

TRUCK NEWS

March 2013 Volume 33, Issue 3

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

Trucking telematics

You've got data.
Now, your
insurer wants it.

By James Menzies

MISSISSAUGA, Ont. — Insurance companies love data. They really do. And they're very good at analyzing and interpreting data. So, it should come as little surprise that insurance providers are looking for ways to tap into the telematics data being generated by their fleet customers.

The term telematics is loosely defined as driver behaviour or vehicle performance data that's transmitted from a vehicle to a Web site or other device for analysis. The term insurance telematics is just now entering the Canadian trucking industry's dialect, though in other parts of the world such as Europe, it's practically mainstream.

Scott Cober, vice-president, national leader with Marsh Canada's trucking practice, told the Toronto chapter of the Fleet Safety Council recently that by 2017, there will be 89 million users of usage-based insurance around the world. Usage-based insurance, or UBI, can be broken down into two categories: Pay As You Drive (where premiums are set based on mileage driven) or Pay How You Drive (where premiums reflect driving behaviour, as measured by on-board telematics).

Insurance companies are particu-

Continued on page 14



Tail Blazers

This Quebec fleet says it's saving 10,000 gallons of diesel a month with trailer tails. So, why are they illegal in Canada?

By Carroll McCormick

MONTREAL, Que. — Taking yet another step to reduce fuel consumption, Montreal-based Groupe Trans-West has installed trailer tails on the 120 trailers it uses for US-bound trips. The carrier values the monthly fuel savings at \$54,000.

"You cannot really calculate the savings in percentages, because different tractors have different fuel consumption. In our tests, the best calculation was that for every 1,000 miles running you will save six to eight US gallons of fuel," says Pierre Savard, director of training, Trans-West.

The carrier logs 90% of its miles in the US, where trailer tails are permitted. If Canadian regulations change to permit their use north of the border, fuel savings for Trans-West could increase another 10%.

Continued on page 11

QUICK PAYBACK: Trans-West fleet director Michel Morin opens a fuel-saving TrailerTail. The devices must be folded in while in Canada, but even so, they're paying big dividends on US miles. *Photo by Carroll McCormick*

Sprint to the Arctic



The Mercedes-Benz Sprinter may be among the smallest of commercial vehicles. Can it perform in the harshest of conditions?

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Inside This Issue...

- Fleets get social:** Surveys indicate Canadian fleets are slow to join the social media party. But, those who are getting involved say they're reaping the benefits. Page 20
- Shoping for used iron?:** A glut of low-mileage used trucks in good condition means truckers are having to get over their fears of DPFs. Page 33
- New direction:** Muir's Cartage, one of Ontario's longest-running fleets, will no longer use company drivers. Page 39
- Like a lamb to slaughter:** Mark Dalton needs a load. Bad. Even if it's a live load – literally. Page 60



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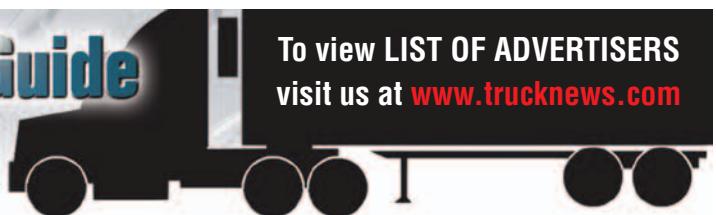
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The risk in making safety a competitive battleground

The advent of the Compliance, Safety, Accountability (CSA) program in the US has had a significant impact not only on how carriers manage their equipment and drivers, but also on how they sell their services.

Never before has the safety performance of motor carriers operating in the US, including those from Canada, been so readily available to the public and the shipper community. Carriers that have managed their CSA scores effectively and stand out as top-performers among their peer groups are using that to their advantage when soliciting new business and negotiating rates. And who can blame them?

When several carriers are being considered for a piece of business, with rates being equal or close to it, CSA scores are undoubtedly entering the discussion. A carrier sales rep may even do the legwork and present its own scores along with those of its competitors for comparison. Others may subtly point their customer in the right direction and encourage them to do their own research. This tactic is usually accompanied with some degree of fear mongering and the lecturing of shippers on their societal obligations to choose the safest carrier available.

"I think CSA is a game-changer, and while it's imperfect, it provides a more comprehensive view of each car-

Editorial Comment

JAMES MENZIES

rier's safety potential," Robert Low, founder of Prime Inc. said during a fall Driving for Profit seminar. "And now, with the public nature of most of that information, shippers have at least some implicit obligation, if not more than that, to review that information and to make decisions not just based on the lowest price. CSA is going to be a watershed for safe truckers and truckers who can manage CSA and keep those scores good."

At first, it would seem the trucking industry would be well served by moving the discussion with shippers away from rates and towards on-road safety performance. Theoretically, this should motivate carriers to place extra emphasis on their safety programs and if a direct correlation can be made between a company's CSA performance and its ability to win new business, getting buy-in for crucial safety programs from upper management should be that much easier. What could be wrong with that?

My concern is that, as a carrier's safety performance, and its CSA scores

specifically, become more heavily leveraged in the freight-bidding environment, that carriers will be less likely to share their best safety practices, that they'll hold those secrets more closely to their vests than they have in the past. I've always enjoyed covering the trucking industry because carriers, though competitors, have traditionally been willing to share insight and expertise on what works – and what doesn't – in managing their fleets.

This is especially true when it comes to safety, as it should be. Keeping our industry's collective workforce safe and sending them home to their families at the end of each trip should be a shared goal. It's difficult to imagine it being any different.

However, when discussing CSA in general, and this issue more specifically, with a couple of fellow trucking journalists on a recent press trip, one of my American peers noted that carrier executives in the US are already more reticent to speak openly about their safety programs, for fear of losing a competitive edge. It seems that an unintended consequence of CSA is that it has created a competitive environment in which CSA scores are so highly valued and heavily guarded, that motor carriers are

less inclined to share information and best practices that could lead to a safer industry as a whole.

There's nothing wrong with viewing safety as a competitive advantage; safe carriers have earned that right. But in my opinion, carriers have a moral obligation to share information that could help protect drivers and other workers within the industry, no matter who they work for. □

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Small fleets; large worries

Large carriers are always in the spotlight – they drive trucking association policy, are usually the first to test new technologies, and get a disproportionate share of the headlines. But the reality of the Canadian trucking market is that it's dominated by small carriers.

Carriers possessing fewer than 10 trucks and earning less than \$1 million in annual revenues make up more than 60% of the country's for-hire carrier population.

During the five-year economic growth spurt prior to the recession, their numbers increased considerably, rising by about 20%. And they have hung on through the recession and the subsequent slow recovery relatively well considering the challenges they faced.

As resilient as small carriers have proven to be through the greatest

The view with Lou

LOU SMYRLIS

recession since the 1930s, however, there is good reason to worry about their future.

Simply, the numbers I'm looking at look troublesome.

Our annual *Transportation Buying Trends Survey* of carrier executives across the country, conducted in December and January, found that while 38% of large carriers expect to grow their business volumes in 2013, only 27% of small carriers expect the same. This divide in carrier projections is borne out by research conducted by the American Trucking As-

sociations stateside. While large carriers in the US are doing better, small carriers actually experienced a 4.6% drop in freight volumes from September 2011 to August 2012.

The same divide is found when looking at rates. While three quarters of large carriers expect to charge higher rates, only 39% of small carriers do.

Our research, conducted in partnership with the Canadian Industrial Transportation Association, Cormark Securities and CITT, is also finding a wide gap in purchasing plans based on fleet size.

While two thirds of large fleets (100 or more Class 8 vehicles) intend to purchase new trucks in 2013 only 17% of small fleets (5-9 trucks) have similar plans.

Considering these differences it's no surprise that large carriers are considerably more upbeat about business prospects in 2013 than

small carriers. Large carrier optimism for 2013 averages 6.6 out of 10, compared to just 5.6 for small carriers.

Seems our smaller carriers have some big challenges ahead of them. But I wouldn't count them out because the other reality is that transportation in Canada is a tough business. There are many lanes and many customers which simply don't make economic sense for large carriers to take on.

I believe there will always be a need for well-managed, niche-seeking small carriers in the Canadian marketplace. They have some challenges to overcome, and their numbers may shrink some as a result, but they will not be going away. □

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

Did you know?

Carrier plans to purchase new trucks

More than half of Canada's for-hire carriers have plans to purchase new trucks this year, our latest *Transportation Buying Trends Survey* of trucking executives shows. The national survey, conducted in late December and early January and including responses from more than 100 carrier executives from across Canada, found 53% ready to invest in new heavy-duty trucks in 2013. That represents a notable increase from the 47% who said likewise last year and certainly a sizeable increase from the 31% willing to

invest in new trucks in the midst of the recession back in 2009.

Purchasing plans, however, differ considerably on both a regional basis and by fleet size. Carriers headquartered in Western Canada are much more likely to be purchasing Class 8 trucks this year with more than two thirds indicating they have such plans. In comparison, only 44% of carriers from Central Canada will be purchasing new trucks and 57% from Eastern Canada. The differences in purchasing plans are even more differentiated when fleet size is taken into consideration. Whereas two thirds of large fleets have plans to purchase new iron, only 17% of small carriers indicate that they do.

For the purposes of the survey, small carriers have 5-9 Class 8 vehicles; medium-sized carriers have 10-99 Class 8 vehicles; and large carriers have

Intent to purchase new Class 8 trucks in 2013 – By Region



Intent to purchase new Class 8 trucks in 2013 – By Fleet Size



– *Transportation Buying Trends Survey*, Transportation Media Research

more than 100 Class 8 vehicles. The annual survey is conducted by our research division in partnership

with the Canadian Industrial Transportation Association, Cormark Securities and CITT. □

CLASS 8 TRUCK SALES TRENDS

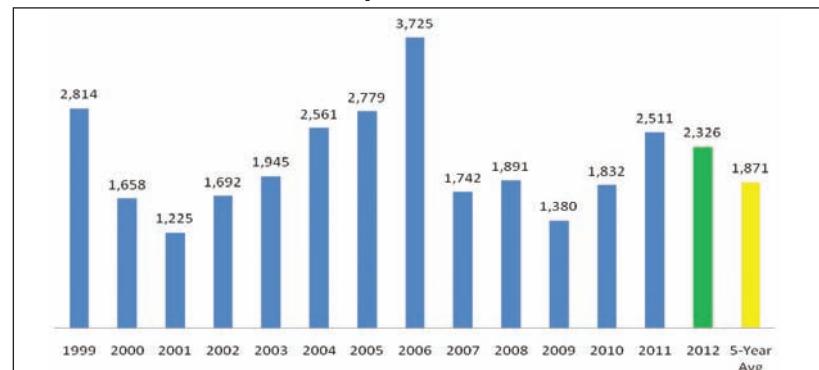
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Class 8 truck sales in December, although above 2,000 once again, continued their 3-month slide below last year's totals. The top three market share leaders – Freightliner, International and Kenworth – all suffered setbacks compared to the previous year. Kenworth's numbers in particular took a turn for the worse during the month. Still, this was the sixth best December total since 1999. Monthly sales were also about 500 units above the 5-year average. Another positive note, both Mack and Western Star experienced gains from December last year.

Monthly Class 8 Sales – Dec 12

OEM	This Month	Last Year
Freightliner	575	696
International	224	288
Kenworth	276	534
Mack	314	121
Peterbilt	317	308
Volvo	357	403
Western Star	263	161
TOTALS	2326	2511

Historical Comparison – Dec 12 Sales

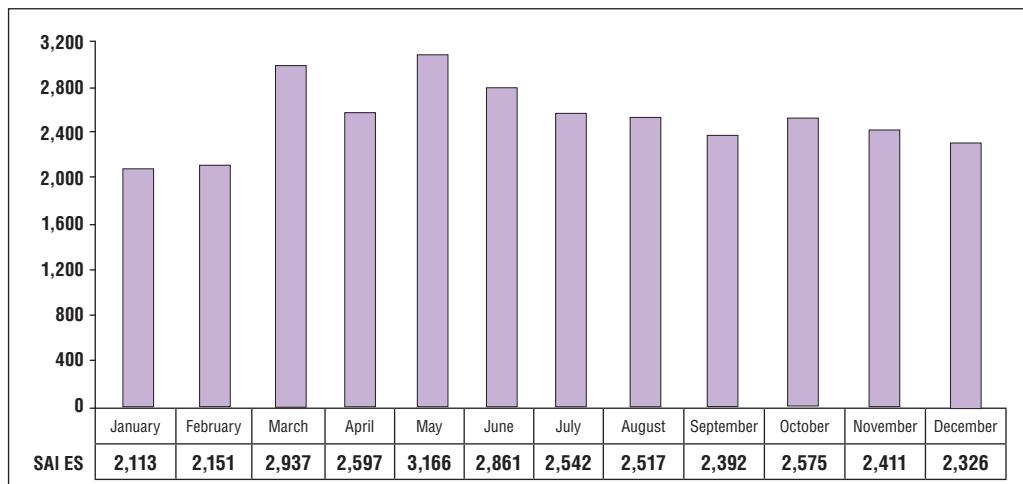


Class 8 Sales (YTD Dec 12) by Province and OEM

OEM	BC	ALTA	SASK	MAN	ONT	QUE	NB	NS	PEI	NF	CDA
Freightliner	608	822	222	622	3,583	1,271	343	143	29	29	7,672
Kenworth	648	2,432	392	212	997	1,045	125	0	0	0	5,851
Mack	103	415	200	111	951	391	82	42	0	32	2,327
International	154	764	81	300	1,888	861	191	81	26	62	4,408
Peterbilt	373	1,410	313	533	721	612	165	28	0	0	4,155
Volvo	232	305	110	247	1,839	786	111	78	0	9	3,717
Western Star	450	880	92	74	350	404	73	113	7	13	2,456
TOTALS	2,568	7,028	1,410	2,099	10,329	5,370	1,090	485	62	145	30,586

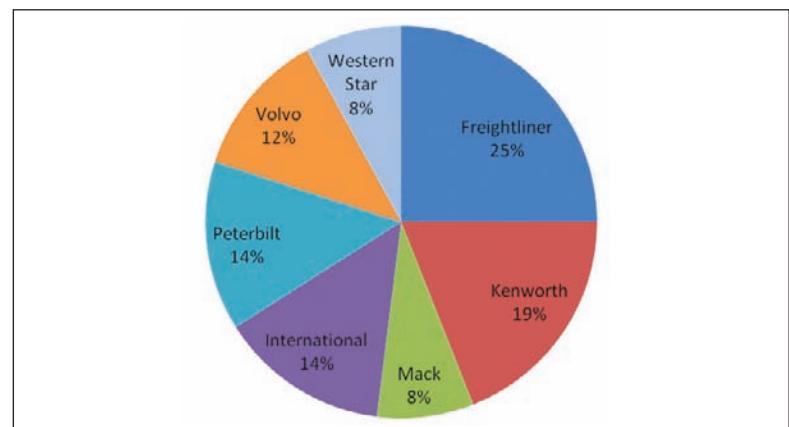
Class 8 truck sales are in their third year of recovery following their crash in 2009. The 30,586 trucks sold make 2012 the fourth best sales year since 1999 and almost 9,000 above the 5-year average. It could have been the third best year but slumping sales over the final quarter nixed that opportunity. The 30,586 trucks sold were also well within our own forecasted estimated range of 30,319 to 31,227. Assuming an 8-year life cycle for Class 8 trucks (a truck could go through several owners), there are more than 35,000 trucks due for renewal. But many fleet owners are reluctant to purchase trucks that actually add to their fleet size due to concerns about the slow growing economy. We forecast sales in the range of 35,000 to 35,986 Class 8 trucks for 2013.

12-Month Sales Trends



Truck sales came in above the 2,000 mark for the 15th straight month, reminiscent of the industry's capacity boom years of 2005 to 2007. A worrisome trend, however, is that sales have been declining each month since October and have also been in general decline since the year's high mark of 3,166 back in May.

Market Share Class 8 – Dec 12 YTD



The sales totals for 2012 now completed, it's time to weed out the winners and losers. Freightliner, last year's Canadian market leader, had a banner year in terms of sales volumes and market share, commanding a quarter of Class 8 sales. Kenworth is in the number two spot for marketshare and enjoying the fact that its strong western network is able to tap into the stronger western economy. But the company faltered in December and ends up with less than 20% market share. Troubled Navistar International finished the year with 14% market share.

Source: Canadian Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association

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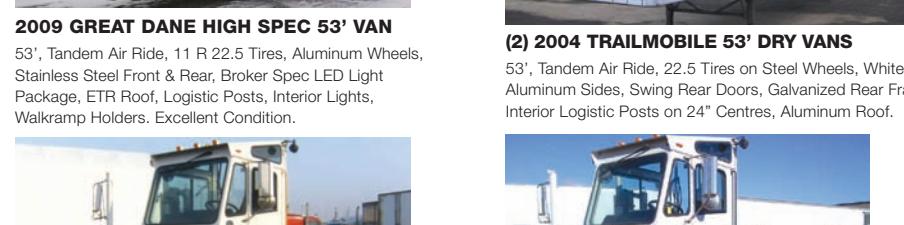
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IN BRIEF

Truck News golf tourney to tee off June 4

UXBRIDGE, Ont. – The eighth annual *Truck News/Chevron* charity golf tournament will be held on June 4 at Wooden Sticks Golf Club in Uxbridge, Ont.

"We are happy to be working with Trucking for Wishes again to send one or two children with life-threatening conditions on their dream vacation," said Kathy Penner, associate publisher of *Truck News*. "We will have a full field of 144 golfers. The entry fee includes all competitions, prize draws, lunch, dinner. Don't miss this great event."

For more information or to register, visit www.golfingforwishes.com. □

Canadian Class 8 truck sales reached fourth best year ever in 2012

TORONTO, Ont. – Sales of Class 8 trucks hit 30,586 in 2012, according to data released by the Canadian Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association. That made 2012 the fourth best year since 1999 in Class 8 truck sales. The year's totals were on track to make 2012 the third best year since 1999 but a slowdown in the final quarter nixed that opportunity.

The 30,586 trucks sold in Canada were well within our own forecasted estimated range of 30,319 to 31,227.

How do Class 8 sales look for 2013? This year is particularly difficult to forecast because the industry appears to be on a holding pattern in terms of adding capacity. Assuming an eight-year life cycle for Class 8 trucks (a truck could go through several owners), there are more than 35,000 trucks due for renewal. But many fleet owners are reluctant to purchase trucks that actually add to their fleet size due to concerns about the slow-growing economy.

Our research is also finding a wide

gap in purchasing plans based on fleet size. While two thirds of large fleets (100 or more Class 8 vehicles) intend to purchase new trucks in 2013 only 17% of small fleets (five to nine trucks) have similar plans. Also important is that while 38% of large carriers expect to grow their business volumes in 2013 only 27% of small carriers expect the same. And while three quarters of large carriers expect to charge higher rates, only 39% of small carriers do. As a result, large carriers are considerably more upbeat about business prospects in 2013 than small carriers. Large carrier optimism for 2013 averages out at 6.6 out of 10, compared to just 5.6 for small carriers.

Balancing the reality that small carriers (which make up three quarters of Canada's for-hire fleets) won't be a factor in truck sales along with the fact there are many trucks up for replacement, we are being cautious with this year's projections. We forecast sales in the range of 35,000-35,986 Class 8 trucks for 2013. □

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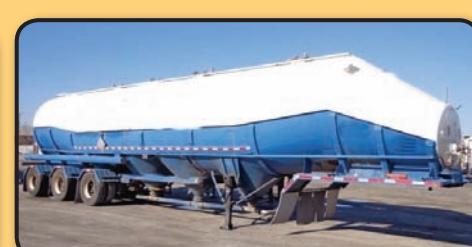
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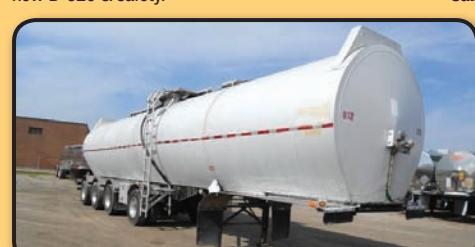
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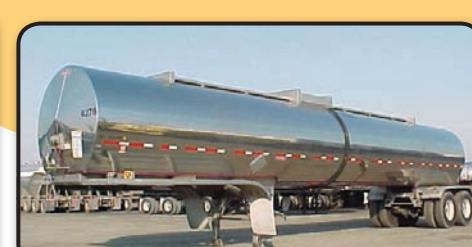
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BORDER

Ambassador Bridge seeks approval to carry more hazardous materials

By Ron Stang

WINDSOR, Ont. – The company that owns the Ambassador Bridge is applying for permission to allow a wider number of hazardous materials substances to be trucked across the more than one-mile link between Windsor and Detroit.

Up to now, more dangerous HazMat shipments have been restricted to the Detroit-Windsor Truck Ferry, which has several daily crossings. The Blue Water Bridge between Sarnia and Port Huron, 90 kms north, also allows those HazMat transfers with restrictions such as hours and escort vehicles.

Ambassador Bridge management did not respond to requests for an interview. But a spokesman for the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) suggested the application might have to do with the fact the new \$260-million Gateway Project – which links the bridge seamlessly to a series of freeways and which has a designated truck road and ramp – was completed last year.

"I'm going to assume (it's) because of the changes that the Gateway Project brought about, meaning direct freeway access," MDOT's Rob Morosi said.

With Gateway "there had been some changes primarily with the routing of trucks not going through the neighbourhood anymore, having their own designated ramp, which obviously played into the factor of reviewing (the bridge's) application," he said.

The plan, which is being endorsed by MDOT, would allow flammable and combustible liquids, as well as corrosives, to be carried across the structure, with some provisions such as escort requirements. Currently flammable and non-flammable, non-poisonous, non-toxic compressed gas and poisonous gases (toxic by inhalation) are allowed, as are flammable solids, and oxidizers and organic peroxides. Explosives, restricted now, would continue to be restricted.

But a chorus of opposition has delayed the timeline for public comment, which was to have concluded Jan. 31, and which now has been extended indefinitely.

Morosi cited specific concerns of Detroit bridge area residents in the city's Mexicantown or Hispanic community. "We haven't decided when the public meeting will be," he said, which likely will require translating documents.

But it could be as long as 18 months after the public comment period ends before a decision is made. Canadian officials are also concerned they were kept out of the loop. Windsor Fire Chief Bruce Montone said his department is tasked with leading the Canadian response to any bridge HazMat emergency, and "my first concern is we need to be consulted."

Montone said he wasn't "telling them what to do, I'm just saying where's the discussion? We have certain expertise that we can bring to the table and offer in terms of thoughts and ideas."

Windsor West MP Brian Masse, co-chair of a federal all-party committee on border issues, said the bridge lacks proper infrastructure



BRING IT ON: The Ambassador Bridge could allow more HazMat loads if it gets its way.

to carry dangerous hazardous materials. He said that at the Blue Water Bridge, there are specific spill containment areas.

"Right now if we have an accident on the Ambassador Bridge, even our general spills from our cars, they're running into the river," he said.

The connecting roads leading

to the Ambassador Bridge from Hwy. 401 – Talbot Rd. and Huron Church Rd. – are designated HazMat routes. Under the Michigan proposal, the Windsor-Detroit tunnel, which currently is allowed to handle some hazardous materials, would ban all hazardous materials.

"The tunnel is inherently most vulnerable to hazardous materials

due to the limited ability of vehicle occupants to avoid toxic fumes," the MDOT report says.

Currently trucks carrying all forms of HazMat between Windsor and Detroit can use the Detroit-Windsor Truck Ferry. Ferry vice-president Gregg Ward said the ferry carries 40-50 trucks a day, the "two main categories" being flammables and corrosives.

But Ward said his concern is that because the bridge is privately owned, it means "the state doesn't inspect it, so they can't even make the assumption that nothing will happen when they don't even know what the condition of the bridge is."

