

TRUCK NEWS

December 2013 Volume 33, Issue 12

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

ECONOMIC FORECASTS INSIDE:
ATA: Pg. 10 • APTA: Pg. 15
Surface Transportation Summit: Pg. 22

Brutal border backup

US computer glitch causes biggest border backup in years

By Ron Stang

WINDSOR, Ont. – A nationwide US Customs computer glitch saw truck traffic backed up here more than 20 kms in the kind of delay not seen since the weeks after 9/11.

The day in question was Oct. 22 when computers processing both commercial and vehicular traffic malfunctioned and resulted in multi-hour delays, according to truckers with whom *Truck News* spoke.

US Customs and Border Protection officials did not provide an actual count for the hours the system was down.

Spokesman Kris Grogan from a US Customs regional office said he didn't know "the exact length, because I think some places came up before others" and Detroit Customs chief Ken Hammond said "I believe it was just a couple of hours."

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ALL IN THE FAMILY: Arron Attard is the youngest of the Attard family to launch a career behind the wheel. Father Steve founded S&S Trucking which has provided a launching pad for the careers of his children. Photo by Daniela Piteo

Who says today's youth aren't into trucking? For this small Ontario fleet, trucking is still a family affair.

By Daniela Piteo

GEORGETOWN, Ont. – It's do or die in the trucking industry. The industry is, for Steve Attard and his family, their livelihood, their passion and soon, their legacy.

Attard got behind the wheel of a truck at a young age, following in his father's stead. As soon as he could put

the money together, he bought himself his first set of wheels.

"When I was 18 years old, I bought my first truck. I couldn't even use it. I was (unemployable), because in the 1980s you had to be 21 years old to drive," Attard said.

Attard always had a passion for trucks and decided to eek his way into

the industry at a slow but steady pace. "At first, I started making small deliveries, until I became an owner/operator," said Attard.

After many years of working for other companies, Attard decided to branch out on his own; after all, he had been a private business owner as

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Driving the T880

We put Kenworth's newest truck model through its paces.

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Inside This Issue...

- **Report from the Summit:** This year's Surface Transportation Summit was bigger than ever. Check out our report, including strong words on a tender subject. Pages 22-25
- **Safety meeting:** We report on the Fleet Safety Council meeting, where behaviour was a hot topic. Pages 28-30
- **Trailer talk:** Utility Trailer has revealed its proprietary manufacturing processes to the press for the very first time. We share some of them in an exclusive interview. Page 52
- **The Truxpo Gambit:** Dalton went to the truck show looking for deals. He may get more than he bargained for. Page 60

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CLASS 8 TRUCK SALES TRENDS

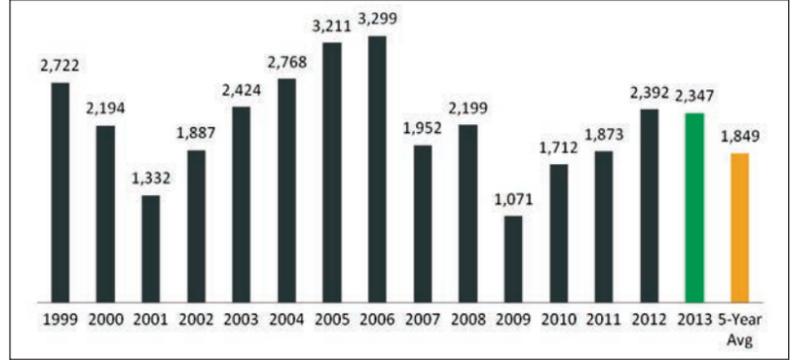
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The 2,347 trucks sold in September were just slightly behind last year's pace. This continues the trend we've seen with Class 8 sales for the first three quarters: good, but not as good as the previous year or on pace with the best years in truck sales. Freightliner, International, Kenworth, and Western Star posted slightly higher figures than the previous year. Going back to 1999, there were only 6 years with better sales results in June. The sales total for the month is also more than 500 above the five-year average.

Monthly Class 8 Sales – Sept 13

OEM	This Month	Last Year
Freightliner	617	604
International	343	283
Kenworth	417	404
Mack	170	204
Peterbilt	278	384
Volvo	281	312
Western Star	241	201
TOTALS	2347	2392

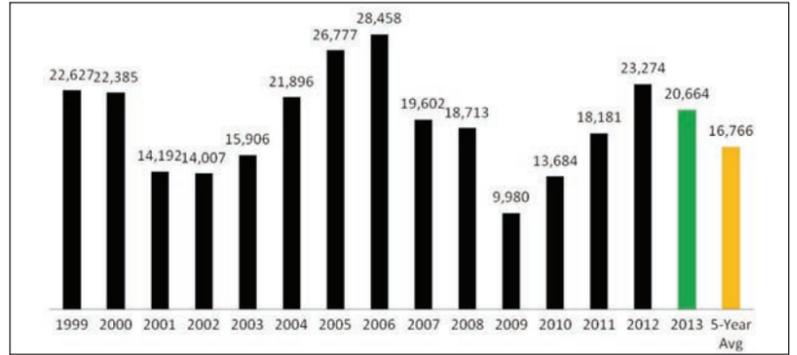
Historical Comparison – Sept 13 Sales



Class 8 Sales (YTD Sept 13) by Province and OEM

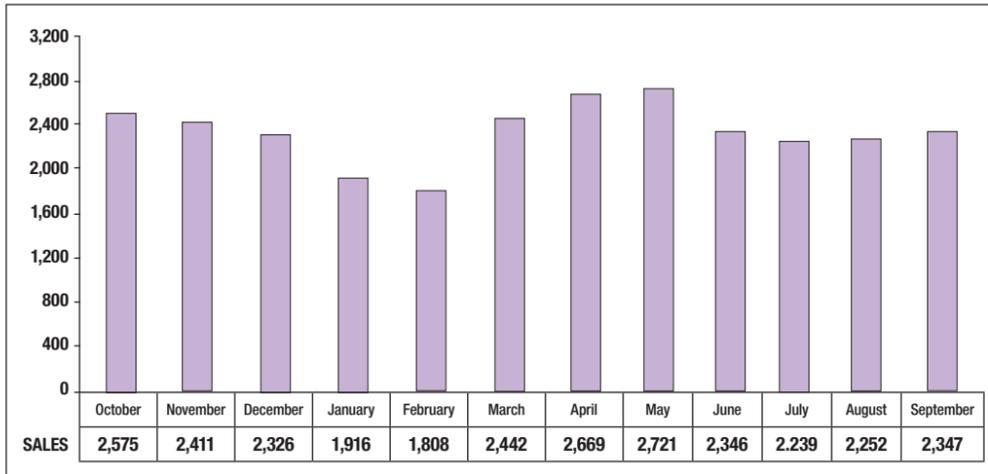
OEM	BC	ALTA	SASK	MAN	ONT	QUE	NB	NS	PEI	NF	CDA
Freightliner	442	609	164	290	2,390	873	284	94	21	23	5,190
Kenworth	606	1,331	385	97	623	653	86	0	0	0	3,781
Mack	122	256	150	53	639	291	63	58	0	14	1,646
International	130	521	61	130	1,286	580	93	43	17	27	2,888
Peterbilt	407	980	235	178	459	411	136	48	0	0	2,854
Volvo	280	177	101	158	1,044	587	111	46	0	7	2,511
Western Star	274	561	60	55	344	358	40	79	4	19	1,794
TOTALS	2,261	4,435	1,156	961	6,785	3,753	813	368	42	90	20,664

Historical Comparison – YTD Sept 13



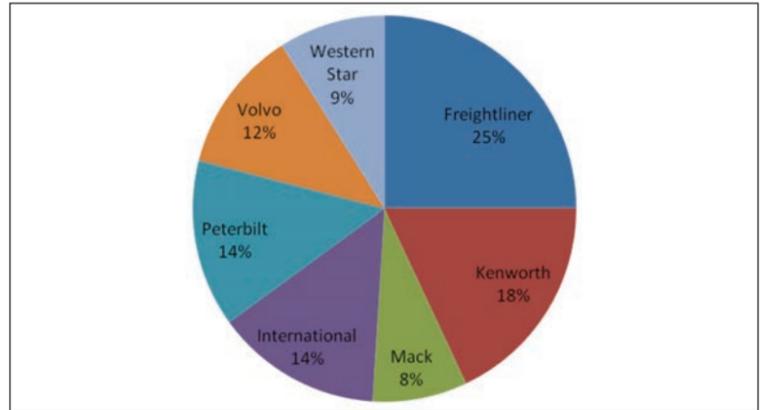
YTD Class 8 sales of 20,664 units places 2013 more than 2,600 trucks behind last year's pace but also more than 3,500 above the five-year average. So far this is the 7th best year in sales going back to 1999 but slippage is occurring. We don't expect a particularly strong second half of the year. Our revised estimate is for Class 8 sales to come in around 28,500 vehicles in 2013.

12-Month Sales Trends



Class 8 sales have come in above 2,000, reminiscent of the industry's capacity boom years of 2005 to 2007, for seven straight months now. The three-month trend towards increased sales figures month over month came to an end in July but August showed improvement again as did September. The big question was whether sales would hold up over the summer months and they have. Next question now is how they will hold up the final quarter of 2013.

Market Share Class 8 – Sept 13 YTD



Freightliner, last year's Canadian market leader, is solidly in control of the market share lead with a quarter of Canadian Class 8 truck sales. Kenworth finished 2012 in the number two spot for market share and there it still sits with an 18% market share. Navistar International finished the year with 15% market share and is now in a dead heat with Peterbilt with a 14% share of the Canadian Class 8 market. Volvo is the only other OE with a market share above 10%.

