they’re travelling in the Mexico/US border zone.

Awareness and vigilance – good advice is you find yourself down that way. Hopefully, our Manitoba driver will soon get the answers he needs to make sure he’s not an “illegal” himself. □

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

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# Challenger rejuvenates fleet, modernizes paint scheme

By James Menzies

**CAMBRIDGE, Ont.** – Challenger Motor Freight has embarked on an aggressive strategy to rejuvenate its fleet, and by year's end will have replaced more than 400 tractors – or nearly a third of its entire fleet.

By the end of the year, Challenger's oldest highway tractor will be of a 2010 vintage, president Dan Einwechter told *Truck News* during a recent interview at Challenger headquarters.

This investment comes after the company replaced its entire trailer fleet with 600 Stoughton and 400 Wabash trailers, all configured for long combination vehicle (LCV) applications. The new trailer purchases were part of a "right-sizing" strategy, which saw the 1,000 new units brought in to replace 1,400 aging trailers, Einwechter explained.

The new tractors – more than 200 of which have already arrived – will look a little different than those flying the Challenger colours in the past. The company has decided on a more modern paint scheme, which offers both practical and stylistic benefits.

"We've had these stripes for 30 years, as of next year," Einwechter



**REDESIGN WITH A PURPOSE:** Challenger's new look is more modern, and makes for easier repairs to the hood or cab extender. Photo by James Menzies

said of the company's traditional red, yellow and blue paint scheme. The colours will remain the same, but the logo has been updated to give it a more modern look. And because the decals now begin on the doors rather than the hood, there are cost savings as well.

Einwechter said less decaling material is required, resulting in a savings of about \$400 per truck. And since the decals no longer extend

to the hood, any repairs requiring a hood replacement will be more cost-effective.

"The moment it touches the hood, if you have to change the hood out you have to re-detail it," Einwechter noted. Towards the rear of the cab, only a small piece of decaling covers the cab extender, another piece of the truck that's susceptible to damage. The tail end of the red stripe can easily be replaced by an ama-

teur, at no significant cost.

Challenger's rebranding initiative is being implemented in stages, and as recently as a few weeks ago new trucks were still arriving with the traditional decaling. The company has now adopted the new logo on its internal communications and all new tractors. Most of the 1,000 new trailers Challenger has taken delivery of are rather bare, and that's because the company hadn't yet decided on a final design.

"Only 300 of them have any decaling on the side of the trailer, the rest we deliberately left clean because we weren't sure what we were going to do going forward," Einwechter said.

In a more subtle move, the company is also changing the location of its truck identification numbers from the side of the bunk and the bumper (where it was often rendered nearly invisible by road debris) to a cleaner spot above the visor and high on the back of the cab.

The new tractors include a mix of Volvo VNs, Freightliner Cascadias and Kenworth T700s. Nearly all have automated transmissions and every one is equipped with stability systems and X One wide-base tires. □

## Canadian fleets finish in top four of TCA's Weight Loss Showdown

**ALEXANDRIA, Va.** – Bison Transport and Brian Kurtz Trucking – the lone Canadian entrants into the Truckload Carriers Association's (TCA) Weight Loss Showdown – both finished in the top four.

Bison finished in second place and Kurtz finished in fourth, having shed 14.8% and 12.7% of their teams' collective body weight respectively.

The grand prize was won by Prime, Inc. while Hirschbach Motor Lines driver Carl Bailey won the top individual prize and was awarded \$2,500. Bailey shed 58 lbs, totaling 26% of his body weight.

Eleven carriers took part in the competition, each entering 12-member teams consisting of drivers and office staff. Participants followed the Lean for Life program and were coached through the process by the Lindora Clinic.

For its part, the Prime team was rewarded with StayFit fitness room equipment valued at \$13,000.

Overall, the participants shed 3,022 lbs or 10% of their collective body weight. Organizers say 90% of participants were able to complete the program.

"The fact that so many competitors made it to the end and achieved so much proves our industry is ready to stop talking and start acting when it comes to health and wellness," said Chris Burruss, president of TCA. "My thanks and congratulations go out to all of them."

The TCA has announced plans to host a second Weight Loss Showdown. □

## Contrans pursues acquisition opportunities, announces purchase of Peter Hodge Transport

**WOODSTOCK, Ont.** – Contrans says its acquisition-driven growth strategy is paying off and more opportunities exist to expand and diversify.

"The prospects for continued growth are good," said Contrans CEO and chairman, Stan Dunford when announcing the company's first quarter results.

"We have been receiving more interest from trucking entities interested in selling their businesses for a variety of reasons. In many cases, successful owner-managers have reached the age at which they wish to retire and their only practical succession plan is to sell to a third party. With few buyers in the market and armed with a strong balance sheet, Contrans is well positioned to continue to act upon suitable acquisition opportunities. Management is continuing to assess all opportunities in a disciplined manner."

Contrans acquired two companies

in the first quarter of 2012, which Dunford says "have added to our top line and have further added to the diversity of Contrans' customer mix."

Shortly after making the remarks, Contrans announced it has acquired bulk trucking firm Peter Hodge Transport.

The deal is expected to generate annual revenues of about \$20 million. Peter Hodge runs 92 highway tractors and 140 trailers and provides bulk hauling using open-top dump trailers and liquid tankers.

"The managers, staff and drivers at Peter Hodge Transport have spent over 40 years building a great company," said Dunford. "This is a unique opportunity for us to strengthen our dump and tank hauling presence in Ontario by adding such a well-respected, service-oriented business to our group... This is a complementary addition to our service offerings." □



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# Celadon wins new award celebrating health, fitness of drivers

**INDIANAPOLIS, Ind.** – The first-ever Healthy Trucking Fleet of the Year award, a collaboration between FusionHealth and Navistar, has been presented to Celadon Group at its headquarters in Indianapolis. The award honours trucking companies that excel in integrating health and wellness programs and practices into their operations for improving the health and well-being of its driver workforce.

“Drivers power the industry, and it can be difficult to maintain a healthy lifestyle during long stints on the road,” said Chelle Pfiffner,

vice-president of strategic employer solutions at FusionHealth. “The program is meant to raise awareness of employer initiatives to support health among drivers and to recognize outstanding fleets leading those efforts. FusionHealth and Navistar believe the trucking industry can set the example for moving America forward to better health.”

“Just as healthy drivers are paramount to a successful fleet, a healthy fleet is essential to a successful business,” added Phil Tindell, vice-president of North American regional sales for Navistar. “Navistar and International Truck are working toward a healthier population of drivers and part of that is recognizing those individuals and fleets that are dedicated to a healthier industry.”

Celadon Group, one of North America’s largest truckload carriers with more than 4,000 employ-

ees, boasts a turnover rate at almost 50% less than the industry standard, which the company attributes – at least in part – to its wellness programs. These include an on-site, full-service health clinic that offers primary physician care, prescription services, workers compensation rehabilitation, and physical therapy. Its wellness program also consists of health screenings, health seminars, diet and weight loss programs, nutritional and exercise programs, and incentives for healthy habits.

“We have worked diligently to initiate innovative health practices recognizing the importance of health and well-being of our employees,” said Paul Will, Celadon’s vice-chairman, president and COO. “We are excited to be awarded the Healthy Trucking Fleet Award and help elevate industry adoption of proactive healthcare and healthy life-

style choices.”

The Healthy Trucking Fleet of the Year award is scored on a set of criteria focusing on how the company’s program integrates into its operations, how it targets the continuum of health care issues, tailors to population needs, includes high participation of employees and evaluates the results on clear definitions of success.

For winning the award, Celadon will receive a FusionHealth Health and Productivity Assessment, a Worksite Health Station, Healthy Driver Training Sessions conducted by FusionHealth Driver Care Teams, and an award with the official designation as the Healthy Trucking Fleet of the Year.

Other finalists for the award included J.B. Hunt Transport Services, Prime, Inc., and US Xpress Enterprises. □

## Bison Transport, Jessiman Foundation donate \$1M to park

**WINNIPEG, Man.** – Bison Transport and the Jessiman Foundation have given a joint gift of \$1 million towards the Assiniboine Park Conservancy’s (APC) Imagine a Place Campaign.

The announcement was made last month by Rob Penner, executive vice-president and chief operating officer at Bison Transport (founded in 1969 by the Jessiman family), and Peter Jessiman, director of the Jessiman Foundation.

The \$1 million gift has been designated in support of various projects within the Assiniboine Park Conservancy’s overall \$200-million redevelopment plan and was made in honour of the ongoing contributions to the community made by Bison CEO Donald Streuber, according to company officials. Streuber is also vice-chair of the Assiniboine Park Conservancy.

“Don has played a crucial role in the bold transformation of Assiniboine Park that is currently underway,” said Margaret Redmond, APC president and CEO. “We are so pleased to have him as a part of our team and to see him recognized in this way.”

“We are thrilled to be able to honour Don and thank him for his many years of outstanding leadership, both at Bison Transport and in the many community-based organizations in which he has played a leading role,” said Jessiman. “Along with Don and his family, we share a real passion for Assiniboine Park, and believe wholeheartedly in the impressive redevelopment plan that’s being undertaken.”

Streuber and his family were officially recognized at the announcement with the naming of the Streuber Family Children’s Garden. Located inside the east entrance to the Nature Playground, the children’s garden is comprised of a floral area and topiaries that line the path into the playground.

“This is definitely a fitting recognition for a man who genuinely cares about people,” Penner said. “On behalf of everyone at Bison Transport, we are very excited to see the Streuber family and in particular, Don’s efforts and contributions, recognized in this manner.” □



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## FLEET NEWS

# Apps Transport replaces a third of its fleet with new Peterbilts

By James Menzies

**BRAMPTON, Ont.** – Apps Transport Group has taken delivery of the first of 17 new Peterbilt 386s the company has ordered.

It's a significant investment for Apps, as the order represents about one third of its entire fleet and the switch to a premium truck is somewhat uncommon for a city cartage fleet.

Rob McDonald, president of Apps, told *Truck News* the company was unhappy with how its EPA07 generation vehicles were performing and decided to start with a clean slate when transitioning to EPA2010 technology with selective catalytic reduction (SCR).

"We had a lot of trouble with the early emissions engines, that was the primary problem we were having," McDonald said.

"There were a lot of breakdowns, a lot of issues and a lot of stuff that seemingly couldn't be resolved. We did a lot of investigation and it seemed that as they moved from the (EPA07) to (EPA2010), there was a significant improvement in the entire process. The truth is, it was industry-wide. We had all the OEMs come in and we said: 'We are not and never want to be in the truck repair business, we are in the freight delivery business.' We want to provide as trouble-free a service to our customers as possible. I want

a truck where the driver gets here in the morning, does what's required, turns the key and does the job until the job is done."

Local dealer Peterbilt Ontario, "put by far the best package together," McDonald said.

The 386s, with 450-hp Paccar MX engines and automated transmissions are a heavier-spec' than others within the fleet and will be given to dedicated drivers handling heavier loads.

"For an LTL carrier, it seems like overkill. But we move a lot of freight to Western Canada on an intermodal basis and some of those loads can be 60,000 lbs, so we figured we'd go heavy," McDonald explained. "The assignment of trucks is based, for the most part, on the lanes guys run. If you run a lane where you're picking up loads of canned goods for shipment to Western Canada via rail, you're going to have a heavier truck. The assignment of the trucks was based on requirement and nothing else."

Apps plans to keep the trucks for seven years – at which time they'll have about 500,000-600,000 kilometres on them – and then determine whether to trade them in or continue running them, based on the condition they're in. It has spec'd features such as automatic shutdown to reduce idling and keep the hours on the engine as low as possible.



**A NEW LOOK:** Apps has replaced a third of its fleet with new Peterbilt 386s.

"Our target is around seven years, then it's decision time," McDonald said of the projected lifecycle.

McDonald said drivers are excited about the acquisition and those who've been assigned one of the new trucks "have big smiles on their faces."

However, he said the purchase was made for practical reasons, in an effort to drive down repair and maintenance costs, and not to project any particular image to drivers or customers.

"We do what we do because we've decided it's the right thing to do," McDonald said. "Whether or not that portrays an image is secondary. We bought the trucks because we

know they're very well built, they're trucks the drivers like and we have great commitments from Paccar and Peterbilt on the warranty and service. How that reflects in the marketplace...maybe it helps a little bit, but that wasn't our rationale for doing it."

Asked whether it could backfire and indicate to shippers that the company is doing *too* well, McDonald laughed and quipped: "If anybody says we're making too much money, I can shoot that down!"

A second round of premium truck orders is planned for later this year, if the economy holds up and the trucks perform as expected, McDonald said. □

# Trimac lands major limestone haulage deal, buys Liquid Cargo Lines

## LCL acquisition adds 23 trucks, 45 drivers

**FORT MCMURRAY, Alta.** – Trimac Transportation has inked a deal to transport a "significant volume" of limestone aggregate for Hammerstone Corp. in Fort McMurray, Alta.

"The Hammerstone contract enhances Trimac's market presence in the Fort McMurray region. As a result of this award and the existing products and services we perform in this key economic hub of Alberta, we anticipate additional growth opportunities and employment for our professional drivers," said Ed Malysa, president and COO of Trimac.

Trimac expects the new deal to generate about \$36 million in revenue over the length of the three-

year contract.

The agreement marks the beginning of a new strategic partnership with Hammerstone, Trimac said in a release.

It anticipates its limestone aggregate hauling operations will reach full capacity in the third quarter of 2012.

Hammerstone owns and operates a limestone quarry with more than 750 million tonnes of reserves in the heart of Alberta's oil sands.

Meanwhile, Trimac has announced its intention to purchase Ontario-based Liquid Cargo Lines (LCL).

Trimac plans to purchase all

issued and outstanding shares in the company and take over its 13-acre property which will then be sold to a party related to Trimac and leased back to Liquid Cargo Lines.

The closing is expected to occur in the third quarter of this year, Trimac announced.