The new Detroit River International Crossing (DRIC), a bridge that will link Windsor's new border highway to Michigan interstates, still years away from opening, would be designed to carry all forms of HazMat. □



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CANADA

CFMS to return for 50th conference

By James Menzies

TORONTO, Ont. – The Canadian Fleet Maintenance Seminar will see its 50th birthday after all.

The storied event, which brings together fleet maintenance managers from across Canada, was cancelled last year, casting its future in doubt.

This year, however, the 50th rendition of the event will proceed, albeit in a downsized format. The downsizing applies not only to the event itself, but importantly, to the cost of attending as well. That was one of the objectives when new organizers, the Toronto, Belleville and Ottawa branches of the Automotive Transportation Service Superintendents Association (ATSSA), took over management of the conference.

"We needed the time off last year to see if we could do it a little differently, a little bit cheaper," Dan Cushing, president of the Toronto chapter of ATSSA told *Truck News*. "We wanted to make it more attractive price-wise."

The other challenge was that, under the previous format, maintenance managers struggled with the commitment of spending two or more days away from the shop to attend the conference, Cushing said.

The new CFMS will take place Apr. 24 at Paradise Banquet hall in Concord, Ont. The cost to attend has been ratcheted down to \$135 per person, including lunch and dinner. The fee also covers the seminars,



ITS' BACK: CFMS is returning this year with a condensed format, so attendees can get back to the shop.

which this year will include: Are fault lights keeping you up at night?; Annual safety inspection – Compliant with the NSC; and New products, trends and technician training. The Volvo Fleet Maintenance Manager of the Year award will be presented at the event as well.

And as before, a trade show will be held, but Cushing said costs to exhibit at, and to sponsor the event have been decreased to make it more accessible. The changes, said Cushing, have been well received.

"So far it has been pretty positive," he said of early feedback received by ATSSA. "There were a lot of rumours on the street, people thinking we weren't coming back. The more we talk to them, the more they're getting involved."

More information on the event can be found at www.cfms-atssa.ca. □

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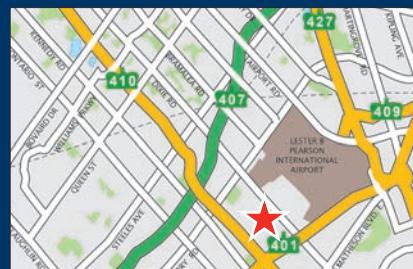
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Inaugural TMTC conference set to roll

KING CITY, Ont. – Plans are well underway for the very first Transportation Maintenance and Technology Council event, to be held May 6-8 at the Kingbridge Conference Centre.

Organizers say the new maintenance event has "something for everyone" and will feature informative seminars, workshops and panel discussions focused on current issues affecting transportation businesses.

The event will also include a trade fair, which will be unique in that it will be set up along a 1/8th of a mile indoor walking track. Organizers say this eliminates concerns about preferential booth locations and also makes set-up and tear-down simpler, since all exhibits will consist of small pop-up displays and literature (the format won't fit 10x10 or 20x20 booths).

Exhibitors and attendees are urged to register before March 29 to ensure an on-site guest room. There are only 124 rooms available, organizers say.

A draft program and registration forms are available online at www.tmtconline.ca. □

Canada's LTL sector ripe for consolidation

By Lou Smyrlis

TORONTO, Ont. – Canada's Less-than-truckload sector is ripe for consolidation, Cormark transportation market analyst David Newman told transportation industry professionals during a webinar on industry trends.

"I think it's going to be a case of who is going to be the first to blink and then we will finally see consolidation. The truckload business is scaleable and they've already right-sized. LTL isn't scaleable. If you have a case of having to do something about your fixed costs, then that's a case for consolidation," Newman said.

Newman cited TransForce's recent stake in Vitran as indication large players may be getting ready for more than the small, bolt-on type acquisitions that have dominated transportation

M&A activity the past couple of years.

Newman, fresh from cross-country visits with Canada's leading carriers, said several large players, such as Contrans and Trimac, are doing extremely well and are in a good position to consolidate the industry.

"Canadian government is certainly trying to prod business to use the dead money in their balance sheets. Companies are well armed with cash, they've gone through the recession, and are a bit older now and certainly valuations look good so if you are going to sell your business, certainly this would be an opportune time. We have a few catalysts for consolidation to happen," he reiterated. In addition to LTL, Newman believes carriers on the tank side of the business may be targets for acquisition. □

Canadian transportation sector to stay strong in 2013: Report

MONTRÉAL, Que. – Canada's railway, airline and trucking sector earnings should stay strong this year despite forecasts of modest economic growth on both sides of the Canada-US border, according to a report from the *Canadian Press*. Sluggish economic growth wasn't able to slow Canadian transportation stocks last year, which outperformed the TSX benchmark with a return of 21%.

Further gains are expected in 2013 even though real GDP growth is forecast at 2% in the US and 1.7% in Canada, according to CIBC World Markets.

"Despite the share price move among the transportation equities in 2012, we still see more upside this year, reflecting the industry's earnings resiliency and cash flow generation," Jacob Bout wrote in a report.

CIBC analysts have upgraded price targets for a string of companies, including Canadian National Railway, Canadian Pacific Railway, WestJet Airlines and TransForce.

It expects Montreal-based CN to focus on capturing "a disproportionate share of freight volume growth" instead of realizing any material improvements to its industry-leading operating efficiency.

Two intermodal customers have already switched to CN while rival CP simplifies its intermodal train design and trims the number of destinations. CN is also well-positioned to double its carloads in crude and export coal and to reap the benefits of a US housing recovery, said Bout.

Meanwhile, industry observers expect the airline industry will improve as it continues to constrain capacity growth and increase prices.

The International Air Transportation Association recently raised its forecast for global airline profits to US\$8.4 billion this year. That would represent a 25% increase from what it expects to have been earned in 2012.

Meanwhile, trucking capacity is expected to get tighter, in part due to a driver shortage that is forecast to widen in the second half of the year.

"We believe this will support freight rates despite the weak economy and any pickup in volumes will result in significant upward pressure on pricing," Bout said.

But Walter Spracklin of RBC Capital Markets said weak economic activity in the fourth quarter resulted in soft prices and volumes for freight carriers. His estimates for 2013 and 2014 remain unchanged but he has tempered his fourth-quarter revenue forecasts for several trucking firms.

Several analysts say industry leader TransForce should continue to expand its profits due to synergies and efficiencies from the integration of Loomis Express and other acquisitions. □

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CANADA

IS THERE ANYTHING THEY CAN'T DO?: We knew low rolling resistance tires were good for fuel economy (4-11%), but do they offer good grip in winter conditions? A new study for Transport Canada indicates there's no trade-off when using low rolling resistance tires in winter.

Low rolling resistance tires perform equally well on packed snow, study suggests

OTTAWA, Ont. – Low rolling resistance (LRR) tires not only improve fuel economy by 4-11%, but they also last as long and perform as well on packed snow as truck tires that are not marketed for low rolling resistance.

Those were the findings of a study from the National Research Councils and Transport Canada, conducted in light of increased market penetration of low rolling resistance tires and complaints from some operators of such tires that they don't perform well on packed snow. Low rolling resistance tires have made considerable inroads into the trucking industry and that trend is likely to continue, thanks to impending EPA and NHTSA rules which will create minimum fuel economy standards beginning in 2014. Canada is set to mirror the US rules with its own requirements, which will encourage the use of low rolling resistance tires on trucks.

"To comply with the proposed Canadian regulations, it is expected that truck manufacturers and importers will increase the penetration of fuel saving technologies, including LRR tires, to equip on vehicles for sale in Canada," Transport Canada announced when releasing the results of its study. "While some manufacturers, importers and truck owner/operators already equip selected vehicles with LRR tires in Canada, some members within the Canadian trucking industry have expressed concerns that LRR tires may have reduced winter road traction performance compared to non-LRR tires, particularly in snow covered road conditions."

To investigate those concerns, the NRC and Transport Canada engaged Smithers-Rapra to test a variety of LRR and non-LRR tires in a series of tests including: dynamometer testing; durability testing to FMVSS 119 test procedures; and performance on snow-covered roads on a test track in Kapuskasing, Ont.

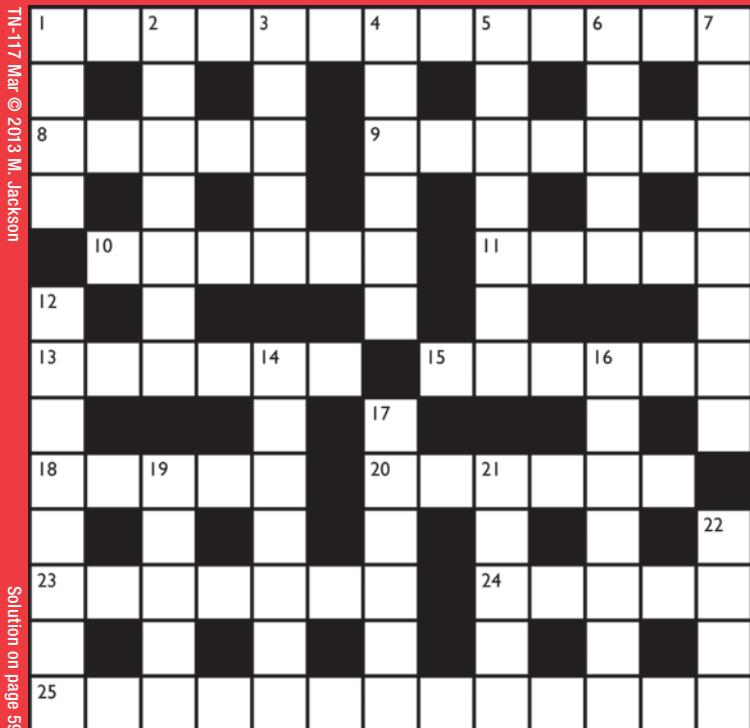
Loaded and unloaded trailers were used in straight-line braking tests using five different configurations of SmartWay-verified LRR tires and one configuration using non-LRR tires. Track conditions featured medium- and medium-hard pack snow.

The trial found that: LRR tires provided 29% less rolling resistance than traditional tires; that all LRR and non-LRR tires passed minimum durability requirements, with no discernable difference between the two tire types; and that LRR tires demonstrated comparable levels of snow traction compared to traditional tires.

"With the exception of the tires that are specifically marketed by their respective manufacturers as a high-traction tire, the results of this preliminary study indicates that the current generation of LRR tires can offer a similar level of snow traction performance as conventional tires, while reducing fuel consumption and emissions," Transport Canada announced.

"Put in the context of Canadian trucking, there are many factors that must be considered when purchasing tires for a tractor and trailer combination. The advent of low rolling resistance tires has given owners and operators one more tire characteristic to consider." □

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QUEBEC

Quebec fleet realizing big savings with trailer tails

Continued from page 1

Trans-West began trials in May 2011 with 10 units it purchased from Hayward, Calif.-based ATDynamics, under the product name TrailerTail. It added 50 more units in 2012 and then went into installation overdrive to equip all of its US-bound trailers with TrailerTails.

The units cost \$2,000 each. Trans-West trucked the TrailerTails home, then shuttled its trailers a few metres down the street to American Road Service, which installed them at a cost of \$400 apiece. Assembly and installation takes about five hours, a straightforward process, according to Savard.

The only special consideration is locating the correct installation points for different trailer types. This depends on the location of the hinges on the trailer doors and the lock rods. Trans-West owns trailers manufactured by Great Dane, Wabash and Utility, for which ATDynamics supplied detailed installation instructions.

Opening and closing a TrailerTail is very easy. A little tug on two short cords unlatches the two sides of the TrailerTail. Gravity pulls the panels down and out into the open position. This takes perhaps eight seconds. Closing a TrailerTail takes perhaps 10 to 12 seconds. It requires just a light upward push with both hands



TAIL BLAZERS: Trailer tails are still not allowed in Canada, but fleets such as Trans-West can still save significant fuel if they run enough US miles to generate a payback.

to buckle the two lower panels on their hinges, then watch the TrailerTail close and check that the folded unit is latched.

Trans-West tested the regulatory waters in Canada by running with the TrailerTails open, but stopped after enforcement officers challenged the practice. "We are asking our drivers now to close the tails in Canada," Savard says.

The first hurdle to overcome in allowing their use in Canada was safety concerns in the case of rear impacts.

"ATDynamics made some changes to the angle of the tail and submitted it to Transport Canada, saying it would not be as dangerous. Now Transport Canada says there

is no problem with rear impact," Savard says.

The second hurdle concerns the definition of the rear extremity of a transport truck. "When the tail was accepted in the US, rear impact was the only concern. Length was not an issue because it was an aerodynamic device added on. It was not considered a part of the bumper-to-bumper truck configuration," Savard explains.

This is not yet the case in Canada. Here, a boat tail (or trailer tail) is considered to be part of the truck, so therefore a 4-ft. boat tail is not permitted. On Oct. 6 2012, however, Transport Canada published a proposed amendment in the *Canada Gazette* to the Motor Vehicle Safety

Regulations that would change the definition of the "rear extremity" of trailers in Canada found in the Canadian Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 223.

Once this amendment comes into force, boat tails meeting certain dimensional requirements will be an acceptable "non-structural protrusion" in the language of the proposed amendment. "Transport Canada accepted the 4-ft. length of the tails. We are waiting for the regulation to be published in the *Canada Gazette Part II*," Savard explains.

Unfortunately, however, the next hurdle more resembles the whole steeplechase. Savard thinks that all of the provinces will need to agree, one by one, to change their provincial laws to declassify tails as a part of the truck proper.

Until that day, drivers will have to pull over once they cross into the US to unfurl their trailer tails, but this is not ideal, Savard explains.

"It is easiest for us if the driver opens the tail in the yard for the whole trip instead of asking the driver to stop after crossing the border. Asking drivers to go outside at -30 C at night is tough. Some will wait to reach a truck stop before opening them, or even not open them at all. We are looking at ways to monitor whether the tails are open. We are experimenting with using a spare reefer connection to tell us if the tail is open." □

Fuel misers

MONTREAL, Que. – In the last six years Trans-West has decreased its fuel consumption by 32%. All of the carrier's tractors and trailers – even its intermodal trailers – are kitted out with wide-base tires, trailer skirts and EcoFlaps, which are perforated mud flaps. Trucks also have central tire inflation and tires are inflated with nitrogen.

Trans-West collects tractor telemetry that profiles in exquisite detail how drivers handle their rigs; ie., for example, it monitors nine variables of brake and Jake brake use and variables such as anticipation and coasting, changing gears, flat shifting and downshifting going up hills. Originally collected to ensure smooth driving and a good sleep for co-drivers, Trans-West has made best driving practices part of its fuel savings regimen.

Fine-tuning the engines also wrings more mileage out of the trucks. This includes verifying fuel pressure and fuel restriction, verifying the integrity of the air-to-air systems to ensure that there are no leaks and verifying the good functioning of the turbos.

Trans-West has cut the maintenance interval for valve adjustments by half and mechanics must be more precise in their use of feeler gauges. Fleet director Michel Morin explains why: "We do a lot of mileage at cruising speed. More accurate valve adjustments add five hp and decreases fuel consumption. This easily adds 0.5 mpg." □

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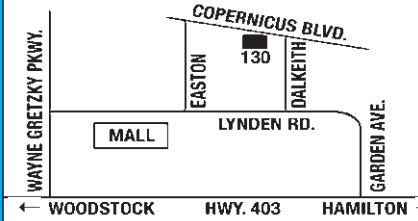


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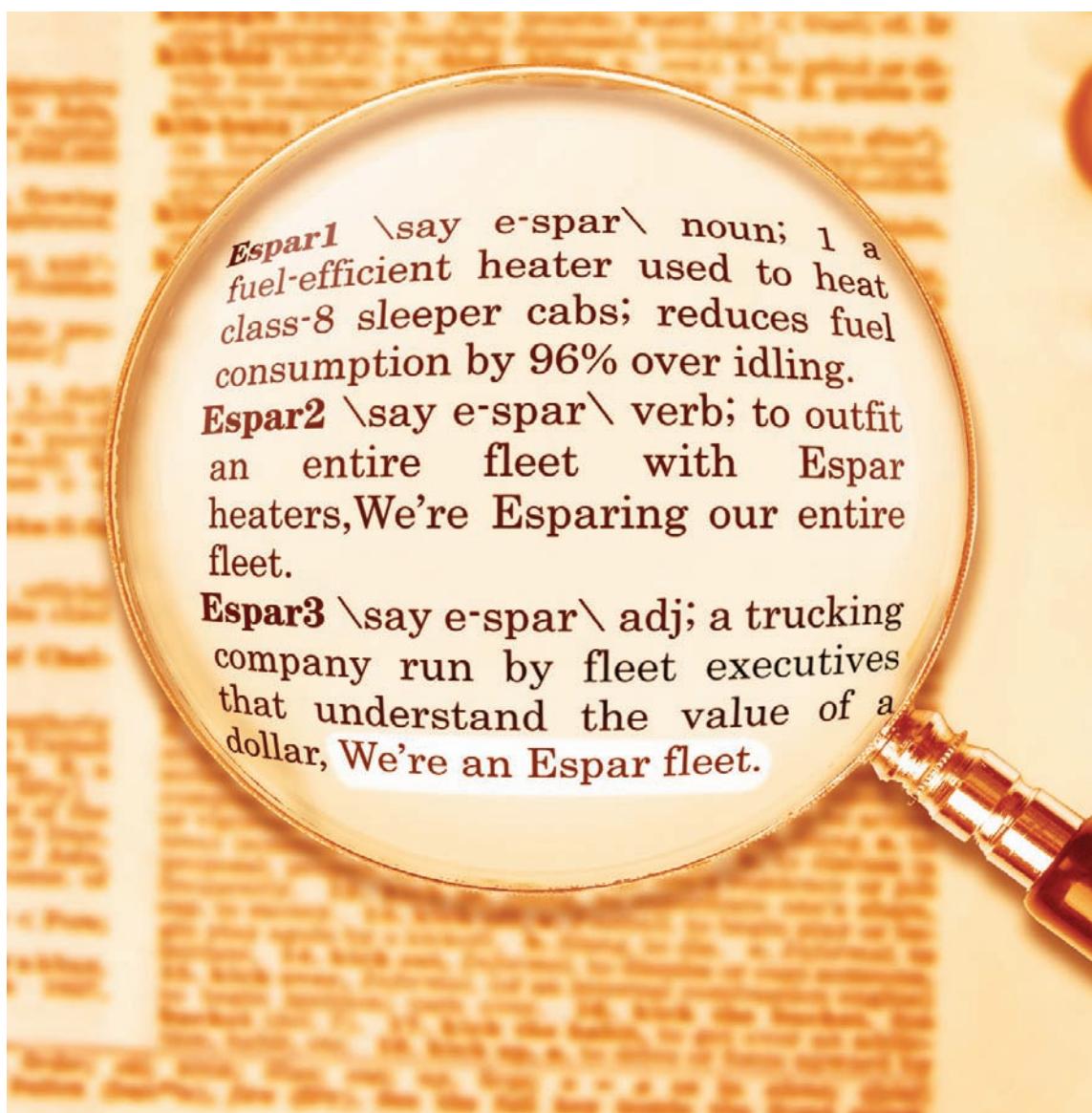
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QUEBEC

Quebec axes permit requirements for some configurations

QUEBEC CITY, Que. — Transports Quebec has announced that it will no longer be requiring special permits for certain vehicle configurations. Those configurations include:

- Vehicles equipped with wide single tires that operate up to 9,000 kgs per axle;
- Quad-axle semi-trailer configurations that operate up to a maximum of 57,500 kgs gross weight (34,000 kgs on trailer axles);
- B-train configurations that operate up to a maximum of 62,500 kgs gross weight;
- Retractable tarpaulins, with extra width of 100 mm on each side.

The changes were announced by Transports Quebec Jan. 30 and were to go into effect Feb. 14. Transports Quebec says carriers who have applied for permits since the Jan. 30 announcement will have been advised by the organization of the upcoming changes and their permit applications would no longer be necessary. Officials are advising carriers who have set up automatic payment renewals of their permits (wide single tires and quad axles at 34,000 kgs, because there are costs associated with these permits) with MTQ that they should cancel this option.

Officials also noted that no refunds will be offered to carriers who paid for permits prior to Jan. 30. □

New Champlain Bridge could be tolled: Report

MONTREAL, Que. — The city of Montreal is pushing to toll the new Champlain Bridge, according to a report in the *Montreal Gazette*.

The city has presented to Transport Canada its "wish list" for the new crossing, which would include, among other things, a toll booth.

Montreal Mayor Michael Applebaum wrote in a letter to Transport Canada that the cost of maintaining the crossing should be shared among users and governments.

"It would be unfair, even in a user-pays model, for drivers to be the only ones paying the bill as the citizens of the metropolitan region (already) contribute to the public treasury through their taxes," the city said in a release.

According to the *Gazette*, city officials also have expressed that if the new bridge is tolled, then others connected to Montreal Island will also need to be tolled to prevent traffic jams at other crossings.

One idea being considered is a "standard toll" for crossing the St. Lawrence. □

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Insurance telematics could result in lower premiums

Continued from page 1

larly interested in PHYD insurance, which allows them to set premiums that are more indicative of future crash risks. The current norm is for

insurers to set premiums that are based largely on past crash history, which says little of a fleet or driver's likelihood of future crashes.

Cober said driving behaviour is

twice as predictive of future claims than any other factor, which is why insurance providers are eager to access the telematics data being generated by fleets. Nine of 10 US

insurers offer some form of usage-based insurance, but Cober said in Canada, only Industrial Alliance is actively selling insurance in this manner. Their program is aimed at young drivers, who can save significantly on their auto insurance pre-

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miums by volunteering to install an on-board device that collects data on their driving behaviour and then shares that data with the insurer.

But Cober predicted that by the third or fourth quarter of this year, several more Canadian insurers will be offering some form of usage-based insurance.

Cober said trucking fleets that are actively using telematics to monitor and, when necessary, correct driving behaviour, often see a 5-15% reduction in their insurance premiums. This is in addition to double-digit savings in fuel economy. One of the greatest challenges for insurers is that there is no standard for what data is collected and how it's transmitted, or what thresholds are used to define risky driving behaviour. There are hundreds of telematics systems on the market and each one is different. Cober said he's most impressed with the camera-based systems that record what took place inside and outside the cab in the seconds before, during and immediately after an accident. In many cases, he said, the truck driver is exonerated by these systems and when the driver is at fault, "at least you know it right off the bat, so we can set up the reserve and settle it."

Canada has the strictest privacy regulations in the world, so installing the camera-based systems requires written permission from drivers.

Other telematics systems collect data on how a truck has been driven, analyze it and then create easy-to-interpret driver scorecards. These are great, but insurers are struggling with the inconsistencies between systems.

"The insurance industry needs a standardized scorecard," Cober said.

Angélique Magi, vice-president of strategic initiatives with The Guarantee Company, agreed that standardization would make it easier for insurance companies to set fair premiums.

"We all have our own back-end systems. Data is great, as long as we have a place to put the data and

more importantly, to analyze the data," she said. "What we need in the marketplace, frankly, is a way to get your data to talk to our systems. That's what we wrestle with. It doesn't mean insurers are going to ignore telematics. We welcome fleets using telematics, it's to the degree that you use it. If you can demonstrate that it's part of your culture and show over time how you facilitate change in your organization or have benchmarks and have seen improvement, that's where insurance companies really pay attention."

Magi said that carriers that are using telematics effectively to drive improvements in driving behaviour should make their insurance broker or provider aware of this, even in the absence of formal insurance telematics programs.

"Keep asking your broker or insurance company, 'When am I going to get credit for this?'" she urged.