Source: Canadian Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association

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TRUCK NEWS

December 2013, Volume 33, Issue 12
 ISSN 0712-2683 (Print)
 ISSN 1923-3523 (Online)
 Truck News, USPS 016-248 is published monthly by
 BIG Magazines LP, a div. of Glacier BIG Holdings
 Company Ltd. U.S. office of publication:
 2424 Niagara Falls Blvd, Niagara Falls, NY 14304-5709.
 Periodicals Postage Paid at Niagara Falls, NY, U.S.
 Postmaster send address corrections to:
 Truck News, P.O. Box 1118, Niagara Falls, NY 14304.
 Truck News is published 12 times a year by
 BIG Magazines LP, a leading Canadian information
 company with interests in daily and community news-
 papers and business-to-business information services.
Creative Directors: Carolyn Brimer, Beverley Richards
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PUBLICATIONS MAIL AGREEMENT NO. 40069240



We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Canada Periodical Fund of the Department of Canadian Heritage.

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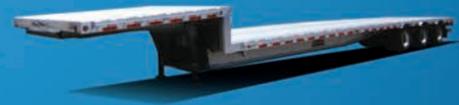
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(3) 2006 GREAT DANE 53' DRY VANS
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Ontario's misguided biodiesel mandate

Ontario is hopping on the biodiesel bandwagon, requiring a 2% blend in on- and off-road diesel by 2014 and ramping up to a 4% blend by 2015. This begs two questions.

The first is, why? Will this industry never get the credit it deserves for reducing its emissions on late-model equipment to near-zero levels? And the second question is, why biodiesel? Are there not more effective and less risky options available?

As the Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) has already brought to the province's attention, the trucking industry has other means at its disposal by which to lessen its greenhouse gas emissions, and they are far more effective than mandating biofuel.

Truck manufacturers are committed to significantly improving the fuel economy of the vehicles they produce between 2014 and 2017, by using a combination of currently available and future technologies.

These will include everything from low rolling resistance tires in the early years, to more advanced technologies such as waste heat recovery closer to 2017. The GHG regs which are being enforced by the US and in turn, adopt-



ed by Canada, deliver a net benefit to end users in the form of reduced fuel consumption.

Truckers will burn less fuel and as a result, produce less GHG. It's a win-win situation for the trucking industry and the environment, and should appease legislators – even those who just can't help but to get involved.

Do the lawmakers who support such rules as the one that's being proposed in Ontario even know about how far this industry has gone in recent years to reduce its environmental footprint? Do they know that the latest generation heavy trucks produce virtually no particulate matter or NOx? Do they even care?

What really bothers me about the latest effort to foist biodiesel upon the trucking industry is that this same province does not allow for proven fuel-saving devices such as trailer tails. Many progressive American carriers

have deployed trailer tails across their entire trailer fleets.

Here in Ontario, we're told they're too dangerous. Anyone who's seen these devices in person knows you can fold them in with one hand – they don't pose a hazard for traffic.

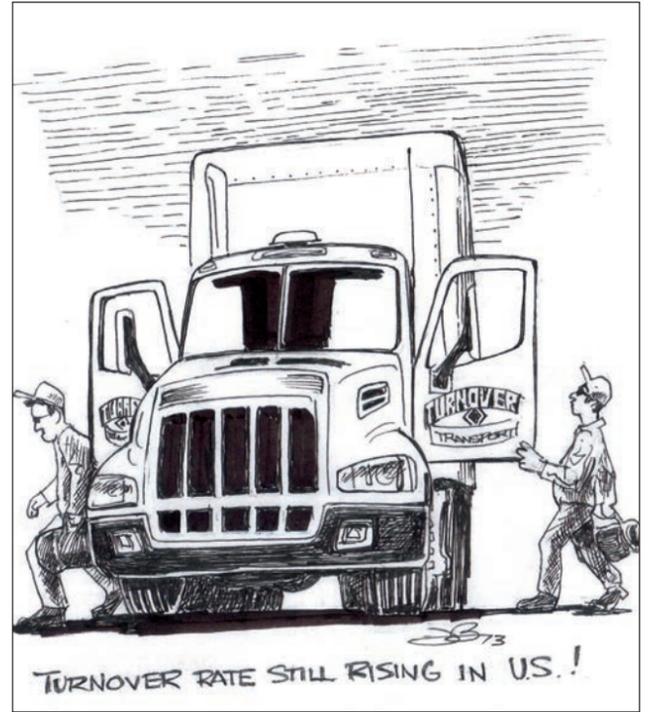
I've seen flatbed loads of steel coils where the steel hangs off the end of the trailer with little more than a red piece of cloth to warn other motorists of the overhang, yet full-length trailer tails remain illegal here.

How can the province be so slow to approve a safe and proven fuel-saving device such as trailer tails while at the same time forcing upon industry a solution that will have minimal environmental impact and may incur additional costs upon operators?

Biodiesel has been known to gel up in cold weather and is there any way a 2-4% blend can be introduced without an increase in price? I'm skeptical. If the province really cares

about lowering GHG emissions, then there are better ways to go about it. There are other options. Is biodiesel really the best? □

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



Happy 30th work anniversary Kathy Penner!

With this issue we celebrate an important milestone: Associate publisher Kathy Penner's 30th work anniversary.

That's right folks, 30 years. And, yes, she started working for us right out of kindergarten, or so she tells us. Who would doubt her? Who remembers that far back? And last I saw her, she was "taking a break" from the American Trucking Associations conference down in Orlando, Fla. for a midday run under a blistering sun, while supposedly younger folk were complaining of the heat while sitting in an air-conditioned van.

In all seriousness, however, it's that kind of determination over the past 30 years from Kathy that has created the industry's largest Careers section within *Truck News* and *Truck West*. Trucking is a people-driven industry and it's safe to say the Careers section Kathy has grown and managed so capably over the years has served as the conduit for thousands of successful job hires. Kathy has received a series of promotions within the growing Truck-



ing Group of Transportation Media – which also now includes *Motortruck Fleet Executive*, www.trucknews.com, TMTV, the Surface Transportation Summit, Transportation Media Research, and several newsletters. In her current role as associate publisher, she works in tandem with me to manage all aspects of the business and I can tell you Kathy is the heart and soul of our group. We simply could not have achieved all that we have over the years without her.

She is one of the most determined, capable and hard working people I know.

Kathy is also one of the best known faces in the industry, travelling across North America to attend industry events and working tirelessly with in-

dustry organizations such as the Toronto Transportation Club and our own annual charity golf tournament.

What makes my new job as publisher a lighter load than would be expected is that Kathy is a shining star on a team of stars. Her 30 years with the Trucking Group is representative of the deep well of experience that pervades every department of the group. Every member of the sales team – Doug Copeland, Don Besler and Brenda Grant – has more than 25 years of industry experience. Combined with Kathy, the sales team has more than 120 years of experience in the industry.

The editorial team, led by James Menzies, one of the most influential editors in Canada's transportation media, is the most experienced in the industry. The team includes long-time staffers Julia Kuzeljevich and Jim Bray as well as recent hire Daniela Piteo, with more hiring announcements to come. Same goes for our art directors, Carolyn Brimer, Beverley Richards

and Roy Gaiot – experience galore.

Added to that is the most experienced talent pool of trucking industry writers including former *Truck News* editor John G. Smith, long-time Quebec correspondent Carroll McCormick, on-the-road editor Harry Rudolfs and the most recognized columnists and bloggers in the industry.

In an industry as vibrant and changing as fast as trucking, experiences counts. It takes an experienced team to best integrate all the different media platforms available today and to guide both readers and advertisers through the most effective use of each platform. Whereas others continue to churn through staff in the hopes of finding the right mix, we already know we have a winning formula with the family of staff who have been growing our products for more than three decades now.

Kathy's 30th work anniversary is testament to that. □

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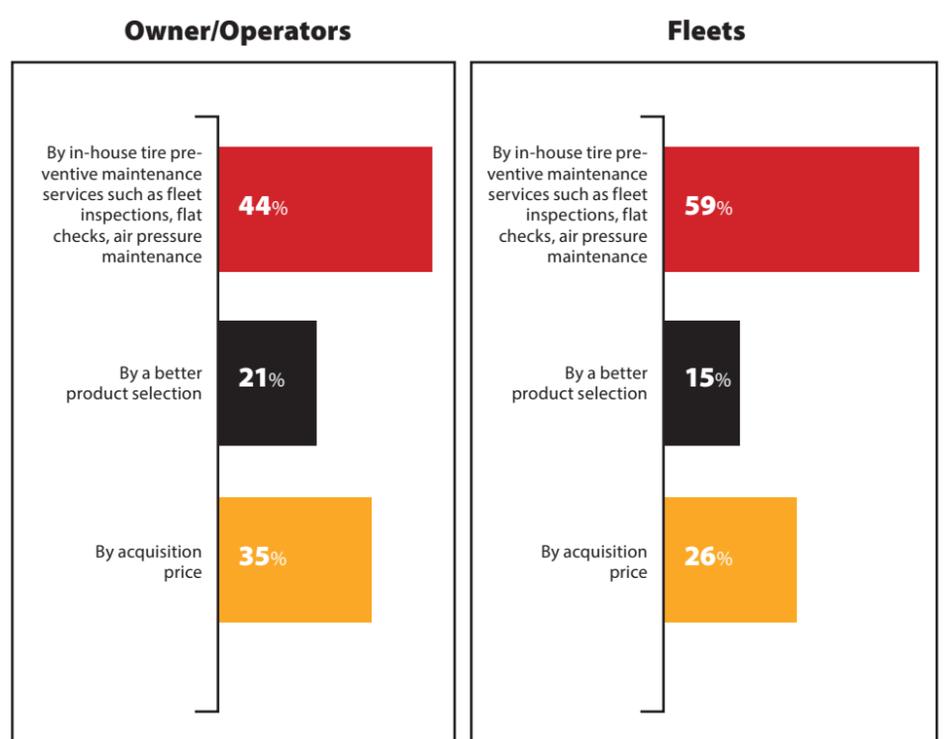
Did you know? How fleets & O/Os plan to optimize tire costs

Tires make up a significant part of operating costs yet tire management doesn't always get the attention it deserves. With our recently completed annual Tire Buying Trends Survey we asked both fleets and owner/operators across the country how they planned to optimize their tire costs in the future. Doing so by inhouse preventive maintenance services such as inspections, flat checks and air pressure maintenance were once again the top choice for both owner/operators and fleets. Almost 6 in 10

fleet managers chose that option as did 4 in 10 owner/operators.