Liquid Cargo Lines has been in business since 1953, providing specialized bulk transport through Ontario, Quebec and the US with a focus on chemicals and asphalt.

Its assets include its 13 acres of real estate, 50 trailers and 23 company-owned power units. Fifteen owner/operators also work for the company.

"Trimac is extremely pleased to have the employees of LCL join

the Trimac team," said Trimac's Malysa.

"Liquid Cargo Lines is a very strategic acquisition on several fronts. LCL's team of approximately 45 professional drivers will allow Trimac to grow its chemical and asphalt bunker product offering in central and eastern Canada. In addition, we gain 10 professional mechanics to grow our National Tank Services (NTS) segment.

"The 13-acre property includes mechanical shop facilities, commercial tank washing (currently leased and operated by NTS), administrative offices and parking. The property is strategically located and will facilitate Trimac's future growth requirements in this key geographic market." □



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HEALTH

# Introducing the 'dine and DASH' diet

Most of us want to look our best for the summer. It would be great to feel our best, too. Let's look at a diet that can help accomplish both.

The DASH diet (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) was not developed as a weight-loss eating plan, but as a plan to lower blood pressure.

However, it is now recognized as a safe, nutritional diet plan that helps people with a variety of chronic diseases, including obesity.

The US News rates the DASH diet very highly, in terms of short-term weight loss, long-term weight loss, easiness, nutrition, safety, the ability to prevent or manage diabetes, and the ability to prevent or manage heart disease.

The DASH diet is recommended by: the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute; the American Heart Association; the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans; US guidelines for treatment of high blood pressure; the 2011 AHA Treatment Guidelines for Women and the Mayo Clinic.

It has been proven to lower blood pressure in just 14 days, even without lowering a person's sodium intake. This was especially noticeable in people with only moderately high blood pressure, including people with pre-hypertension.

Those with more severe hypertension, who may not be able to completely eliminate medication, find the DASH diet helps improve their response to medication, while helping lower their blood pressure.

Certainly, the DASH diet gives the greatest benefit when combined with 30 minutes of exercise each day. To follow the DASH diet, you don't need to buy any prepackaged foods; all foods are inexpensive and readily available in any grocery store.

The daily diet guidelines are flexible; food choices and servings can be adjusted so that your overall weekly average falls within the recommended limits.

The DASH diet is not a crash diet. It is simply a way of eating that emphasizes low-salt and high-fiber foods.

A 2,000 calorie per day diet includes: seven to eight servings of grains and grain products; four to five servings of fruit; four to five servings of vegetables; two to three servings of low-fat or non-fat dairy foods; two or less servings of lean meats, fish and poultry; and four to five weekly servings of nuts, seeds, and legumes; but, fats and sweets are very limited.

As well, only 2,300 mg of salt is allowed, and even less (1,500 mg) for people already diagnosed with high blood pressure.

When eating on the road, these five steps will help you stay within the DASH diet guidelines:

**Pay attention to what enters your mouth:** Drinks, appetizers, soups and salads may be less healthy than you think. Choose water, club soda, diet soda, fruit juice, tea and coffee. Choose appetizers that highlight healthy vegetables, fruits or fish. For salads, order fruit salad, tossed greens or spinach salad, with



## Preventive Maintenance

KAREN BOWEN

no added cheese, eggs or meats, and with dressing on the side.

If you must have bread, ask for one piece of whole grain bread, rolls breadsticks (without butter). If you must have dessert, choose fresh fruit, sorbet, sherbet, fruit ice, meringues or plain cake with fruit puree.

**Watch your portion size:** Over the past few years, restaurant serving sizes have grown bigger and bigger. To avoid growing bigger yourself, ask for the lunch portion (even at supper time). Choose an appetizer instead of an entrée. Di-

vide your large meal in half and put it into a take-out container before you start eating.

**Monitor your salt:** When ordering, ask that your food be prepared without added salt, or salt-containing foods like MSG. Avoid foods that may be high in salt, like soya sauce, broth or meat that is pickled, cured or smoked. Leave the salt shaker on the table. Limit salty condiments like ketchup, mustard, pickles and sauces.

**Avoid unhealthy fats:** Choose foods that are low in saturated fats and cholesterol. Ask that your food be prepared with olive oil instead of butter or other fats. Use oil and vinegar dressing or ask for your salad dressing on the side and then pour on a limited amount. Keep your meat portion to the size of a deck of cards and be sure to trim

off the fat. Choose meats that are steamed, grilled, broiled, baked, roasted, poached or stir-fried. Order steamed vegetables and fruit for dessert. Choose fish that's been steamed or broiled and season with fresh herbs and lemon.

**Monitor your fast food intake:** Become familiar with restaurants' nutritional information, either online, or on location. Many menu items have icons identifying particularly healthy selections. Choose one of these, such as a single hamburger, which is usually lower in salt than a chicken or fish sandwich. Don't super-size your order. Watch the salad dressings. Choose grilled, broiled or steamed items instead of battered or fried.

You won't pay with your health if you follow the DASH diet. □

- Karen Bowen is a professional health and nutrition consultant, and she can be reached at karen\_bowen@yahoo.com.




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## HEALTH

# You don't have to be hauling hay to suffer from hay fever

As summer approaches, we look forward to spending days at the beach and warm nights around campfires, but for some people summer signals the beginning of hay fever.

Hay fever, also known as allergic rhinitis, is caused by the body's allergic reaction to allergens such as pollen, grass, dust mites, or pet dander. Hay fever is common in North America as it affects approximately 20% of the population. For most people, the symptoms of hay fever are worse during the spring, summer or fall. However, others experience symptoms year-round.

Although hay fever is not a life-threatening condition, symptoms can significantly affect a person's performance at work or school, as well as leisure activities. The good news is hay fever is fairly easy to treat.

## Back behind the wheel

DR. CHRIS SINGH



The main cause of hay fever is the immune system's overreaction to harmless airborne substances. When the immune system comes in contact with these substances it releases chemicals, such as histamine, into the bloodstream.

It is these chemicals that are responsible for the symptoms of hay fever. Common seasonal triggers include tree, grass and weed pollen, as well as spores from fungi and molds. Year-round triggers of hay fever include dust mites, dander from pets, as well as spores from indoor fungi and molds. You are more likely to develop hay fe-

ver if you have other allergies or asthma or if you were exposed to cigarette smoke the first year of life. Being male also increases your risk.

The symptoms of hay fever usually develop during childhood or early adulthood, although it can begin at any age. In most cases, the symptoms of hay fever tend to diminish slowly over the years.

Common symptoms include runny nose, nasal congestion, watery eyes, as well as sneezing and coughing. Some people also report experiencing an itchy nose, roof of the mouth or throat. Sinus pressure and facial pain may also occur during severe cases of hay fever.

Hay fever is usually more of an irritating condition as opposed to a significant medical problem. However, the symptoms of hay fever can

significantly reduce the quality of a person's life. In severe cases, hay fever can lead to absences from work. In addition, the symptoms of hay fever can disrupt a person's sleep patterns. In chronic, year-round cases of hay fever, the chances of developing sinus and ear infections increase dramatically.

Hay fever is usually diagnosed by your doctor after taking a detailed medical history and conducting a physical examination. Your doctor may also recommend undergoing special testing to identify specifically what you are allergic to.

A common test is called the Skin Prick Test. This test entails pricking the skin with small amounts of possible allergens and monitoring your body's response. A positive reaction would cause a small raised bump on the skin. This type of testing is usually performed by an allergy specialist. Blood testing can also be performed to measure your body's immune response.

The good news is hay fever is very treatable. The first form of treatment is to avoid the substances that cause your reaction. However, this is not always the most practical solution.

In mild cases, over-the-counter medications may suffice. Antihistamines are the most commonly prescribed medication for hay fever. These medications work by blocking histamine, which is responsible for many of the symptoms associated with hay fever.

It is important to note that some of these medications may cause you to become drowsy. Thus it is important to discuss it with your physician before taking any of these medications. Nasal corticosteroids are used to reduce nasal inflammation and runny nose. These are administered in the form of nose sprays.

For many people, nasal corticosteroids are a safe long-term treatment option. Another group of medications are called decongestants. This class of medication is designed to reduce congestion in the sinuses.

There are several side-effects associated with decongestants, which include increased blood pressure, insomnia, irritability and headache. As such, they are designed for short-term use only. By discussing your particular case with your doctor, he/she will be able to best advise you as to which medication is best for you.

Clearly, it is not possible to completely avoid all potential allergens. However, knowing what particular allergens affect you most will help limit your exposure to them.

Presently, there is no way to avoid developing hay fever. However, studies have shown that reducing a child's exposure to allergy causing substances such as mold and dust mites, may delay or reduce the chances of developing hay fever.

Until next month, drive safely. □

— Dr. Christopher H. Singh runs Trans Canada Chiropractic at the 230 Truck Stop in Woodstock, Ont. He can be reached at 519-421-2024.

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OPINION

# Getting an A/Z licence has become far too easy

In last month's column, I suggested that truck driving schools should be forced to follow a legislated, standardized curriculum in an effort to cultivate a safer crop of new drivers. However, there is still an unofficial feeder system of drivers that don't use driving schools.

I, and many others, learned the old-fashioned way, starting with relatively small construction companies, graduating from tandem dumps to tri-axle dumps to tandem trailers and finally to multi-axle trailers. This was done strictly after gaining complete proficiency and with the right old-school mentors, the approach still works.

So how do we properly assure that these drivers – as well as driver school graduates and new immigrants – are properly moved upward through the system? The answer is graduated licensing, combined with making it a lot more difficult to attain a commercial licence in the first place. Graduated licensing has been a reality for young car drivers for over a decade, and I believe it is a necessity for our industry. Besides creating a process where drivers and their employers are able to more closely monitor progress, it creates a level playing field, so employers of all sizes have the ability to hire new drivers.

Start with the actual driving test. Although a major loophole was closed in the '90s (no more pick-up trucks with horse trailers), we still need to increase the size of the test vehicle. A road test should be conducted with a tandem tractor, 228-inch minimum wheelbase, with either a bunk or the rear window covered. A loaded trailer should be required, so that the test vehicle grosses at least 65,000 lbs.

Automatic or automated transmissions should not be eligible. The road test should involve stopping at the bottom of a hill, then climbing to speed again, demonstrating the ability to utilize every gear in the transmission. Downshifting through several gears at some point of the test should be mandatory.

When you have completed your driving test, step inside. A bench-mounted, cutaway trailer suspension should be available for the applicant to not only name all the brake components, but explain their operation. This would show an understanding of the air brake system that the current multiple guess written test doesn't measure.

Once you have passed your driving test and brake demonstration, and paid your fees – I strongly recommend \$200 minimum for an initial test to eliminate those who are really not serious – you would be given a Level 1A licence, good for single trailers with a maximum gross of 45,000 kgs.

A heavier GVW would only be allowed on provincial highways, not Trans-Canada or 400-series highways, with a mentor present (not in the bunk, either). No tanks or HazMat would be permitted under this licence. After you complete 50,000 safe driving miles, in a minimum of eight months, you could then apply for a full A licence, which would allow you to drive the maximum GVW of 63,500 kgs, and trains.

Sorry, but my graduated licence plan doesn't stop there. We need to also institute a special licence endorsement to pull tankers, as is already a reality south of the border. I've driven nearly every configuration and type of freight



available, and I still wouldn't feel comfortable pulling a tank, so let's stop making it so easy. At minimum, a detailed written test should be required.

Dangerous goods, or HazMat certification is currently conducted by the employer, something I feel is a disaster in the making. Am I the only one who has been handed a test and handbook, while the employer whispers that the answers are glued to the back page? Didn't think so. What about the legal grey area created when agency drivers are tested by the agency, not the carrier? If you want to haul hazardous, get your chequebook out again at the test facility and write a government-

sanctioned test...and repeat the process every three years.

This may sound a little too costly for some, to which I say: suck it up. I am tired of sharing the highways with underqualified, careless and dangerous drivers. In an industry otherwise so heavily regulated, why should anyone be able to attain a licence in the morning with a single-axle tractor and empty trailer, then hit the highway that afternoon with a 600-hp unit grossing 60,000 kgs? Every year I am besieged with applicants either recently graduated from a driver school, or several years into a career with a major carrier. Most of them make me cringe at their complete lack of caution and ability.

Maybe I'm alone in saying that I think that a driver shortage is a preferable problem to having 20% of our driver pool operating only one rabbit's foot away from causing a catastrophe.

One more thing needs to change

about our licensing system. I have held an A licence since 1989 and have yet to be retested on a road test. Under current law, I won't be. My reflexes and reaction time are not what they were over 20 years ago, and I doubt that will improve with age. I don't believe it is unreasonable to expect any professional driver to re-establish his/her expertise every 10-12 years.

As involved as this pipe dream sounds, we need to make a decision. Is this industry content to jam highways with upside-down trucks, albeit with lower paid help and an abundance of available labour, or are we ready to raise the bar so only the best become drivers, not just the best available? □

– Bill Cameron and his wife Nancy currently own and operate Parks Transportation, a four-truck flatdeck trucking company. The company was founded in 1999 with a 20-year-old truck, rented flatbed trailer and a big dream. Bill can be reached at [williamcameron.bc@gmail.com](mailto:williamcameron.bc@gmail.com).

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**SUSTAINABILITY**

# Worth the wait?

## New study investigates whether fuel-saving technologies are worth the up-front cost

By Lou Smyrlis

Is the cost saving potential of fuel-efficient technologies worth the up-front investment? Answering that critical question, based on real-world trials, is at the heart of a new study just released by Natural Resources Canada, entitled *Results from the Road*.

Commercial highway freight has the fastest growing energy demand of any economic sector in Canada. It's responsible for nearly 10% of the country's greenhouse gas emissions. Rising fuel costs are also placing downward pressure on profit margins as an increasing number of shippers push back on the magnitude of fuel surcharges and demand to know what carriers are doing to reduce their fuel consumption. So carriers need to improve on the fuel performance of their vehicles not only for the sake of the environment but also for their bottom lines. The challenge, as the *Results from the Road* study points out in its opening paragraph, is that achieving cost-saving initiatives requires up-front investment in new technology. And given that their goal is to save money, transport companies need reassurance that any investment they make is likely to deliver a positive return.