While the use of telematics data by insurance companies is still in its infancy in the Canadian market, there's no question the trend will continue to grow. Cober said the insurance industry has identified 2014 as the "tipping point" for insurance telematics. He also warned that as the movement gains steam, the safer, more progressive fleets will take advantage of telematics to lower their insurance costs while those who shun the technology will be left in an ever-shrinking pool of higher-risk carriers, and will ultimately pay higher premiums as a result. □

Fleets don't know what to make of 2013

TORONTO, Ont. – Contrasting trajectories of truck freight volumes and freight pricing appears to be further muddying the trucking economic forecast for the next several months, suggests the most recent Ontario Trucking Association survey of business conditions.

With another less-than-peak shipping season in the rearview mirror, the New Year brought more uncertainty for Ontario carriers. According to the Q1 2013 survey, the level of optimism about the industry's prospects softened once again as less than half of carriers (44%) indicated they were confident about the next three months (down from 52% last quarter).

However, outright pessimism also subsided as the rate of carriers who were not confident fell seven points to 9%. Consequently, the number of respondents who said they were "unsure" about the industry's prospects jumped from 32% in last survey to 56% – more than doubling those who said the same thing a year ago in the Q1 2012 survey and the highest level of uncertainty the OTA survey has ever recorded.

This lack of clarity among carriers could be a reflection of an emerging gulf between rising freight volume expectations and a flattish pricing environment, the OTA surmised.

Volumes in all sectors experienced only modest fluctuations over the last three months, with a majority of carriers continuing to report unchanged volumes.

Pricing, especially domestically, has not paced carriers' high freight volume expectations but has remained dependably stable even throughout recent soft economic conditions.

Capacity remains frozen as carriers continue to be disciplined in adding both equipment and drivers in the absence of the proper economic conditions to support growth. A large majority of carriers (64%) said that capacity in their segment remained the same compared to the previous quarter while those who say capacity increased dropped even further (20% from 23%). Those rates are virtually identical to the responses of carriers projecting capacity for the next six months.

Somewhat concerning, the rate of carriers who say it's taking longer for customers to pay their freight bills jumped from 20% last quarter to 30% – the second highest level in three years and double what was indicated in the 2Q12 survey. While receivables are being extended, there is no such deferment for carriers in terms of their own costs. The vast majority of carriers continue to report increases in operating cost, including equipment, maintenance, fuel and labour.

For more survey details, visit www.ontruck.org. □



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The future potential of truck telematics

By James Menzies

MISSISSAUGA, Ont. – Imagine a prospective new hire showing up at your recruiting office with a USB drive in hand, containing his or her complete driving record over the previous six months.

Every trip, every day, every mile. Every speed limit violation, every evasive manoeuvre, every panic stop. All of it presented right there in an easy-to-read scorecard format.

That could be a reality sooner than you'd think, thanks to the rapidly growing world of truck telematics, the machine-to-machine transfer of data that streams information on how a truck is being operated to a Web portal or device where it can be analyzed by a fleet owner, safety manager or insurance company.

Speaking to the Fleet Safety Council's Toronto chapter in mid-January, Scott Cober, vice-president, national leader with Marsh Canada's trucking practice, said vehicle telematics is more accessible than ever and can even be captured on the latest generation smartphones.

The latest iPhones come equipped with digital compasses and accelerometers, and Cober predicted it will only be three to five years before smartphones are capable of providing quality, detailed data on how a vehicle has been operated. A driver will be able to plug his or her own phone into a portal in the vehicle and then collect their own driving performance data.

Angelique Magi, vice-president of strategic initiatives with The Guarantee Company, said the younger generation drivers are already comfortable with technology and will be likely to embrace telematics and understand the benefits of what it can do for them.

"That generation of driver will welcome technology and see it as an incentive to work with a particular company," she said. "New drivers could show up for an interview with a USB card that says 'This is how I drive, this is my driving record for the past six months'."

With many fleets reporting they now hire only 10% of the drivers they road test, this information would prove invaluable during the recruiting process and a way for safe professional drivers to ensure employment with their carrier of choice.

Both Cober and Magi believe telematics is reaching a tipping point.

"The technology side is changing so fast," Cober said. "It's being pushed to smartphones and tablets. You don't need hardware anymore."

As for the future of telematics, Magi said it will continue to become more all-encompassing. She said the technology exists today for so-called "biometric telematics," which measures much more than how a vehicle is being driven.

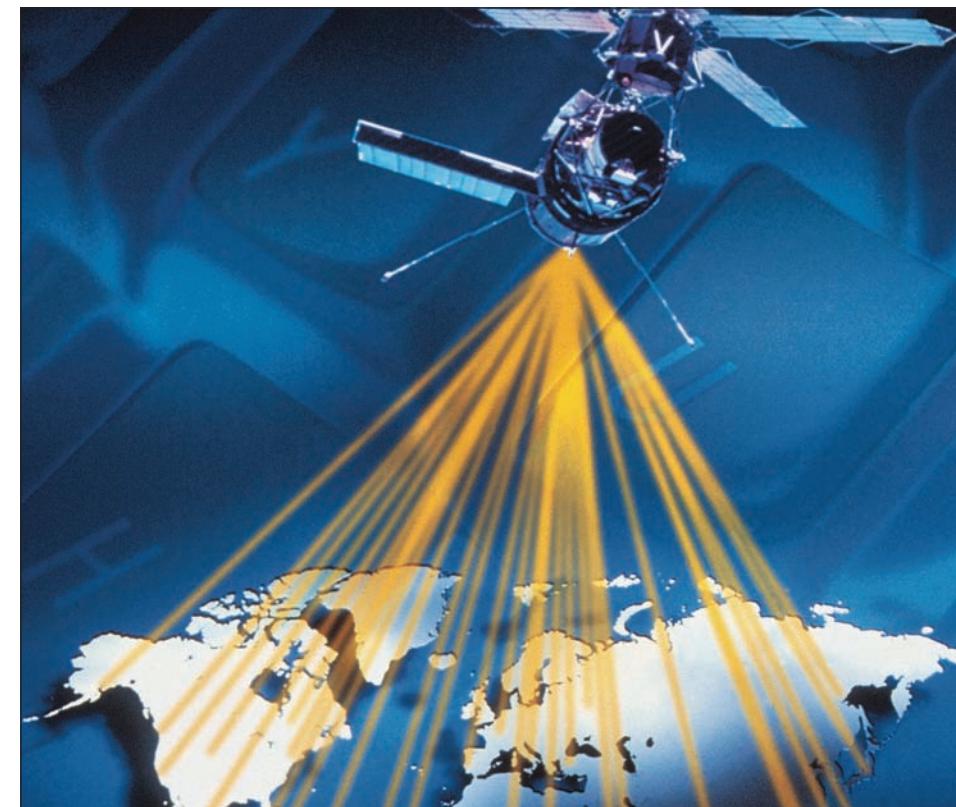
"The device sits in the cab of a truck and it encompasses the entire atmosphere," Magi explained. "It can smell, monitor the driver's

heart rate, it can detect a change in posture and it can immediately tell if something has gone wrong with your driver physically."

This could help eliminate accidents related to driver fatigue or health-related issues.

While that may seem extreme, Cober pointed out telematics technology could at least easily be adapted for the tracking of cargo. So many fleets employ trailer tracking, but the technology also exists to attach pill-sized tracking devices to cargo itself.

Then, instead of retrieving empty trailers following a heist, fleets would improve their chances at recovering the actual goods that were stolen. □



EMBRACING TELEMATICS: Truck telematics could soon allow a driver to apply for a job with their complete six-month driving history uploaded to a USB drive.



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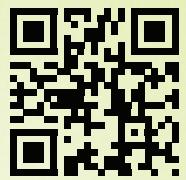
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WEST

Industry lobbying keeps Alberta rest areas open

CALGARY, Alta. – Three of four Alberta-based rest stops originally targeted for closure will now remain open, according to the Alberta Motor Transport Association (AMTA). The AMTA, which has been lobbying the province to keep turnouts open, received the news in a recent meeting with Alberta Transport.

"We are delighted that Alberta Transport has responded to AMTA to make available places where professional drivers and other motorists can pull over and rest," says AMTA executive director Don Wilson. "Providing places for all drivers – especially commercial transport drivers – to pull over and rest is a vital component of any fatigue management program and compliance with load security rules."

The rest stops previously slated for closure that will – for now – remain open are at the following locations: south of Olds; southbound, just north of Hwy. 11; and northbound, just south of Red Deer. The two southbound rest stops will be reviewed by Alberta Transport to see if signage and pavement can be improved to enhance safety, while the northbound site may be relocated as Alberta Transport searches for a safer location. A fourth site (southbound, opposite the Sports Hall of Fame, Red Deer) is still slated for closure.

Alberta Transport says it wanted to close these roadside rest stops because it has concerns over collisions taking place when vehicles merge on and off the highway.

"Providing all road users with places to pull over and take rest breaks when they feel fatigue coming on, is the foundation of keeping the roads safe," says Dan Duckering, president of Duckering's Transport, who attended the recent meeting with Alberta Transport.

"While we recognize that the best scenario for all Alberta motorists is the commercial rest areas that allow people to get completely off the road, removing the existing rest areas in the interim, as was proposed, will inevitably increase the number of fatigue related incidents. There are many professional drivers behind the wheel who have driven 25 or more years accident-free. Their safe driving record is due, in part, to knowing when they need to pull over and rest. Removing places for them to park their big rigs makes the roads less safe for transport drivers and those with whom they share the road."

"Professional transport drivers are among the safest drivers on our roadways because they are in tune with their circadian rhythm," adds Rocky Downton of Downton's Transport, who was also in attendance at the meeting. "What sets a commercial driver apart from other motorists is the fact that he or she knows when fatigue is setting in and takes steps to manage it by resting. Reducing rest stops is an enormous step backwards for road safety in Alberta." □



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Canadian trucking companies have been slow to adopt social media. Will a changing industry convince fleets to finally 'get social'?

By Adam Ledlow

The stunning collapse in the value of many Internet companies near the turn of the century – known as the burst of the “dot-com bubble” – had far-reaching consequences, with many still being felt to this day. The most obvious was the stock market crash and the recession that followed in the early 2000s, but another was a tendency to be wary, if not outright dismissive, of new Web-based programs and platforms. Many companies were burned during the boom period, and were damned if they were going to let it happen again.

Emerging in the years immediately following the dot-com burst was a

new form of online interaction, which eventually came to be known as social media. Today, social media, via channels such as Facebook and Twitter, is still victim to that post-boom wariness, struggling to find universal acceptance as a business tool in a number of industries, including trucking.

Though it's been hailed by some as one of the most important trends in business over the last decade, social media is still at loggerheads with a number of detractors, who label it as fad at best and a complete waste of time at worst. And for many trucking companies, the lack of perceived benefits of social media has been



enough for them to avoid the online party altogether.

“Most trucking company CEOs cannot see the value in social media except for some very specific purposes (ie. driver recruitment),” says Dan Goodwill, president of Dan Goodwill & Associates.

Here in North America, research from Palmer Marketing indicates that Canadian trucking companies are even less enthused about social media than their American counterparts. Jerry Popowicz, director of Internet strategy at Palmer, says there are likely two major factors as to why US trucking companies have a greater social media presence than those in Canada – and both boil down to size.

With US trucking companies making up roughly 90% of the largest for-hire carriers in North America, many trucking companies don't have the manpower necessary to put a forward-thinking marketing department in place, says Popowicz.

“Bigger companies also have bigger marketing budgets and there are only two Canadian companies that crack the top 30 for-hire carrier list in North America,” he told *Truck News*. “TransForce, which is the largest Canadian company on the list, doesn't have a social media strategy in place, and because it has many divisions under its umbrella, suffers from marketing fragmentation. Many Canadian carriers just don't spend enough on marketing because of budget, so even if they have a forward-thinking marketing department, they just don't have the money.”

But Popowicz says that the sluggish adoption of social media is far from limited to the trucking industry. “Companies that are focused on the consumer have adopted social media in much greater numbers than B2B-focused organizations, so I don't think that slow adoption is exclusive to the trucking industry,” he said.

Turning the tide

But the tide appears to be turning. The annual Best Fleets to Drive For competition, put on by the Truckload Carriers Association (TCA) and CarriersEdge, identifies for-hire trucking companies that provide the best workplace experiences for their drivers.

Continued on page 23

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SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media attitudes shifting

Continued from page 20

CarriersEdge president Mark Murrell says there has been a marked shift in trucking company attitudes about social media since the program began.

"In the 2009 edition of the program (the first year), the words 'Facebook' and 'Twitter' do not appear in any fleet report or driver survey at all – no one using, discussing, or even asking about them," Murrell told *Truck News*. "In 2013, close to two-thirds of the participating fleets were actively using some form of social media."

One such fleet is Saskatoon, Sask.-based Yanke Group of Companies, an avid social media user and – perhaps not coincidentally – the only fleet in North America to make the Best Fleets to Drive For list in all five years since the program began.

Yanke first dipped its toe in the social media pool about two years ago, in an effort to – as social media manager Carlene Deutscher puts it – present itself as a "leader in the industry and (stay) on top of technology."

Deutscher admits that Yanke's main goal at the outset was to harness social media's recruitment possibilities, "but it didn't take long for us to realize that it was an excellent way to communicate and engage with our professional transport operators. We noticed that their family members enjoyed being able to keep up to date with what was going on, either on the road or in the office. We had operators commenting that they liked being able to look at pictures and finally know what the voice at the end of the phone looked like. It's almost like our social media platforms were being used to further bond and unite our employees."

Despite having but two years of experience under its belt, Yanke's social media reach is extensive, using some of best-known platforms like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube, in addition to Prezi (for dynamic presentations), SurveyMonkey (for internal surveys), MailChimp (for newsletters), as well as a forthcoming corporate blog in 2013, which will include content from members across the Yanke universe including dispatchers, drivers, and multimodal and executive staff.

"We're engaged into the world of social media and are always watching and anticipating the next trend," Deutscher says.

Another trend-setting trucking company is Oakville, Ont.-based Caravan Logistics, which confirmed its need to integrate social media into the company's business plan after reading a *Truck News* article two years ago (*The new social network, cover story, January 2011, Truck News*).

"Social media was becoming a large part of daily life, and conversations were happening about the industry and us. Caravan Logistics was not listening or being heard," said Sonia Merena, marketing and public relations, Caravan Logistics.

Not wanting to be left out of the conversation any longer, Caravan launched its social media initiative two years ago, hoping to create a source of two-way communication between the company, its drivers and the general public.

"Facebook has helped to strengthen the bond between office staff and our professional drivers; creating a space for drivers, office staff, and the gen-

eral public to interact and ask questions, provide answers or share personal experiences while on the road," Merena says.

"Our Facebook fans share a lot of great and personal moments with us and we love it. Fans share their memorable moments or special occasions, such as their wedding pictures with a Caravan Logistics truck or announce their engagements or baby news."

Merena says even the owners are actively engaged in Caravan's Facebook page, writing feedback or liking photos posted by others. "It's all about sharing and contributing; one big social media family."

An extension of its Facebook page, Caravan's Twitter account has been an outlet to communicate with potential customers and find sales leads, but mostly targets the general public, allowing them to write comments or questions directed at the company.

"It is very important to know what is going on in the community and to let people know that you care about their opinions, especially with the environmental push and the size of your trucks," Merena says.

Smaller fleets more 'social'

While Palmer Marketing's research revealed that Canadian trucking companies are less likely to engage in social media than US-based firms, it also found that bigger companies lag behind smaller ones.

"Bigger fleets are run by committees, and this sometimes becomes a barrier to quickly putting a proper marketing strategy in place," says Palmer's Popowicz.

"If you're an owner of a smaller fleet and are in tune with online marketing trends, you will be more likely to implement them on your own, and much quicker within your organization, as the sole decision-maker."

One company bucking this trend is

Winnipeg's Bison Transport, one of the largest for-hire carriers in Canada. After being involved in social media on "a limited basis" for the past few years, Bison expanded its activities "in a strategic way" in 2012, creating "well-defined goals for all platforms" in the process, says corporate marketing manager, Lionel Johnston.

Now active on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube, Johnston says the company's main objectives are to "communicate our brand, provide customer service, share career opportunities and to provide a forum for discussion."

With an increase in Facebook fans, more engagement on Twitter, and trackable conversion rates towards its Web site, Johnston says Bison has certainly seen successes since making its foray into social media, but cautions companies still on the fence to consider their approach carefully before venturing forward.

"For the companies that dismiss so-
Continued on page 25

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SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media strategy lacking

Continued from page 23

cial media, they likely have either not tried it yet, or tried it without a proper strategy," he says.

And the lack of a proper social media strategy seems to be something of an epidemic for Canadian trucking companies. According to an internal survey conducted by Palmer Marketing, of the top 30 largest Canadian carriers, 40% have a Facebook business page, but only 10% of those companies seem to have an actual Facebook strategy in place.

"The amount of total 'likes' for all of those companies is well under 5,000, which is a very low number, and speaks to the opportunities available for Canadian transportation companies," says Popowicz.

"While most companies have a LinkedIn page, only a handful (33%) utilize it for recruiting, brand or company awareness, or communicating the company's value proposition. Twitter seems to be the least active social media platform among this group, with the engagement level being at 30%."

Goodwill says that in order for trucking companies to be successful, they must have a social media strategy with a clear focus and objectives.

"The social media tools one uses should be matched up against the objectives. Is the objective to obtain sales leads? Then one needs to offer some sort of white paper that requires the completion of an online form. This

can be done by writing a blog on certain topics and showing expertise in an area," Goodwill says. "If the objective is to use the media for recruiting, LinkedIn and Facebook can be very useful. Metrics can include quality sales leads, prospective candidates for jobs, Twitter followers, etc."

"Companies need to look at social media as a marketing channel, just like they view the traditional channels of print, radio, TV, etc.," adds Popowicz.

He points to a driver recruiting campaign using social media as an example. "It would probably be a lot less

expensive, but more effective than doing recruiting through a traditional marketing channel. We have clients that have successfully recruited drivers from a Facebook recruitment campaign, by using targeted advertising."

CarriersEdge's Murrell says multiple fleets from the Best Fleets to Drive For program are reporting that they've hired appreciable numbers of drivers and owner/operators directly through Facebook – with some attracting upwards of 25% of their new hires via the platform.

Popowicz points to LinkedIn as another great networking platform that, in addition to helping companies build their business and pro-

mote their brand, is also good for management-level recruitment.

Social media wariness is waning

While some Canadian fleets have been slow to join the social media party, dismissive attitudes towards social media in general are waning in the industry, with most carriers focusing less on *if* they should be getting involved and more on *how* to get involved most effectively.

For Montreal, Que.-based carrier Trans-West, an ardent social media user across a variety of platforms, making social media part of company culture is "imperative" to the industry's future success.

"The labour shortage in the transport sector is alarming. To address this issue, it is imperative that we listen to the current generation of truck drivers. Our long-haul drivers are using new technologies more and more in their professional and personal lives, both on the road and at home," says Trans-West social media coordinator, Sophie Jacob.

"Making optimal use of these tools and our presence on the Web allows us to communicate better with drivers, regardless of the platform used. Being attentive and accessible, and providing meaningful exchanges are indispensable if we want to maintain fruitful relationships with the drivers of today and tomorrow."

"The high participation rates and the comments we receive from our long-haul drivers confirm to us that these new means of communication are here to stay." □

Before we begin...

If you're now ready to make social media part of your business plan going forward, consider these points from Dan Goodwill, president of Dan Goodwill & Associates before – and shortly after – you get started:

- Before you jump in, take some time every day to read tweets from certain people whom you respect.
- Find out what is being said about your company in social media.
- Join a few LinkedIn groups that are directly related to particular areas of interest.
- When someone asks a question that you can answer well, do so. Demonstrate expertise.
- Watch grammar and punctuation. Poorly written tweets, posts and blogs are a direct reflection on you and your company.
- Figure out a strategy to highlight where your company has a definite expertise. Reinforce that expertise by helping potential clients cover a load or move a truck. People and companies get noticed, not by sending out promotional e-mails, but by demonstrating expertise, by being positive and helpful.
- There is no point in setting up a Twitter or LinkedIn page and then waiting for people to come to you. They won't. □

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INDUSTRY

NOC and FCR: Both are overdue for revision

Programs must be revamped if driver shortage is to be resolved



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We seem to have general agreement that there is a shortage of qualified truck drivers in Canada, and now the attention of the industry and the government needs to be turned towards remedies.

There are a number of examples of important initiatives that have already been taken by the industry and a couple of important things yet for the government to do.

In the spring of 2012 the Canadian Trucking Alliance convened a Blue Ribbon Task Force to broadly examine the driver shortage.

They should be applauded for their much publicized report that was, in many ways, self critical of the industry's own practices. That was an interesting and frank approach.

Around the same time the Private Motor Truck Council of Canada and *Motortruck Fleet Executive* magazine published the comprehensive Benchmark Study of Canadian Private Fleet prac-

Private Links

BRUCE RICHARDS



tices (still available by contacting the PMTC office).

Sections of that report delve in to the best practices of fleets in areas such as hiring, retention, rates of pay and benefits, as well as training and incentive programs.

The report provides readers with insight into how other fleets function, along with some of the industry's best practices in driver hiring and retention. There's a good deal of information that fleets can use to assess their own operations.

In its heyday the Canadian Trucking Human Resources Council (CTHRC) developed a comprehensive driver training program that received both darts (too long and too expensive) and laurels (comprehensive and a good foothold on the career path). CTHRC went further by auditing schools to ensure that the curriculum was being used properly.

The industry continues to wear a poor image the way a beaver wears a pelt – hard to shake off. But, if we could change that image it would lead to more interest in the industry from young people and that would surely bolster the dwindling cadre of professional drivers. Better entry-level training is part of upgrading the profession and would yield long-term benefits in the supply of new entrants.

Despite these efforts on the part of industry, success stories in solving the shortage of qualified drivers are few in number. In fact, the recent economic downturn may have had more to do with alleviating the problem than anything else.

A shortage of freight and consolidation of carriers equals less demand for drivers.

But the problem has not gone away, and it will be exacerbated as the economy rebounds and demand for transportation services increases.

With that in mind, the industry needs to continue its efforts to improve working conditions and make truck driving a job in which an individual can earn a good living and have some pride.

But there are other issues that need attention that affect the shortfall. For example, the classification for a truck driver in the National Occupation Classification (NOC) is overdue for a review and here's why that matters.

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Absent an influx of Canadian youth looking for jobs as truck drivers, it is natural for carriers to look outside of Canada for qualified people that might want to immigrate.

Those people are there and are willing to come to Canada, but the NOC presents some Olympic-level hurdles.

The NOC has assigned truck driving as a 'Skill Level C' occupation, which means that truck drivers don't rank high on the list of desirable immigrants.

That makes it difficult for an overseas driver willing to immigrate to bring his or her skill set to the Canadian trucking industry. Some of these drivers have a good deal of experience in Europe, for example, and could be a fit for the Canadian industry.

NOC levels run from a high of A to a low of D, so you can readily figure out what the government thinks of the skills required of today's truck driver.

To quote the Web site of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Level C occupations "generally require completion of secondary school and some job-specific training or completion of courses directly related to the work."

In our view that is one big oversimplification.

In part because of the NOC level, employers wishing to utilize immigration as a source of truck drivers are limited to various temporary worker programs.

While this is of some help in the short term, employers are less likely to invest in training and other traditional employee-related programs for these drivers, whom they will only have for a relatively short period of time.

This, unfortunately, contributes further to the high levels of driver turnover in the industry, and does nothing to address the long-term issue of the industry's need for skilled drivers.

PMTC and other industry groups would like to see the National Occupation Classification upgraded to better recognize the skills required to drive trucks in Canada today.

This would be an important step toward making immigration a realistic source of drivers that the industry requires.

Clearly, an experienced individual who makes the choice to immigrate to Canada to drive a truck is a better long-term prospect as an employee than someone on a temporary work permit. These points were raised by PMTC in a recent meeting with Canada's Minister of State (Transport), Steven Fletcher, and I believe we received a fair hearing.