Price, however, remains a significant consideration, particularly for owner/operators. More than a third said that's how they would be optimizing their tire costs in the future, compared to the slightly more than a quarter of fleet managers who said likewise. Further probing shows that both owner/operators and fleets are considering the cheaper offshore tires from China, Korea and India. Almost 4 in 10 owner/operators have used offshore tires over the past three years as have almost 5 in 10 carriers. This despite the fact that the perception of the quality of these tires is quite low. Low price is the main attraction.

Better product selection is the least popular approach to optimizing tire costs for both owner/operators and fleets. □



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(6) 53' x 102" UTILITY DRY FREIGHT VANS
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(3) 2005 MANAC 53' x 102" DROP DECK VAN
Hendrickson air ride dock leveling suspension, well spec'd. **Priced To Move!!**



(6) NEW 53'x102" UTILITY TRIDEM DRY FREIGHT VANS
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(20) (6) NEW 53' x 102" UTILITY DRY FREIGHT VANS
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IN BRIEF

Canadian freight rates stay flat: Nulogx

TORONTO, Ont. – The cost of ground transportation for Canadian shippers rose 1.2% in August, mostly because of higher fuel surcharges. The Canadian General Freight Index found that the base rates assessed by carriers remained unchanged when compared to July. However, fuel surcharges rose to 20.12% of the base rate in August, compared to 19.25% in July. “Total cost of freight is down 3% from a year ago,” said Doug Payne, president and COO, Nulogx. “Base Freight costs are 3.4 % below last year.” For more information, visit www.nulogx.com. □

US truck tonnage rises again. Is economy stronger than thought?

ARLINGTON, Va. – US for-hire truck tonnage spiked 1.4% in September, matching August's gain. The American Trucking Associations (ATA) reported that the seasonally adjusted truck tonnage index is up 8.4% compared to September 2012, marking the largest year-over-year gain since December 2011. Year-to-date, tonnage is up 5.4% over 2012. “I continue to be pleasantly surprised on the strength of truck tonnage,” ATA chief economist Bob Costello said. “I attribute a part of tonnage's robustness to the sectors of the economy that are growing fastest, like housing construction, auto production, and energy output. These industries produce heavier than average freight, which leads to faster growth in tonnage versus a load or shipment measure.” Costello added that tonnage levels suggest the economy may be stronger than many believe it to be. “While tonnage is likely running ahead of overall economic growth, perhaps the economy is stronger than many believe. The index has now increased in four of the last five months and the year-over-year growth rate has accelerated. Plus, other measures of truck freight volumes, while increasing at a slower pace than tonnage, have also accelerated in recent months,” he said. “However, the government shutdown served as a headwind in the fourth quarter.” □

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CROSSWORD PUZZLE

TN-126 Dec 2013 M. Jackson

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1 Rush-hour traffic description (4,3,2)	1 Change gears
6 Tachometer info (1,1,1)	2 Exceed safe engine speed
8 European big-rig brand	3 Wheel-nut cover design
9 Obeyed triangular sign	4 Trailer type (3,3)
10 Home of 407 ETR	5 Goods in excess of Bill of Lading
11 Word on Hawaii's plates	6 Dash option since the '30s
12 Name atop Big Stop	7 Dieppe, NB-based carrier
14 Patronized Penske, perhaps	12 '90s "Hoosier Hospitality" plates' home
17 '70s Bighorn conventional brand	13 Isuzu low-cab-forward line (1,6)
19 Palindromic competition vehicle (4,3)	15 Castrol diesel-engine oil
22 Massachusetts "Spirit of ____" plates	16 Fifth-wheel plate lube
23 Actor Claude ____, "Movin' On" trucker	18 "Nothing runs like a ____" slogan
24 Class A trucker, slangily	20 Roll along in neutral
25 Tractor's diesel containers, often (4,5)	21 Succumbs to corrosion

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BORDER

Graves shocker: My advice is to sell your Republican shares and buy Democrat

Lou Smyrlis

ORLANDO, Fla. – The American Trucking Associations and the US trucking industry have long held an affinity for the Republican Party. Yet, as was foreshadowed by the playing of Bob Dylan's *The Times They are a Changin'* as ATA president Bill Graves took the stage to deliver his annual State of the Industry address, traditional allegiances may be re-evaluated.

Graves, a former Republican governor himself, said as much, right at the start of his address. Graves pointed out that – like it or not – the world trucking operates in is in large part shaped by the policy and regulations set by government and so engagement in the political process is critical.

“Political change is underway and many of the traditional alle-

giances the business community has had with the Republican Party are necessarily going to need to be re-evaluated...We are rapidly moving to a time where political labels mean very little, but the integrity and statesman-like qualities of candidates for office, or those already holding office, must be the measure by which we decide our level of support,” Graves told the strongly attended State of the Industry session.

Graves called the collapse of the Republican Party in the face of the emergence of its ultra-conservative Tea Party wing alarming and referred to the Tea Party's influence as “corrosive.”

“While it's appropriate, and there is certainly merit in advocating for reduced government spending, smaller government, reducing

our debt, limiting regulations and controlling the reach and intrusive nature of the federal government – insisting on having things their way, without a hint of willingness to compromise and threatening to ‘burn the house down’ otherwise, is a combination of foolish, ill-advised, reckless and detrimental actions to the future of this country,” Graves said.

He added, “Compromise must be at the heart of all the federal government does.”

Graves believes the Republican Party will spend its energy wrangling internally over who they are and who they represent, allowing the Democrats to dominate presidential elections and possibly end

up controlling both chambers of the Congress. “The Tea Party is intent on fielding candidates and challenging any Republican officeholder or candidate not viewed as conservative enough and committed to the Tea Party agenda. The candidate may win the primary only to prove unelectable in the general election,” Graves said. “I've personally been in this political family feud and in the near-term, no good will come of it for the Republican Party. If I was your political broker, my advice would be that you should sell your Republican shares and buy Democrat,” Graves said to a likely surprised audience of fleets executives. □

You survived the Great Recession. Are you ready for the “Great Okay”?

By Lou Smyrlis

ORLANDO, Fla. – ACT Research president Kenneth Vieth may have summed up the US economic forecast best at the American Trucking Associations' (ATA) All Eyes on the Economy session, when he said “We came through the Great Recession and we are now in the Great Okay.”

Vieth was referring to expectations for continued but less than spectacular growth in 2014 and 2015 for the US. Co-panelist Mark Vitner, managing director and senior economist at Wells Fargo, forecast GDP growth of 2.4% in 2014 and 2.7% for 2015.

ATA vice-president and senior economist Bob Costello was more optimistic about the future, but conceded current freight growth is “very choppy.” For example, while truck tonnage is up 5% year-to-date and intermodal tonnage is up 3.7%, rail carloads are down 0.9% and air freight is down as well.

Costello added that mostly because recovery in sectors such as energy and construction are outpacing the recovery in the general economy, heavy freight is driving the tonnage figures even though the number of loads is growing slower.

Flatbed freight is up 1.8% YTD, temperature control freight is up 2.7%, tank freight up 5.4%, yet dry van is down 0.1% but improving, according to Costello.

The economy is “moving in the right direction,” Vitner said with home ownership expected to increase and home construction, which was held up by the wettest summer on record in the southern states, picking up the rest of the year. But to place current home construction in perspective, he pointed out about as many new homes are being built now as back in 1981 when mortgage rates were around 15%.

Vitner also warned that uneven distribution of economic gains means consumer confidence is growing slowly and retailers who cater to mid- and low-income shoppers are experiencing slow growth as a result. Vitner explained that rising stock prices are bolstering household finances at a time when incomes are growing slowly but those gains are being registered by just the top 7% of US households. He did add he sees this situation improving in 2014 and 2015.

“More income is what we need, particularly among mid-income consumers, to get this economy growing,” he said.

Vitner also didn't have strong expectations for the upcoming holiday season, which will be shorter than usual because the US Thanksgiving will be celebrated later this year.

It all led panel moderator Stuart Varney of Fox News to comment: “I have to say the new normal is not that attractive.” □

US fleets increasing pay packages

ORLANDO, Fla. – Three-quarters of fleets surveyed by the American Trucking Associations (ATA) say they have or will be increasing driver pay packages in the face of a driver shortage.

At an ATA Management Conference & Exhibition panel discussion, chief economist Bob Costello said “While the driver shortage is generally confined to only certain segments of the trucking industry, it is having real impacts in how fleets recruit and retain their drivers.”

“Fleets in all segments of trucking have told us they are having a more difficult time finding qualified drivers than they were a year ago,” Costello added. “As a result, more fleets are considering hiring drivers straight out of driver training programs and nearly three-quarters of those we surveyed plan to increase pay or have already done so.”