Towards that goal, Natural Resources Canada, back in September 2009, launched the SmartWay Certified Technology Fund (SCTF) to prove out the cost-saving potential of fuel-efficient technologies by helping freight companies purchase, install and test fuel-efficient tires and aerodynamic skirts in a variety of real-world driving conditions. The goal was to learn about the performance of energy-efficient devices and equipment in a variety of real-world operating conditions on as many vehicles as possible. Twelve companies qualified for up to \$100,000 in funding and entered into contribution agreements which required them to collect and report fuel-usage data when using their new fuel-efficient technologies.

After a full year of pre-trial baseline fuel usage gathering followed by six months of trials, including both summer and winter driving conditions, Natural Resources is releasing the findings through the *Results from the Road* report. It says the results are clear: The more often companies use these fuel-efficient technologies, the more fuel they save. Key findings from the research project include: a 5% average reduction in fuel consumption; and an eight-month/110,000-km pay-back period.

After installation, fuel usage data was collected over two periods to satisfy the need to include both summer and winter driving conditions.

Data was collected from August to October 2010 and again from December 2010 to February 2011. (To supplement the fuel-usage data, participants were also required to administer surveys among drivers, maintenance staff and fleet managers directly involved

in the project).

For the three-month summer/fall period from August to October 2010, usable data were collected from 371 tractors across the 12 qualifying companies. In the three-month winter period from December 2010 to February 2011, usable data were collected from 392 tractors.

According to the pre-trial baseline data, over the course of six months, these tractors drove more than 37

**Continued on page 47**

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**SUSTAINABILITY**

# Putting fuel-saving claims to the test

Continued from page 45

million kilometres while using nearly 15 million litres of fuel. That works out to an average fuel consumption of 39.7 L/100 km (5.92 mpg). During the six trial months in which the tractors were equipped with aerodynamic skirts and low rolling resistance tires, the same amount of fuel was used, but the total distance driven climbed to nearly 39 million kilometres, making the average fuel consumption 38.9 L/100 km (6.05 mpg).

“While this amounts to a 2% reduction in average fuel consumption during the trial period, it is not perfectly reflective of the fuel-saving potential of the SmartWay-certified technologies,” the report explains. “On average, the tractors pulled SCTF-equipped trailers only 33% of the time – meaning that for two-thirds of their trips, they were not experiencing the benefits that come from using the tires and skirts.”

The report stresses that the more often a tractor pulls a trailer equipped with fuel-saving technologies, the more closely the full potential of the equipment is achieved. For a more precise analysis of the data, the tractors were grouped into five “quintiles” according to how much time they spent pulling trailers equipped with fuel-saving technology. The study then focused on the 80-100% quintile – that is, the group of tractors that pulled SCTF-equipped trailers at all times. And that’s when the true potential of the fuel-efficient technologies shone through.

It was found that for both the summer/fall and winter trial periods, the high-usage group experienced a 5% reduction in average fuel consumption rates compared to the pre-trial baseline period. (The low-usage groups saw only a 2% reduction in fuel consumption – clear proof that greater fuel savings can be experienced by using SmartWay-certified technolo-

gies more often).

“Considering that the average commercial transport truck gets approximately 40 L/100 km (5.88 mpg), based

**COMBINED SUMMER/WINTER TRIAL RESULTS**

Quintile (SCTF trailer use)	Number of Trucks	Average Fuel Consumption
0-20%	319	-1.5%
20-40%	280	-2.9%
40-60%	24	-0.3%
60-80%	37	-2.8%
80-100%	103	-5.1%
All trucks (0-100%)	763	-2.6%

on SCTF pre-trial baseline data, this 5% reduction in fuel consumption could save transportation companies two litres of fuel for every 100 kilometres travelled,” the report states.

The data were also analyzed to determine how many tractors recorded a noticeable improvement in their

**Continued on page 48**

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**SUSTAINABILITY**

**What really works?**

**Continued from page 47**  
fuel efficiency. Of those in the 80-100% usage quintile, 71% reduced their fuel consumption. Of those that pulled SCTF-equipped trailers less than 80% of the time, only 51% noted fuel savings.

The report calculates payback on the initial investment to within eight months or 110,000 kilometres.

“As the price of fuel increases, this payback period will become even shorter,” it notes.

This is how the payback was worked out: To be SmartWay-certified, a trailer must include both an aerodynamic skirt and a set of fuel-efficient tires.

It costs approximately \$2,300 to purchase and install the skirts and \$10,800 to purchase 18 tires – for a total cost of \$13,100. However, the report points out that tires need to be regarded as a “sunk cost” – something transportation companies must buy, regardless of type – and so the net equipment costs need only to consider the difference in cost between fuel-efficient and regular tires. Of the initial calculation, \$10,260 (18 regular tires at \$570 per tire) is a sunk cost, bringing the actual price of SmartWay upgrades to just \$2,840.

The average truck has a fuel economy of approximately 39 L/100 km (6.03 mpg) and drives about 180,000 kilometres per year. Assuming a diesel fuel cost of \$1.30 per litre, the average annual fuel cost is \$91,260.

The study established that using SmartWay-certified technologies can cut fuel usage by 5%, bringing fuel consumption down to 37 L/100 km (6.34 mpg). At that rate, the annual fuel cost when using SmartWay-certified technology is \$86,580 – amounting to an expected annual fuel savings of \$4,680. So the initial investment of \$2,840 will be repaid in 0.6 years (just over seven months).

It should be noted that if all tires were installed immediately (in other words, all at once, regardless of the condition of the existing tires), the total equipment costs would increase by \$540 to \$3,380. This increases the payback period to about eight-and-one-half months, “still making tire replacement an affordable and sensible choice,” according to the report.

To learn more about SmartWay-verified technologies – or how to adopt these energy-efficient technologies in your company’s fleet – contact Natural Resources Canada’s FleetSmart program online at [www.fleetsmart.nrcan.gc.ca](http://www.fleetsmart.nrcan.gc.ca) or by telephone at 613-960-7427. □

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# Examine the examiners

Dear Editor:

I thought I'd write regarding your article on senior drivers retesting (*Will they come back?*, *June Truck News*).

In the article, you gave some examples of various drivers failing for minor infringements. I would like to give you the benefit of my experiences. I have been teaching truck, bus and car driving in different provinces in Canada. For truck tests, most provinces require a two-hour test, in Ontario this is only one hour. In all provinces where I have taught, the examiners all hold a valid licence for the class of vehicle they are testing for.

In most provinces an instructor has to obtain a licence and prove they have five or six years of experience, but not in Ontario. So it is quite possible for a driver with 20 or more years of experience to be tested by an examiner with 20 hours of experience.

Lastly, I have a letter from the Transport Minister stating that Ontario roads are among the safest in the world. From what I see, more people have died on Canadian roads in the last 50 years than were killed in World War 2. □

David Ralfe  
Via e-mail

## Have your say:

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## FEATURE

# They liked it so much... they bought the company!

In a testament to the entrepreneurial spirit of the trucking industry, fleet executives are often prepared to invest in the technologies that most impress them.

Entrepreneurs have always been a major force in Canadian trucking. I recently went looking for a handful of trucking executives who had invested in technology because they believed in the product. The champion of this kind of leadership has to be Leland James, the owner of Consolidated Freightways of Portland, Ore. way back in 1937. He grew tired of having his innovative suggestions ignored by truck manufacturers and decided to design and build his own truck.

James had his mechanics adapt his

## On-Road Editor

HARRY RUDOLFS



fleet of American-made Fageols into a new breed of vehicle, using sheet metal to fashion the cabs into the distinctive cabover engine design. These first in-house trucks were called "Freightliners," and the name stuck.

James also had his mechanics experimenting with aluminum and

magnesium parts: he wanted a lighter-weight, more durable design with more power for the mountains. The first aluminum-covered COE was built in 1940 and weighed 2,000 lbs less than its closest competitor.

A later partnership with White Motors greatly expanded the market and White Freightliner became a household name. Consolidated Freightways soldiered on for three quarters of a century but finally closed up shop in 2002. But the truck brand never faltered and has been safely in the hands of Daimler Corp. for decades.

Innovation is a big part of trucking. A smart operator knows a good idea when he or she sees one. Twenty years ago, lightning struck Ross Mackie and one of his employees,

Steve Shermeto, while they were hauling Formula 1 racing cars from Montreal to Mexico City for the Mexican Grand Prix.

Mackie is a stickler for cleanliness and the sand and dirt that got into the cabs during the trip was a constant annoyance. Shermeto had the brainwave of mounting an upside down brush somewhere on the truck steps or tanks. Mackie immediately liked the idea and challenged

**'When you believe in a product and can prove it works, it pretty well sells itself,'**

Dave Tyrchniewicz

Shermeto and another trucker friend Steve Floyd, who drove for Maritime-Ontario, to come up with some drawings. From there he encouraged Shermeto to make up a prototype and guided him in starting the new enterprise.

During one of their group discussions the partners hit on the name "Boot Brush" and the rest is history. Ross provided some of the start-up capital and the partnership between Mackie, Shermeto and Shermeto's mother Marg, remains in place to this day.

Today Boot Brushes can be seen on the steps of trucks all over North America. "We've sold over 500,00 units so far," says Mackie. "We just got an order from a Paccar dealership in Chile."

The partners continue to distribute Boot Brushes to truck stops and truck dealerships across the continent. "We sell them to Volvo and Navistar dealers, too, but Paccar remains our biggest customer," says Mackie.

Scott Smith, president of JD Smith and Sons of Vaughan, Ont., has had a long-time interest in fuel-saving technologies and sustainability, encouraging progressive shifting and best practices years ahead of the industry curve. In 2007 JD Smith Transport received the Supply Chain and Logistics Association's Green Supply Chain Award for setting and exceeding standards for environmental friendliness.

At the same time shippers and manufacturers were getting keenly interested in "greening" the supply chain. Perhaps as a result of the award, Smith was invited to sit on panels and discussion groups.

"That's how we met the EnerMotion people," says Smith. "They approached us as a potential partner that might be interested in helping to develop their product. It seemed like a perfect fit."

The product Smith refers to is a hybrid auxiliary power unit (APU) that runs directly off the waste heat generated by the engine. Up to 30% of the energy produced by a truck's engine is lost through heat that escapes from the exhaust pipe. EnerMotion's shop in Bolton, Ont. has developed a prototype that recaptures that energy and can run a truck's heating, cooling and bunk appliances and lighting for up to 10 hours without consuming any fuel.

Smith liked what he saw and jumped in, investing in the company itself, and providing a truck for field-testing purposes. "I see this as a potential future benefit and another way to eliminate idling, among other things. This is a credible product with

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credible people behind it," he says. This is not the only project Smith has gotten behind. He's also closely involved in the testing and preliminary data capture of a new pallet that's neither wood or plastic, that can be re-used dozens of times, and comes equipped with a Radio Frequency Identifier (RFI) chip so products can be tracked and scanned on the pallet as they move through the shipping stream. And that's not all, Scott is also instrumental in the development of a new kind of portable gas can with some "revolutionary" features.

Trailer aero-skirts have been in fashion for years among the leading fleets in Canada. But finding the right design and model is often a case of trial and error. Diligent fleet managers thoroughly research a component before making a commitment. "We were looking to equip our fleet with trailer skirts and we did an evaluation of several types," says Steve Ondejko president of Onfreight Logistics in Tecumseh, Ont. "For our kind of work, where we service a lot of drop down docks, the Aerofficient system was the most durable and cost-effective."

Aerofficient features a hinged system on the skirts which allows them to fold inward or outward as they encounter a foreign object or steep slope. They also supply a sliding panel kit which can be trimmed for the best efficiency when the bogies are moved. Ondejko was so impressed with the product that he sat down with the president of Aerofficient for three hours. At the end of the meeting Ondejko had been offered and accepted a partnership with three other parties for the Canadian distribution rights.

Thus, Aerofficient Canada was born. The skirts are manufactured in nearby Livonia, Mich., just across the river from Onfreight in Windsor, Ont. One advantage to the Aerofficient system is that the product can be installed, even on a loaded trailer, in a fraction of the time from the competitors' brands, he claims. Ondejko is currently setting up a dealer network across Canada and training a team to install the wings on-location. He currently has Aerofficient trailer skirts installed on 40 of his trailers.

Many entrepreneurial side projects were borne out of frustration with existing products. Dave Tyrchniewicz, owner of Turk Enterprises with about 50 trucks and trailers in Winnipeg, Man., was not happy with the brand of underskirts he'd



**CUSTOMER AND DEALER:** Steve Ondejko found a trailer fairing that he liked, and inked a deal to become its Canadian distributor.

installed on his trailers.

"They weren't getting the mileage savings that were promised," he says. "And we found that there were a lot of maintenance issues with them. It seemed like they had to be repaired or straightened every month. I'm fussy about how my trucks look; I won't let them run down the road with a warped or bent underskirt."

To the rescue came the Smart-

Truck's Aerodynamic Undertray system – a radically different aero configuraton that uses an undercarriage pan to reduce drag, leaving the sides of the trailer completely open. Tyrchniewicz tried the product and liked the results.