Another impediment to considering immigration as a source of drivers for the Canadian trucking industry is the absence of Foreign Credential Recognition.

The skills and experience that foreign drivers can bring to Canada from parts of the world where they have been successful, are not recognized as part of the Canadian licensing process.

As a result, these potential drivers must often undertake further

expensive training in Canada prior to applying for a licensing test.

The CTHRC has submitted a proposal to the Foreign Credential Referral Office to consider reciprocity agreements with countries whose training is similar and to the same level as Canada's. The goal is to streamline the integration of international drivers immigrating to Canada.

So, as much as there is a lot happening to address the shortage of qualified drivers, there is much yet to do.

And two of the most important ways that government could help is to review and upgrade the National Occupation Classification for truck drivers and consider foreign competency recognition. □

– The Private Motor Truck Council is the only national association dedicated to the private trucking community. Direct comments and questions to trucks@pmtc.ca.



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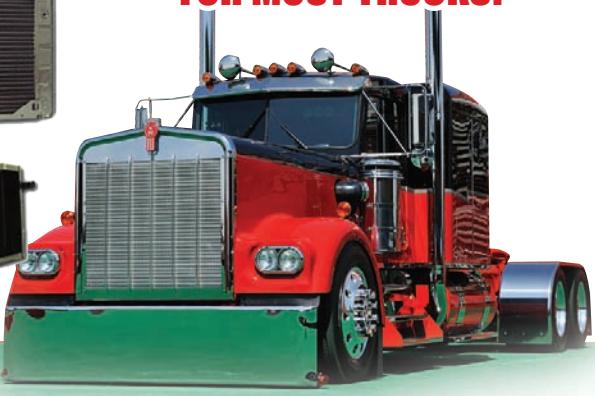
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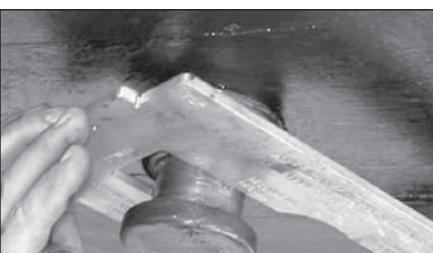
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DATA MANAGEMENT

Are your data backup procedures compliant with CBSA requirements?

Understanding the transportation and logistics industry, Canada Border Services Agency regulations and the Patriot Act as they relate to your data can mean the difference between keeping your trucks on the road or having them parked while you face steep fines and other penalties.

What are the data backup and retention requirements for the logistics industry? In short: ACI and ACE e-manifests must be kept for three years plus one current; CBSA regulations require six years of data retentions to be available upon request; and the Patriot Act requires that your data be stored on Canadian soil.

Is your company compliant? If you answer: "Yes, we're backed up," don't be so sure.

The reason? Many companies mistakenly believe their data is safe and they are compliant because they are paying a third-party vendor to host their infrastructure in the cloud. This is a common mistake. Do not assume that you are in full compliance when your infrastructure is hosted by a third party.

Here's a common scenario: A logistics company chooses a third-party vendor (such as Telus or Bell) to host their infrastructure and back up their data. They believe the services offered will prevent any data loss and keep them CBSA compliant. Warning: Nothing could be further from the truth.

Over 90% of cloud hosting companies only provide seven days of retention. This includes the large cloud hosting companies like Telus and Bell.

This means logistics companies who rely on them have only a week's worth of retention – a clear violation of compliance rules.

My advice? Check with the company hosting your infrastructure and managing your backups. Ask for the cost to keep seven years of your data. Expect it to be significantly more than you are paying now. You have other options that will allow you to remain 100% compliant during a CBSA audit.

Thinking about doing nothing and crossing your fingers? Remember, without seven years of data re-

Guest Column

STEPHEN PYOTT



tention you run the risk of failing a CBSA audit and incurring steep fines.

Studies reveal that 75% of companies that experience a major data loss will not be in business two years later. Data is vital to business and data loss can be insurmountable. Critical data backups and timely recovery are both necessary for compliance and the ongoing success of your business.

In summary: Backing up your computer system is not enough. You are responsible for seven years of data retention.

And proper data retention is not a given, as most cloud hosting companies only offer seven days.

You require: a full backup every night; the ability to go back 30 days or more; 11 monthly backups; a yearly backup archived for seven years; and compliance with CBSA.

How can you ensure that you are 100% CBSA-compliant at all times? Choose your service provider carefully.

Look for: A company that is compliant with The Patriot Act (data must be stored on Canadian soil); seven years of retention; data is encrypted at all times – at rest and in flight; a company that has a proven track record within the logistics community.

Once you have chosen a service provider that allows you to always remain compliant, you can greet the CBSA with a smile and keep your trucks on the road. □

– Stephen Pyott is sales manager for North America with Stage2Data, the data backup and recovery experts with over two decades of experience. Specializing in logistics, Stephen has worked with many companies to ensure their compliance and data security. He will be at the Stage2Data vendor table at ExpoCam April 11-13. Visit stage2data.com/compliance for further information.



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HEALTH

Hold your water

While on the road, you often find yourself miles away from the next rest area; so, it's necessary to be able to hold your water. You already know that a healthy bladder is important.

Your bladder, a pear-shaped, hollow, muscular organ that sits on the pelvic floor, has two main functions: to collect the urine that has been filtered by the kidneys and to excrete it. Since it has the ability to stretch and shrink, the bladder can hold changing quantities of liquid. Typically, an adult bladder can hold almost two cups of urine.

The detrusor muscle around the bladder squeezes the bladder to empty it. The sphincter muscles around the urethra keep the opening closed until it is time to release the urine. A normal, healthy bladder should empty completely every time you urinate with no leakage in between.

Because of the nature of your work, you may have developed some habits that affect your bladder's health and/or effectiveness.

Consider the following eight questions. Do you: drink less than six to eight cups of liquid a day?; get up more than once each night to urinate?; urinate more than eight times during 24 hours?; consistently use the washroom 'just in case'?; get a sudden urge to pass urine?; experience stress-incontinence when you

Preventive Maintenance

KAREN BOWEN

laugh, cough, sneeze or exercise?; leak before you reach the bathroom?; regularly strain and push to move your bowels?

If you answered yes to most of them, it's time to review your habits.

Drink enough fluid each day. If you don't, your bladder will get used to holding smaller amounts of urine and may become sensitive. As well, your urine (and the toxins in it) will become concentrated and irritate your bladder. If you usually drink just a little, increase your consumption until you reach the six to eight glasses per day range.

Maintain your bladder capacity. You can actually decrease your bladder capacity by urinating before necessary, so it is best to hold your urine for as long as comfortably possible. When urinating, let the urine drain naturally, without pushing or straining. Take the time to ensure your bladder empties completely; then, you won't store bacteria or toxins for an extended time, which will help prevent urinary tract infections.

Keep your urine slightly acidic to reduce bladder infections since

bacteria thrive in alkaline environments. Some signs of a urinary tract infection are any sudden: onset of incontinence or frequency and urgency; burning and discomfort when urinating; blood in the urine; and strong smelling or cloudy urine. To avoid this painful condition, add Vitamin C-rich foods, especially cranberry juice to your regular diet. Certainly, anyone taking medication, particularly anticoagulants, or with diabetes should check with a doctor first as some fruit juices affect how your body absorbs medications.

Limit your intake of any foods or liquids that seem to irritate your bladder. Some common irritants are: chocolate, tomatoes, citrus, spicy foods, tea, coffee, colas, alcohol and diet drinks with artificial sweeteners like Aspartame or Saccharine. If you notice taking a Vitamin C supplement irritates your bowel, try an Ester C product. Please note that the acid in some fruit juices can irritate the bladder lining, so monitor what you eat and drink to identify if any foods cause discomfort.

Maintain the strength in the muscles in your pelvic floor to retain good bladder control. Kegel exercises, where you start and stop your urine flow, will specifically strengthen these muscles. Regular physical exercise will keep your abdominal muscles strong to properly support your bladder and other internal organs which is vital for you because of all the bouncing you experience driving down the roads.

Avoid constipation to reduce the pressure on your bladder. Maintain

a high fiber level in your diet by including whole grains and plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables in your daily intake.

Eat vegetables and fruits that are loaded with nutrients that promote bladder health. They contain Vitamin C, Vitamin E, magnesium, potassium, fiber and powerful antioxidants. The vegetables and fruits that especially enhance bladder health include cranberries, blueberries, bananas, blackberries, raspberries, mustard greens, turnips, cabbage, beans, yams, strawberries, carrots and sweet potatoes.

Enjoy the Omega-3 fatty acids found in nuts, fish and certain oils. They can benefit bladder health because they reduce inflammation. Most bladder or urinary disorders cause swelling and/or infection. Specific examples of omega-3 rich-foods include lake trout, salmon, mackerel, tuna, herring, halibut, sardines, Brazil nuts, almonds, peanuts, macadamia nuts, safflower oil, sunflower oil and canola oil.

Add yogurt to your diet; it appears to significantly reduce a person's chance of getting bladder cancer. In contrast, avoid smoking; smoking significantly increases your chances and has been implicated in almost 50% of bladder cancer diagnoses. Make these lifestyle adjustments to improve your bladder health now and down the road. □

– Karen Bowen is a professional health and nutrition consultant, and she can be reached at karen_bowen@yahoo.com.

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Coping with Sacroiliitis

The sacroiliac joints are located at the bottom of the spine where it joins to the pelvic bones. These joints play an important role in the movement of the lower limb. Just like most joints in our body, the sacroiliac joints can be injured. When injury occurs to these joints, a condition called sacroiliitis may develop. Sacroiliitis simply means inflammation of the sacroiliac joints.

The symptoms of sacroiliitis vary from person to person, however most patients complain of lower back or buttock pain which may extend down one or both legs and groins. These symptoms may be aggravated by prolonged sitting and standing. This is especially important for professional truck drivers, as they spend many hours sitting behind the wheel. The prolonged sitting as well as the constant bouncing from the truck seem to increase or even cause sacroiliitis.

Other factors such as stair climbing, running or standing on one leg may also increase the intensity of the symptoms. There are many possible causes of sacroiliitis. The most common cause of this condition is a traumatic injury such as a car accident or a slip or fall.

In this case, the joint and surrounding soft tissues may be injured. Arthritis or wear and tear can also occur in the sacroiliac joints, which may lead to inflammation. Other conditions such as pregnancy or infection may also lead to sacroiliac joint irritation and subsequently inflammation. The diagnosis of sacroiliitis is usually arrived at after conducting a detailed medical history and physical examination.

During the examination, the doctor will perform several orthopedic tests, which are designed to put stress on different structures in your lower back and pelvis. In addition, your doctor will palpate the soft tissues and bones in the surrounding area in order to pinpoint the location of the pain. If necessary, your doctor may request an X-ray or MRI to better visualize the injury site.

The treatment of sacroiliitis really depends on the severity of the symptoms as well as the underlying cause of the condition. Over-the-counter pain relievers, muscle relaxants and anti-inflammatory medications are usually the first-line treatment.

If this is unsuccessful, physical therapy, chiropractic care and massage therapy may be recommended. A corticosteroid injection directly into the joint to reduce the inflammation may also be suggested by your doctor.

Finally, if all other forms of treatment do not relieve the pain and inflammation, your doctor may recommend a joint fusion in which the two bones of the sacroiliac joint are surgically fused together.

What I recommend to my patients who are suffering with sacroiliitis is to first of all rest the joints in order to give them a chance to heal.

Next, a combination of ice application and over-the-counter pain relievers may be used as needed. It is important to consult with your doctor or pharmacist before taking any

Back behind the wheel

DR. CHRIS SINGH

new medications in order to avoid unwanted drug interactions. The good news is that in most cases, sacroiliitis will resolve with in three to six weeks.

I also recommend that professional truck drivers try to get out of their trucks and walk around as much as possible. This practice significantly reduces the chances of developing sacroiliitis. Until next time, 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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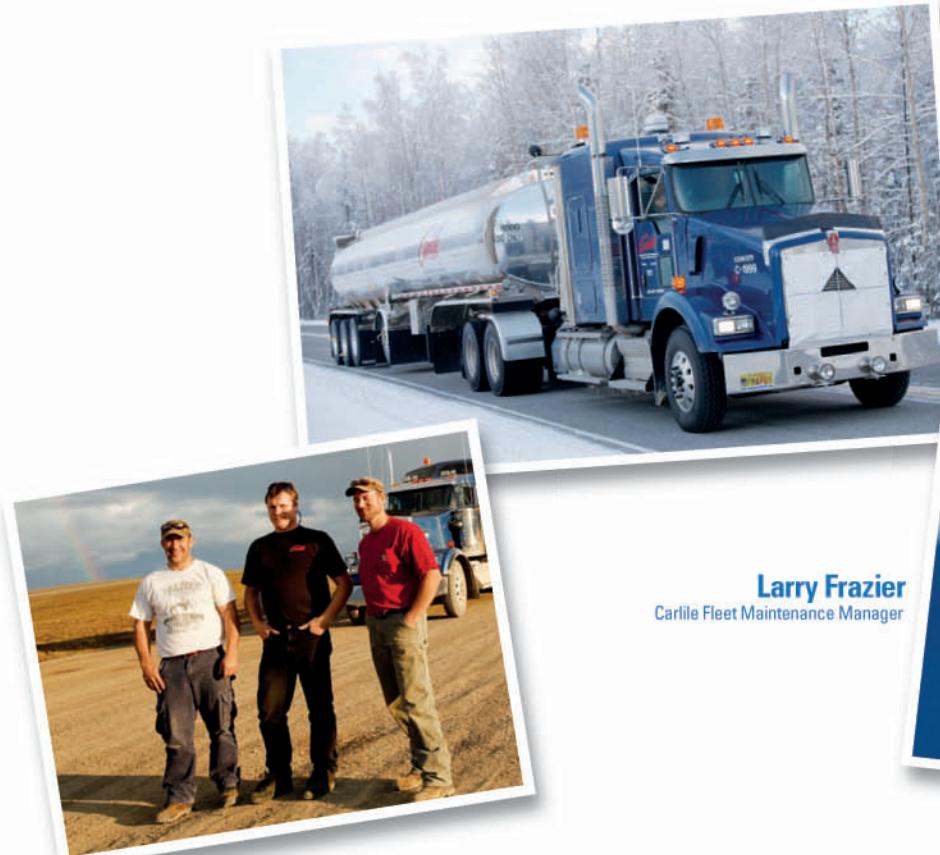
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Used truck buyers forced to overcome DPF fears

Scarcity of low-mileage, late-model trucks is propelling buyers towards accepting newer engine technologies

By Harry Rudolfs

Used trucks with low kilometres are getting harder to find than hen's teeth. Because of their dislike of 2008 and newer EPA engines, many truck buyers have been reluctant to commit to diesel particulate filter (DPF) technology. Instead, truck owners have tended to hold onto their pre-2007 Class 8 trucks causing a disruption of trade-in cycles.

"One of the trends I've seen is with guys who used to run three or four trucks who are now cannibalizing them to keep one running," says James Morgan, part-owner of Morgan's Diesel Truck Parts of Kingston, Ont. "Lately I've even seen stuff I've never seen before, like a 1988 International hauled out of the bush and put back on the road."

Morgan thinks that the distrust around the newer EPA engines runs deeply through the owner/operator and small truck fleet community.

"The most popular (used) trucks right now are between 2000-2007. Some guys get cold feet with anything 2008 or newer," he says. "For the highway, what they're looking for is something like 475 hp or better with a 13-speed transmission. Used Petes and Kenworths tend to fetch a better price. For newer engines, I'm seeing a preference for Cummins or Volvo. In the glider kits, 60-series Detroits are popular as are Cat single turbos from 2001-2004."

Morgan suggests that speed limiters governing trucks to 105 km/h are also having an effect on the preferential spec's.

"A guy running multi-axle loads at 105 km/h on 336 rear-ends is going to be on the gear shift a lot of the time, which wasn't a problem when they were running 110 km/h. Most of my customers run heavy and want no less than 1,850 lbs of torque to carry them over the hills."

Although many of Morgan's clients are logging and speciality haul-

ers, certain models are universally popular across the board.

"If I had a 2005 Kenworth day cab or small bunk on my lot that was clean and half decent, it wouldn't sit for more than a couple of weeks," he says.

But the used truck market could be in transition now, according to Jason Queenen, general manager for truck sales at Expressway Trucks in Ayr, Ont.

"I'm seeing some guys right now with older equipment and their company has told them to upgrade," he says.

Of course, Queenen still gets a lot of calls from prospective buyers looking for pre-DPF trucks from 2006 and 2007, "but those trucks don't exist anymore. And we didn't sell a lot of new trucks in 2008-2009, so it's getting very difficult to find good used trucks."

Queenen acknowledges that one



exception might be a private carrier or local manufacturer that is up-cycling its regional truck fleet, but those situations are also extremely rare.

Vic Gupta, sales manager at Arrow Truck Sales in Mississauga, Ont., thinks there has been a sea change in buyers' attitudes towards EPA technology starting in 2012 that has continued into this year.

"At the beginning of 2012, guys were still looking for trucks without a DPF," he says. "But after the second quarter, those trucks became

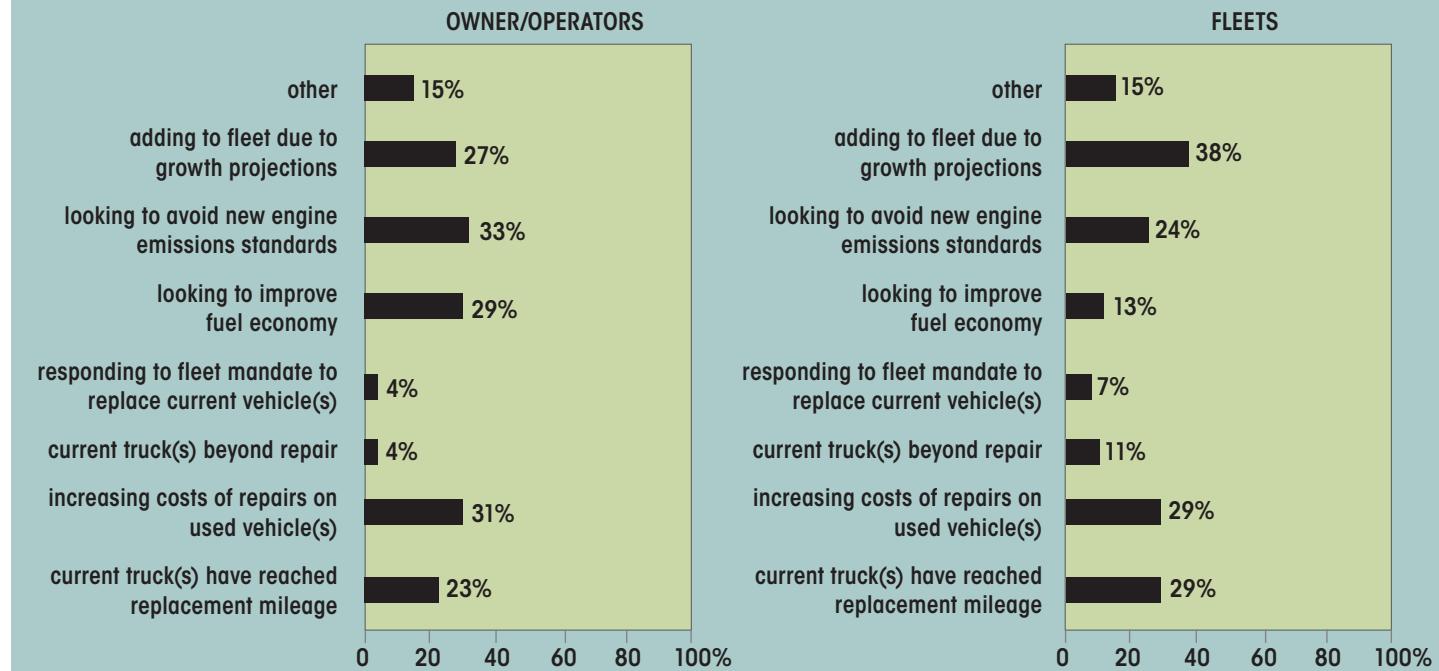
hard to get. From the third quarter on, we started selling a lot of trucks with DPFs."

According to Gupta, 50% of the trucks his branch sold in 2012 were equipped with DPFs.

"People don't want to come out of their comfort zone," says Gupta. "But our customers who have gone over to DPF units have been generally pleased. We were convinced that educating the customer was the key

Continued on page 34

What are your main reasons for purchasing used trucks at this time?



-2012 Equipment Buying Trends Survey, Transportation Media



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TRUCKS

Shopping for used iron

Continued from page 33

to selling those trucks."

Queenen suggests that some of the negative feeling toward DPF equipment is a myth.

"There were some hiccups from all of the OEMs but overall, they pretty well have it worked out now," he says. "We're selling trucks second-hand and we aren't seeing any issues."

Queenen compares the opposition to the way drivers and owner/operators used to feel about automated transmissions. Many of the new trucks sold these days are equipped with automatic transmissions, and they're also holding up quite well, he says.

But the reluctance to upgrade to newer models in recent years has caused a constriction in the used truck market.

"This is going to be the year that brokers are going to be buying new trucks," says Queenen. "They've waited long enough. But the problem is that their (trade-in) equipment is going to be miled right out. The US used to take stuff that had a million kilometres on it, but not one million miles. We used to rely on the export market for that, but they won't pay \$20,000-25,000 for a truck."

Queenen thinks that some prospective buyers have an unrealistic expectation of the value of their trade-in.

"Maybe some of them are looking for a big discount. But it's easy to do the research and, in most cases, their repair expenses are about the same as the previous trucks they owned," he says.

Queenen suggests that truck owners' incomes have taken a hit the last few years and this may be part of the equation. "Back in 2004-2006, times were pretty good and guys got used to living on the income they made back then – so it's easy to point a finger at the truck. But if a truck's got 250,000-plus kilometres on it for every year that it's on the road, that tells me it's been working."

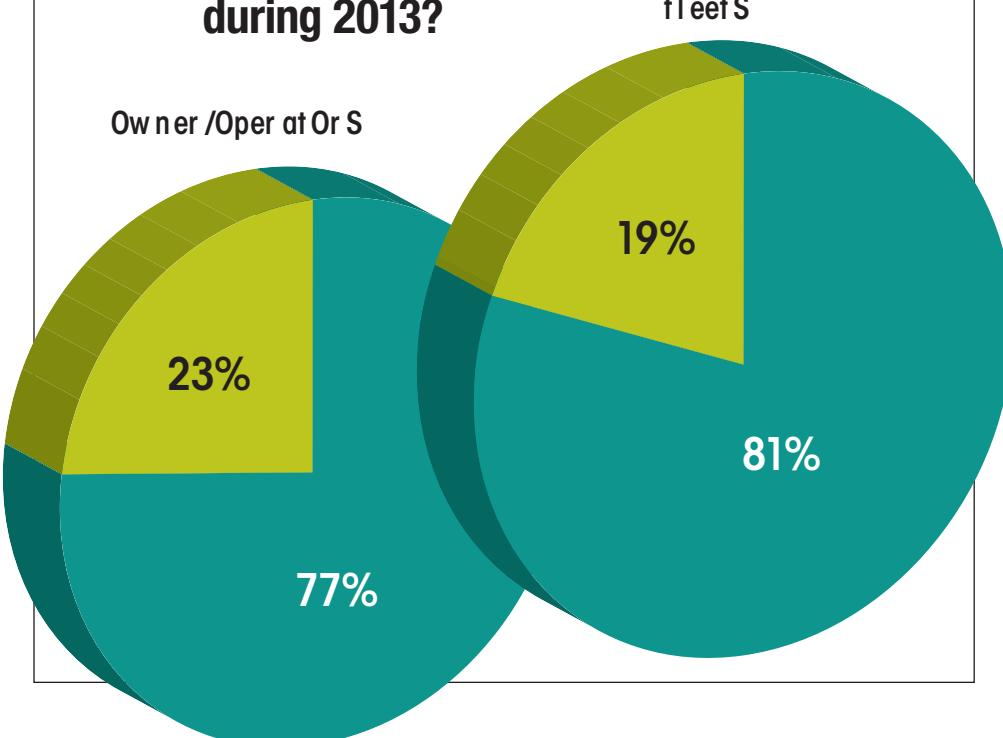
Fuel mileage is of course a major consideration and Queenen has noticed that truck buyers are getting beyond the 475-500 hp, 13-speed manual shift cookie-cutter spec. "We're seeing fleets dropping their horsepower down to 425 hp," he says.