The industry needs to find an average of roughly 96,000 new drivers annually to keep pace with demand. If freight demand grows as it is projected to, the driver shortage could balloon to nearly 240,000 drivers by 2022, according to ATA data. □



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BORDER

Computer crash shows vulnerabilities of Canada-US border

Continued from page 1

But Brad Vermette, manager of the Windsor terminal for Doug Coleman Trucking, said “You were looking at four to five hours getting over the border.”

Trucks were backed up through most of the afternoon along Huron Church Rd. and Windsor police said the line wasn’t cleared until 9:45 p.m.

Brian Masse, the NDP MP for Windsor West, who is official opposition critic for border issues, called the glitch “disturbing,” particularly since Customs on both sides of the border has implemented improved technology including FAST and C-TPAT. As well, he said, there is the Beyond the Border Agreement, designed to expedite shipments of an increasing number of commodities.

“So if we’re going to head down that road more, it appears we haven’t really thought what are we going to do if we have problems,” he said.

Masse said that generally he’s satisfied with processing on the US side but with an uptick in the economy there are more trucks crossing the bridge and he has received more complaints of delays. Windsor Mayor Eddie Francis recently cited the figure of 12,000 trucks crossing a day, which is considerably higher than the pre-recession level of 10,000.

“The truck traffic, I’ve really noticed a big difference over the last half a year, so we need to start pre-

paring for that,” Masse said.

The day was a nightmare for Vermette’s drivers. He sends about 40 of his 50 drivers stateside every day carrying just-in-time delivery of auto parts.

“I don’t know what happened,” he said. “There were all different types of stories,” such as Customs not getting paid because of the US government shutdown.

Truckers say there had been a slowdown generally in October with an apparently increased x-ray surveillance of trailers. Vermette said his drivers were losing two hours a day, “so 10 hours for the week.”

It’s also a logbook issue. “I’m concerned about my drivers getting the freight on time,” he said. Vermette said it can become a general safety issue “with hours of service.” But his firm is exactly monitored by satellite.

Tracy Cassivi, who drives bulk loads for Laidlaw Carriers out of Woodstock, Ont. had just dropped off scrap metal at Zalev Bros. in Windsor and had come off E.C. Row Expressway. He took one look at the Huron Church line-up “and made my decision rather quickly” to pull in for the night.

Otherwise, he said, he would have exceeded his legal hours. He parks in an open lot near the bridge and hasn’t had problems doing so. “I pulled in there at 6.30, and then my 10 hours off, I go again at 4:30 in the morning,” he said.

But Cassivi is “lucky” because his customers operate 24 hours. “And it’s not like life and death if the load doesn’t get there, it’s very rare I’ve got a delivery appointment.”

Other drivers aren’t as fortunate. “A lot of guys don’t have that ability because they’ve got just-in-time deliveries.”

Cassivi knows that drivers are between a rock and a hard place because of border delays.

“I do know there’s a lot of guys sitting in those line-ups, and you know this, that when they get to the other side, they have not shown themselves on duty for that two or three hours or whatever it was,” he said. “And that’s their business, because you have to do what we do to bring money home for our wives our families and our responsibilities.”

Cassivi said he thinks back-ups have also been caused by maintenance work on the bridge, and traffic was “funneling into one lane” on the two-lane Detroit-bound side.

An official with the bridge company did not respond to requests for comment. Jennifer Fox, spokeswoman for the Ontario Trucking Association, said none of the association’s members reported a problem, probably because of the legacy of border back-ups.

“It’s just become a part of the risk of doing business across the border and they understand and appreciate that those one-offs will happen,” she said. □

New HoS rules costing drivers, fleets 3-4%, Schneider claims

GREEN BAY, Wis. – The new hours-of-service rules implemented in the US July 1 have reduced solo driver productivity by 3.1%, and team operations by 4.3%, according to data compiled by Schneider National.

The results reflect estimates the company made before the changes were implemented.

“The hours-of-service changes could not have come at a worse time,” said Dave Geyer, senior vice-president/general manager of Schneider’s van truckload division.

“We now need more drivers to do the same amount of work, but regulations, economic conditions and demographics are working against us in terms of recruiting new drivers. Those who do answer the call deserve an attractive wage and good benefits, but we’re being restricted in the number of miles we can give them and the ongoing challenges that come with sharply rising operating costs.”

Geyer pointed out that safety has not been compromised by the new rules.

“Operating safely continues to be core to how we do business,” added Geyer. “Safety performance dramatically improved under the previous hours-of-service rules and there is no evidence to support that changing the rules has improved safety. Ongoing feedback from our drivers is consistent: they do not feel better rested as a result of the rules change; just less productive.”

The new rules come as fleets continue to struggle with rising driver turnover.

Citing a recent research brief, John Larkin, managing director of Stifel Transportation & Logistics Research Group, said regulations such as HOS create a challenging driver market.

“Virtually all of the proposed federal rules and regulations either reduce the size of the driver pool or reduce the productivity of the drivers remaining in the pool,” he noted. “As a result, drivers remain a scarce input.”

Carriers and drivers aren’t the only ones adjusting to the changes; shippers are feeling the impact, too.

Many shippers are indicating carriers across the industry – as well as their own private fleets – are already experiencing productivity and on-time service declines.

“To put it in the simplest of terms, capacity continues to tighten, productivity has been reduced and it’s harder – and more costly – than ever to acquire and retain drivers,” Geyer explained. “This trifecta is a cost burden that carriers cannot bear alone.” □

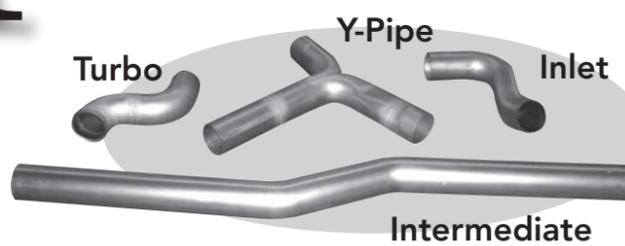
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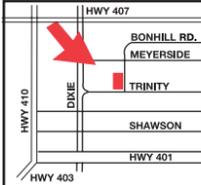
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EAST

Eastern truckers get economic overview

By Daniela Piteo
CHARLOTTETOWN, P.E.I. – The talk wasn't exclusively focused on trucking at this year's Atlantic Provinces Trucking Association conference. Scotiabank's senior vice-president and chief economist took to the podium and presented an economic outlook covering a number of areas.

The global picture

Warren Jestin, in an update on the global economy, stated economic growth is facing some difficulties.

"The US outlook, and that of the world, are being buffeted again by another in a series of recurring economic and political developments that slow, but do not derail growth," Jestin said.

According to a report issued by Scotiabank, economic growth, investor confidence and financial markets have been cuffed by several developments over the past few months, including the expectation that the US

Federal Reserve would slow down its extraordinary monetary stimulus and an increased possibility of military intervention due to mounting threats in Syria. The partial government shut-down in the US also curbed economic growth, according to the report.

"Although it is still a low probability, the political, economic and financial market fallout associated with even a relatively brief failure by the US government to service its debt obligations could be much more severe and longer-lasting," said Jestin. "America's fiscal deficit has been roughly halved in nominal dollar values, and the United States remains a diversified and resilient economy that continues to be supported by a very stimulative monetary policy." Yet, US resiliency does not entirely negate severe outcomes.

In American default scenarios, investors may favour international portfolios, which would weaken the US dollar, the report stated.

"Canadian exports and output will likely be pressured a bit by the events unfolding south of the border, though the overall impact will be limited by the resiliency in domestic personal spending and housing activity," Jestin said, also adding that emerging market economies, like China, are stabilizing and reinforcing the demand and cost of commodities. Nevertheless, Jestin has an optimistic outlook and firmly believes there is no chance that the US will be forced into a default position.

Foreign exchange

The Canadian dollar has lost some ground, but it is expected to stabilize in early 2014, a report issued by Scotiabank's Camilla Sutton, chief foreign exchange strategist, said.

According to her report, presented by Jestin, Canada can no longer boast a twin current account, a budget surplus and strong fundamental growth. The report also stated that the current account and budget deficits would only narrow modestly in the next year. Ultimately, the Canadian dollar will weaken until the end of the year and make a modest recovery in 2014.

Global auto report

Car sales picked up speed during the summer, but because of incentives on new cars and light trucks, the prices decreased by 5%, an economist from Scotiabank reported. According to Jestin, China produces more automobiles than the US, Canada and Mexico combined. While car prices strengthen, particularly in the pre-owned market, rising supplies will limit gains, Jestin said.

Global real estate trends

Jestin reported that Canadian housing activity remains afloat, but sustained gains are becoming less favourable due to a number of factors.

"Low borrowing costs and balanced market conditions continue to attract buyers, but slowing job growth and the recent uptick in fixed mortgage rates will likely cool activity later in the year and into 2014," said Jestin.

Affordability, according to Jestin, is an ongoing problem in larger urban areas, especially for single-family homes. He concluded his findings on an uplifting note. "I am very optimistic about the outlook for Canada," said Jestin, adding, "accurate predictions require an advanced degree in astrology." □

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Driver shortage takes centre stage at APTA meeting

By Daniela Piteo
CHARLOTTETOWN, P.E.I. –

The ongoing driver shortage was addressed in a session at the Atlantic Provinces Trucking Association (APTA) conference here Oct. 23. Moderator Kelly Henderson, the executive director of the Trucking Human Resources Sector Council Atlantic, welcomed Angela Splinter, CEO Trucking HR Canada and Paul Easson, president of Eassons Transport to the discussion.