"Trailer skirts might work in perfect conditions in a wind tunnel, but out on the prairies we get a lot of cross-winds. The SmartTruck undertray works in all conditions. An-

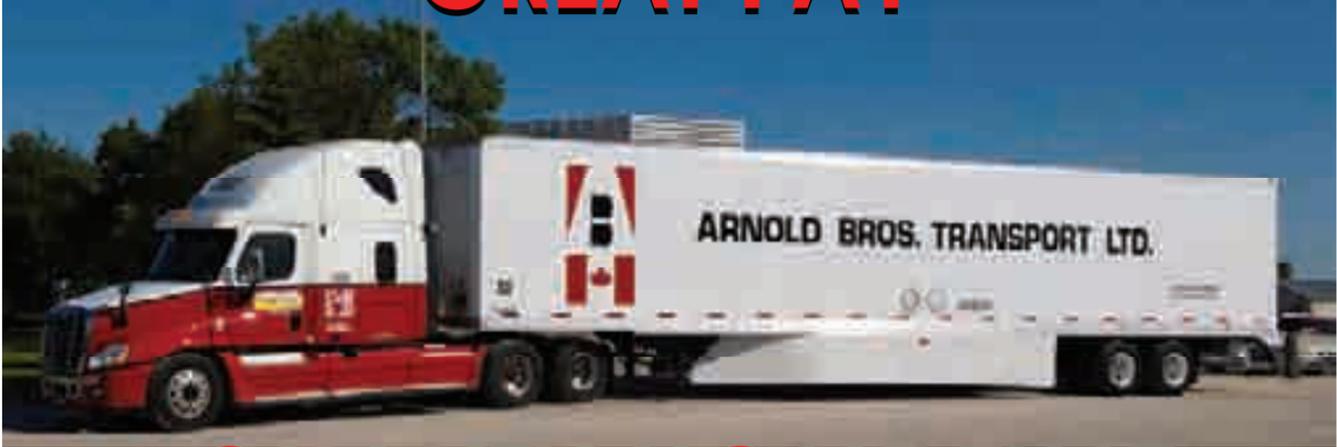
other advantage is that it makes it easier for the driver to do his circle check, and we don't get the build-up of salt and dirt under the trailer as happens with skirts."

When Tyrchniewicz realized that SmartTruck didn't have a plan for Canada, he went into negotiations with the company and came away with the Canadian distribution rights. He also started a new company, Northern Aerodynamic Solutions, to market the product to Canada companies, which operates separately from his trucking concern.

The next step was to set up a dealer network across the country. He currently has 15 dealerships from coast-to-coast who can sell and service the products. "We're still a little light in the Maritimes but we're working on it."

Tyrchniewicz's biggest sale so far was selling 250 units to Ocean Trailers in western Canada. "When you believe in a product and can prove it works, it pretty well sells itself," he says. □

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**MORE THAN A TEST FLEET:** Scott Smith of JD Smith and Sons, has bought into this Hyper APU powered by waste heat recovery.

# Western Star shows off new 4700, introduces tractor version

## Full Western Star product line showcased in the Nevada desert

By James Menzies

LAS VEGAS, Nev. – “The best way to sell a Western Star, quite candidly, is to give people the opportunity to drive them,” Michael Jackson, general manager of Western Star Trucks told a gathering of trucking industry journalists in early May.

And with that in mind, the company set up shop in the Nevada desert for a two-week customer and dealer demonstration event, which put on display the full breadth of the Western Star product line.

The newest addition to the family is, of course, the 4700, which was introduced last spring but didn't go into production until December. The first of those trucks are making their

way to dealers and customers and Jackson said the reaction has been positive.

“We're in a ramp-up at the plant,” Jackson said, noting the plant has now added a second shift. “We're taking orders and the trucks are hitting dealers' lots. They're being bodied up and I've actually seen a couple on the road, doing what they're supposed to be doing.”

The 4700 is a ‘Baby 8,’ meaning it's designed for lighter Class 8 applications, or for work that's too rugged for Classes 6-7 vocational trucks. The truck is on back order through July, Jackson said, and the company has just announced the availability of a tractor version of the new model.



**MORE VERSATILE:** Western Star is now offering a tractor version of its new 4700.

Initially launched to serve six core vocational segments (dump; mixer; crane; roll-off; snow plow; and sewer vac), Jackson said dealers are finding the truck to be more versatile than first thought. They're now expand-

ing the applications the truck can be put into and the tractor version takes it into a whole new realm.

“This will further expand our dealers' capabilities to attract people that want to pull trailers with fifth wheels,” Jackson said.

The 4700 tractor will be targeted towards bulk haul, local delivery and construction applications. It will be available in both set-forward and set-back axle configurations with a day cab. The tractor is available with the Cummins ISC and ISL engines or the more powerful Detroit DD13, with power ratings from 260-470 hp. Despite its ‘Baby 8’ moniker, the 4700 boasts a full-sized, expansive cab, which is also highly functional. This is a pure work truck, and was designed with serviceability in mind. To access the wiring system, for example, all you have to do is remove a few screws and then the entire dash panel folds forward to provide unfettered access to all the wires.

A twin-steer 4800 tractor was one of many trucks Western Star made available to drive on a makeshift construction site set up at Las Vegas Motor Speedway. It was nimble and maneuverable, turning on the proverbial dime and climbing over a steep incline with ease. The 4800 is a new designation from Western Star; previously it was known as the 4900 with 109-inch BBC.

As for the 4700, its exterior appearance is pure Western Star, with a distinctive grille and bold stance. While it's unmistakably a Star, the 4700 has its own unique DNA and is easy to identify from other models within the family. It does not, by any stretch, appear to be a pared down version of an existing Western Star model.

In addition to the twin-steer 4800, I drove a 4700 oilfield service truck and another 4700 mounted with a crane. I took the service truck on a course designed to showcase its maneuverability and ease of backing. The truck's sloped hood provided excellent forward visibility and the truck's steering was ultra-responsive. Coupled with an Allison transmission, the service truck was both easy and comfortable to drive.

I took the crane-mounted 4700 out on the road where it was so nimble and responsive that in some respects it drove like an oversized pick-up truck. It did not have to be manhandled through the corners like you'd expect from a Class 8 vocational truck.

With the launch of the 4700, Western Star is feeling pretty good about

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itself. Jackson admitted launching a new model in 2011, amid so much economic uncertainty – particularly in the construction segment – was “daunting.”

“There were a lot of naysayers,” he admitted. However, the gamble appears to be paying off, with orders for the new model being incremental to Western Star’s business.

“They haven’t taken anything away” from sales of existing models, Jackson said.

Western Star continues to enjoy a loyal following here in Canada, partly because of its Canadian heritage and also because so many Canadian customers put their trucks to work in the harshest of conditions, where only a premium, custom-built truck can survive. Here in Canada, Western Star’s market share sits at a healthy 7% while it’s only 1-1.5% in the US. The company has an ambitious plan to improve its North American market share, but it’s challenging for a brand that sells mostly to customers with less than three trucks.

“Every time we make some progress, it seems the large fleets make an order and that dilutes our progress because that’s not where we play,” Jackson explained.

Indeed, Western Star sells 64% of its trucks to customers with less than three units, while its sister company Freightliner sells the majority of its trucks to customers operating more than 100 units.

Still, Jackson said there’s plenty of pent-up demand out there in the construction and municipal markets – vocations where Western Star is traditionally very strong. He noted there are 435,000 trucks within the construction and municipal segments that are nearing 15 years of age and will soon need replacing.

This presents a welcomed opportunity for Western Star’s newest offering. Jackson said about half of the 4700’s orders to date have come from the construction services segment, while utility and P&D follow in that order. The company is already strong in the forestry, mining, specialty heavy-haul, petroleum and vehicle transporter markets. It sees its chief areas of growth coming from the general freight, government, HazMat, agricultural and construction segments.

Going forward, Jackson said Western Star plans to better promote the benefits of being part of the Daimler organization.

“I think this has been a missed opportunity over the past couple of years for Western Star,” Jackson admitted. “Being part of Daimler gives us an advantage I don’t think a lot of other people have. You’re going to hear us talk more in the future about our connection with Daimler.”

For example, being part of the Daimler organization means Western Star has access to proven, existing technologies without having to spend a fortune on research and development. It can also adopt Daimler programs such as the recently announced Elite Support dealer service network, which sets standards and benchmarks for dealer service excellence.

“Our dealers get to take advantage of all those things that the bigger Freightliner and Daimler can invest in,” Jackson said. “Our dealers are pretty happy right now.” □

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**OEM/DEALER NEWS**

**Volvo to produce its own LNG engine**

By Lou Smyrlis

MIAMI, Fla. – Volvo Trucks has announced it will launch its own 13-litre liquefied natural gas (LNG) engine for the North American market in 2014, claiming “significant” fuel efficiency gains compared with current natural gas products.

Combined with the company’s previously announced offering of compressed natural gas (CNG)-powered Volvo VNM and VNL model day cabs, the new diesel ignition engine provides Volvo with a range of natural gas-powered solutions. Volvo is also testing another fuel that can be produced from natural gas, DME (dimethyl ether), which Volvo executives believe has the potential to become an attractive alternative for the North American market.

“Our focused strategy is not to put all our eggs into one basket. In the future there will be regional differences and we don’t know which way alternative fuels will go. We want to keep our options open,” said Olof Persson, president of AB Volvo and CEO of Volvo Group.

Through high-pressure diesel ignition technology – using trace amounts of diesel to ignite the natural gas – Volvo’s LNG engine will deliver a 30% fuel efficiency improvement compared with spark-ignition engines, making it a viable alternative for long-haul applications, said Ron Huibers, president of Volvo Trucks North American sales and marketing.

Huibers also says the engine will accomplish these savings without sacri-

ficing power, torque or fuel efficiency, all of which are critical attributes for on-highway operations. The company’s proprietary Volvo I-Shift automated mechanical transmission also will be available for customers to specify.

The company also recently announced that it is operating natural gas-powered VNL demonstrator trucks. The larger, more robust VNL model features a 12-litre Cummins-Westport ISX12 G gas engine. Factory production of the natural gas-powered VNL day cab will begin in conjunction with commercial availability of the 12-litre gas engine in early 2013.

The Volvo Group has conducted hundreds of thousands of miles of customer field-testing of trucks equipped with DME, which can be produced from natural gas.

The results – from 10 vehicles operating in a variety of applications in Europe – indicate DME holds much promise as a heavy-truck fuel, and could become a viable alternative in North America to CNG or LNG when it comes to performance, environmental impact, safety and distribution, Persson and Huibers agreed.

DME most closely mirrors the performance qualities and energy efficiency of diesel while significantly reducing GHG emissions.

It is a compression ignition fuel that, like diesel, requires no separate ignition mechanism. Unlike LNG, it does not require cryogenic temperatures; it is handled like propane, with tank pressures of 75 psi (compared to 3,000 psi for CNG). □

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# Expressway Trucks turns 10

By Adam Ledlow

**AYR, Ont.** – With not even a year under its belt since being named Volvo’s Canadian Dealer of the Year last summer, Expressway Trucks has reached yet another milestone: its tenth anniversary. On May 16, the Ayr, Ont.-based dealership invited staff, customers, suppliers and friends for a lunchtime celebration to mark the achievement, offering helicopter rides for those looking to get a sense of the dealership’s high-flying successes over the last decade.

Scott Lawson, president and dealer principal at Expressway, attributes the location’s longevity to its emphasis on service.

“Service is everything,” he told *Truck News*. “As long as you take care of the customer, the customer will always come back. And that’s what we always try to preach to our employees: when he comes in, make him feel at home and take care of him and he’ll be back – it’s that simple.”

General manager Shaun Howard tips his hat to the company’s management and staff, noting, “(Our success) is really attributed to our people more than anything.”

Parts and service manager Jody Prince points to a unified sales and service team as a main driver to the smooth operation at Expressway. The fact that he and sales manager Jason Queenen have each shared sales and service roles over the years has only further strengthened what can sometimes be a strained relationship at dealerships.

“Since Jason’s taken both roles on and I’ve taken both roles on, we use each other for a sounding board quite a bit, actually, which we at one point in time never did,” Prince said. “Our management is five key people, so not so many people that you have too many opinions and you can never get to a final answer. It’s just enough.”

“We react very quickly,” Queenen added. “We meet every week, very socially, just to discuss what’s going on and if there’s anything that we need to change. A lot of companies seem to react a little late, when the times change. We pride ourselves on reacting very quickly. If we think things are slowing down, we watch our employee hours, watch all of our expenses.”

In addition to customer service, talented staff, and a unified and open management team, Expressway officials also spoke of Lawson’s “vision” for the dealership.

“Scott is probably truly the most entrepreneurial guy I’ve ever met,” Queenen said. “Scott’s visions are massive. He’s all about ‘for the company.’ It’s not about him, he likes to build, he likes to attract people, he wants to attract business, he’ll do anything to do it.”

As Queenen says, Lawson’s passionate and, occasionally, “off-the-wall” ideas are based on the premise of keeping both customers and staff members around. From current attractions like the popcorn machine and the ATM, to future ideas including an in-dealership restaurant and a barber shop – kept separate, of course – the ultimate goal, according to Lawson, is to make Expressway more of a truck stop/dealership hybrid.

“When we do the next renovation here, it’ll combine everything.”

Lawson says, noting that they’re already looking at purchasing the property next door.

When the facility opened in 2002, Howard notes that it was “rather empty,” with a 40,000 sq.-ft. facility set on 17 sprawling acres. But over the past decade, Expressway has been in continuous upgrade mode, adding laser alignment racks, flywheel researching machines, a wheel polishing machine, a body shop, a first-of-its-kind media board, in addition to a recent warehouse purchase and expansions of its parts department.

“We still feel that we have a lot of potential here at this facility to grow,” Howard adds. Whether that growth will involve “shave-and-a-haircut” specials for customers remains to be seen, but Howard says the company is confident it can extract another 20-25% growth over the next four to five years as long as it sticks to its principles.



**DEALER HITS DECADE:** Expressway Volvo hosted a 10th anniversary celebration at its Ayr, Ont. location May 16. Pictured from left to right are: Jason Queenen, sales manager; Scott Lawson, president and dealer principal; Shaun Howard, general manager; Jody Prince, parts and service manager; and Gerrie Molenaar, controller.