Rear-end axle ratios are also changing as trucks are running at lower rpms. Queenen has seen buyers favouring 3.36 and 3.42 rear-end

Are you planning to purchase a used truck(s) during 2013?

Yes

No



– 2012 Equipment Trends Buying Survey, Transportation Media

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When selecting a used truck, how important is each factor listed below on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being the least important?	Owner/Operator	Fleets
Knowledge level of dealer sales representative	3.39	3.20
Brand	3.97	4.07
Age of truck/mileage	4.46	4.35
Gross vehicle weight/payload capacity	4.09	4.14
Horsepower	4.28	3.89
Axle ratio	4.26	3.92
Type of transmission	4.26	4.10
Fuel tank size	3.51	3.38
Quality of tires	3.84	3.37
Availability of APU	2.95	3.00
Availability of preferred engine brand	4.12	3.98
Length and quality of warranty	3.76	3.76
Degree of available financing	3.51	2.72
History of the truck	4.32	4.15
Estimated maintenance costs	4.13	3.88
Availability of parts	4.31	4.30

- 2012 Equipment Trends Buying Survey, Transportation Media

ratios in the automatics, and 3.55 and 3.58s with the 13-speed transmissions.

"You don't see the 3.70 or 3.90 set-ups like you used to," says Queenen. "Truck buyers seem to be doing their homework."

Arrow's Gupta agrees that fuel economy is a most important consideration: "Many of our customers are looking for a trucks three or four years old, with 425-450 hp. Small bunk sleeper tractors are very popular and can be used for either regional, city or highway work. It's a good time to buy," he adds. "There are some very aggressive

interest rates available."

Dennis Sheehan, co-owner of Sheehan's Truck Sales in Burlington, Ont., thinks that used truck buyers should look seriously at new trucks as well.

"New truck pricing is as good as it's ever been," he says. "Everything including the exchange rate is favourable. We're selling new trucks right now cheaper than we were in 2000."

But if you're not interested in acquiring new iron, Sheehan mentions there are still decent used trucks available, including plenty of 08s and 09s. "There's something there for everyone out there," he says. □

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INDUSTRY

Clean air standards caught in Canadian jurisdictional limbo

The heavy truck air quality regulations culminating in the 2010 "smog-free" truck engines have been heralded by governments and industry alike as among the most important clean air initiatives in history.

The regulations (which were introduced in the US and Canada) have been credited with reducing the incidence of asthma and lung cancer. They are held out as an example of international cooperation and harmonization.

Getting there was no easy feat. In order to comply with the law, engine manufacturers invested billions of dollars in research and testing. Customers paid an "environmental premium" on the purchase price for the new equipment. They also saw fuel economy decrease (a trade-off for cleaner air) and maintenance costs rise.

Industry Issues

DAVID BRADLEY

These additional costs were and are painful. But, most people in the industry have taken the view

'Surely, the regulators don't want to see people tampering with the engines in a blatant attempt to get around the emissions standards,'

David Bradley, Canadian Trucking Alliance

that the emissions standards are the right thing to do – for the planet, for our children; and, ultimately for the industry which has for too long been a convenient

whipping boy and easy target for environmentalists and politicians.

The pain that individual companies felt was mitigated in part by the fact that everyone was supposed to be in the same boat; that your competitor was going to have the same challenges as you in trying to get your customers to pay more to cover the increased costs. It was supposed

to be a collective pain.

However, there are always those who will seek to get a leg up on everyone else by trying to find a way around the rules.

By now most people in the trucking industry have at least heard about the repair shops and garages that seem quite happy to dismantle or otherwise tamper with the new trucks' air quality controls for a fee. Some of the people involved in this activity are doing so on the quiet, under the noses of the regulators. Others are more brazen and are taking out advertisements or promoting their "service" on the Web – in plain view of the regulators.

Surely, the regulators – especially Environment Canada, which introduced the regulations in the first place – don't want to see people tampering with the engines in a blatant attempt to get around the emissions standards. Surely, they have some mechanism for actually enforcing their own law. You think?

When CTA brought this issue to Environment Canada's attention, we thought they'd be all over it. Instead, we were told that the regulations do not apply to modifications to vehicles after their first retail sale – even though it is acknowledged what these shops are doing affects emission performance, it falls under provincial/territorial jurisdiction.

So, CTA's next step was to contact the provincial departments and ministries of transportation and offer to work with them to develop a strategy to target those facilities that are circumventing the emissions standards. It took some time, but some of the provincial representatives eventually acknowledged they do have the authority. Current provincial efforts are focused on perhaps tackling the issue through the periodic mandatory vehicle inspection. We'll see.

The incessant ping-pong between the feds and the provinces is commonplace. Look at our industry's experience with the federal hours-of-service regulations, for example. A disjointed approach to national standards and the enforcement of them is as Canadian as Hockey Night in Canada.

But that doesn't make it right. We hear a lot from governments these days about how they want to reduce red tape to make things better for the business community. That's a good thing.

But, in the trucking industry as big or bigger concern than "red tape" is the lack of harmonization both in terms of regulations and their enforcement across the country and the resulting distortions visited upon the marketplace. A lack of enforcement of federal standards, in this case the emissions regulations, not only denigrates the credibility of those standards, it also tilts the playing field in favour of those who don't comply.

In part the problem is constitutional. Other times it's administrative or just the way things have always been done. It doesn't matter. It's dumb and it's costly and surely we should be mature enough as a nation to start dealing with these sorts of things in earnest. □

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

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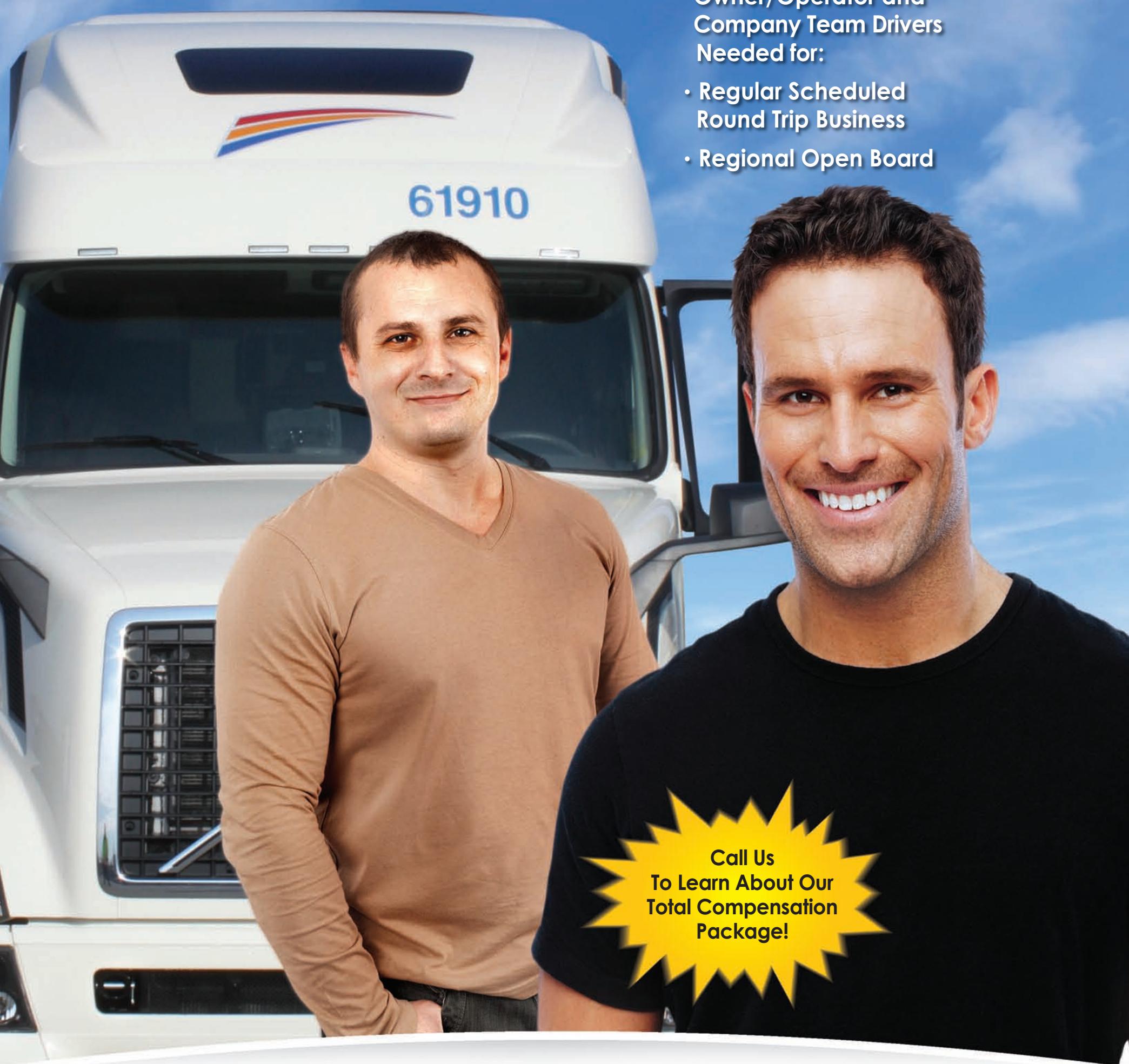
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FLEET NEWS**Six Canadian trucking companies named Best Fleets to Drive For**

ALEXANDRIA, Va. – Six Canadian trucking companies have made the 2013 list of the top 20 Best Fleets to Drive For compiled by the Truckload Carriers Association (TCA) and CarriersEdge. The annual survey and contest, now in its fifth year, identifies for-hire trucking companies that provide the best workplace experiences for their drivers. This year's Canadian winners are: Brian Kurtz Trucking, Breslau, Ont.; Erb Group of Companies, New Hamburg, Ont.; Steed Standard Transport, Stratford, Ont.; TimeLine Logistic International, Saskatoon, Sask.; Trimac Transportation, Calgary, Alta.; and Yanke Group of Companies, Saskatoon, Sask.

Yanke has become the only company to be named a Best Fleet for all five years since the program was launched. "I think that's a real

achievement, considering how much we've seen fleets improve their programs since we started," said TCA president Chris Burruss. "It's very difficult to get named a Best Fleet to begin with, let alone remain on the list for five consecutive years."

A pair of Canadian companies also made the contest's list of "Fleets to Watch" (honourable mentions) for demonstrating innovation in their driver programs: Celadon Canada of Kitchener, Ont., and Transpro Freight Systems of Milton, Ont.

The nomination process began in the fall of 2012, when company drivers and owner/operators were asked to nominate carriers that operate 10 or more trucks. After confirming the validity of the nominations and the trucking companies' desire to participate, CarriersEdge interviewed human resources representatives and executives of the nominated fleets about their corporate direction, policies, and programs. Nominated fleets were evaluated against a scoring matrix covering a variety of categories.

A selection of each fleet's drivers were also surveyed, with their feedback compared to management's and incorporated into the final score. The responses were then tallied, resulting in the selection of this year's winners and honourable mentions.

Mark Murrell, president of CarriersEdge, said: "We had a 50% increase in nominations and participation for the fifth anniversary of the program. Clearly, being named a Best Fleet to Drive For is a prestigious title that is motivating companies to constantly raise the bar on the offerings they provide their truck drivers."

Now that the winners have been named, the next phase of the contest is to announce the highest scoring fleets from each of two categories: Best Overall Fleet for Owner/Operators and Best Overall Fleet for Company Drivers. The overall winners will be announced at the TCA Annual Convention, March 3-6 at the Wynn Las Vegas in Las Vegas, Nev. □

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Muir's Cartage drops company drivers in organizational restructuring

Will rely on owner/operators and third-party driver services agency to meet demand

By James Menzies

CONCORD, Ont. – On Jan. 3, just days after the Christmas rush, all 33 company drivers working for Muir's Cartage were brought together and informed collectively that they would no longer work for the company with a 100-year-plus history.

Ted Brown, executive vice-president with Muir's, told *Truck News* the changes were necessitated by the "market forces experienced by the entire industry." Going forward, Muir's will rely on owner/operators and drivers provided by third-party agency Inter-Link Driver Services.

Brown told *Truck News* the move was necessary in response to "significant changes specific to our major customer relationships that remain strong, but simply require a change in our overall infrastructure and how we deploy our fleet and drivers."

Some of these changes, Brown said, have been phased in over the past few years. As for the Jan. 3 announcement that it would no longer run company trucks, Brown said it "was a necessary component to fully meeting those demands going into 2013 and remaining a competitive provider of excellent service well beyond."

Prior to the Jan. 3 announcement, Muir's operated three distinct driver groups: a city and highway owner/operator fleet; a scaleable third-party channel with agency partners; and a company driver fleet.

"After Jan. 3, our model will consist of a mix of owner/operators and our agency strategy – the application of either depending upon our

Mullen Group to spend \$80M on new equipment in 2013

OKOTOKS, Alta. – Mullen Group will spend \$80 million on new equipment in 2013, a decrease of \$23 million compared to 2012. Most of the \$80 million in approved capital spending will go towards buying new trucks, trailers and specialty equipment, the company announced.

Of that, \$25 million will be spent on equipment for the trucking/logistics segment while the remainder will go to the oilfield services segment.

"I am pleased that the board of directors accepted the recommendation of our senior executive team," said Murray Mullen, chairman and CEO of Mullen Group. "This capital will ensure that our business units can remain competitive in what I can summarize as a very challenging market."

Mullen also announced it would be increasing its annual dividend by 20 cents per share and paying it monthly, rather than quarterly. □

existing and new customer requirements," he said.

Customers, said Brown, stand to benefit from increased flexibility and efficiencies.

"Asset utilization will determine which driver solution we will deploy and we'll be better positioned to meet the cost challenges of our partners," he said.

Asked if he expects other Canadian trucking companies to rely more heavily on owner/operators, Brown said "We're certainly seeing more emphasis on the need to flex and adapt to the challenges of our customers. Each transportation company will continue to assess its specific

needs as it adapts to this constant change."

As for the drivers affected by the reorganization, Brown said "These changes are never easy for anyone involved, be they the drivers or the people who they worked with – in some cases for many years. We communicate robustly here though, and our team understands the changing environment and have been resilient throughout the many changes of the past four to five years. We were pleased that a significant number of the drivers affected chose to join our 3P provider and have been able to resume driving for Muir's as part of their service."

Asked if owner/operators may be concerned that the restructuring is indicative of underlying problems at Muir's, Brown said "Muir's has carried out these changes in order

to increase its ability to compete within the conditions of which we're all aware. We've seen continued improvement here over 2011 and 2012 and anyone currently with us or considering joining us should be encouraged by our enhanced ability to succeed in the years to come."

Muir's Cartage is one of Ontario's longest-running trucking companies. It has been in business for more than 100 years. In 2007, the company sold its cross-border truckload division to Kriska Transportation. Today, Muir's operates as a core carrier to big box retailers, and offers regional LTL and truckload services as well as warehousing.

Last year, the fleet operated 145 tractors, down from 211 in 2011, according to the Top Tier report on Canadian trucking capacity, published by *Motortruck Fleet Executive*. □



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ROAD TEST



UP TO THE CHALLENGE?: Mercedes-Benz allowed journalists to test its Sprinter cargo van in some of the toughest conditions Mother Nature could dish out.

Photo by Kelly Taylor

Sprint to the Arctic

Can one of the smallest commercial vehicles withstand the harshest of environments?

It's about -38 C when the diesel-powered auxiliary heater fires up automatically at 7 a.m. near Tok, Alaska.

An hour, and about 0.6 litres of diesel fuel later, we climb into the Mercedes-Benz Sprinter to see if it will start. It does, but it also doesn't like it. The 3.0-litre turbodiesel sputters and coughs and needs a fair bit of throttle to get going, but it passes this, its most serious test of its winter ability on our drive from Edmonton to Anchorage.

Light-Duty Report

KELLY TAYLOR



This is the last of our five-day adventure: It's been an exhilarating, at times harrowing, journey along most of the Alaska Highway.

We've had a dip in the Liard River hot springs in northern British Columbia – changing in a dark,

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unheated dressing room at -20 C and trudging barefoot through ankle-deep snow – eaten schnitzel at the beautiful, hospitable Northern Rockies Lodge in nearby Muncho Lake, B.C. and been blown away by the haute cuisine at Skyy Hotel in Whitehorse.

Today, we're leaving Tok, which is about halfway from the Alaska-Canada border to the western end of the Alaska Highway at Delta Junction. The cabin of this particular short-wheelbase cargo van Sprinter variant isn't exactly shirt-sleeves temperature, but it's comfortable enough we can shed our toques and gloves. About 20 minutes of driving later, we're shedding layer after layer as the cab heats up.

Others on this sprint to Alaska aren't so lucky. The van we're driving has a partition between the cabin and cargo area, and our small space heats up to near-sauna levels in a hurry. A few of the other vans are either cargo variants without a rear cabin wall or are passenger versions, also without partitions. An hour into this trip from Tok and the people in these vans are still cold.

There is also a crew van version that seats five and has ample cargo room, handy for taking work crews and gear to a job site. Partition options on all but passenger vans include a solid wall, a wall with a window and a sliding door.

Mercedes-Benz may seem like an odd supplier of cargo vans, given that until 2010, we in Canada knew it only as a luxury brand. But in Europe, Mercedes-Benz is a full-line vehicle manufacturer, from tiny micro cars all the way up to large, heavy-duty cargo haulers. Its experience in building cargo vehicles stretches all the way back to 1896 and Gottlieb Daimler's Motor-Lastwagen.

Will the hoity-toity image of Mercedes hurt Sprinter sales? Time will tell, but they're already at 7,000 units sold in Canada, with countless others operating here after having been bought in the US by American parent companies.

After five days in the arctic hinterland, it's easy to see why Sprinter is gaining in popularity. The auxiliary heater, which is standard but in our vans is operated by an optional programmable timer (\$250), ensures a toasty cabin and an engine full of hot coolant. There are handy touches that professional drivers will appreciate, from a bounty of cargo bins and storage trays to a comfortable driving position with a host of adjustments, including seat height, tilt steering wheel and adjustable tilt on the seat cushion.

There are also bits about Sprinter to please the company accountant: high resale value, extended 25,000-kilometre service intervals and excellent fuel efficiency. Our best average was 11.3 litres per 100 kms, on the second day when we had temperatures around -10 C and we weren't idling for extended periods. Mercedes pegs the fuel costs at 13 cents per kilometre, six cents less than the nearest competitor. Resale value after five years is, according to Canadian Black Book, 32%, also best-in-class.

How did we like the Sprinter after 3,176 kilometres from Edmonton to Anchorage? Well, it handled

treacherous winter conditions admirably, starting every day with nary a hitch and tracking easily on icy, hilly, twisty roads. The tires, Continental CrossContact winter skins, certainly helped.

The stability control worked in all conditions, even on that -38 C day in Tok. What I appreciated about the stability control is that it was smart enough that if you caught a slide early and corrected appropriately, it let you do the work. If you didn't, it took its direction from you – based on where you were steering – to set the vehicle back on track.

It's also adaptive, so it behaves differently when the van is empty, when it's loaded, and when it's loaded unevenly. It even saves you from loads that greatly increase the vehicle's centre of gravity.

There were a few opportunities for improvement: The driver's seat, while adjustable in many ways,

Continued on page 42

The Sprinter spec's:

Engine: 3.0-litre turbodiesel with selective catalytic reduction and BlueTEC emissions-reduction technology, heated fuel filter and heated BlueTEC components.

Power: 188 hp.

Torque: 325 lb.-ft.

Transmission: five-speed automatic with AutoStick manual shift function.

Suspension: shock-absorber-strut independent with transverse-leaf parabolic springs and stabilizer bar (front); rigid rear axle with parabolic spring, shock absorber and stabilizer (rear).

Steering: power-assist rack-and-pinion.

Brakes: four-wheel disc brakes with brake assist, electronic brake force distribution, brake disc wipe (activates to dry brakes when wipers on) and electronic brake prefill.

Stability program: includes acceleration skid reduction, load adaptive control, enhanced understeering control and trailer stability assist.

Fuel economy: 9.4 L/100 kms highway, 13.8 L/100 kms city (based on 144" cargo van and SAE J1082 and J1491 standards).

Cargo capacity: Cargo van, 9 to 17 cu.-m. (318 to 600 cu.-ft.).

Interior standing height: 194 cm (76.4 in).

Payload: cargo van, 1.55 to 2.54 t (3,426 to 5,415 lbs); chassis cab, 2,866 kg (6,318 lbs).

Towing: up to 3,042 kg (7,500 lbs). □



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BONDED CARRIER

ROAD TEST



TRAFFIC JAM: The trek from Alberta to Alaska meant dealing with some rather unusual traffic.
Photo by Kelly Taylor

For smaller loads, Sprinter gets it done

Continued from page 41

lacked lumbar support. As well, Bluetooth hands-free is available, but not standard. As distracted-driving laws continue to increase, that might be an oversight. As mentioned, cabin heat was an issue on vans without a closed passenger compartment and the longer wheelbase vans were tossed around pretty good by sidewinds.

Sprinter comes as a cargo van and

a passenger van in two wheelbases, three lengths and three roof heights. There's also a 2500-series chassis cab dually that can be upfitted to every thing from an ambulance to an RV to a a mobile kitchen. □

— Kelly Taylor is a veteran automobile journalist and a recipient of the Journalist of the Year award by the Automobile Journalists' Association of Canada.

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TAX TALK

Tax tips: Every bit helps

Usually, it's easy coming up with topics for this column in March and April. I go to the Canada Revenue Agency Web site, read the "what's new" bulletins, decide what's useful or pertinent to *Truck News* readers, and then translate the CRA gobbledegook into English. I call the column "Tax Talk" and away we go.

I'm still calling this column Tax Talk, but it wasn't as easy to write this year. There's less bad news (new taxes) and good news (new deductions) to discuss.

The biggest change on your 2012 tax filing involves contributing to the Canada Pension Plan (CPP). As of Jan. 1, 2012, if you are between 60 and 65 and receive CPP benefits while you keep working, you must continue making CPP contributions on your employment or self-employment income. These contributions

Tax Talk

SCOTT TAYLOR

go toward a new post-retirement benefit (PRB) created for working people who are between 60 and 70 years old.

If you're an employee, you should have reviewed these changes with your employer already. You self-employed folks will experience this change when you file your tax return this year. I covered the PRB in the November 2012 *Truck News*, so I'll refer you to that issue for details.

Instead, I want to concentrate on several personal-tax issues that generate questions every year:

Accrual vs. cash: As a self-em-

ployed individual, you report business income by using the accrual method of accounting. You report income in the period you earn it, regardless of when you receive the money. For example, your broker settlement for the period ending Dec. 31 would be December income even though you weren't paid until Jan. 15. Likewise, you deduct expenses in the fiscal period you incur them: ie., your cell phone bill dated Dec. 28 is a December expense even though you paid it in January.

Pension income splitting: Pension income earners can save big by splitting their pension income between spouses/common-law partners. With the right ratio, I've seen \$2,000 to \$3,000 refunds come out of this calculation that couples had no idea were there. If you're too young to take a pension, what about your parents or in-laws? Make sure they get their returns done by someone who can calculate this split to their advantage.