“I think it is vital that the driver shortage is one of the topics that kicked off the conference,” said Henderson. “It shows that people understand that this shortage is a serious issue.”

Henderson reported that by 2020, the industry could face a driver shortage of 33,000 truck operators. Splinter echoed this statistic by adding that the numbers do fluctuate from 25,000 to 33,000, but could realistically be higher.

“These numbers don’t include private fleets,” said Splinter.

In the past, well-documented research has been conducted that suggests a shortage is imminent, but numbers required quantification.

“We need to look at demand and productivity,” said Splinter, noting that in periods of higher demand, shortages will peak.

Splinter pointed out the Canadian Trucking Alliance has created a Blue Ribbon Task Force to tackle operational concerns, chiefly the driver shortage.

“We are working together to address the driver shortage,” Splinter said. “We are trying to do our part at a national level and while some people don’t believe there is a shortage, we absolutely see that there is a decrease in workers.”

“We keep hearing about the perfect storm or the demographic tsunami,” Splinter said. “We are facing pending retirements, a workforce with 20% of drivers over 54 years old and 12% under 30.”

Additional concerns the Blue Ribbon Task Force contend with are image and attraction issues.

Currently, only 3% of drivers are women and another 3% are immigrants.

“We need to start recruiting from non-traditional sources: women, immigrants and aboriginals,” said Splinter.

The task force has also developed a call to action, which has been dubbed BRTE.

First, the “Basics,” such as compensation and benefits, are reviewed. Second, “Respect” is addressed; the image of drivers needs to shift so it is recognized as a professional occupation. Third, “Training” needs improvement and last, “Family” has to be taken into account, as drivers deserve a fair work-life balance.

“We really need to amend the NOC code,” said Splinter.

A NOC code, or the National Occupation Classification, is a system that authoritatively ranks occupations in Canada. At present,

truck driving has one of the lowest NOC code scores.

“We need to raise the bar,” said Splinter. “We can achieve this by updating these national occupational standards.”

Mandatory entry-level training, or an apprenticeship-type model, according to Splinter, can improve the current standard.

The Blue Ribbon Task Force also initiated an inquest with young people and guidance counsellors looking to understand what needs the upcoming workforce require.

“Youth are looking for occupations with environmentally-friendly work practices, continuous learning opportunities and high safety standards,” said Splinter.

Easson joined the panel to ad-

dress the issue from a fleet perspective.

He shared anecdotal evidence to support the current shortage issue concerns.

“I knew a driver who always said, ‘If you can’t tell me what the mission is, I can’t prepare for it,’” said Easson. “Drivers live in a short mission world and they need to know where they are going.”

According to Easson, the job can be demoralizing when truckers are forced to wait for their schedules or left idling at a shipper’s facility waiting for their truck to unload. Rearranging operations so dispatch plans are forward-looking will aid wait times.

The issue of time was stressed when Easson addressed the conference attendees.

“Take long-haul trips and break them up so drivers aren’t on the road and away from their family for a week or more,” said Easson.

Easson’s other suggestions to help build a stronger workforce with lower turnover include: maintaining a fleet with better equipment and rewarding the positives in the work environment.

“We need to celebrate good news,” said Easson.

At Eassons Transport, employees are given the chance to reward co-workers with the Better Safer Easier reward.

“Employees can recognize their co-workers that help make their jobs better, safer and easier,” Easson said. These simple steps, Easson said, will help alleviate subsequent shortage problems. □

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Bringing driver wellness to the forefront

A look inside Armour Transport's Shift Gears, Live Well initiative

By Daniela Piteo

MONCTON, N.B. – In an American study released by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, trucking is ranked as one of the most high-risk occupations – and the perils go beyond highway collisions. It's also about an unhealthy lifestyle.

Incidents of diabetes, hypertension, obesity and coronary disease are on the rise, prompting the industry to establish programs that promote health and wellness.

At Armour Transport Systems (ATS), safe equipment, good working relationships between management and staff and employee recognition have been a priority over the company's six decade tenure, but according to Alisha Armour, mar-

keting and wellness coordinator, it was time to implement a Health and Wellness program for all staff.

"A Wellness Committee was established with participation by our executive and management team," Armour said. "Meetings were held at all of our terminal locations throughout Atlantic Canada introducing our elements of wellness, encouraging people to participate in our programs and asking for volunteers to become wellness representatives at their terminal or department. This laid the early foundation of our Shift Gears, Live Well wellness program."

At Armour Transport, insurance costs were on the rise, which impacted both the finances of the company

and the employee.

"In trying to resolve this situation, our company wanted to not only show people that we cared about the bottom line, but that we cared about every employee's life and this meant their health and well-being," said Armour. "With healthier employees there would be reduced absenteeism and sickness, safer workers, better outlooks and attitudes, healthier and happier families."

ATS implemented a wellness program eight years ago and tailored it to reflect the guiding principles long espoused by the company – valuing people, safety, service, stability and family.

"We want to enhance everyone's quality of life. We encourage and

support an environment of wellness through opportunities that will promote healthy lifestyles in a healthy workplace," Armour said.

In 2007, ATS and Medavie Blue Cross worked together after Medavie conducted a company-wide study that revealed the top risk factors for employees included: weight control, physical inactivity, smoking, stress and coping ability.

Wellness initiatives were based on Medavie's findings.

"Our Healthy Meal Plan was developed as a useful tool to provide our people with healthy eating tips," said Armour. "It was created in partnership with a registered dietitian along with input from one of our wellness reps, a company driver."

Health coaching and nutrition support services and eating healthy education and awareness were also a part of the program.

"Our company made sure healthy meal choices at company-sponsored meetings were available, as well as healthy vending machine choices," Armour said.

Wellness programs were not designed just to change and improve the eating habits of a workforce, but to also encourage more physical activity and so Armour added the annual spring activity program to its initiative.

"We call the annual initiative 'Let's Get Moving' and it encourages all our employees and their families to get physically active," said Armour.

The company has also partnered with GoodLife Fitness, which offers a preferred annual rate to Armour employees and their spouses and children.

"We also offer complementary clinical assessments and seasonal flu shots to our employees and their spouses and children on an annual basis," said Armour. "This 15-minute appointment was offered during work hours and allowed for time to ask the nurse specific health questions and to receive health coaching."

The company also recognizes the importance of keeping the mind healthy, as well as the body, and to that end Armour Transport works to keep employees upbeat through potlucks, themed lunches, Halloween contests and scavenger hunts for the employees' children.

"At Armour Transportation Systems we recognize the hard work and dedication of our employees at numerous events held throughout the year including awards banquets, family breakfasts, staff appreciation days, summer barbecues, dances and a scholarship program, just to name a few," Armour said. "These special events demonstrate our commitment to our people and family, which are two of our company's guiding principles."

Two other vital initiatives that have been worked into the program involve smoking cessation and creation of a long-haul driver committee.

"Our Team Crush smoking cessation program is open and available to all Armour Transportation Systems employees and their spouses. The program covers 50% of the cost of quit smoking aids, including nicotine replacement gum and patches," Armour said. "Accommodations have also been made to in-



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We also promote National Non-Smoking Week and a smoker's help line."

In 2012, Armour Transportation Systems created a long-haul driver committee to address topics related to driver recruiting and retention.

"The purpose of the committee is to facilitate an open discussion between our management team and our drivers to address issues and topics that are of primary concern to our driver population," said Armour. "Topics such as scheduled runs, work-life balance, equipment and wellness-related issues are covered."

At ATS, a wide spectrum of health-related issues are examined and addressed, because, according to Armour, health matters.

"We have made a very conscious effort with all of our initiatives to target the home, by making our programs open and available not only to our employees, but also their spouses," Armour said. "We have also tried to create initiatives that are appealing and interesting to our people."

ATS has a network of over 60 representatives that help spread the wellness message.

GW Driver Training takes on new name

By Daniela Piteo

MONCTON, N.B. – GW Driver Training has changed its name to Trans-Canada College, the first step in a major new initiative to help address the severe truck driver shortage crisis in New Brunswick. The company was acquired by Tony and Susan Reeder in 2009 and maintains a head office in Riverview along with a hands-on training facility in the Scoudouc Industrial Park.

"This announcement of our new name coincides with the Atlantic Provinces Trucking Association's (APTA) annual conference," Reeder said. "We believe we can play a prominent role in supplying much-needed driver resources into the system. The truck transportation industry is vital to Greater Moncton and New Brunswick's economy, with some of the region's largest trucking companies located here. We will be modernizing and upgrading our facilities and services in order to meet the growing needs of New Brunswick's trucking industry."

Reeder said the school will do its part to raise awareness of the career opportunities in trucking.

"There are many opportunities for long-term, well-paid trucking jobs right here at home. We need to ramp up our efforts to ensure our very important trucking industry has the workforce it needs to meet the needs of the people and businesses it serves. There's no need to commute to Western Canada and leave your family for weeks or months at a time. There are jobs right here," Reeder insisted.

Trans-Canada College also announced that Brian Baxter, former president and CEO of Oulton Career College has agreed to chair its new advisory board and lead the group during the rebranded company's first year. □

"Our wellness initiatives are also shared through various communication methods," Armour said. "We send satellite messages to the drivers, post cards at dispatch and driver's rooms, paystub attachments, e-mail notifications, driver and dock worker meetings."

The message that Armour has sent out has been received and it is beginning to show in their numbers.

Each year since the initiative was implemented, participation continues to increase, and for the seventh year running, there has been no increase in insurance premiums, Armour said.