“We believe in working very hard, but by the same token, everyone needs to have fun. We try to make every day a good day for staff, with monthly barbecues, and breakfasts for staff. We

are constantly looking at ways of involving the staff,” Howards says. “I can’t say it enough: it starts at the top with our dealer principal and the way that he’s built our team.” □

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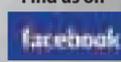
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**CLOSING IN ON 10 MPG:** This Cascadia Evolution, decked out in every imaginable fuel-saving option and pulling an aerodynamic trailer, achieved 9.31 mpg in on-road testing. Daimler CEO Martin Daum says the 10 mpg truck is “not out of reach.”

## Daimler introduces Freightliner Cascadia Evolution; promises 5% fuel savings over today's top model.

By James Menzies

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Freightliner has introduced a new version of its flagship Cascadia, which it claims will be 5% more fuel-efficient than today's version, even with all the latest aerodynamic fairings.

That makes it 7% more economical than the majority of Cascadias on the road today and 5.5% more fuel-efficient than its closest competitor, the company announced.

The 2014 Cascadia Evolution has achieved an impressive 10.67 mpg on closed circuit testing pulling an aerodynamic trailer and 9.31 mpg in over-the-road testing, the company announced during a recent unveiling.

Aerodynamic improvements were achieved through subtle front-end enhancements – so subtle in fact, the company didn't bother covering the front end during cross-country on-road testing, as the Evolution looks very similar to today's Cascadia. Exterior changes include: a new air dam, bumper closure, a redesigned windshield seal and a hood-to-bumper fill. Other enhancements include an improved cooling system, more aerodynamic mirrors and antennas that are integrated into the cab.

Daimler also improved upon its Detroit DD15 engine for further fuel economy gains, shedding 100 lbs and incorporating a new asymmetric turbocharger along with a new amplified common rail fuel system. Officials say the new turbo is less complex than variable geometry turbochargers and was designed specifically to work with Detroit's DD15 EGR system.

“We examined every detail to ensure that no stone was left unturned when developing the Cascadia Evolution,” said TJ Reed, director of product marketing for Freightliner Trucks. “The result is a truck that will immediately benefit fuel economy performance and overall cost

of ownership.”

Freightliner has assembled an ultra-fuel efficient spec' that includes: wide base tires, wheel covers and the new Detroit automated transmission in a 6x2 configuration, and it was this truck that yielded the greatest fuel savings. However, when the truck becomes available in 2013, customers will still have the option of spec'ing Cummins engines, Eaton transmissions and Meritor axles if they so choose.

“But the most fuel efficient combination will always be the captive one,” said Daimler Trucks North America president and CEO Martin Daum, speaking of the combination of a Detroit engine, axles and transmission.

The Cascadia Evolution with integrated powertrain will consistently deliver a 7% fuel savings over most Cascadias on the road today, Daum said.

Mark Lampert, senior vice-president of sales and marketing, said pricing of the new model has not been finalized and while it will be priced higher than today's Cascadia, he said the fuel savings will provide a return in short order.

“I think what we will see is the value proposition and corresponding payback for customers who choose to go with the Evolution will be quite short,” Lampert said. “It will be within a year to a year-and-a-half timeframe; the payback will be much shorter than anybody's trade cycle.”

David Hames, general manager of marketing and strategy with Daimler, shared fuel economy test results that showed today's Freightliner Cascadia with DD15 engine is the most fuel-efficient Class 8 vehicle available, but he admitted competitors were closing the gap with recent enhancements.

“The Cascadia with its 2011 aerodynamic improvements was still the best-in-class vehicle in terms of fuel

efficiency, but the gap was beginning to narrow and we weren't waiting for the competition to catch us,” Hames said.

Freightliner will be delivering customer demonstration units of the Cascadia Evolution later this year with production set to begin in early 2013.

### Putting it to the test

Freightliner knew changes to its Cascadia model would provide fuel savings, but just how significant those savings would be needed to be determined through some extensive testing.

With that in mind, the company set out on its Evolution of Efficiency Tour, which pitted the new Cascadia Evolution against a “baseline” Cascadia in “first generation” EPA2010 trim.

“The Evolution of Efficiency Tour provided us with the unique opportunity to gauge the fuel efficiency of our newest truck – the Cascadia Evolution – against the Cascadia, our most fuel-efficient product to date,” explained Freightliner's Reed. “This tour put our latest technologies and innovations to the test in real-world circumstances, and validates our continuous achievements in fuel economy over the past several years.”

The tour covered 2,400 miles between San Diego, Cal. and Gastonia, N.C. from May 17-23. The Cascadia Evolution featured a 125-inch tractor with 72-inch raised roof sleeper, the redesigned Detroit DD15 engine, Detroit tandem rear axles and an Eaton UltraShift Plus transmission. The baseline truck was a similarly spec'd Cascadia featuring only the first generation aerodynamic package.

The cross-country route covered various terrain and drivers averaged between 250 and 425 miles per day, running at a cruise speed of 62 mph grossing 76,000 lbs. Fuel usage was

measured by Automotive Testing and Development Services, using high-accuracy fuel flow meters, Freightliner officials explained.

Drivers and trailers were swapped at the midway point of each day to account for driver- and trailer-related variables.

“It was imperative that we followed very precise testing procedures to ensure the integrity and accuracy of the test,” said Al Pearson, chief engineer, product validation engineering for Daimler Trucks North America. “In comparing the vehicles, we followed a standard fuel economy test procedure as close as possible given the unique nature of this drive. Very few fuel economy tests encompass these kinds of mileages and terrain so we went to great lengths to ensure that the vehicles were operated as similarly as possible and in accordance with standardized test procedures.”

In the end, the Cascadia Evolution consumed 7% less fuel than its predecessor.

### On the track

Freightliner also tested a Cascadia Evolution that was optimally spec'd for maximum fuel savings and achieved a staggering 10.67 mpg on a closed circuit.

The test was conducted prior to the Evolution of Efficiency Tour, at the Continental Proving Grounds in Uvalde, Texas.

A Cascadia Evolution, powered by the redesigned Detroit DD15 engine, was equipped with the new Detroit DT12 automated transmission, wide-base tires, in a 6x2 drive-train configuration and pulled a specially-designed trailer fitted with numerous aftermarket fuel-saving technologies currently available. (It was expected the truck itself would get about 7.64 mpg pulling a conventional van trailer without the aerodynamic add-ons. This compares to a baseline of 7 mpg achieved by today's Cascadia).

The truck was run over the 8.5-mile track for 1,000 miles at an average speed of 60 mph with a gross weight of 76,000 lbs, company officials said.

“The closed-track demonstration enabled us to eliminate interfering elements of a typical on-highway fuel economy test such as traffic, construction and speed variations,” said Pearson. “The use of a closed test track allows us to demonstrate pure fuel economy potential with ambient weather conditions being the only uncontrollable factor.”

Had it not been for some rain, which caused the tires to lose some grip, officials said it's possible the Cascadia Evolution may even have reached 11 mpg.

The test results were especially gratifying for DTNA's Daum, who in one of his first speeches as CEO in 2009 predicted there will be a 10 mpg truck on the market within the span of his career.

While on-road testing showed the Evolution to achieve 9.31 mpg, it's not far off the 10 mpg target that Daum said raised some eyebrows when first predicted.

“The 10 mpg truck is not out of reach anymore,” Daum said. “It's a huge step and every step gets more difficult than the step before, but I still believe during my professional lifetime (the goal will be reached).” □

# Volvo introduces Remote Diagnostics to keep trucks connected and out of the shop

By Lou Smyrlis

**MIAMI, Fla.** – Telematics will continue to evolve until no truck is ever offline, according to Ron Huibers, president of North American sales and marketing for Volvo Trucks. And judging by what Volvo launched in mid-May, the future may well be here.

Volvo Trucks, during a special media conference held in Miami in conjunction with the Volvo Ocean Race, announced the launch of its Remote Diagnostics aftermarket service for North America. The service is designed to provide “a seamless, dynamically connected system of vehicle management tools to help maximize vehicle uptime.”

Remote Diagnostics is now standard on all Volvo-powered VN model highway trucks.

Huibers said Volvo was the first North American truck manufacturer to deliver a telematics solution, offering fleet management tools in 2002. Today, Volvo’s Remote Diagnostics provides proactive diagnostic and repair planning assistance with detailed analysis of critical diagnostic trouble codes. The remote communication platform facilitates live dealer and customer communication through Volvo Action Service, Volvo’s 24/7 support team. Proactive diagnostics streamline service procedures with confirmation of parts on-hand before a truck arrives at a service location, increasing uptime, according to the company.

Remote Diagnostics also provides service case communication and documentation among Volvo Action Service, dealers and customers through ASIST, Volvo’s Web-based service management tool, which comes free of charge for two years with the purchase of all new Volvo trucks.

“Remote Diagnostics maximizes vehicle uptime by reaching far beyond proactive diagnostics to deliver

total connectivity among the vehicle, Volvo and the decision-makers responsible for maintenance,” said Stephen Roy, Volvo Trucks senior vice-president, aftermarket and soft products.

“As part of our integrated business solution, Volvo Trucks Support Services, and bundled under Connected Vehicle services, Remote Diagnostics leverages Volvo’s support network and service management tools to rapidly address service issues before they occur.”

For nearly a year, Volvo field-tested Remote Diagnostics with motor carriers in the US and Canada, drawing on the feedback from 15 customers operating more than 1,300 Volvo VNs with the service. Volvo officials said the test trials found that by using Remote Diagnostics downtime could be reduced by about one day per event.

Challenger Motor Freight was one of the Canadian participants in the test trials and Bryan Burningham, director of maintenance at Challenger, was on-hand at the launch to talk about his experience with the system.

“The Remote Diagnostics service has really helped with vehicle uptime,” Burningham concurred. “It’s much easier to manage events with the service communication tool because it provides a very good data trail so we know what we’re working on, what we’ve done and when we expect it will be done. Communication has really sped up and internally we are able to have more intelligent discussions.”

Volvo’s Huibers said Remote Diagnostics raises the bar to a whole new level in terms of what a truck maker can deliver to help keep cus-

tomers on the road moving freight. He believes it will help “leapfrog” Volvo over competitors.

“If we can help keep trucks on the road, everybody wins,” Huibers said.

Remote Diagnostics is the first service being offered under the new Connected Vehicle Services category of the Volvo Trucks

Support Services bundled aftermarket offering. Previously launched categories include:

*Service Management:* Beginning Jan. 1, 2012, Volvo Trucks offers ASIST at no charge with all new truck purchases. ASIST lets customers receive electronic estimates, approve repairs and issue a purchase order, regardless of the vehicle’s location. The online tool allows the

customer to monitor vehicle status online, communicate directly with the dealer and maintain an electronic “file cabinet” of service activities. Consolidating all maintenance events and communication in one web-based tool also eliminates invoice and repair surprises, according to Volvo.

*Parts Purchasing:* Volvo customers can order parts online through their local dealer. The online portal provides 24/7 access to parts availability and pricing from the local Volvo dealer. Customers can also receive nationwide credit access at all Volvo Trucks dealer locations in the US and Canada through a charge card program.

*Fleet Services:* Volvo Trucks Support Services offers 24/7 roadside assistance through Volvo Action Services and full contract maintenance services and a variety of leasing and rental program options. □

‘If we can help keep trucks on the road, everybody wins,’

Ron Huibers, Volvo

## Tallman Truck Centre buys Toronto International dealer

**CORNWALL, Ont.** – Tallman Truck Centre has completed the acquisition of Western Toronto International Trucks, effective June 1. Going forward, the new company’s name will be Tallman Truck Centre (Toronto) Limited. The move gives Tallman nine full-service International truck dealerships in Ontario.

“This acquisition will allow us to further execute our growth strategy of expanding our service network in Ontario,” said company president Kevin Tallman. “We are excited to represent International in Canada’s largest truck market, the Greater Toronto Area, and we look forward to servicing new and existing customers in this very important market. We would also like to welcome all the Western Toronto employees to the Tallman Truck Centre family.”

“Cornwall is growing as a supply chain hub for Central and Eastern Canada, and the trucks that service our DCs come from across Ontario,” said Kirk Tallman, general manager of Tallman Truck Centre in Cornwall. “This acquisition positions Tallman to provide quality sales, service and support for transportation companies across southern Ontario, from the GTA to Cornwall.” □

## Trailer Wizards breaks ground at new Winnipeg location

**WINNIPEG, Man.** – Trailer Wizards broke ground in early June on its new Winnipeg facility at 65 Bergen Cutoff.

The new shop will be 37,000 sq.-ft. and will feature 14 repair bays, two wash bays and a two-storey, 9,500 sq.-ft. parts area, the company announced. The new facility is expected to be operational by January 2013.

“We are now completing our cross-Canada Trailer Wizard network. We will be able to offer much-needed trailer solutions for our customers in Manitoba and Saskatchewan,” said Gary Myroniuk, regional vice-president for the Trailer Wizards’ Prairie region. He noted the company is opening two new branch locations in Regina and Saskatoon, Sask. □





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## ROAD TEST

# The little engine that could

## The ISL G engine in a Kenworth T440 belies its small displacement, providing an attractive option for regional fleets

By James Menzies

**MOUNT VERNON, Wash.** – As the buzz surrounding natural gas as a viable alternative to diesel in the heavy truck industry continues to grow, manufacturers have rapidly expanded their natural gas-fueled offerings in an effort to position themselves as leaders in this emerging market.

There is no arguing the potential cost savings when switching from diesel to natural gas. A recent Conference Board of Canada report entitled *Cheap enough? Making the switch from diesel fuel to natural gas*, concluded that fuel savings of up to \$150,000 per truck over a 10-year period are attainable at the current price spread between diesel and natural gas. Such savings are enough to pay for the cost of the technology two, maybe even three times over a 10-year period, which is a compelling proposition for regional fleets where truck life-cycles are typically longer than in over-the-road applications.