Medical expenses: These include premiums you or your spouse/common-law partner paid to an insurance company (not a government body) for medical coverage, along with all your receipts for drugs, eyeglasses, dentistry, hearing aids, and other medical services. If you're self-employed, there may be a tax advantage to listing the premiums as a business expense rather than a medical expense on your return. Check the CRA Web site to see what qualifies.

Meals: Meals are deductible at a rate of 50% of \$17 per meal up to three meals per day. As of 2011, 80% of expenses for meals by a long-haul truck driver during an "eligible travel period" are deductible. By definition, an eligible travel period covers at least 24 continuous hours during which a driver is away from his or her home municipality or metropolitan area, and is driving a long-haul truck that transports goods beyond a radius of at least 160 kilometres. Seek tax advice from someone who understands how the rules apply to you and the type of work you do.

Lodging and showers: You can deduct lodging and shower expenses, but keep your receipts to support the amount you deduct. Despite what you may hear, there is no logbook/"away-from-home" calculation for showers.

Cell phones: You can deduct the portion of the airtime expenses and long-distance charges for a cell phone that reasonably relates to earning income as long as your employer requires you to have a cell phone (your employer must sign CRA Form T2200-Declaration of Conditions of Employment). However, you can't deduct amounts you paid to connect or license the cell phone or the cost of fees for Internet service.

GST370: This calculation allows you to reclaim GST/HST paid within your employment expenses. If you travel coast-to-coast in Canada and the US, you need to prorate your meal claim so you claim GST out of the meals from GST provinces, HST from HST provinces, and, of course, zero GST for meals paid for in the US. Your cell phone bills will also contain GST/HST and can be added into this calculation.

Children Fitness/Arts amount: You can claim up to \$500 per child for fees paid in 2012 relating to the cost of registration or membership in a physical activity. Also, you can claim up to \$500 per child for fees paid in 2012 relating to the cost of registration or membership in an "artistic, cultural, recreational, or developmental" activity. Hey, every little bit helps.

That's the point. The best tax tip I can offer is that while taxes are one of the few sure things in life, you can reduce what you're obligated to pay. It takes sound advice, a little discipline, and good planning throughout the year, but it's worth the effort. □



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SAFETY

Focus on yard security will make sure nothing "falls off a truck"

You know cargo theft must be a problem in the trucking industry when stolen goods are described as something that "falls off a truck." It might be more accurate to say some of the goods simply roll through the front gate. A 2011 study on behalf of the Canadian Trucking Alliance – and sponsored in part by Northbridge Insurance – valued cargo theft as a \$5-billion-a-year problem. And much of that cargo is on-board trailers stolen directly from fleet yards.

The threat hardly ends with high-value products like liquor, automotive parts, and video games. Thieves have recently been targeting everything from diapers to produce because the goods can be quickly divided, sold and consumed.

The ill-gotten gains often move into the black market before anyone receives a call about their abandoned, empty trailers sitting on a back road.

Still, it is possible to secure a fleet yard and send discouraged thieves searching for other targets. A well-maintained fence will be an important feature when protecting any site, but even that can be enhanced by limiting the number of entrances and exits, and including gates with electronic locks which open only with a key fob. Live security personnel or other fleet staff can check every driver in and out of the yard, and block any load that is not scheduled to leave.

Landscaping will make a difference on its own. A few well-constructed earthen berms or strategically placed rocks can keep thieves from cutting through the fence in a secluded area of a yard, driving through the opening, and coupling up to their trailer of choice.

And a few extra lights and security cameras around the yard can serve as both a deterrent and a crime-fighting tool. Even if a load is still targeted, a well-aimed camera will offer a clear view of every vehicle plate and driver's face, while a 30-day recording can be used to spot any unusual activities that occurred before the cargo was actually stolen.

Trailers that must be parked on their own can be secured with products ranging from kingpin locks to electronic tracking technologies. Some options will just offer a bigger deterrent than others. For example, a poorly constructed kingpin lock might shatter under the force of a fifth wheel; cone-shaped designs can keep jaws from actually aligning with the pin.

But cargo thefts tend to be more than crimes of opportunity. Thieves who are looking for specific freight need to steal information long before they hook up to a trailer.

The details about a load can be shared innocently enough. Drivers have been known to brag about their cargo during lunches at a truck stop. Inside a fleet office, the member of a contracted cleaning crew may thumb their way through the records dumped

Ask the Expert

EVELYN CARTMILL

in a recycling bin rather than being carted away to a shredder.

Another member of the staff might take the opportunity to peek at the bills of lading that were stacked on a counter rather than being secured in a filing cabinet.

Once armed with the right information, thieves can focus their attention well beyond a fleet yard, whether the trailer is parked at a closed strip plaza or in the far reaches of a massive truck stop. Fleets can help to protect against these thefts by informing drivers about secure yards that are avail-

able along a planned route. Orientation programs also offer a great chance to inform new drivers about security protocols that should be followed at home and on the road.

Consider how something as simple as parking techniques can make a difference.

Trailers that are parked back to back, with the barn doors facing each other, will be harder to unload in a hurry. And a trailer coupled to a tractor will always be harder to steal than a unit with an exposed kingpin.

Dispatchers have their own role to play when protecting the freight. Rather than arranging for a high-value load to be picked up and stored in a fleet yard for several days, they can try to schedule a pick-up when the cargo actually needs to move.

Another option is to unload the contents of an unsealed trailer into a secure warehouse. Or maybe a consignee will accept the freight earlier than expected.

These may seem like small steps, but they can all play an important role in protecting the cargo under your care and control. □

– This month's expert is Evelyn Cartmill, risk services specialist, CHRP, CRM. Evelyn has served the trucking industry for over 15 years in the areas of human resources, safety and compliance. 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.nbins.com.

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Achieving a healthy lifestyle begins with an aspiration

The three ingredients to a healthy lifestyle:
an aspiration, a plan and a support network

I closed off my February column with a commitment to share some thoughts about how I keep myself motivated to exercise and eat right while dealing with the rigors of the trucking lifestyle. I started laughing at myself over this.

After all, I'm a truck driver, not some sort of motivational guru. There is no sugarcoating the fact that it is as hard as hell to put in all the hours we put in as professional drivers and still find the time to exercise and prepare healthy meals. The availability of time, or lack of it, is most often cited by drivers as the reason we don't take better care of ourselves. I don't disagree with that statement at all.

Over the Road

AL GOODHALL

It's a fact.

The irony is that successful professional drivers possess the personal traits required to create the time in their lives to make that lifestyle change. Professional drivers are self starters, they have the ability to plan and organize, they have the ability to solve problems as they arise, they are able to roll with the punches, they are patient, they are tenacious, and they pos-

sess a high level of commitment.

I can share three things with you that I have learned since I smoked my last cigarette in the fall of 2000 and kicked off my quest to improve the quality of my life. These are not mind-blowing ideas or practices. I haven't developed some sort of revolutionary health plan. To me these three things are just common sense.

- I have maintained an **aspiration** to make healthy choices and practices a priority in my life;
- I have an **ongoing and flexible plan** to adopt those healthy choices and practices;
- And I have developed a **support network** to help me stay focused on those healthy choices and practices.

So, you see I don't have any big motivational secret or quick fix solution to the health challenges

we face every day as professional drivers. In effect, I don't allow my personal health and well-being to be less important than the freight I handle every day.

When I started, it didn't look this simple or straightforward to me. It was a messy struggle that started with a deep desire for change.

I often say there is no point trying to make a change in your life if you don't want to change. It's why I use the word 'aspiration' and not 'goal' or 'objective.' To aspire to change speaks to an emotional need, a passion, an ambition, a deep desire.

It's often a significant emotional event you have experienced that triggers the deep desire to make a change in your life. For me it was a noticeable decline in my health between the ages of 38 and 40. I described myself at that time as a train wreck just waiting to happen.

I possessed, and practiced, all the high-risk factors associated with heart disease. I believed then that if I didn't make a change I'd be lucky to make it to retirement. It was a very emotional time for me. I think it was the first time I had come face to face with my own mortality. So this is where my aspiration to make healthy choices and practices a priority in my life comes from. It is a very powerful source of motivation for me. It's a place I have left behind and will never go back to.

So when it comes to your health and well-being, what is your greatest aspiration? Forget about how you would accomplish it at the moment, forget about goal setting and planning. Don't think about having to exercise or quit smoking or change your eating habits. Put those thoughts aside for the moment. Just picture yourself five to 10 years down the road.

How do you picture yourself? What would you have to change in your daily life to meet that aspiration? The answer is different for each one of us. It takes a lot of introspection, a lot of time being brutally honest with yourself to answer those questions. It's not comfortable for most of us to do. It's far easier to leave your life on cruise and wait until you run into something.

But having a lifelong aspiration is the 'Big Idea' and it won't resolve all the issues you face in the daily grind of a driver's life, or any life for that matter.

That's where devising a flexible plan and developing a support network comes in. This is where you do all the hard work, especially at first. The trick I learned is not to try to do too much, not to set your sights too high. Slow and steady wins the race when it comes to forming new habits. More on this next month. □

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

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OPINION

It's time to get a handle on emissions-related breakdowns

I would like to use this column as a way of sharing some of the things I've learned over the years, mostly about improving fuel economy and lowering maintenance and operating costs.

Coming from the UK, where diesel fuel is extremely expensive and rates are low, it's a subject dear to my heart.

I've done extensive research, had many hours of training from industry experts and put a lot of what I've learned into practice, so it would be very simple to hit the keyboard and e-mail the results to the editor – money for old rope, really.

However, I just can't. Something always comes up that changes things and there seems to be a pattern to that something. Yes, you've guessed it, emissions. Or to be more accurate, the failure of the emission control systems on modern trucks.

A good friend of mine runs a trucking company with 20 trucks. His fleet is all under three years old, with the exception of a couple city trucks. If you knew nothing about modern trucks and listened to this guy talk, you would think he was jinxed or was paying the price for misdemeanors in a previous life.

In the last six months there has not been a single week where he has had his whole fleet out on the road earning money.

Some weeks a quarter of the fleet is in a shop somewhere in North America and every single problem is somehow related to EGR, the DPF or SCR.

As I write these words, he has three trucks off the road. These three trucks have been off the road for over a week. Two of them had spent a week in the shop before this visit too.

One of them had a new SCR system fitted and was off the road for a week. It then went 1,200 miles before shutting down, this time with a DPF fault.

It needs a complete new DPF system fitted; the only problem is that there are only two available in North America, one in Chicago, the other in Canada. The truck, meanwhile, sits in Texas.

The second truck also needs a new DPF system, despite having a new one fitted the previous week. It is currently on day seven in the shop and the light at the end of the tunnel is conspicuous by its absence.

The third truck has SCR issues, so far three days in and the shop has gotten as far as diagnosing that it has SCR issues, but they do not know the specifics.

I've spoken to all three drivers and they tell me they are not alone, there are other drivers in the same position at each of the dealerships.

And to make matters even worse, each of the trucks has a different brand of engine.

Two different truck manufacturers are involved too, so these problems are not isolated. In my opinion, the whole EGR, DPF, SCR thing is a disaster.

You say tomato,
I say tomahto

MARK LEE

Worse still is the sad fact that not only are there big problems with the systems, when they do go wrong, nobody seems to know how to put them right.

They keep throwing parts at the problem hoping that it will go away.

And to add insult to injury, the parts are never in stock, in one case last year at this specific company a truck was waiting for parts for three weeks.

Out of the 15 new trucks, not one of them has been trouble-free. Two have needed engines rebuilt with less than 300,000

miles on them, both caused by EGR cooler failure which led to excessive bearing wear caused by coolant in the oil.

These two are part of a batch of three trucks that are pre-SCR. The third one is suffering from low oil pressure, a sure sign of bearing wear.

The only good thing about any of this is that the work is all covered under warranty. The loss of earnings, layover pay and hotel bills are not, and this sorry saga is having a major effect on my friend's business.

He did have plans for expansion, the work is there, but he doesn't want any more headaches than he already has, so no more trucks will be added in the near future.

Not until somebody, somewhere, can get a grip on these

malfunctioning emissions control systems and he can send a truck down the road, confident it will be able to return without spending a week in the shop along the way.

Now to finish on a positive note, he has four trucks that are trouble-free, the two city trucks, which are old over-the-road tractors with the bunks removed.

They have pre-emission engines and he also has two gliders with pre-emission engines: no EGR, no DPF, no SCR, no breakdowns. A coincidence? I think not. □

– 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.brandttruck.com/blog.

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When hiring drivers, small fleets are at a major disadvantage

As small carriers, we often watch job applicants leave our offices confused as to why, despite seemingly acceptable credentials, they were not hired as drivers. Maybe I can shed some light.

First, newly-licensed applicants need to gain at least two years' experience with a large carrier before a small carrier can hire you. Our insurance providers will not allow us to hire anyone with less than two years' experience, and even that often involves a premium increase.

Even if you prove yourself to be an exceptional talent, as some new licencees are, we can't hire you. This has been the case for many years, so if a driving school tells you otherwise, they are not simply confused or mistaken, they lied.

Small carriers are locked in to a



Small Fleet, Big Attitude

BILL CAMERON

very firm set of insurance provider-dictated recruitment rules. In some cases, a driver we may not accept can apply at a large carrier and be accepted almost immediately, creating obvious confusion for newcomers to the industry.

Large carriers may be able hire new trainees, recent immigrants, or those with shaky driving histories. This is because the large carrier will often be self-insured, meaning the lion's share of their insurance coverage is for liabilities. Deductibles on vehicle damage are so astronomically high,

claims are rare.

How did a driver I couldn't hire become acceptable just because the truck has a different name on the door? This can be very frustrating for the small carrier, as well as the driver, as there are many drivers who are quite qualified, but lacking in experience.

Imagine finding the ideal driver for your empty truck, yet being unable to hire them due to insurance guidelines that only apply to small carriers. My equipment is an important asset, not just a unit number, and nobody operates it unless I have complete faith in their ability.

Older, experienced drivers and owner/operators need to bear in mind the primary difference between dealing with small and large carriers.

At the large carrier, you will deal with someone whose title is recruiter. The recruiter's duty is to recruit, not to retain. They are often under pressure to hire new drivers. As a result, if your ability or attitude is slightly lacking, but your abstract and resume look alright, you will likely be hired.

Apply at the small carrier, and your recruiter likely wears the following hats: human resources, payroll, safety, dispatch, maintenance, senior driver, and/or owner. As such, this person has a huge financial and personal stake in the company. If you are the most qualified, hardest worker to ever walk through the door, but your attitude is horrible, you will remain unemployed.

I once interviewed a man in his 50s, who boasted a 35-year safety record, who arrived with a briefcase because it was the only container he had large enough to contain all his awards. His impression was that I would obviously hire him immediately, and use him as the benchmark for all future hires.

I've been on road tests that disappointed me, but until that day I had never been on one that had me fearing for my own safety. It seems his clean driving record didn't reflect his driving ability, just incredibly good luck, something he was painfully unaware of.

An angry phone call from him a week later confirmed that no other small carrier would hire him either, but he didn't remain unemployed. Some desperate fool hired him.

As a side note, you'll notice that carriers of all sizes are guilty of certain recruiting sins. One ad that caught my eye before the recession was from an Ontario carrier that advertised flatbed company driver positions paying "up to" 73 cents per mile. A company insider explained this number to me. They took the highest grossing driver's T4 earnings, and divided it by the miles he travelled. That number, unfortunately, included safety bonus, uniform allowance, holiday pay, overdimensional bonuses, layovers, tarp fees and LTL bonuses.

That's hardly a true mileage rate, is it? As usual, if it sounds too good to be true, it's usually not true. The real base rate in this case was 42 cents per mile. The recruiter obviously had exceptional math skills. This, unfortunately, is a common practice.

The biggest downfall to these issues, is the lasting impression it leaves with younger drivers. After being rejected by small carriers, they will gravitate to a large carrier. After gaining experience, they could try employment at both small and large carriers, weighing the merits of each. Unfortunately, we are all creatures of habit, and your first job in a new industry will likely set an unbreakable pattern. □

– 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.

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Meritor celebrates production of 10 millionth trailer axle

Milestone axle will go on Wabash trailer and be deployed by Werner Enterprises

By James Menzies

FRANKFORT, Ky. – Meritor recently celebrated production of its 10 millionth trailer axle. The event was marked by a ceremony at the company's Frankfort, Ky. plant, where all its trailer axles for the North American market are now produced.

The Frankfort plant has been home to Meritor's trailer axle production since 2001. The 195,000 sq.-ft. plant sits on a 30-acre site that was originally opened in 1994. Currently, 181 employees work there and the plant is running a shift and a half, producing trailer axles and brakes. The plant has received \$2.2 million in upgrades over the past three years, increasing capacity and improving productivity.

"North America is the centre of our trailer business and what we do out of this facility serves as the centre for what we do globally," Craig Frohock, general manager of Meritor's trailer and aftermarket businesses said during a special ceremony at the plant. "This facility services the US and Canada market and this is where the core of our business is."

Meritor also has an international presence, producing trailer undercarriage products in South America and the Asia-Pacific regions as well.

The 10 millionth trailer axle was to be shipped to Wabash for installation in one of its trailers before being delivered to customer Werner Enterprises. Representatives from Werner were unable to attend the ceremony due to bad weather, but a wide variety of guests were on-hand, including media, political representatives, suppliers, customers and of course, the Frankfort plant employees who halted production to commemorate the milestone.

Meritor officials seemed upbeat about the pace of the recovery and their prospects for sales.

Beaver Truck Centre now offers leasing, rentals

WINNIPEG, Man. – Beaver Truck Centre has launched a new leasing and rentals division. Beaver Leasing and Rentals will carry both Volvo and Hino trucks for daily rental or long-term, full-maintenance lease.

"We understand the customer's livelihood depends on their trucks being on the road with a minimum of downtime," Beaver said in a release. "When you sign up for a full-service lease from Beaver Leasing and Rentals, we look after all your breakdown issues including the repair costs, towing costs and replacement vehicle, if required, to keep you on the road making money."

Angelo Macchia and Lisa Carriere will be heading the leasing and rentals areas of the new division, respectively. □

"The market is recovering at a nice, steady pace," said Pedro Ferro, president of Meritor's aftermarket and trailer operations.

"We don't see a recovery like we saw back in 2006 when the market really exploded and we saw dealers left with a lot of inventory and we were left with a lot of inventory and there was this big cliff. This time, I'm encouraged by the pace of the recovery. I think some segments of the trailer market are weaker than others; flatbeds have softened, construction hasn't gotten back to where we think it should be. But I'm encouraged by the pace (of the recovery) this time and I don't think we'll have a boom and bust. I



THAT'S A LOT OF AXLES!: Workers at Meritor's Frankfort, Ky. axle plant pose with the 10 millionth trailer axle produced by the company.

think the recovery will continue in 2013 and 2014. I'm very optimistic about it. As far as the whole trucking industry is concerned, I don't

think there's going to be explosive growth this year, but it should grow at, I would say 3-4% between this year and next." □

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Utility Trailer manufactures 200,000th reefer trailer

CITY OF INDUSTRY, Calif. – Utility Trailer has reached a production milestone, having manufactured more than 200,000 reefer trailers at the company's Clearfield, Utah manufacturing facilities.

Utility's first Clearfield plant opened in 1965 and closed in 2001. A new larger facility adjacent to the area opened in January 2000 and has recently reached the milestone of producing its 100,000th reefer trailer. The 100,000th reefer trailer was produced for Utility's longtime customer, Stevens Transport from Dallas, Texas. Combining the production from both the old and new Clearfield manufacturing plants, Utility has exceeded the milestone of producing more than 200,000 reefer trailers in Utah.

"We opened the new facility in Utah specifically for our number-one selling 3000R refrigerated trailer. The design and layout of the larger facility accommodated the



MARKING A MILESTONE: Utility Trailer recently marked the 100,000th reefer manufactured at its Clearfield, Utah plant, which, combined with a second, now-closed facility, brings the total reefers manufactured in the state to 200,000 all-time. The historic trailer was made for longtime customer Stevens Transport.

advanced tooling specific to the 3000R," said Steve Smith, Utility's Clearfield plant manager. "From 178,000 sq.-ft. of space to the larger facility which exceeds 500,000

sq.-ft., we've increased production efficiencies with a continuous production flow by expanding and adding a second assembly line for high-option trailers." □

Volvo to reward safest fleets

GREENSBORO, N.C. – The search is on, once again, for the safest fleets in North America, with Volvo seeking recipients for its annual Volvo Trucks Safety Award. For the fifth consecutive year, two fleets with the safest driving records and top safety programs will receive \$25,000 to be used toward their safety-related activities. Michelin will once again be joining Volvo Trucks as sponsor, officials announced.

"Improving highway safety remains a top priority for Volvo Trucks and the trucking industry," said Göran Nyberg, president of Volvo Trucks North American sales and marketing. "We're proud to again have an opportunity, along with Michelin, to celebrate the industry's best and highlight the areas that help make them successful. Safe trucking operations do not occur by chance. Fleets must be in tune with all aspects of their operations, from their safety cultures and programs to equipment selection."

The award is open to all Canadian and US fleets operating at least five Class 8 units. Fleets must have at least one Volvo tractor in operation to be eligible for the award. Entrants will be ranked by their accident frequency rates. Participating fleets will also be judged on their accident prevention activities.

The deadline for entry is July 31. The winners of the award will be announced during the American Trucking Associations' Management Conference & Exhibition in October.

The two grand prizes will be awarded to the fleets with the best records in two divisions based on annual vehicle miles travelled: less than 20 million miles and more than 20 million miles. □

Arrow's Toronto branch recognized

MISSISSAUGA, Ont. – Jacobson Hodoh of Arrow Truck Sales Toronto has been named runner-up as Arrow's Retail Salesperson Of The Year, as well as a 2012 President's Club award winner. In addition, the Toronto Arrow Truck Sales office has been named runner-up for the company's Founder's Award for Most Improved Branch during 2012.

"For our branch, and one of our own employees to receive national recognition such as this – especially among 16 Arrow Truck Sales locations throughout the US and Canada – is truly gratifying," said branch manager Vikas Gupta. "It's good to know that our dedication to customers and focus on self-improvement and continuing education in the used truck industry is recognized by our peers."

According to Gupta, Hodoh has been with the company for seven years and has been a President's Club award winner the past six years. Hodoh has also received other top sales honours while at Arrow. □

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Bendix warns many non-OE linings don't meet stopping distance requirements

ELYRIA, Ohio – Bendix Spicer Foundation Brake is warning customers against the use of non-OE friction material when replacing linings on Bendix brakes. The company says it has tested and analyzed stopping distances on a variety of after-market friction products and that in the new reduced stopping distance era, OE friction material is safest.

"We have invested millions of dollars in R&D to develop new brake designs that meet and exceed the government mandate for reduced stopping distances on new vehicles. Since these vehicles will continue to share our roads after servicing, it's vital that we help fleet operators make informed decisions to maintain that same high level of safety and performance," said Eddie Wilkinson, president of Bendix Spicer Foundation Brake.

In August 2011, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) mandated a 30% reduction in stopping distance for new three-axle tractors with GVWRs up to 59,600 lbs. Phase two of the mandate, aimed at tractors with two axles, as well as severe service tractors with GVWRs above 59,600 lbs, takes effect Aug. 1, 2013.

"We spend a great deal of time talking to our fleet customers, and through that ongoing dialogue have come to realize some general misunderstanding exists concerning maintenance of the new high-performance brakes," said Gary Ganaway, director of marketing and global customer solutions for BSFB. "Bendix wants to make sure the industry understands the impact on stopping distance, so we conducted testing and analysis to demonstrate the potential trade-off in performance."

Ganaway said the longtime standard test for certifying brake linings, FM-VSS 121, is no longer adequate in a RSD environment. Most linings that pass the dynamometer requirements don't meet today's requirements, he

said. In testing, Bendix said its own RSD-compliant vehicle using Bendix High Performance ES (extended service) brakes stopped in 215 ft. at 60 mph, well under the 250-ft. limit. However, it said none of the comparison friction used in the relining of RSD brakes met the new requirements. The worst of them had a stopping distance of 311 feet, 45% worse than the Bendix OE lining, the company claims.