"A substantial surplus (in insurance premiums) has been achieved and it is with pleasure that we returned this money to our group insurance participants in the form of a premium holiday in 2013," said Armour. "It's just one way we recognize our employees commitment to the program." □

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The day the trains stopped running

How trucks stepped up to keep a Lac Megantic company's product moving

By Carroll McCormick

LAC MEGANTIC, Que. – When a runaway freight train carrying crude oil exploded in the middle of Lac Megantic, Que. this July 6, half the downtown vanished, 47 people died and the city's industrial park lost its rail connection to the continent.

Particleboard and decorative melamine panel manufacturing giant Tafisa Canada called on its trucking carriers to fill the gap.

Up until that horrible day in Lac Megantic, located about 250 kilometres east of Montreal and just 15 kilometres from the Maine border, Tafisa, which opened in the early 1990s, relied on a mixture of rail cars and trucks to ship vast quantities of particleboard. Every week between 50 and 60 rail cars, each carrying as much as 85 tonnes, and from 200 to 210 trucks would leave the 700,000 sq.-ft. plant.

The trucks served most destinations under 1,000 kilometres away and the railcars took product further west in Canada and the US, primarily to Ohio and Michigan.

The short line railway Montreal, Maine & Atlantic Railway (MMA) owns the line running through town and some of the spur line that branches off from downtown Lac Megantic and meanders north to the industrial park and Tafisa.

Tafisa would load rail cars at its 100-metre long indoor rail platform and push them away from the plant. MMA locomotives would hook up to them for transport to the mainline railways CN and CP.

The explosion changed all that, but Tafisa was determined to continue serving all of its customers, according to Christine Couture, supply chain manager, Tafisa.

Tafisa put out a call for help to

the 10 or so trucking companies already hauling for it, and hired one additional carrier. The truck departures increased to 330-350 truckloads a week.

"We brought in only one new company. Otherwise, our existing trucking companies were able to find more trucks and more brokers to fill our needs," Couture explains.

It took two to three weeks for Tafisa to put in place a plan to have those roughly 130 additional trucks per week deliver their loads to reload centres in Quebec, where their contents could be put on railcars.

"Now, most of our customers who were receiving railcars before are receiving them from reload centres," Couture says. She declined to say where the reload centres are, other than that they are within the province.

Between the plant's administration offices and the railcar loading platform are four truck loading docks.

They serve closed van, flatbed and curtainside trailers.

Before the explosion, Tafisa was loading trucks six days a week. The greatly increased truck traffic meant ramping up that schedule to 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Work was reorganized so that the loading could be done entirely by Tafisa's employees.

Of the change, Couture says, "It is faster to load the product on the trucks. Flatcars, for instance, take a long time to load, because there is a lot of tarping to be done."

That said, there is no chance that Tafisa will get hooked on the convenience of trucking: Its distant customers are well accustomed to the train schedules, direct shipment by truck to them is more costly and double-handling the shipments to the reload cen-



STEPPING UP: A load of particle board, which traditionally would have been shipped by rail, sits ready to be transported by truck.

tres incurs added costs.

It is unknown how much longer Tafisa's carriers will continue filling in for the railway. Work did begin in late October to repair the tracks so trains could pass through the city and on to Maine and to the industrial park.

The work could be completed by the end of November, but this does not translate into an automatic resumption of rail service. Transport Canada has already denied a tourist train passage on the MMA line into Lac Megantic, raising questions about when rail service on the MMA line will resume, and how quickly car-

movements will return to the levels seen before the July explosion.

That said, Tafisa has expressed hope, in a press release this October, that rail service from the plant could resume before year's end.

In any case, the repair work is a temporary fix, Couture understands. "The city is pushing to have a track go around the city. But this is a huge project, a long-term project."

In the meantime, trucks will continue to keep Tafisa's supply chain intact, its doors open and its workforce of some 325 on the job. □

Gaz Metro applauds Quebec program that subsidizes natural gas trucks

MONTREAL, Que. – Quebec has announced a program that will subsidize 30% of the cost premium of natural gas trucks.

The rebate will cover 30% of up to \$75,000 of the additional cost natural gas adds to the price of a vehicle.

The announcement drew praise from Gaz Metro, which operates a number of natural gas fuelling stations in the province.

"The measures announced today are important, because they will help speed up the use of natural gas as fuel, resulting in an immediate reduction of up to 25% in GHG emissions," said Sophie Brochu, president and CEO of Gaz Metro.

Robert Transport is the highest profile user of natural gas trucks in Quebec.

The fuel emits up to 25% less GHG than diesel and is about 20% less expensive to purchase. The transportation sector contributes about 42.5% of all GHG produced in the province. □

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Phase 3 SPIF deadline extended five years due to weak economy

TORONTO, Ont. – Ontario has announced it will provide a five-year extension for Phase 3 Safe, Productive, Infrastructure-Friendly (SPIF) vehicles, according to the Ontario Trucking Association.

The OTA applauded the extension, noting the changes will allow more carriers to continue using the non-SPIF vehicles until the end of their life-cycles. Phase 3 of the SPIF requirements were implemented in January 2006, affecting all non-dump multi-axle semi-trailers (four or more axles) and double trailer combinations. In 2006, existing equipment was grandfathered until a sunset date of the end of 2015. After that, semi-trailers built before 2006 would be allowed to operate only under special permits until reaching the age of 15 years for non-tank trailers, and 20 years for tank trailers.

But because of the recession in 2008-2009, carriers have struggled to replace equipment and many were concerned they'd be unable to meet the SPIF requirements by the deadline.

OTA requested a five-year extension of the grandfathering provisions, which has been granted.

The additional five years of grandfathering will kick in after 2015 and allow qualifying non-tank trailers 20 years of age and under as well as tankers 25 years of age and under to be eligible for special permitting until they reach those ages respectively based on their year of manufacture, the

OTA announced. The permits allow continued operation at existing weight allowances. When all grandfather protection is exhausted, these trailers may continue to operate, but at significantly reduced gross weight allowances.

“OTA is most appreciative of the receptivity of MTO to reconsider this matter and to work with us to reach a collaborative, responsible and proactive solution,” says OTA president David Bradley. “The industry remains committed to SPIF, but these are difficult times and the carriers needed some extra breathing space and support. Today’s announcement will allow them to plan and manage existing and future capital investments.” □

OTA concerned about new biodiesel rule

TORONTO, Ont. – The province of Ontario has announced a new biodiesel mandate, which will require a 2% biofuel component in on- and off-road diesel beginning in April 2014, and ramping up to 4% in 2015.

The Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) said it will be raising concerns about the new requirement with the province.

It has until December to raise issues with the new requirement, and to outline any impact the new rule could have on the industry. The OTA says it questions the need for a biodiesel requirement, in light of new greenhouse gas emissions reductions that are being achieved by vehicle OEMs beginning in 2014.

“Following the consultations, OTA expects the government to make a final decision in the early new year about moving forward with a mandate, potentially leaving fuel suppliers with little time to react in the event the proposal is in fact implemented in April 2014,” the association said in a release. □



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Shippers and carriers work better when they work together, in a spirit of cooperation and collaboration rather than confrontation. These are more than fancy words; they are the heart of what drives both Transportation Media and Dan Goodwill & Associates, two organizations which have made a concerted effort over the years to bring shippers and carriers together to discuss issues of importance, in an atmosphere that is both respectful of each other's needs and yet spares no sacred cows.

And it's what drove us to again bring shippers and carriers together for our second annual Surface Transportation Summit this Oct. 16th. More than 300 top level transportation and logistics professionals heeded our call for a full day of education and networking at our new venue, the Mississauga Convention Centre.

Our blue-chip lineup of more than 20 speakers dug deep into key subjects such as the economic outlook for transportation, the CEO's view of the coming year, the future of intermodalism, the growth of dedicated transportation; retail supply chains; carrier performance management; effective transportation sales strategies; opportunities in mergers and acquisitions, and a frank debate on freight bids.

We were rewarded with a very insightful exchange of ideas.

But this conversation is too important to allow it to end there. So with this issue we are providing a comprehensive report on the major themes from the conference across all Transportation Media properties – Truck News, Truck West, Fleet Executive and Canadian Shipper, reaching more than 150,000 providers and buyers of transportation services across the country. Look also for our Inside the Numbers and HookedUp e-newsletters for more information as well as future episodes of our award-winning WebTV show, TMTV. We have already provided considerable coverage of the event on www.trucknews.com, www.ctl.ca, Twitter and on our Facebook page and will continue to provide more. This dialogue between shippers and carriers must continue beyond the Summit and we will be doing our best to ensure that it does.

Finally, we would like to thank our growing group of industry sponsors, whose support allowed us to bring the Surface Transportation Summit to a higher level. And don't forget to book Oct. 15, 2013 into your calendar for our next Surface Transportation Summit.

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'Collaboration' becoming more than just a buzzword: Jacquie Meyers

By James Menzies

MISSISSAUGA, Ont. – The term collaboration, as it applies to the relationships between shippers and carriers, has been “overused and misused in our industry,” but there are finally signs that shippers are truly interested in working with their carrier partners to gain efficiencies.

That was the message from Jacquie Meyers, president of Meyers Transportation Systems, when addressing more than 300 carrier and shipper executives at the Surface Transportation Summit.

Meyers said there has been a commoditization of trucking services in recent years, with many shippers issuing RFPs and making decisions based solely on price.

“What I'm seeing is, that's changing,” Meyers said. “And it needs to change. Change is often coming from customers who were burned from the tender process or from a low-cost carrier.”

Meyers said progressive shippers are now inviting their transportation providers to engage in meaningful discussions on how to improve efficiencies to the benefit of both parties.