In regional applications, one option worth considering is Kenworth's T440, available with the Cummins ISL G natural gas engine in either a Class 7 or 8 configuration. I recently spent some time behind the wheel of a Class 8 version of this truck, pulling a loaded trailer on the roads surrounding Paccar's Technical Center in Mount Vernon, Wash.

I wasn't able to stray too far from the tech center, ironically because of fuel limitations, which remains one of the two biggest concerns of most fleets considering the switch to natural gas (the other being the cost of the technology). Availability of both CNG and LNG is quickly improving on both sides of the border, however, with new partnerships between opportunistic gas suppliers and heavy vehicle users resulting in a rapid rollout of fueling stations.

The T440 I drove is in many ways an ideal regional truck for lighter loads on reasonably flat roads. The ISL G engine can be spec'd to run off natural gas in either liquefied or compressed form. In Canada, the most high profile fleets to embrace natural gas have gravitated towards liquefied natural gas with Westport's 15-litre LNG engine. This is understandable as LNG offers greater range for longer routes such as Montreal-Toronto, the lane on which Robert Transport has deployed most of its natural gas vehicles.

In more regional applications, however, OEMs speak favourably of CNG, which lacks the range of LNG but is simpler to handle. Drivers can watch a five-minute video to learn everything they need to know about fueling their truck with CNG while certified handlers are required to fuel

vehicles with LNG. Liquefied natural gas also comes with more limitations in terms of where trucks can be parked or operated. Less driver training is required with CNG as well.

"With CNG, a driver can just get in the truck and go within 15 minutes," said Alan Fennimore, vocational marketing manager with Kenworth. "That type of technology has been around for pushing 30 years now."

Fleets considering adding natural gas trucks to their operations will want to research the fueling infrastructure available in their vicinity. In many cases, Fennimore said, natural gas stations offer both types of fuel since LNG can be easily converted to CNG on-site.

The T440 I drove was fitted with two 40.5 diesel gallon equivalent (DGE) tanks, good for about 350 miles (560 kilometres). The ISL G is an 8.9-litre, spark-ignited engine available with up to 320 hp and 1,000 lb.-ft. of torque. At first glance it seems underpowered for most Class 8 applications but don't underestimate the capability of this little engine. On my drive, it performed beyond expectations, thanks largely to the deceptive torque delivered in combination with the standard

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'With range comes cost. The fuel storage system accounts for at least half the premium you can expect to pay for a natural gas-powered vehicle.'

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Allison 3000HS six-speed automatic transmission.

When I told Fennimore I was pleasantly surprised by the abundance of torque, he credited the Allison transmissions torque converter and its torque multiplication capabilities.

"In first and second gear, you've got that torque converter that allows you to basically slip and that slipping allows you to get an additional gear range so it doesn't feel like 1,000 lb.-ft. of torque, it feels like 1,350 lb.-ft.," Fennimore explained. "It was a conscious decision by Cummins to only offer the Allison transmission and it was a good decision. For a manual transmission to pull 80,000 lbs with 1,000 lb.-ft. of torque is very tough. Having that gear multiplication



**SMALL TRUCK, BIG POWER:** This Kenworth T440 with the Cummins ISL G engine provides a deceiving amount of torque despite its 8.9 litre displacement.

Photo by James Menzies

in first and second gear gives you that gradability you need to get a heavy load off the ground."

The other attribute of the ISL G that's immediately noticeable is its quiet operation, even in a day cab pulling a heavy load. You become more attuned to other sounds, like the operation of the air compressor, which traditionally were drowned out by the rumbling of a diesel engine.

Real-world users of the ISL G, including Swift Transport CEO Jerry Moyes, have said the engine is undersized for heavy loads and it certainly could be, even though it greatly outperforms its single-digit displacement. Cummins will soon have an answer to this with the release of its ISX12 G engine,

fuel storage system accounts for at least half the premium you can expect to pay for a natural gas-powered vehicle. The ISL G costs about \$25,000 more than an ISL base engine and two CNG tanks will set you back another \$25,000, bringing the total upcharge to about \$50,000. Cheaper, steel tanks are available but Fennimore said most customers are investing in the more durable Type 4 composite tanks, which are lighter weight and feature a plastic core wrapped within a carbon fiber composite material.

Kenworth likes the T440 as a natural gas vehicle because "it was just the right size," Fennimore explained. The company considered making its T800 short hood model its natural gas guinea pig but in the end, Fennimore said, "we decided to put it in a lower content vehicle to keep costs down."

The larger cooling module of the T800 was seen as overkill and so it was decided the T440 offered all the requirements needed of a natural gas-powered regional truck at a lower cost. Because natural gas is a clean burning fuel, the truck doesn't require a diesel particulate filter (DPF) or selective catalytic reduction (SCR) emissions system. Just a back of cab-mounted three-way catalyst is all that's required for emissions compliance.

Drivers won't have anything to complain about when operating this truck as long as it's placed into the right application and isn't asked to do too much.

Remember, this is a workhorse medium-duty truck available in a Class 8 configuration but it's no heavy hauler.

The T440 with ISL G may not be the right truck for pulling heavy loads over the Rockies, but a regional fleet operating within a metro area pulling lightish loads on regular routes of 500 kilometres or less would be a perfect fit, provided the fueling infrastructure is available.

If the Conference Board of Canada report is to be believed, running a T440 with ISL G engine in such an application over a 10-year period could actually deliver a six-figure savings even after the cost of the technology is accounted for. How can you not be intrigued by that? □

### The spec's:

**Model:** Kenworth T440

**Engine:** Cummins ISL-G, 320 hp, 1,000 lb.-ft. torque

**Cab configuration:** Extended day cab

**Transmission:** Allison 3000 HS six-speed automatic

**Front suspension:** 13.2K Taperleaf

**Rear suspension:** Kenworth AG4000L

**Wheelbase:** 193-inch

**Colour:** Solar Flare Red

**Fuel storage:** Twin frame-mounted 40.5 DGE CNG tanks □

**ONTARIO**



**BIG RED:** Laddi Mann of Key Point Carriers won Best Interior during the Road Today Truck Show's show'n'shine competition. *Photo by Adam Ledlow*

## Truck show brings out the VIPs

Continued from page 23

approach: enforcement, education and citizen engagement.

A driving simulator was on-site where drivers were able to experience first-hand what can happen when driving while distracted.

The show was also visited by local dignitaries, including: Brampton Mayor Susan Fennell; Parm Gill, Member of Parliament for Brampton-Springdale; Harinder Takhar, Ontario Minister of Gov-

ernment Services; Dipika Damerla, MPP from Mississauga East-Cooksville; and John Sanderson, Regional Councillor.

"Overall, the show was well received and the mood of exhibitors and visitors was upbeat," said show organizer Manan Gupta.

To view video highlights of the fourth annual Road Today Truck Show, check out the 'Road Today Truck Show 2012' episode of *Transportation Matters* at [Trucknews.com/videos](http://Trucknews.com/videos). □

## Ontario truck safety improved in 2009; 'safest jurisdiction in North America'

**TORONTO, Ont.** – Ontario road fatalities reached their lowest levels in the past 68 years, making the province the safest jurisdiction in North America, according to the Ontario Road Safety Annual Report (ORSAR).

The Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) feels its speed limiter law helped contribute to the achievement.

The report indicates that in 2009, there were 564 fatalities on Ontario roads, the lowest level since 1944 and the lowest ever rate per licensed driver. Large truck fatalities also declined to the tune of 24% compared to 2008.

This is the continuation of a steady trend of improved truck safety over the past 20 years. The OTA notes large truck fatalities are down 50% from 1990 to 2009, despite a 59% increase in the number of large trucks registered in the province during that period.

"Safety continues to be the number one priority of the trucking industry," said David Bradley, president and CEO of the OTA. "The report confirms once again that truck drivers and trucks as a class are the safest drivers and vehicles on the road. We are pleased to see continued improvement in the 2009 results."

The OTA says the Ministry of Transportation credits the province's speed limiter law with contributing to the improvement. The association says it hopes to make further safety gains with initiatives including its call for the mandatory use of electronic on-board recorders (EOBRs) and stability control systems.

Other highlights of the report include: Of all fatal collisions involving large trucks, the truck driver was not driving properly in just 27% of incidents, down from 36% in 2008; fatal collisions involving trucks represented 17.6% of total fatal collisions, down from 20.6% in 2008; alcohol was a factor in just 1% of fatal incidents involving large trucks; and only 3.3% of vehicles involved in collisions were heavy trucks. □

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NEW PRODUCTS



Caterpillar has announced the availability of its **15-litre CT15 engine** in the CT660 vocational truck. The CT15 rounds out the engine line, which currently consists of a CT11 and CT13 engine with 11 and 13 litres displacement respectively. The new offering can provide as much as 550 hp and 1,850 lb.-ft. of torque, the company says. The CT15 reaches peak torque at 2,100 rpm and pulls strong at low engine speeds, allowing for shifting at lower speeds when accelerating, according to the company. Based on a Navistar design,

the CT15 uses exhaust gas recirculation (EGR) to eliminate NOx in-cylinder without requiring exhaust aftertreatment. For more info, visit [www.DriveCat.com](http://www.DriveCat.com).

Federal-Mogul has introduced Abex **reduced stopping distance brake block** to comply with FM-VSS 121, requiring heavy trucks to stop in 30% less distance than before. The company says its new RSD drum brake block includes three application-specific formulations engineered to improve overall performance while meeting the new requirement. They include an RN premium organic 20,000-lb axle rating, copper-free formulation; an RSM premium semi-metallic,

29,000-lb axle rating for reduced stopping distance and severe-service applications; and RSC, a premium semi-metallic combo formulation with a 23,000-lb axle rating. For more info, contact an Abex distributor or Federal-Mogul rep.

for fast, convenient data transfers. For more info, see a dealer or visit [www.trucktrailer.carrier.com](http://www.trucktrailer.carrier.com).



Rand McNally has announced availability of a new **seven-inch truck GPS device** with new features, including: WiFi connectivity allowing for real-time weather updates and a new hardware with ruggedized casing, video input and brighter screen. The IntelliRoute TND 720 allows drivers to use their smartphones as WiFi hot spots to access real-time updates while on the road. The new weather feature provides updates on potential delays along a driver's route, the company says. Real-time weather updates were among the top requests Rand McNally received from its TellRand submissions. More info can be found at [www.RandMcNally.com](http://www.RandMcNally.com).



Carrier Transicold has come out with two new models of its X2 series of **trailer refrigeration units**, the 2500 APX and 2100 APX. Both feature the new APX control system as well as what Carrier insists is the industry's most comprehensive warranty at 60 months or 10,000 hours for the electronics and 48 months or 8,000 hours on the engine and other major components. With the APX control system, Carrier says it's the first in the TRU industry to combine: distributed, modular electronics for enhanced reliability, serviceability and expandability; an easy-to-use driver interface with bright graphic display; and USB connectivity

Magellan says its latest **truck GPS navigator** helps truckers plan their routes, drive more safely and save trip reporting time. The Magellan RoadMate Commercial 9270T-LM GPS includes an extra large seven-inch GPS display, customizable truck-specific routing and hands-free communication and trip logging, the company announced. Drivers can set up customizable routes based on the height, weight, width and length of their load and can also factor in HazMat restrictions. The new device also logs information related to fuel tax reporting and hours-of-service and allows the driver to export it into reports. For more details, visit [www.magellangps.com](http://www.magellangps.com). □

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OPINION

**My retirement plans? Staring into space**

I've been told that if you retire early, you'd better get a hobby or volunteer for a worthwhile cause.

For the majority of people, an early retirement is the result of careful financial planning. Investing for the long-term is the name of the game and forget about the "get rich quick" scams.

Getting into a good defined benefit company retirement plan sure helps. These are rare today, with most companies offering contribution-based plans. The other option is your own self-directed RSP. All have their advantages and a quick trip to a financial planner will help you decide which one is best for you. You don't need to head down to Bay Street to find one. The next time you're in your local bank, make an appointment to see one of their consultants. You'll never be sorry or regret planning for the future, that's for sure.

Speaking of the future and finding a hobby, I recently directed my attention to astronomy. I thought this would be something I could enjoy now, and later in life during my retirement years. So after extensive research I jumped in with both feet. I found the telescope make and model that fit my expertise (zip) and budget (cheap) and started searching the Internet classifieds. A few weeks later, I found what I was looking for and dusted

**Publisher's Comment**

ROB WILKINS

off my hard-earned *Truck News* bucks to pay for it.

Being a guy, I didn't read the instructions. This baby is supposed to be "simple" to operate, so being of very average intelligence, I thought I'd have no problems. After all, how difficult could it be? Aim, focus and presto...beware ye little green men of Mars, I'm watching!

Apparently their definition of "simple" is a little bit different than mine. The only thing I saw that night was the reflection of my ugly mug. I thought I saw the moon at one point but quickly realized I was aiming at a streetlight. I couldn't see a thing through this beast and I wondered if Galileo had the same problems?

Simple to operate, blah, blah, blah. I'd have been better off looking through a Cracker Jack freebee.

If and when I do retire I'm going to be very happy wearing a volunteer badge at the local hospital. I'm sure it will be a lot less stressful even if bedpans are involved! □

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



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PEOPLE

# Bob Smith of Mackie Moving Systems presented with safety award

**By Harry Rudolfs**  
**MISSISSAUGA, Ont.** – Bob Smith, safety and compliance manager for Mackie Moving Systems of Oshawa, Ont., was awarded this year's Motor Transportation Safety Award at the Motor Vehicle Safety Association banquet held in Mississauga, Ont. on May 9.

Smith has had a long association with the Oshawa family trucking company going back more than 20 years.

He used to park his trailer in the Mackie yard when he was pulling liquor loads for the LCBO, first for Cathcart Transport and later for Manitoulin.

He started working for Ross Mackie 19 years ago, and took on the role of safety and compliance manager in 1998.

Smith was nominated by last



**RECOGNIZING SAFETY:** Bob Smith, second from the left, is flanked by family, friends and colleagues as he receives the prestigious Motor Transportation Safety Award.

year's winner, Shawn Jamieson, safety manager for SGT Transportation in Mississauga, Ont.