"When our engineers develop brake systems, they also specify the friction material as an integral part of each design. Prior generation friction material formulations available throughout the industry are simply not engineered to this same performance standard," Ganaway said. "To avoid confusion and potential risks to safety, we strongly encourage replacing friction like-for-like when relining Bendix High Performance ES Brakes." □

Redhead Equipment named top Canadian Mack dealer

REGINA, Sask. – Mack Trucks has named Redhead Equipment of Regina, Sask. its 2012 Distributor of the Year for Canada.

The annual award recognizes the top-performing distributors within Mack's North American dealer network based on sales, facilities, service, general management, customer satisfaction, parts, personnel and community service.

Other regional Distributor of the Year awards were doled out to a number of Mack dealers across the US, including Tri-State Truck Centre of Memphis, Tenn., which was named top Distributor of the Year for all of North America.

"Our distributors are essential partners for Mack Trucks," said Kevin Flaherty, president of Mack Trucks North American sales and marketing. "We appreciate the depth of product knowledge and the commitment to customer satisfaction that these award winners display as they deliver exceptional service." □

Michelin to expand Nova Scotia truck tire plant

WATERVILLE, N.S. – Michelin announced last month that it's investing \$64.1 million into expanding its Waterville, N.S. factory, where its X One wide-base tire is produced.

The province of Nova Scotia is adding up to \$8.9 million. The expansion is expected to add 50 new high-value jobs in the Annapolis Valley region.

"When a company is coming here, or expanding here, I want it to be profitable enough to re-invest and keep hiring Nova Scotians," said Premier Darrell Dexter. "Companies like Michelin can choose to grow anywhere. I'm happy that they have chosen to keep growing in Nova Scotia, meaning more good jobs, more families and more young people."

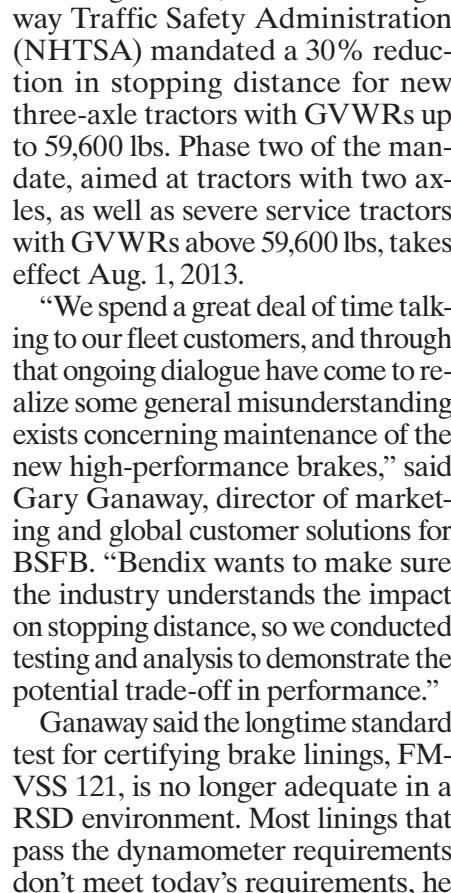
Michelin will invest in the installation of new technologies to improve manufacturing processes, which will support the growth of its wide-base tire product line. As part of the expansion, a 3,000 square-metre addition will be built.

"Today's announcement shows once again that Michelin believes in both the province of Nova Scotia and our highly skilled employees," said Dana LeBlanc, president, Michelin North America (Canada). "The demand is growing in North America for our wide-base tire products like the Michelin X One, and this manufacturing investment at Waterville will help us meet that demand." □



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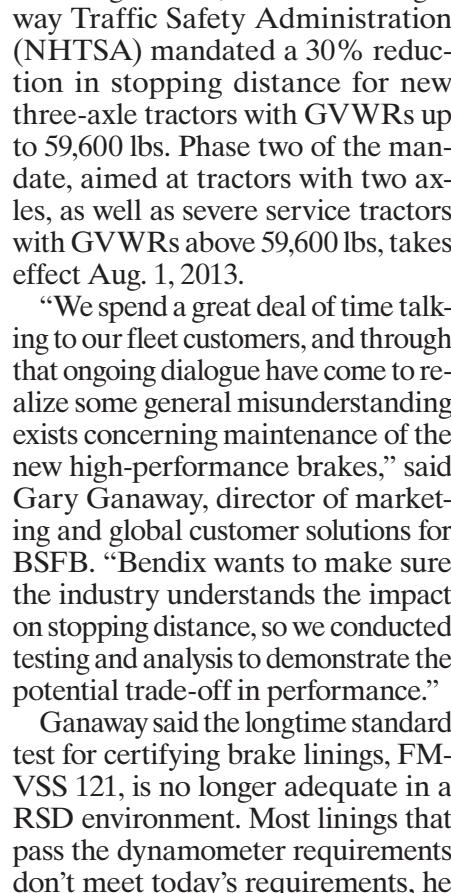
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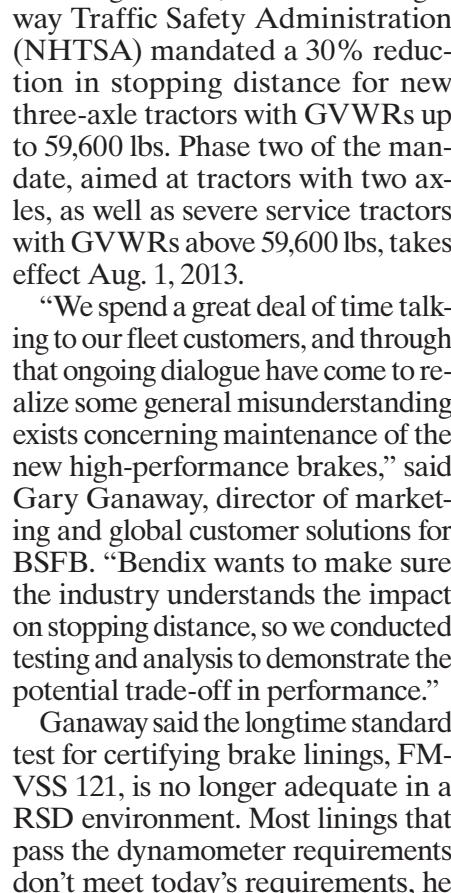
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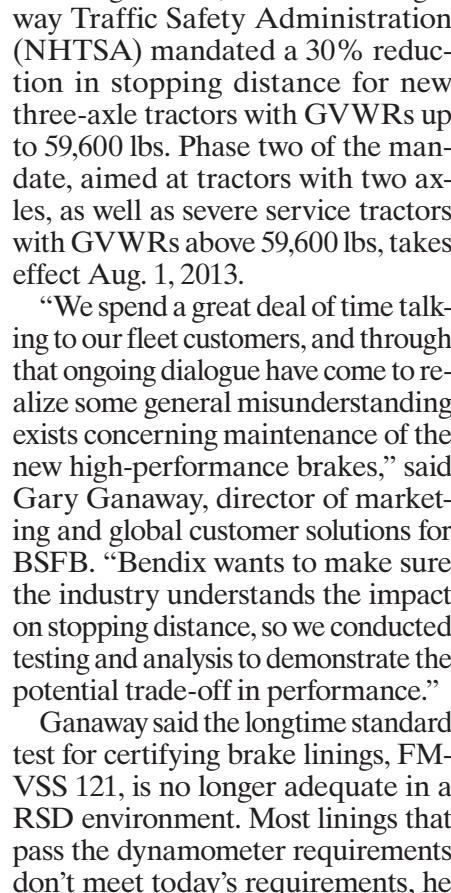
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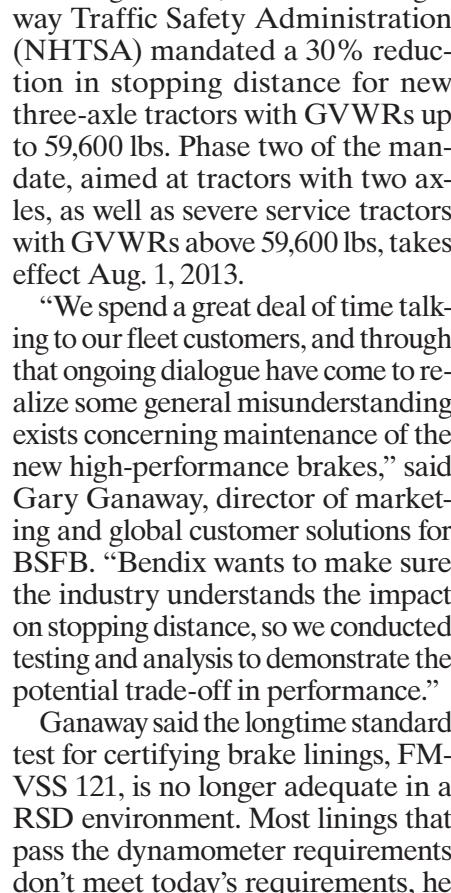
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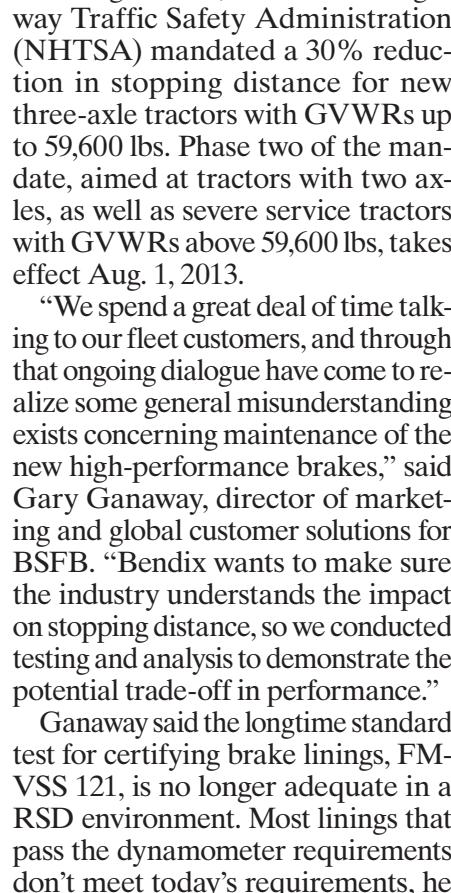
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"Our distributors are essential partners for Mack Trucks," said Kevin Flaherty, president of Mack Trucks North American sales and marketing. "We appreciate the depth of product knowledge and the commitment to customer satisfaction that these award winners display as they deliver exceptional service." □

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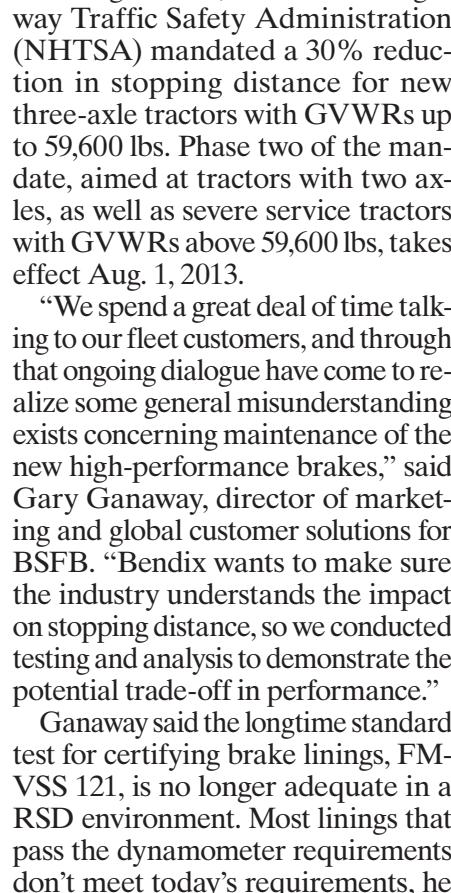
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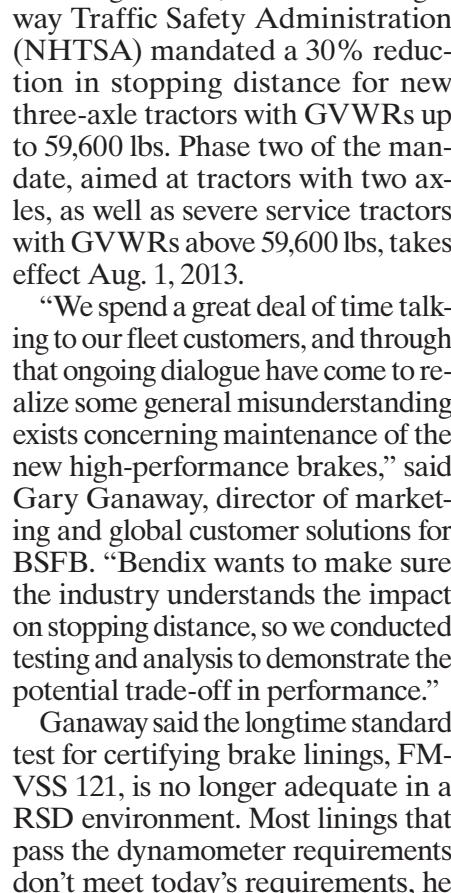
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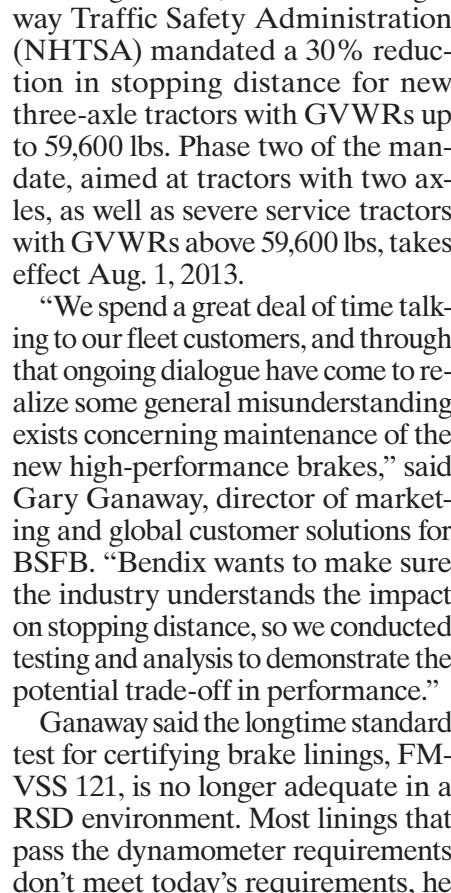
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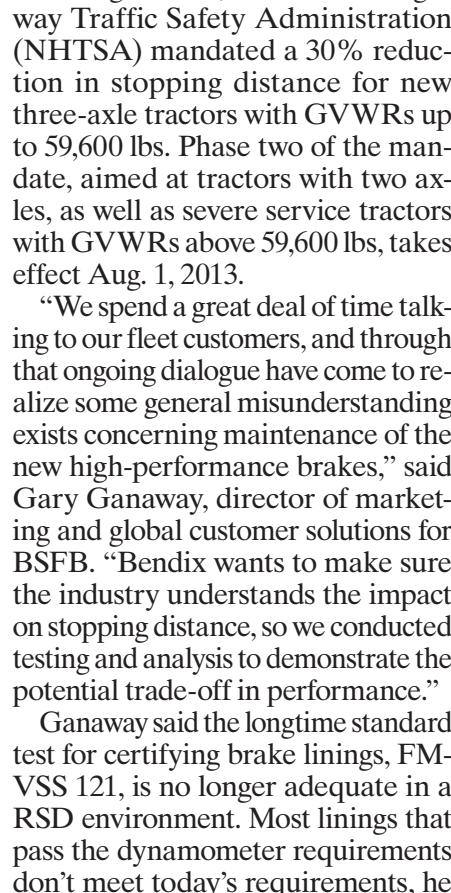
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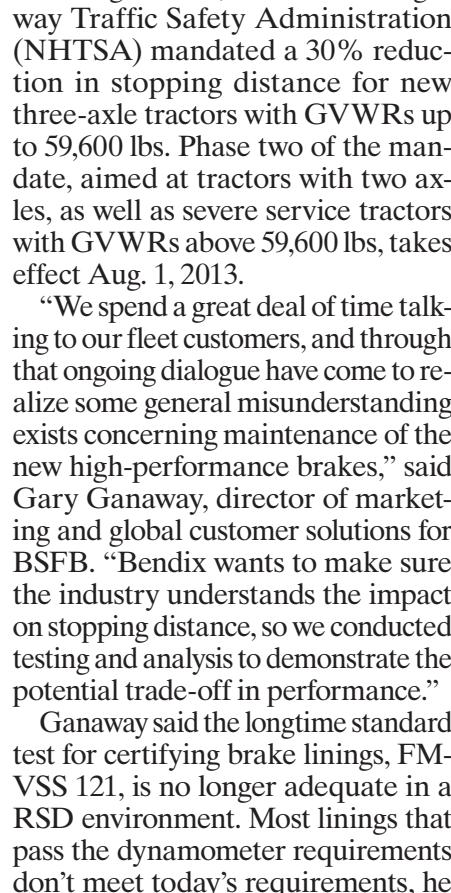
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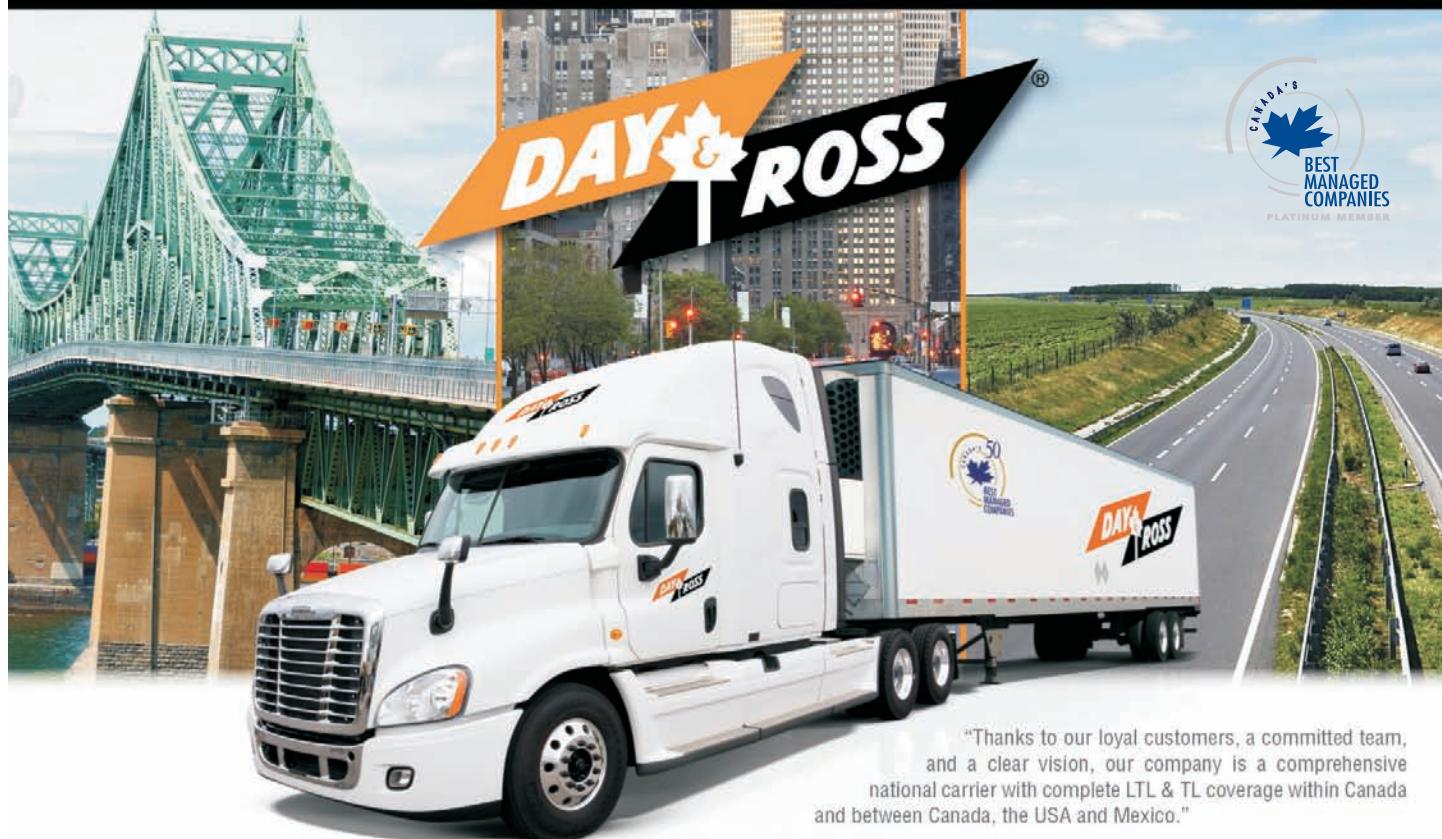
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OPINION

Investments: Always do your homework

Publisher's Comment



ROB WILKINS

In these days of low interest rates, it may be an excellent time to pull the trigger on a new truck. In the all-important world of cash flow, these rates can make such a major capital investment an affordable reality. If you are thinking of making the move, and if you're financing the purchase, do yourself a favour and shop around for a finance program that fits your needs. You don't have to accept the first number they throw at you. Shop around and make sure you've done your homework.

While a welcome sign of the times for many, low interest rates are causing havoc for the retirees of the world. Since the days of the defined benefit retirement plans are few and far between, many people have moved their self-directed investment portfolios to the greener pastures of the stock market.

More specifically, stocks that pay dividends are all the rage at the moment. Some of the larger blue chips will pay you handsomely to hold their shares. It's not unusual for oil producers pay north of 5% – a healthy return, for sure. But buyer beware; do your homework before you jump in. If a company is paying out dividends that are higher than its cash flow per share, chances are that big fat juicy dividend won't be sustainable. Eventually it will catch up to them and that will be reflected in the share price.

At this point, if you're still reading this column, you have at least some interest in how your investments are being handled. There are some great financial advisors out there that can customize an investment plan that's right for you.

Again, do your homework. You need to be comfortable with that person. Do they understand your risk tolerance? Do their investment recommendations meet your goals? More importantly, can you sleep at night?

If you do decide to sign on with a financial advisor, do yourself a favour. Take a proactive role in researching his or her recommendations. There have been some horror stories of people seeing their portfolios decimated by poor decisions, usually through investing in risky, unproven equities.

There's a great Web site that will help the average Joe or Joanne find out what the experts say about most TSX- or NYSE-listed stocks. Go to www.stockchase.com and you'll see their opinions and top recommendations. Most of this information is summarized and posted daily from interviews conducted on the BNN channel.

Oh, and if you haven't read *The Wealthy Barber*, go buy a copy or two. That may be the best investment advice you'll ever get. □

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

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WORLD OF CONCRETE

Freightliner offering CNG-powered concrete mixer

LAS VEGAS, Nev. – Freightliner has brought to World of Concrete a 114SD model concrete mixer powered by compressed natural gas (CNG).

The truck is equipped with the Cummins ISL G natural gas engines. The 114SD CNG concrete mixer is available with a wide range of vocational rear suspensions and

frame options. The truck features a heavy-duty frame and steel-reinforced aluminum cab.

"The combination of our severe-duty concrete mixer with natural gas

technology is the ideal blend of power, performance and efficiency," said Robert Carrick, manager, natural gas sales, Freightliner Trucks. "We are providing the mixer market with another solution for customers seeking an economical way to reduce emissions and fuel costs." □



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2001 INTERNATIONAL c/w 20,000 litre four compartment aluminum tank, dual pumping and metering equipment, Midcom, DOT Safetied and B620. Stock #T675



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Navistar showcases updated WorkStar, integrated mixers at World of Concrete

LAS VEGAS, Nev. – Navistar International and its Continental Mixers subsidiary were at World of Concrete in early February, touting the breadth of the truck maker's construction segment.