“Customers are now calling in their strongest carriers and working with them to make their supply chain stronger and more resilient, and to drive out costs together,” Meyers said. “We have so many problems facing us, we need to be working together to overcome some of these challenges and we need to find win-win solutions. The conversation is changing, and I'm so thankful it is.”

Meyers issued a call to action to shippers and carriers in the room. To shippers, she urged “Please invite us to the table. We want to come to the party. Let us be a strategic partner.”

And to carriers, she said “When invited to participate in the tender (process), start the dialogue. Talk about how you can impact their bottom line without being the cheapest. Invest in collaboration, show up to meetings, bring your A-team and find ways to do better.” □



Most economic indicators remain in positive territory

By James Menzies

MISSISSAUGA, Ont. – Despite all the negativity on the news, and the uncertainty involving the US debt load and credit rating, most trends are pointing to a steadily growing economy that bodes well for trucking's future.

That was the synopsis from leading economists and industry analysts speaking at the 2013 Surface Transportation Summit here Oct. 17. Carlos Gomes, senior economist with Scotiabank, has earned a reputation for being more upbeat than many of his peers. He remained that way this year.

"I generally have been very positive over the past several years and I still remain positive with respect to the outlook," Gomes said.

Globally, Gomes said the economy has been improving throughout the year, led by emerging markets in China, India and Brazil. "They have moderated as well, but they continue to grow in excess of 5%, while the global economy is closer to 3%," Gomes said of emerging markets.

Even Europe, which has been an economic anchor in recent years, returned to positive growth in the second quarter, Gomes noted.

China saw some moderation in

economic growth last year, but it has enjoyed double-digit growth in late 2012 and into 2013, "which is telling us the slowdown in China that was expected to last several years, is coming to an end."

Job growth is improving in the US, by about 2% year-over-year. That's a leading indicator Gomes watches closely.

"Employment growth went negative a full year before the recession began," he pointed out.

Here in Canada, Gomes characterized the economic picture as "more mixed."

"Coming out of the downturn, we had a significant improvement both in manufacturing shipments as well as building permits," Gomes said, noting growth has since moderated. Canada still relies heavily on the US for 70% of its exports.

Gomes acknowledged Canadian household debt is a valid concern, but that it may not be as dire as it seems. Canadians now carry a debt-to-household income ratio of nearly 160%, which is higher than in the US today, and about equal to where US debt loads sat before the recession.

However, thanks to low interest rates, debt charges account for just 7% of disposable income in Cana-

da, a figure that was in excess of 9% in 2008 and as high as 12% in the 1990s. Interest rates would have to climb by 100 basis points to bring the debt charges as a percentage of disposable income to its average rate of 8.5%. So while Canadian household debt is high, Gomes said it's manageable as long as interest rates remain low.

Charles Clowdis Jr., managing director, North American markets with IHS Global Insights, said he was "embarrassed" by what the impasse in Congress over the debt ceiling - which was still ongoing at the time of his remarks - threatened to do to the economy. He said a quick resolution would prevent any lasting damage, but that it could interrupt some positive momentum with leading indicators such as housing and consumer confidence.

"Until two weeks ago, we were cautiously optimistic," about the economy, Clowdis said. "We're still cautiously optimistic."

Focusing on transportation, Clowdis said he's seeing evidence of near-shoring, with as much as 5% of manufacturing that was moved to Asia, returning to North America, usually to Mexico. This bodes well for trucking and rail providers, he noted. □

Freight volumes strong, but overcapacity remains an issue: M-O's Munro

By James Menzies

MISSISSAUGA, Ont. – Freight volumes are higher than they've been in "many, many" years, but there remains excess capacity in the marketplace and continued downward pressure on rates.

Doug Munro, president of Maritime-Ontario Freight Lines, told a packed Surface Transportation Summit that strong freight demand isn't yet translating into stronger rates. In fact, he said it's quite the opposite, as there continues to be pressure to reduce trucking prices.

"There is a lot of overcapacity, so though there's been an improvement in freight volumes, it's very hard to get rate increases," Munro said. "Margins are under pressure. We see that on a lot of freight quotes."

Munro said many shippers are continuing to issue RFPs in a bid to reduce their transportation costs.

"It's very difficult to get rate increases in this environment," Munro said. "The volumes are there, but it's hard to get the margins on it."

Maritime-Ontario is taking advantage of low interest rates to refresh its fleet, but isn't adding capacity.

"We're using this time to get new equipment and fund it at very reasonable rates," he said.

Asked what signals Munro is looking for before adding capacity, he responded it would take real demand and healthy rates - not outlooks or forecasts - before shifting into growth mode.

"We respond to demand, rather than looking at outlooks that are hard to predict. We look at actual demand. If demand is growing, we add accordingly. Without demand, we don't add (trucks)," Munro said. "We would like to see continuing growth in freight volumes and freight rates to justify those capital expenditures."

Asked by moderator Lou Smyrlis, Truck News publisher and editorial director, what it would take to bring capacity back in line with demand, Munro said it could be a combination of mergers and acquisitions and insolvencies.

"But until now, we haven't seen a lot of M&A or insolvencies, so it's hard to say," he added.

Looking ahead to 2014, Munro remains cautious. He characterized the US financial situation as "very fragile" and worries about what will happen when the Federal Reserve begins weaning the economy off life support.

"I think things will work their way through, but we can see how it would be a difficult time for the next couple of years, especially if the US doesn't sort through these problems," he said. □

When you 'win' a tender, are you really winning?

By James Menzies

MISSISSAUGA, Ont. – Jacquie Meyers, president of Meyers Transportation Systems, issued a plea to shippers and carriers attending the Surface Transportation Summit, to re-evaluate the tender process that she says has commoditized the trucking business.

"There are lot of challenges inherent to these tenders," Meyers said. "Number one, it reduces the decision making down to price... often times when we win these tenders, you are not really winning. It's not a long-term win. It means you were the cheapest or close to the cheapest. You

have to give something up to be cheap. If you're the cheapest, what are you leaving out? Driver training? Safety? Security?"

Another downfall to the RFP process is that it creates a disconnect between decision makers, and those who'll be most affected by those decisions on a daily basis, Meyers added. A senior executive who chooses a low-cost carrier based on price, leaves the warehouse managers, sales team and other front-line workers to deal with the mess.

She said shippers relying on a tender process to select transportation providers of-

ten focus on the line item transportation represents on their financial statements, but not all the other areas of the business that transportation affects. Lost loads, missed deliveries, unprofessional interactions with a shippers' customers and other possible repercussions of choosing a carrier based on price can cost more to a business than what it saved in transportation costs.

"Transportation managers are judged on that transportation line item, but not the other lines that transportation impacts," Meyers said.

She also said that tenders are onerous and timely to complete and that they often come with heavy-handed contracts attached.

"Within these contracts are unfair and overreaching clauses that, honest to goodness, put a carrier at risk of bankruptcy should something go wrong," she said.

All that said, Meyers acknowledged it's impossible to avoid the tender process altogether. At Meyers, if the tender is geared towards choosing the lowest-cost carrier or if it goes out to dozens of companies, Meyers said her company won't participate.

"If I can't get a human to speak to me, I'm not going to be participating," she said. However, the company will engage in the tender process if there's some human interaction involved, and the possibility of a long-term business partnership developing.

"We're asking to be a strategic partner, not just a line item on your financial statements," Meyers added. □



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SURFACE TRANSPORTATION SUMMIT

Looking for an exit strategy?

Start planning early, experts advise at Surface Transportation Summit

By James Menzies
MISSISSAUGA, Ont. – Business owners shouldn't wait until they *have* to sell their business to begin the planning process, otherwise they'll "lose control of the process."

Mike McCarron, M&A consultant with Wheels Group imparted that advice and more during a discussion on mergers and acquisitions in transportation at the Surface Transportation

Summit. He was joined on the panel by Doug Nix, vice-chairman, Corporate Finance Associates. Both speakers brought a unique perspective to the discussion; Nix has brokered many major acquisitions throughout his career and McCarron last year sold his own company, MSM Transportation, to Wheels Group.

McCarron said the trucking and 3PL markets are ripe for an escalation in M&A activity.

tion in M&A activity.

"I think trucking companies realize that without scale and technology, it's going to be impossible to survive," he said, citing that as one reason he and his partner opted to sell MSM when they did.

"We knew we were too big to be small and too small to be big. We had to decide, do we want to risk everything at this stage in our lives? Do we want to go to ground zero and raise money? The people I've talked to in the business are thinking the same thing, 'What am I going to do to get out?' I think that is going to drive a lot of acquisitions, that state of mind in the industry."

As baby boomers near retirement age, they'll have to devise an exit strategy. McCarron pointed out there could be a logjam of boomers looking to sell at the same time, driving down expected returns.

Asked how business owners will know when the time is right to sell, Nix offered this tongue-in-cheek advice: "Ask your wife."

If you no longer wake up in the morning eager to go to work, Nix said it may be time to prepare your business for a sale. But first, you should determine if it's even saleable. Commoditized trucking companies without an established, steady custom-

er base may be disappointed to find their business has little value in the marketplace.

When considering when to sell, Nix said "I'd say it's better to sell a little too early than a little too late, because you'll never get that time back."

McCarron said the owners of mid-sized trucking companies, and any sized 3PL, will find it difficult to keep pace in the current environment unless they add scale or invest a fortune into technology. American 3PLs are making capital investments into technology that dwarf what their Canadian counterparts can or will afford.

McCarron suggested owners prepare their company for sale even before they're ready to step aside, so that they are able to begin negotiations as soon as a prospective buyer comes knocking.