The award is based on a points system where nominees are assessed according certain catego-

ries including community service, achievements, recommendations and previous awards. Smith served as an OTA Road Knight in 1997-98 and has logged 1.7 million miles accident-free.

He's also a member of the OTA's Pioneer Club.

Smith thinks the key to having a successful safety team is having an open door policy.

"I like to think that the drivers can feel free to come and ask about things they're not sure of. I've been on both sides of the road, both as a driver and a manager, so I think I understand what they're going through," he says.

"It's important to establish trust with your drivers, whether they're owner/operators, broker drivers or company employees," adds Smith. "I also enjoy working with fleet management. They get the equipment they need to get the job done, and I try to get them the people to do the job."

The 57-year-old safety manager looks after more than 200 drivers located in six terminals.

"Things have changed so much," he reminisces.

"When I started there were a lot fewer regulations, no logbooks, no transportation of dangerous goods regs, all you needed to drive a tractor-trailer was a chauffeur's licence. Today's trucks are much safer: anti-rollover, collision-warning, satellite-tracking, and everything is Bluetooth-enabled for hands-free driving. All the new tucks have this."

Smith was presented with a plaque, a \$2,500 diamond ring and a \$500 cheque.

His family, including his octogenarian mother was on-hand to watch him receive the award. Harvin Kaura and Rubinder Sran of Cheyne Middle School of Brampton, Ont., were awarded the MVSA Peel Regional Science Fair Award for their project, dubbed: Is there any available material safer than an airbag?

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 4,536-8,845 kg. (10,000-19,500 lbs.)...  YES  NO  
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Diesel powered vehicles...  YES  NO  
 Refrigerated vehicles...  YES  NO  
 Pickups or Utility Vans...  YES  NO  
 Propane powered vehicles...  YES  NO

5) Do you operate maintenance facilities at this location?  YES  NO  
 IF YES, do you employ mechanics?  YES  NO

6) Indicate your PRIMARY type of business by checking ONLY ONE of the following:

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SAF-Holland has announced two key appointments within its Canadian operations. **Darrin Young** has been named to the newly created position of trailer OEM key accounts manager. He'll be charged with strengthening technical sales and support for OEM trailer accounts, the company announced.

And **Jim Murphy** has been named sales and service rep for Western Ontario and the Maritime provinces. Both appointments took effect in early June.

"The transition of Darrin Young to our newly created trailer OEM key accounts manager gives us an increased focus in this market segment. It will further strengthen our position in trailer axles and suspensions in 2012," said Paul Robb, director of sales and marketing, Canada. "Bringing Jim Murphy on-board, at the same time, as regional sales and service representative will ensure the continued high level of quality of customer support our customers have been accustomed to for many years. Jim's extensive industry experience and close connection with our dealer and distributor partners is an invaluable asset."

Ancra Canada has appointed **Richard Drapeau** as Canadian sales manager. For the past five years, Drapeau has been the eastern regional sales manager for Ancra Canada, with overall sales responsibility for the region. He has 25 years of sales and service experience in both the automotive and heavy-duty transportation industries at the aftermarket, OEM and national accounts level.

In his new role, Drapeau will manage the day-to-day operation of the Canadian sales group as well as focusing on key national accounts.

"We look forward to him furthering our established customer relationships across Canada and the continued growth in this market for Ancra," said Brian Larocque, managing director of Ancra Canada.

Trailer Wizards has appointed **Arthur Christakos** to vice-president

of the company's Ontario Region.

Despite being Christakos' first position at Trailer Wizards, officials he say brings nine years of experience as a direct sales representative, handling some of Canada's largest and best-known customers. He has seven years as a systems sales manager, providing advanced, high storage density/productivity material handling supply chain solutions to a variety of industries from large grocery and retail giants to hospitals, pharmaceutical and electronic verticals.

"We are pleased to have Arthur on-board with us. He brings fresh ideas, as well as strong people skills. He also is a pro at managing teams and his sales and marketing know-how is a perfect addition to all we have to offer. We look forward to the future," said Doug Vanderspek, president of Trailer Wizards.

PeopleNet has announced several

personnel changes, including the appointment of **Mark Botticelli** to the position of executive vice-president and head of technology.

Botticelli has 25 years' experience in technology industries and is charged with PeopleNet's North American technology strategy and product delivery across wireless, software, hardware, infrastructure and quality assurance.

**Brian McLaughlin** has replaced former PeopleNet founder and CEO **Ron Konezny**, who has been named general manager of Trimble's Worldwide Transportation and Logistics division.

"Brian's leadership of marketing, product development, communications, and sales programs over the last 10 years has helped garner double-digit year-after-year growth," Konezny said.

Meanwhile, new senior sales vice-presidents **Garland Jackson** and **Mark Kessler** will take on more market management au-

thority and will work with Canadian president Jamie Williams on key operating issues, the company announced.

Jackson will lead regional accounts and also be charged with small markets, sales operations and sales engineering.

Kessler will manage the growth of national accounts while overseeing PeopleNet's expansion into Mexico and other strategic markets, the company says.

**Rick Ochsendorf**, former operations vice-president, is now senior vice-president of operations and product management with added product strategy and management responsibilities.

"This team combines Trimble and PeopleNet experience and success," McLaughlin said of the appointments. "In addition to their individual and collective track records, they have the leadership skills and expertise to drive growth and profitability." □

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# TRUCK NEWS

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apparently so do a lot of other people!

**TRUCKNEWS**

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Magazine Writing – News (Gold)	TWNA Communication Awards	2008
Magazine Writing – Feature (Gold)	TWNA Communication Awards	2008
Magazine Writing – Technical General (Silver)	TWNA Communication Awards	2008
Best Website (Top 5)	KRW Awards	2007
Magazine Writing – Product Applications (Gold)	TWNA Communication Awards	2007
Magazine Writing – Column or Series (Silver)	TWNA Communication Awards	2007
Magazine Writing – Column or Series (Silver)	TWNA Communication Awards	2007
Magazine Writing – News (Silver)	TWNA Communication Awards	2007
Magazine Writing – Feature (Silver)	TWNA Communication Awards	2007
Magazine Writing – Technical General (Bronze)	TWNA Communication Awards	2007
Magazine Writing – Business (Bronze)	TWNA Communication Awards	2007
Magazine Writing – Company Profile (Bronze)	TWNA Communication Awards	2007
Best Website (Top 5)	KRW Awards	2006
Magazine Writing – News (Silver)	TWNA Communication Awards	2006
Magazine Writing – Feature (Silver)	TWNA Communication Awards	2006
Magazine Writing – Technical General (Bronze)	TWNA Communication Awards	2006
Magazine Writing – Supplements (Silver)	TWNA Communication Awards	2006

**TRUCKWEST**

CANADA

# Cracking the Best Fleets list

Continued from page 25

dependent operator, which could lead to problems with the tax man. However, Murrell said progressive owner/operator fleets are able to provide programs without threatening their status as independent operators.

Paramount Freight Systems, which has won the Best Fleet for Owner/Operators award the past two years, has done just that. For starters, Paramount awards owner/operators who stay on by increasing their pay by one cent per mile each year. It also pays for all their tolls and has negotiated on behalf of its owner/operators a parts discount through a vast network of retailers. As a result, its owner/operators pay just 7% above cost for parts through select retailers.

Paramount has driver of the week, month and year programs that issue \$250, \$500 and \$1,500 rewards respectively. Paramount also has provided its O/Os with the latest in-cab technology, including scanners and electronic logs. It also enrolls its O/Os in a CSA scorecard program so they can monitor their own safety record and be on the lookout for any false reports.

Social media is where Paramount “really shines,” Murrell said. Paramount has a Facebook page that’s liked by 262 people. Owner/ops use the site to communicate with office staff in what has become a “virtual water cooler” of sorts.

Photos of company functions are uploaded to the Facebook photo albums, keeping owner/operators informed on the latest happenings. Owner/ops are also invited to upload pictures of their trucks and can win gift certificates to restaurants for the best pictures. The by-product is that owner/operators take more pride in how their equipment looks.

Paramount also uses Survey Monkey to conduct regular surveys of its drivers. This allows the company to get on top of any issues quickly. It also surveys new owner/operators when hired, to find out why they left their previous company.

“You never get good information during exit interviews but when someone’s coming on-board, you get good information on why they left to make sure you don’t make the same mistakes,” Murrell pointed out.

Paramount also runs a “buddy program,” which is rare among owner/operator fleets.

### Becoming a Best Fleet

Having spent four years studying the best practices of the best fleets to drive for, Murrell is in a position to identify some of their common traits. So, how do you become a Best Fleet winner? For starters, Murrell said it’s important to get buy-in from top executives.

“The number one thing is to get the executive team engaged,” he said. “That’s where we see the biggest difference.”

Next, he suggested fleets survey their drivers to identify areas of concern.

“You’re going to find some very simple things that are easy to implement,” he said.

Murrell also advised fleets to figure out what they do best and focus on their strengths. Fleets that lack

an identity, or try to be everything to everyone, tend not to provide the greatest workplaces, he said. Murrell suggested carriers get on top of operations to address the source of most driver complaints.

“Time after time, operations is the source of the problems,” Murrell said. “We see a lot of comments from drivers who say the company believes in this, but operations doesn’t.”

Murrell also said some carriers must do a better job of informing drivers about what services and programs are available to them. Driver surveys indicate that often, drivers aren’t even aware of the programs their carrier offers.

And finally, Murrell suggested that carriers set measurable objectives in order to continuously improve working conditions for drivers and owner/operators. □

## How <sup>NOT</sup> to become a ‘best fleet’

Among the many great programs and initiatives run by fleets nominated into the Best Fleets to Drive For program, there are a few such programs that may have been created with the best of intentions, but questionable results.

Mark Murrell, president of CarriersEdge, which administers the competition, spoke of a couple such programs.

One carrier looking to reduce its crash costs created a profit-sharing fund and then deducted crash-related costs from the pot throughout the year. Worse, it outed the drivers responsible for any incident by posting their name and the amount of money their accident cost the fund.

“I can tell you they’re a very safe fleet, but a Best Fleet to Drive For? I don’t think so,” Murrell said.

Another company has set up a spot outside its driver entrance where its wrecked vehicles would be parked with a sign that said: ‘Don’t let this happen to you.’ As a result, Murrell said drivers live in fear of making a mistake and having it put on display.

“Anytime you have a section of your parking lot set aside for a wreck, you’re going to have a wreck,” he said. “The problem is, drivers walk by it every single time they go in and out and the problem with that is, they’re not thinking ‘I’m really excited to haul some freight for these guys,’ they’re thinking ‘Holy crap, I hope that’s not me!’” □

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Mark Dalton: Owner/Operator

# Human traffic on the road

By Edo van Belkom

Mark was nearing his destination and hadn't heard from his dispatcher Bud for a while. He was in need of another load so he decided to give the man a call.

"Hello?" Bud said.

"Bud, this is Mark."

"Mark who?"

'Did he never get tired of that?' Mark thought. "Mark S. Welby, Doctor of Trucking."

"Very funny, Dalton. Sad thing is, I'm old enough to remember that show."

"I need my next load, Bud."

"Yeah, you and everyone else working for me."

"Things that bad?"

"Not really, just slow at the moment."

"So you don't have a heavy load going all the way across the country that's going to make me a truckload of cash?"

"If I had that," Bud said, "I'd still be driving myself."

Mark nodded. "Okay, what do you have?"

"I didn't think you'd be interested, seeing as you like adventure and all that, but I have about four weeks worth of trips to Montreal and back. Two round trips every three days."

"Sounds like a grind."

"It's honest work," Bud said. "And it's yours if you want it."

"I'll take it. My truck's not making money if it's not moving."

Bud gave Mark the details.

Mark was able to comfortably go from Toronto to Montreal and halfway back again before running out of hours in his logbook, so he decided he would stop overnight at the same truck stop outside Kingston whenever he had to stop halfway between the two cities. That would give him alternating days off in Toronto and Montreal, which wasn't too bad a gig, all things considered.

While he liked the food and amenities the truck stop had to offer, the hardest part of the trip by far was the overnight stay. Mother Load was comfortable enough and he could usually get a good night's rest in her sleeper no matter where she was parked,

but this truck stop was making peaceful sleep a real challenge.

The problem began on the third night he stayed in the truck stop's lot. He was tucked into his bunk, all warm and snug and just about to drift off into a deep sleep when there was a knock on the door.

The first time it happened he didn't even realize what was going on until the third knock. By then he was up and wondering who the hell was knocking on his door at this time of night.

"You lonely, mister?" It was a female voice and a young one at that.

"What?" he said. "No!"

"You sure? I'm young and pretty."

"Get lost!" Mark said, shaking his head. There were lot lizards just about everywhere you went in North America – probably the world too, for that matter – but he'd never been in a place where they were so brazen as to walk up to a truck and knock on your door. He didn't approve of it anywhere, but at least in other places people were discrete about it. This was like, well... selling candy door-to-door.

Mark put his head back on his pillow and closed his eyes.

Minutes later there was another knock on his door.

"You want a good time?" the woman on the other side of the door asked.

Mark lifted his head off his pillow and saw a young woman peeking into his cab through the driver's side window.

"No, I don't want a good time."

"I can make you feel real good."

"I'll call the cops in a minute if you don't get down off my truck, now!" he said.

"Relax, mister. All you gotta say is no."

'Really?,' Mark thought, having already said the word, "No." He looked over at the window again, but the woman was gone.

With a sigh, Mark rolled over onto his other side and closed his eyes once more.

Sure enough, an hour later there was yet another knock on his door.

"How many times do I have to say, NO?"

There was no response, only the sound of someone climbing down off his truck and walking away.