"Over the past several years, Navistar has maintained its focus on meeting the needs of its construction customers by delivering industry-leading vocational trucks and integrated mixer offerings for a wide range of applications," said Jack Allen, president North America truck and parts, Navistar. "With investment in great products, an extensive dealer network, and the best after-sales support in the industry, we're well positioned to continue our support for this important segment of the business."

The International WorkStar with SCR will be available in May. Other new features on the WorkStar include 96-inch break-away mirrors and standard LED lighting. The WorkStar vocational tractor is also available with the MaxxForce 13 engine with SCR. Meanwhile, Navistar showcased its integrated mixer line. Continental mixers save nearly 2,000 lbs in weight compared to comparable steel mixers, the company claims.

"With this lightweight mixer, we are changing the weight game in the mixer business," said Steve Guillaume, general manager, Continental Mixers. "We've developed a product that provides our customers with significant weight savings while maintaining all the benefits of a conventional steel mixer." □

Cummins unveils 2013 vocational engine lineup

LAS VEGAS, Nev. – Cummins has announced its 2013 engine line for the vocational market, claiming customers will see up to 2% better fuel economy than with 2012 models.

The fuel economy improvements are attributed to improvements in subsystem components, including the XPI fuel system, VGT turbo, Cummins aftertreatment system with DPF and SCR, all powered by a single engine control module resulting in improved combustion efficiency, performance and reliability, the company says. There are no major hardware changes in Cummins' 2013 engine line.

The 2013 engines are certified to the impending GHG14 standard, which comes into effect next year.

"Cummins remains focused on delivering engines with better fuel economy, reliability and durability with lower operating costs," said Jeff Jones, Cummins vice-president, North American engine business and market communications.

Cummins 2013 vocational engine line includes the ISX12, with 310-425 hp, and SmartTorque ratings that deliver an extra 200 lb.-ft. of torque in the top two gears and vocational ratings that provide additional torque in the lower gears. Options include front- and rear-mounted power take-offs.

The ISL9, with ratings of 260-380 hp, features replaceable wet liners, roller followers, by-pass oil filtration and targeted piston cooling. Cummins says the engine is suitable for tough work environments and boasts the highest power density of any engine in its class.

Also available are natural gas versions of both engines, the ISL G and ISX12 G. They are equipped with Cummins Westport's spark-ignited combustion technology with stoichiometric cooled EGR and maintenance-free three-way catalyst.

The ISL G is available with 250-320 hp while the ISX12 G can be had with 320-400 hp. The ISX12 G can be ordered with an automatic or manual transmission and engine braking, making it an ideal heavy-duty natural gas engine, Cummins announced. □

Mack offering new TerraPro engine option for concrete pumper applications

LAS VEGAS, Nev. – Mack has announced its 13-litre MP8 engine is now available for order in the TerraPro concrete pumper.

The company says the engine meets customer needs for high horsepower and torque in concrete pumper applications. It's available in three ratings with special performance calibrations unique to the concrete pumping industry.

Ratings range from 425-505 hp with 1,760 lb.-ft. of torque.

"The higher horsepower and torque available with the MP8 provide effective and efficient operation of the concrete pump under the demanding and variable engine loading conditions that are routinely encountered during operation," said Curtis Dorwart, Mack vocational product marketing manager.



NEW OPTION: Mack announced it's now offering its 13L MP8 engine in its TerraPro concrete pumper.

"Concrete pumbers demand incredible power and performance, both of which are offered by the Mack MP8 and Mack TerraPro combination." □

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NEW PRODUCTS



TRP has introduced a new line of all-makes **aluminum wheels** for improved fuel efficiency. The wheels are available in 22.5- and 24.5-inch sizes, with machined and high-polish finishes. They are forged from one piece of corrosion-resistant aluminum, for added strength and durability, the company announced. The lightweight aluminum wheels can be found at TRP retailers, including Kenworth and Peterbilt dealers.



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TODAY!

Fontaine has come out with a new LWB **lightweight slide bracket assembly**, which the company says provides additional weight savings without sacrificing strength. The company says it used computer-aided design to develop a bracket with a smaller footprint that uses steel reinforcement in key areas to improve durability and strength. The LWB accepts a variety of Fontaine No-Slack top plates. For more info, visit www.fifthwheel.com or call 800-874-9780.

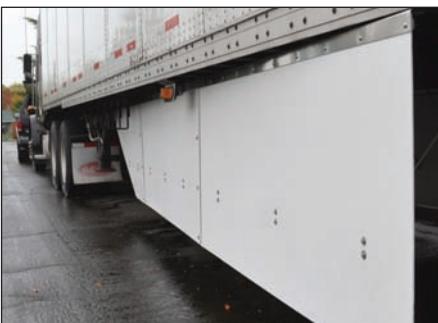
Meritor has announced it's making its PlatinumShield II coating available on **lined aftermarket brakes**. The special coating, which prevents rustjacking, will be available on all new, lined brake shoes, except those with EG and EG2 friction materials, the company announced. "Our customers in the aftermarket kept insisting that we make this innovative breakthrough product available on new shoes, not just remanufactured shoes," said Tim Bauer, director, undercarriage products, Meritor Aftermarket. Meritor says it will not provide unlined brake shoes to the market with PlatinumShield II. Unlined brake shoes will continue to be available with black e-coat paint only.

Meritor announced it is launching **two new product series**: an all-makes parts family dubbed AllFit and a line of remanufactured products named Meritor Green. The AllFit series will include Meritor shock absorbers, suspension controls and all-makes drivetrain.

TRP has announced the creation of a **remanufactured brake program**, offering linings for 20,000- and 23,000-lb applications to help fleets comply with the latest stop-



ping distance and CSA requirements. TRP's remanufactured brakes are engineered to perform to "new brake" standards at a significantly lower cost, according to the company. Applications covered by the new line include city delivery, heavy-haul and severe-service. Single brake shoes and kits are available in 15x4-inch and 16.5x7-inch sizes for both tractors and trailers. All products offered in the TRP program meet FMVSS 121 standards. For more info, visit www.trpparts.com or see a TRP retailer, including any Kenworth or Peterbilt dealer.



Freight Wing has come out with a new AeroFlex Composite **trailer side skirt** that it says has been proven to improve fuel economy by 7.45% using SAE/TMC test methodology. The new skirts are EPA SmartWay-verified. Constructed of a pliable composite material, the skirts are braced with flexible mounting rods and provide a clean, smooth appearance while maintaining a flat panel shape, the company announced. The new model weighs about 170 lbs and can handle typical impact situations, Freight Wing claims. For more information, visit www.freightwing.com.



Blue Tree Systems has introduced a **portable in-cab device**, which provides 'plug-and-play' functionality for owner/operators and rental vehicles during periods of high cargo volume, the company announced. The R:COM in-cab portable unit offer all the same features as the existing R:COM in-cab communication system, but also features a one-piece plug-and-play device that's temporarily mounted on the dash of the vehicle. The system offers hours-of-service tracking, driver messaging, satellite navigation and job management features. For more info, visit www.bluetreesystems.com. □

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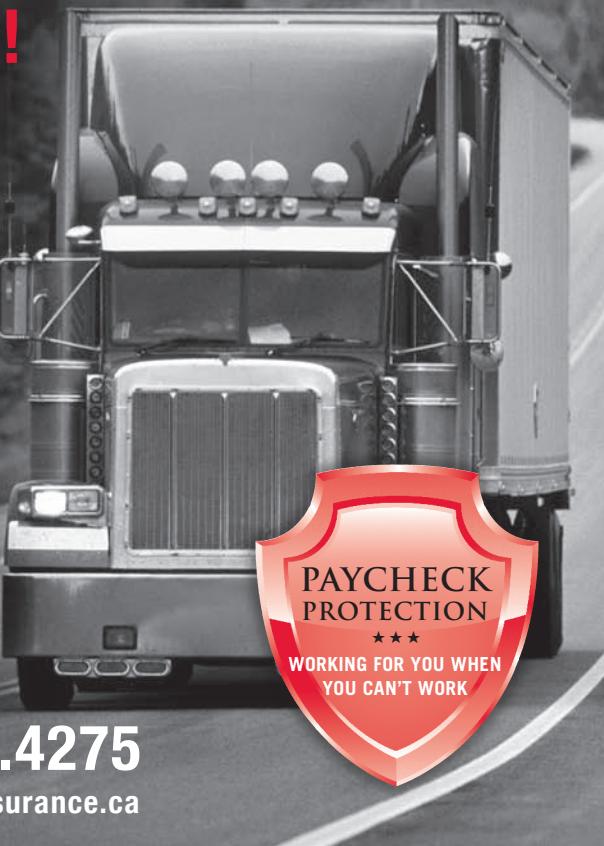
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MAIL**Ontario should follow US model in creating LCV pull-off areas****Dear Editor:**

The first time I ran the New York State Thruway was in 1983 and I was in awe of the long combination vehicles (LCVs). I made the rookie mistake of flashing my lights after the first trailer passed me. Luckily, the driver was on top of his game. I also discovered quickly what a logbook was, as I believe they had not been mandated yet. As a 21-year-old in a straight truck, no one gave me the heads up on such things.

I gave up running long in 1995 for a number of reasons that would likely have me go off on a tangent for another day, but still relish the memories of the interstate network model and how to get it right.

There are some noticeable differences between us and them. The subtle nuances of 55 mph within city limits and the more than adequate infrastructure are just some of the things that made it a pleasure to operate in the US. Then there's the obvious differences in how they accommodate trucks.

The availability of truck stops and places for trucks to park are some of the things that come to mind. The most glaring observation being the network of LCV

interchanges on the New York State Thruway compared to our lack thereof in Ontario. What a meager investment this must have been. To grade an area of land and cover it with aggregate and asphalt is an inexpensive endeavor where the payback for commerce and the environment would most certainly be immediate and real compared to some of the 'green' initiatives executed by Ontario.

There are more than just a few of us who have very strong opinions about wind turbines and solar farms. I found it very puzzling that we would dive headlong into these projects while Europe backs off from their own green initiatives. A billion dollars would have gone a long way towards infrastructure, greening up trucking, reducing idle traffic, and to simply giving LCVs a place to exist. Not to mention in the case of a breakdown or for a driver to rest when the 401 gets closed down. The 401 corridor would only require about six of these interchanges to accommodate. This could be easily done since there is no shortage of barren interchanges along the corridor. □

Angelo Diplacido
Via e-mail

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Mark Dalton: Owner/Operator

Like a lamb to slaughter

By Edo van Belkom

Mark headed west, the collision in Ontario well behind him. While it hadn't been his fault, and he'd actually helped the insurance company route out an organized fraud ring that had obviously been operating with impunity for years, he'd still been victimized by the accident.

In exchange for all his efforts, Mark had hoped for some sort of break on his insurance bill, but there'd been none of that. Despite him personally saving the insurance company thousands – perhaps even tens of thousands of dollars – his bill had still gone up because of other scams and frauds going on in the Greater Toronto Area.

Mark needed to get out of the city and a long drive across the country was just what he needed. And while the accident was thousands of kilometres ago, the sour taste of the city still wasn't out of his system and he wouldn't mind another long-haul back east that would have him avoiding city driving for another few days at least.

And so, after Mark delivered a container of snowmobile parts to the docks in Vancouver, he decided to contact his dispatcher Bud, and see what the man could do for him.

Mark reached for his phone, made sure his hands-free device was working, then used the contacts list to find Bud.

It rang six times before there was an answer.

"Hello?"

"Catch you at a bad time?"

"I was in the bathroom. What do you want?"

"It's Mark."

A second's delay, then, "Mark who?"

Mark sighed and shook his head slightly. Didn't this every get old? "Marxism."

"What?"

"You know, the ideas and writings of Karl Marx that laid the foundation for the creation of communism."

"Oh, that guy," Bud said.

"Yeah, you know, 'Workers of the world unite; you have nothing to lose but your chains.'"

"You feel chained, do you?"

"If anything is certain, it is that I myself am not a Marxist." He said that too."

"No kidding?"

"Yes, he did."

"All right," Bud sighed. "Besides giv-

ing me a history lesson, what do you want from me, Dalton?"

"A load would be nice."

"You want to be one of those worker-types, do you?"

"Yes," Mark said. "It's what I do, and I do enjoy eating my meals indoors."

"What?"

"You know...regular meals, a roof over my head. Only in this case it's a truck."

"Okay," Bud said. "You're in British Columbia right now?"

"Just got out of port."

"Then how about a load of livestock to Quebec?"

Mark didn't answer right away. B.C. to Quebec was a sweet load, but to be honest he didn't know anything about livestock other than he liked his bacon crispy and his steak medium-rare.

"Don't you need a licence or something to drive that stuff? I mean...the product is alive and I'll just bet the receiver wants it that way on delivery."

"Yeah, well, I asked the customer about that and apparently there's a quality assurance program in Canada for hogs, but not for beef, chicken or sheep. There are courses you can take for those animals and they've been offering them for the last five or six years, but there is no official requirement in order to drive them."

Okay, Mark thought. Bud had done his homework. And while it would be a great adventure, it sounded like something for which you'd need some experience in order to know what you were doing. After all, it didn't take much imagination to think of something that might go wrong.

"I don't know if it's for me, Bud. Seems like an awful lot of responsibility. I like driving and being on my own because – outside of shippers and receivers – I don't have anyone depending on me...which includes animals. I mean, it's not like you can just pull off the road if it starts snowing or the weather turns bad. And if you have a breakdown, there's probably all sorts of pressure to ensure the animals are safe and comfortable."

"You're probably right on all counts," Bud laughed under his breath. "But I'm disappointed in you, Dalton. Do you really think I would offer you a load that you couldn't handle?"

Mark thought about it, then said, "Yes, I do. I think you would do exactly that. In fact, I imagine you giggling in delight

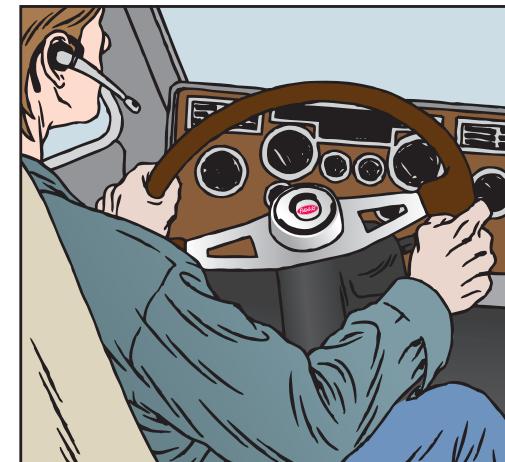
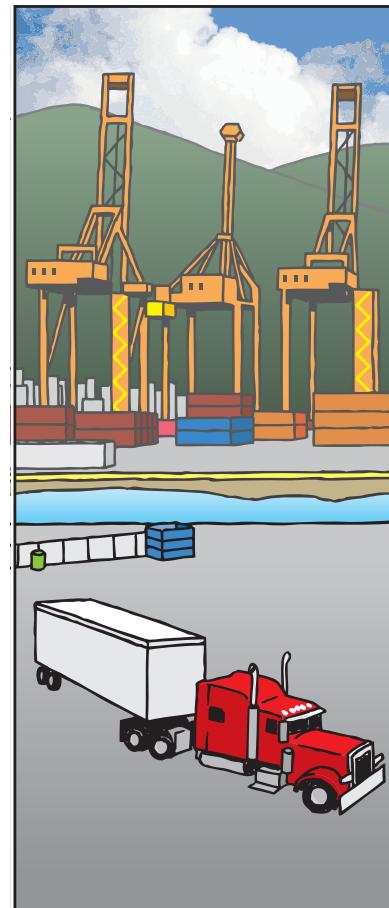


Illustration by Glenn McEvoy

over this load and all the trouble I could get into."

Silence for a moment. "Okay," Bud said. "You know me too well. All that's probably been true in the past, but not this time around."

"Oh, yeah. Why's that?"

"You won't be driving on your own."

"Oh no?"

"No. You'll be with two other drivers and they'll have more than enough experience to go around."

"Ah," Mark said. This was an interesting twist. By driving in a convoy with drivers who knew what they were doing, he could learn from their experience instead by the seat of his pants. He didn't have to think about it much longer. "Okay, I'll do it."

"Great," Bud said. "But I have to tell you it's just not a trip east. It also includes a return load back west after you reach Quebec."

"More livestock?"

"Nope, regular goods," Bud said. "Apparently the trailers get cleaned out after every delivery of livestock. Steamed, disinfected, the whole nine yards. They're probably cleaner than your average goods trailer on the road."

Mark didn't have any trouble believing that. While most drivers took pride in their work, he remembered once seeing a driver urinate inside his trailer because he didn't have time to get to a bathroom before his turn to get loaded. That incident aside, he'd seen the inside of some trailers that might as well have been used as a latrine. The animals, on the other hand, probably had it good. "So this isn't just one long-haul, it's two."

"Exactly. The company will set up the load west. They just asked me to provide them with a driver."

"So why am I so lucky?"

"I like you, Dalton."

"But you don't even know my name."

Bud ignored Mark's comment for the moment, then said. "I look at it this way, Mark: when someone calls with a load or asks me for a driver, they do it because I deliver...just like my drivers do. So, say something does go wrong with this load and the driver I sent these guys is a wet noodle and can't handle a problem or cracks at the first sign of adversity."

"It's not good for you?" Mark guessed.

"No, it's not good. It's terrible. I need to send someone who can handle the job and not make me look bad."

Mark took a deep breath, his chest swelling with pride. "I'm wondering how you were able to make this all about you...but I'm still touched."

"Don't flatter yourself, Dalton. The three guys ahead of you on the list all turned me down."

Mark shook his head. "You're a jerk!"

"Maybe, but I'm the jerk who gives you good loads. Now don't let me down." □

– Mark returns next month in Part 2 of *Like a lamb to slaughter*.

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



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PEOPLE



RICK VALENTINE

Long-time Cummins Eastern Canada employee **Rick Valentine** passed away peacefully at Toronto General Hospital, with his family by his side on Dec. 23. He was 61.

His family said Valentine "fought a valiant battle with courage and grace."

A 40-year Cummins veteran, Valentine began his career with Cummins Ontario in January 1972 as a warranty clerk. He worked in many different roles, spending the last 30 years as territory manager covering southwestern Ontario.

"Rick felt right at home in his role as a territory manager and welcomed every opportunity to work directly with his customers, building strong, long-lasting business relationships," Cummins officials said in a statement. "Known for his positive attitude, breadth of product knowledge, tremendous loyalty and infectious laugh, Rick will be sorely missed by both industry and the Cummins family alike."

Valentine leaves behind his wife, Paula; his son, Matthew; his daughter, Sarah; his son-in-law, Mark; and his grandson, Ethan.

Zurich Canada Commercial has named **Victoria Stirling** national director of its transportation business.

"Victoria's understanding and knowledge of the business will

strengthen Zurich's already deep commitment to meet and surpass the expectations of our transportation focused brokers and customers," said Patrick Lundy, president and CEO of Zurich Canada.

Stirling's experience includes transportation-focused roles with Canadian insurers, most recently with Intact Insurance.

She is a graduate of Ryerson University and the Insurance Institute of Canada.

Ancra Canada has appointed **Frederic Pare** as regional sales manager for Eastern Canada.

Pare has more than 20 years of experience with sales and service in the heavy-duty and automotive industries, working the past five years as district manager for Excide Technologies. He is based out of Quebec City, Que.

To contact Pare, call 418-930-9941 or e-mail fpare@ancra.com.

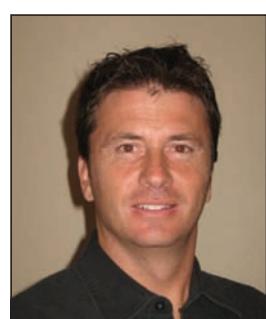
Stemco has appointed **Salvatore Miscio** as the company's director of aftermarket sales.

He will be responsible for aftermarket sales in both Canada and the US, working with a sales team of five regional sales managers and 36 district sales managers.

Miscio has more than 15 years of sales experience in the commercial vehicle market, most recently serving as senior sales manager at Dana Holding Corporation.

He has also worked as business unit manager and director of sales for Donaldson Filtration Solutions.

Originally from Canada, Miscio began his heavy-duty career at Federal Mogul as a sales representative for both automotive and heavy-duty. □



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TSQ

MISSISSAUGA, Ont. – Muir's Cartage delivered a shocking blow to its company drivers to start the new year, as the carrier with over a century in business announced its company drivers would be released and it would operate solely with a mix of owner/operators and drivers from a third-party agency moving forward. Marcus Pryce-Jones, CEO of Muir's parent company Calyx Transportation Group, said the decision was made "based on customer demand and what the market would bear."

(For the full story on Muir's decision, see pg. 39).

One would argue that, historically, working as a company driver has been a safer bet than working as an owner/operator, given all the financial risk that equipment ownership and maintenance entails. But might Muir's move signal a shift towards more owner/operators or a changing mindset in the industry? *Truck News* spoke with drivers at the Husky Truck



Truck Stop Question

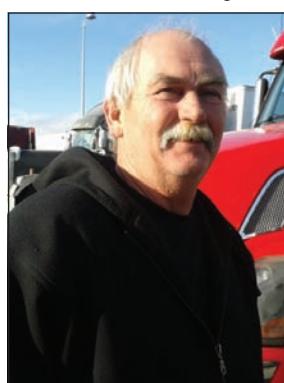
Do company drivers or owner/operators have a brighter future?

ADAM LEDLOW

Stop in Mississauga, Ont. to see whether they think company drivers or O/Os have a brighter future in trucking.

Kirk Hale, a company driver with Carpenter Liquid Transporters out of Rockdale, Ill., is pessimistic about the fortunes of either side, saying "I don't think either one (has a bright future) to be honest with you. I can see pros and cons to both."

Hale says that in the end, it will come down to the best way for companies to save a buck. "If they can get it so they don't have to pay us and don't have to pay the benefits, they're going to do it," he said.



Chuck Walsh

Though **Chuck Walsh** has opted to run his own Newfoundland-based trucking company, Clarenville Movers, he still tips his hat to company drivers as having the advantage.

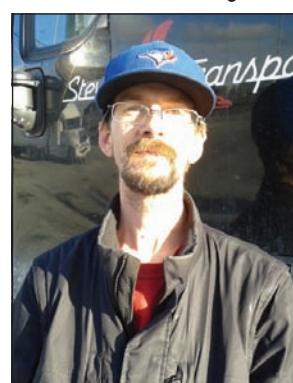
"The cost is just too high for owner/operators. And the money's not there, people aren't willing to pay the money to keep us running," he said.



Inderjid Singh

Inderjid Singh, an owner/operator with Fortigo in Toronto, agrees with Walsh. "Because of the prices for fuel and everything, they are really high, but the companies are not putting any money into their owner/operators. It's much better (for company drivers since) they're getting benefits and all that."

Asked why he opted to take the owner/operator route, Singh said he was "just out of job. This company was hiring, so there was no other choice. (I took the job) so I can keep my house working."



Jeff Reeves

Jeff Reeves, a company driver with Stevens Transport out of Dallas, Texas, says he thinks the debate can't boil down to simply company driver versus owner/operator.

"It's based on the personal situations of each individual driver. I've been a company driver for my entire seven-year career and I don't have any intentions of being an owner/operator."

He said a company would have to make it desirable for him to want to make the switch, including lease-purchase options with minimal buy-out, fuel surcharge on loaded and empty miles, and tolls paid.



Davidson Matthew

Davidson Matthew, a Toronto-based owner/operator with his own company, Matthew Transport, says that O/Os have always had a better future than company drivers.

"I was just talking to this guy, he's been driving for 15 years and he can't figure out how is it that I'm making better money and doing it for a year? So owner/operators are always going to trump company drivers," Matthew told *Truck News*. □

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