Thankfully, he was not disturbed the

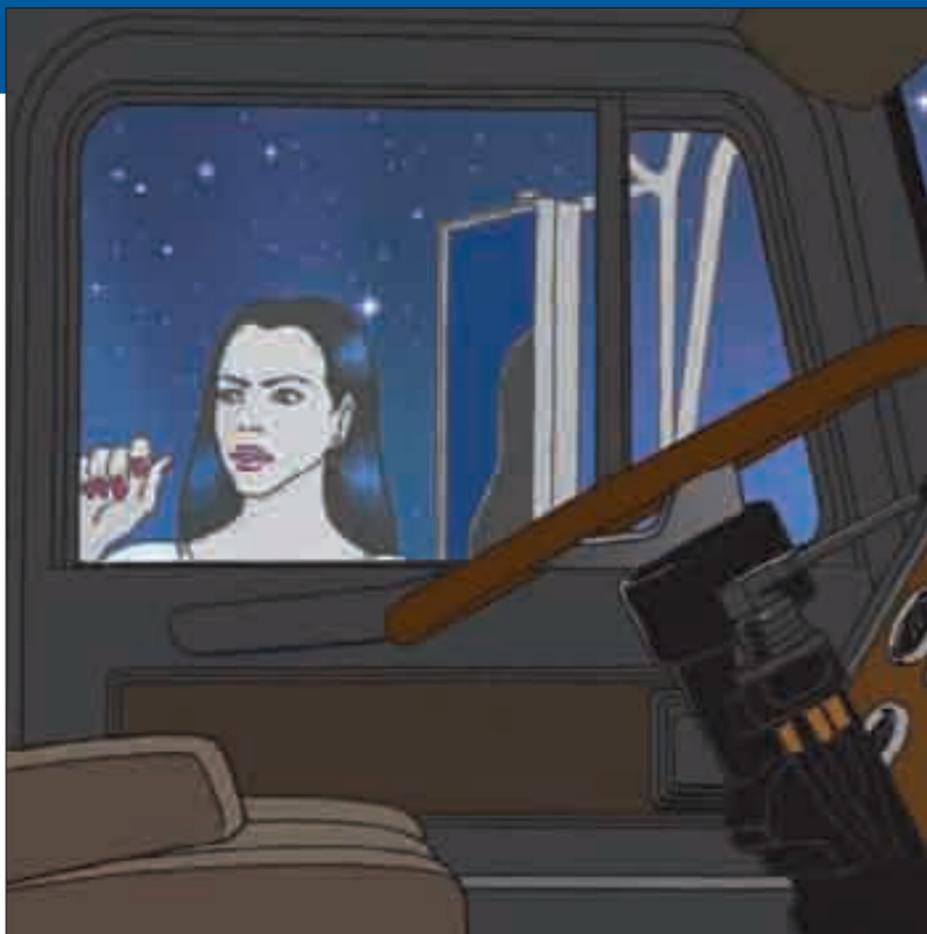


Illustration by Glenn McEvoy

rest of the night.

Mark awoke when the sun began streaming in through his front windshield. Still sleepy and wishing it was one of his days off, he threw the sheets off and kneeled up in bed. There was little movement in the lot so early in the morning and that's why he noticed a dark blue van drive into the lot and stop in front of the long row of trucks Mark was parked in. In moments, three women emerged from three separate trucks, walked across the lot and got inside the van. When the third woman was inside, the van drove off, passing the fuel pumps and restaurant and continuing onto the highway without stopping.

The whole pick-up seemed familiar to him somehow and then he recalled that he'd seen this same van making a similar pick-up a week or so ago, only that time there had been just two women. He remembered the van because at the time he'd thought the van had looked a lot like a school bus picking up kids for school.

He wondered if these girls were actually still in school, and the thought of it made him shudder.

At breakfast Mark ran into a driver he'd seen at the truck stop the past few weeks and joined the man at his table.

As Mark ate, the man just looked at him with a quizzical look. "What? What is it?" Mark asked.

"You look terrible," he said. "Your eyes are red and there's bags under them."

Mark took a bite of his breakfast sandwich. "I didn't get much sleep. There was someone knocking on my door every half-hour."

"Where'd you park?"

"Out in the lot, that way," Mark jabbed a thumb over his shoulder. "At the north edge near the trees."

The other driver laughed.

"What's so funny?"

"Of course they were knocking on your door. You were parked in Party Row all night."

"Party row?"

"It's where you park if you're looking for a good time."

"Ah," Mark said, making the connection between the knocks on his door and the van collecting the girls each morning. "But they're so young."

"That's the way it is now with human trafficking. The girls are young, really young. They get bought and sold and wound up being forced into prostitution by people who are able to control them."

Mark had heard of groups like Truckers Against Trafficking, but he'd always thought they were all about smuggling illegals into the US or Canada, not child prostitution. That was something that was a problem in, well...third-world countries.

"If everyone knows what's going on, why don't they do something about it?" Mark asked.

"The police do shut them down, but they just move down the highway to the next stop. Think of it this way...it might be a new problem in the trucking industry, but that doesn't change the fact that it's still the world's oldest profession." Mark thought about that a long time. □

—Mark Dalton returns next month in Part 2 of *Human Traffic on the Road*.

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](http://fleetsmart.gc.ca). Both are also available in audio book format.



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TransCore Canadian Spot Market Freight Index 2007-2011								
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	% Change Y-O-Y	% Change M-O-M
Jan	173	214	140	171	222	220	1%	1%
Feb	174	217	117	182	248	222	-10%	1%
Mar	228	264	131	249	337	276	-18%	24%
Apr	212	296	142	261	300	266	-11%	-3%
May	280	316	164	283	307			
Jun	288	307	185	294	315			
Jul	219	264	156	238	245			
Aug	235	219	160	240	270			
Sep	206	203	180	234	263			
Oct	238	186	168	211	251			
Nov	227	143	157	215	252			
Dec	214	139	168	225	217			

TransCore Canadian Spot Market Freight Index 2007-2011

## TransCore's Canadian Freight Index dips slightly in April

**TORONTO, Ont** – TransCore's Canadian spot market freight index saw a 3% decline in April, down from a high mark set in March 2012, but remains well above recessionary levels. Year-over-year volumes were down 11% from the record highs in 2011.

Cross-border postings continued to dominate in April accounting for 73% of activity by Loadlink's Canadian customers. Intra-Canada postings made up 23% of the total load volumes.

Top regions for import loads into Canada were: Ontario 55%; Western 22%; Quebec 20%; and Atlantic 3%.

Top regions for import equipment into Canada were: Ontario 50%; Western 24%; Quebec 22%; Atlantic 4%.

Top regions for loads within Canada were: Western 48%; Ontario 25%; Quebec 20%; and Atlantic 7%.

Total equipment postings in March decreased 3% from the previous month, while year-over-year capacity was up 19% from March 2011. Capacity has tightened compared to earlier in the year; however equipment availability remains more abundant than the tight capacity crunch and record low from April 2011. □

## US for-hire truck tonnage drops in April

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – US for-hire truck tonnage fell 1.1% in April, on the heels of a revised 0.6% gain in March.

The seasonally-adjusted index was up 3.5% compared to April 2011, which is stronger than March's 3.1% year-over-year improvement.

Tonnage is up 3.8% year to date over the same period last year, according to the index compiled by the American Trucking Associations.

"While April's decrease was a little disappointing, the March gain turned out to be stronger than originally thought," ATA chief economist Bob Costello said. "The ups and downs so far this year are similar to other economic indicators. April's decrease also matches with an economy that is likely to grow slightly slower in the second quarter than in the first quarter," Costello added. He reiterated last month's message, noting that the industry should not expect the rate of growth seen over the last couple of years, when tonnage grew 5.8% in both 2010 and 2011. "I continue to expect tonnage to moderate from the pace over the last two years. Annualized growth in the 3% to 3.9% range seems more likely." □

## Canadian rates drop in March

**TORONTO, Ont.** – The cost of ground transportation for Canadian shippers decreased 1.7% in March when compared with February results, according to the latest results from the Canadian General Freight Index (CGFI). The results mark the first decrease the index has seen since February 2011, however, costs are still up 8.1% year-over-year.

The Base Rate Index, which excludes the impact of accessorial charges assessed by carriers, de-

creased by 1.77% when compared to February 2012.

Average fuel surcharges assessed by carriers have seen an increase from 20.42% of base rates in February to 21.9% in March.

"The results in this month's index were driven by a downward trend in domestic truckload and transborder LTL, while domestic LTL saw a marginal increase," said Doug Payne, president and COO of Nulogx. □

## OEMs may have to reduce build rates

**NASHVILLE, Ind.** – FTR Associates says another slow month for Class 8 truck orders in May, means OEMs may have to slow their build rates.

Preliminary data from FTR shows Class 8 orders of 17,650 units in May, up 5% from a weak April but down 24% compared to the same month last year.

The annualized order numbers for the past three-month period shows a forecast of 216,700 units. When measured over the December through February period, orders were on pace to reach 308,000 units on an annualized rate.

"The net orders for May were in line with our modest expectations," said Eric Starks, president of FTR. "Unfortunately, it is well below where many in the industry were expecting to be at this point in time in the recovery. The ongoing weakness is putting additional pressure on the OEMs to lower their build rates over the next several months. With orders hovering near 17,000 units per month and production near 25,000 units per month, it is clear there is a disconnect." □

## Purchasers' index continues to shine

**TORONTO, Ont.** – Canada appears to be bucking the international trend of slumping economic news. While the news out of the US, Europe and Asia is focused on slower job growth and output, Canadian manufacturing business conditions improved to the greatest extent in eight months during May, according to the RBC Canadian Manufacturing Purchasing Managers Index.

The headline RBC PMI – a composite indicator designed to provide a single-figure snapshot of the health of the manufacturing sector – signalled a strong improvement in Canadian manufacturing business conditions during May.

At 54.7, up from 53.3 in April, the RBC PMI recorded the strongest monthly improvement since September 2011 and slightly above the historical average for the series (54.3).

The RBC PMI found that both output and new orders increased further in May, with firms generally citing greater client demand. Moreover, the rates of expansion were strong and the fastest in 2012 to date. Manufacturing

employment increased for the fourth consecutive month in May, while the rates of input and output price inflation both slowed from those recorded in April.

"The Canadian manufacturing sector has proven to be quite resilient over the past several months against a backdrop of market uncertainty and softening conditions in many other parts of the world. Employment gains across the sector have been particularly strong since the beginning of the year, with the overall rate of job creation rising at the fastest pace since September 2011," said Craig Wright, senior vice-president and chief economist, RBC. "Manufacturing plays an important role in the country's economic growth and we expect Canada's GDP to grow by 2.6 per cent in 2012."

The Index, conducted in association with Markit, a global financial information services company, and the Purchasing Management Association of Canada (PMAC), offers a comprehensive and early indicator of trends in the Canadian manufacturing sector. □



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**MISSISSAUGA, Ont.** – The driver shortage is – to put it mildly – one of the more contentious issues in the world of trucking. The division of opinions couldn't be more stark, with one side arguing that the shortage is, perhaps, the single-greatest issue facing the future of trucking, while the other side claims that the alleged shortage is mere myth.

Our June cover story, "CTA issues landmark report," examined the issue via the Canadian Trucking Alliance's report, touted by the group as one of the most "comprehensive and honest" attempts to address the problem to date. The report, compiled by CTA's Blue Ribbon Task Force on the Driver Shortage, attempts to tackle both questions surrounding the shortage as well as solutions to fixing the problem. The need for increases in pay, training, and quality of life were among the possible fixes listed in the report, but will really keep drivers in their seats? We went to the Husky Truck Stop in Missis-



**Truck Stop Question**

ADAM LEDLOW

*What does the industry need to do to combat the driver shortage?*

sauga, Ont. to find what drivers say the industry can do to help recruit and retain more drivers.



Gerald Deley

**Gerald Deley**, a driver with McKevitt Trucking out of Mississauga, Ont.,

says that almost as important as pay is trucking company's willingness to support a work-life balance for their employees.

"The main thing is – for the young people – the money and getting home almost every weekend," Deley said. "Sometimes when they say they're going to get you home, some of the companies, they don't get you home. That's a big part: home time and pay."

**Haynesley Bain**, a driver with United Van Lines out of Mississauga, Ont., says new drivers should be getting a greater amount of on-road experience under their belts via apprenticeships, noting that learning the



Haynesley Bain

ins and outs of the industry from veterans will help green drivers decide if trucking is the right career for them.

"I think they should have a program going on where these guys, new drivers, get into the business and all that should go on the road with the experienced drivers a certain amount, and the driver should get certain pay for training these guys," Bain said. "Let them see, let them sit there, go take a couple of trips and see what (the experienced driver) does, and you got your questions, you ask them."

"That's why a lot of these companies don't have the drivers. Because they're not willing either to put the money into it, to get them the experience."



Dalgit Heer

**Dalgit Heer**, a driver with Canada Cartage out of Brampton, Ont., says that pay is, without question, the number one force keeping drivers out of the industry.

Heer says that paying drivers adequately could have a domino effect on the industry: companies will be happy because they're able to retain more drivers, and drivers will opt to do their job better because they're taken care of financially.

**Michael Gower**, an Ayr, Ont.-based driver, says that the driver shortage is a myth – plain and simple. "If this alleged shortage was true, then freight would be stacked up at dock doors," Gower told *Truck News*. "If it was true, CEO's of major manufacturers would be on the front page of *The Globe and Mail* business section bemoaning the fact that they can't get their product to market. If the alleged driver shortage was true, then the value of drivers would have shot up as would their remuneration just like the value of corn and soybeans."

"What fleets suffer from is driver churn due to the low driver pay and poor driver treatment. If carriers would solve – they know how to do it – their HR problems and stop the revolving door then their problems would go away." □

– Do you have a topic idea for the Truck Stop Question? Contact Adam Ledlow on Twitter at [Twitter.com/adamledlow](https://twitter.com/adamledlow) or by e-mail at [adam@transportationmedia.ca](mailto:adam@transportationmedia.ca) and we may feature your question in an upcoming issue of *Truck News*.



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