It can take two years or more to clean up the minutes books, settle old lawsuits, and clean up the business, and by that time an interested buyer may have moved on to another pursuit.

Once you've been courted by a prospective buyer, it's important to determine if the match is a good fit for your business. McCarron said he stopped returning calls from a private equity firm when he sensed they were looking to cut costs, strip the company of its culture and then flip it for a quick profit, all while he'd be expected to stay on and assist with the process.

"It was about slashing and burning and ripping the culture apart," McCarron said. "We felt far better with a strategic fit."



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But Nix cautioned against ruling out investment buyers. "We invite private equity groups into controlled auctions, because there's half a trillion dollars sitting uninvested in North America. "You can't ignore that," he said. "Often-times, the private equity guys will pay more money if it's the right deal."

However, he added few asset-based trucking companies will appeal to private equity firms.

When a good match is found, McCarron said it's a good idea to solicit the help of an advisor, who acts as a buffer between the negotiating parties throughout the transaction. This helps keep negotiations from becoming too personal, McCarron said. This is important, since in most deals, the previous owner will be expected to stay on for a period of time during the transition, so a cordial relationship must be maintained.

"Where they bring the most value is the intangibles," McCarron said of investment bankers, likening them to an agent who represents pro hockey players.

Using an advisor also frees up the business owner to continue running the company. McCarron said it's a mistake to think that the dollars attached to a transaction on the letter of intent is the final value of the deal. Any losses suffered during the transaction process will affect the final value of the company at closing time.

"The price you sell your business for is not the price on the LOI," he said. "I was terrified I would lose a large customer during the transaction. The advisor lets you focus on running the business."

Having an advisor on-board also helps protect against "deal fatigue," McCarron added.

"You cannot go through this process on your own," he insisted.

Nix agreed, adding, "There's a ton of emotional expenditure and effort and resources that goes into the sales process. If you're not serious (about selling), don't pull the trigger on this because it will sap your energy and your business will suffer for it."

When choosing an advisor, Nix suggested asking them what they've accomplished lately.

"A lot of people will tell you what they're working on, but few will actually say 'I did this,'" Nix said. "There's a difference. The reason they're talking about what they're working on is that they don't have anything to talk about that they did."

It's important, Nix said, that both parties trust the advisors they're dealing with.

If you're looking to acquire another company, set out to find a target that fits a strategic need, not just to grow top line revenue, Nix suggested. Both Nix and McCarron agreed that buyers should pick up the phone and call a company of interest, even if it isn't for sale.

When a fit is found, Nix suggested moving the transaction along as quickly as possible.

"Everything that drags gets dirty," he said. "I'm a big proponent of shortening timelines."

As for when M&A activity will pick

up, Nix said a dearth of deals this year isn't due to a lack of interest.

"I see in the industry lots of interest and lots of discussion," he said. "But I also see lots of caution. People are hesitant to pull the trigger."

Last year, Nix's firm did 45 mid-market transactions across North America, and this year they've done only 20. He thinks the decline is partly due to the uncertain political environment in the US, and that "once that stability comes, I'm quite bullish on the future levels of M&A activity."

Large-sized 3PLs are expected to be the most sought after targets, and are currently fetching valuations of 6-7xEBITDA. Asset-based trucking companies, by comparison, are commanding just 3-4xEBITDA. □

'The price you sell your business for is not the price on the letter of intent,'

Mike McCarron, Wheels Group



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ONTARIO

Toronto Transportation Club turns 100

John Foss on the benefits of belonging and the importance of being inclusive

By Lou Smyrlis

TORONTO, Ont. – The Toronto Transportation Club this year celebrates its 100th anniversary.

Trailcon Leasing's John Foss is serving as president during this, the club's milestone year. Editorial director and publisher Lou Smyrlis caught up with Foss recently, to talk about how the organization is planning to celebrate its 100th anniversary, the benefits of belonging and the importance of being inclusive.

TN: The Toronto Transportation Club is celebrating a very significant milestone with its 100th anniversary this year. A lot of clubs have come and gone over the past century. What's the secret to success for TTC? How has it survived for so long?

Foss: The club throughout its history has always held great events. Industry-wide, there have been a lot of people who have relied on the club's social events to keep in touch with people from all different sectors of the industry.

The annual dinner especially has been a popular event. People put it in their schedule right away. They go to the dinner and call up the club right away to find out the date for next year's dinner. But I would also say we've enjoyed having a broad spectrum of members and with all their support we've been able to weather any tough times over the years. We've always had members step up during such times to revitalize the club.

TN: I'm sure you belong to a lot of different clubs and associations, as I do, and you find that each has its unique flavour, and as a result you make more time for some than for others. What is it about the TTC that keeps its members coming back?

Foss: I've been on the board seven years now and we've gone through changes in venues and entertainment and cancelled some events and changed some events, all to keep things fresh. One of the reasons that can happen is because our board changes on a regular basis, roughly every four to five years. That brings new ideas to the table and that leads to new people coming to events.

TN: What does it mean to you personally to be the president who gets to preside over the 100th year anniversary?

Foss: Initially, when I came to the board, it didn't even cross my mind. But when it came up, I thought it was awesome. I take it very seriously and very personally to make the club and the 100th anniversary a success. And I think I'm the right man for the job. When I think of everything we've done to get ready for the 100th anniversary – the dinner, all the spon-

sorships, and the entertainment, the venue, all the work – it has almost become a full-time job. I'm very fortunate to have my employer, Trailcon Leasing, support me through it all.

TN: What can you tell me about the 100th anniversary celebrations?

Foss: We are planning for an incredible night. We are stepping away from our normal venue for this year and going to the Metro Convention Centre to accommodate a larger crowd. We have Canadian astronaut Chris Hadfield, who is an incredible speaker, and a great band.

The room is going to be dressed to the nines. Several member companies have stepped up to help us bring in retirees who are part of the club's history. It's also going to be more interactive than anything we've done before. We are going to have live Twitter feeds and video screens. It's going to be a lot of fun and a great tribute to the TTC. We also have a scholarship trust for members' children. This year in celebration of the 100th anniversary we will be giving out two scholarships, which we've never done before.

TN: What's also interesting about the TTC is that while most clubs are mode specific, the TTC is open to all modes. Why is that important?

Foss: The history of the club started with the railways and the local cartage companies. Canadian Pacific in particular was heavily involved and is the reason the annual dinner was held at the Royal York as



CENTURY CLUB: John Foss is president of the TTC as it celebrates its 100th year.

CP owned it at the time. So the roots are multi-mode. And that's also the strength of the club. We have railways, local cartage, 3PLs, common carriers and a large number of shippers. Carriers bring in shippers as members and shippers bring in carriers. And that creates a lot of support for the club as well.

TN: The TTC is the largest club of its kind in Canada. What relationships do you have with other transportation clubs across the country and in the US?

Foss: It's hard to believe we are larger than clubs such as New York, but we are. As for relationships with other clubs, we are trying to rekindle our relationship with the Montreal Club and we've also rekindled our relationships with the clubs in Chicago and New York.

TN: What are the most significant ways in which the club has evolved

over the past 100 years?

Foss: What we have done with our board has been an important part of our ongoing evolution. We have a good mix of people on our board who are go-getters and who are committed to seeing the club continue to succeed and grow.

TN: In a recent newsletter you wrote that the Women in Transportation luncheon has found a permanent home in the TTC roster of events and that you have a feeling you will need to find a much larger venue for next year's event. Women have only been allowed to join the TTC since 1981. What have they brought to the club?

Foss: Look around transportation today and you see women moving into key management and executive positions and the club has to be reflective of this reality. Look at TTC's own board of directors and how many are women and also how many

of our recent presidents have been women. The inclusion of women into the club has certainly changed the face of the room and it needed to have happened long before it did. We ran the Women in Transportation luncheon for the first time this year and had over 100 turn out. We are moving to a better venue next year and we are expecting to considerably increase the turnout.

TN: What is the next generation of transportation industry leaders looking for in a transportation club and what is the TTC doing to meet those requests?

Foss: I'm involved with the Ontario Trucking Association's Next Generation program and we specifically asked young executives what they were looking for. These are people in their late 20s to late 30s and they may have never attended an industry event because of the perception that it's an old boy's club.

They may not know anyone and maybe they don't feel welcomed. I think what they are looking for is an opportunity for someone to break the ice for them so they can become part of industry clubs, just like they see their parents or older executives at their firms do. They are looking for opportunities to network and gain new perspectives. What we need to do, and are doing, is to work on breaking down the barriers, to help them meet new people. □

–Visit Trucknews.com to read the full interview with John Foss.

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ONTARIO

Safe practices start with the hiring process

By Lou Smyrlis
KITCHENER, Ont. – If the object is to climb a tree, is it best to train a rabbit or to use a squirrel?

That's Dr. Chet Robie's tongue-in-cheek way of saying that although there is value in training people towards company expectations, it's much easier when you start with the right people. Wilfrid Laurier University's Dr. Robie was one of the speakers at the Fleet Safety Council's 22nd Annual Educational Conference.

Robie focused on what motor carriers should consider in their hiring processes to make sure, from a safety perspective, they are placing the right people behind the wheel of their expensive equipment.

Simply checking up on the applicant's prior driving record doesn't cut it, according to Robie. Although important to look at, it falls short of identifying many at-risk individuals. That's because you can't predict the occurrence of specific future accidents based on prior accidents. From a statistical perspective, serious accidents are relatively rare.

"We can only predict the possibility that people who engage in certain behaviours which, if they persist, will make accidents likely," Dr. Robie explained. Think improper

lane changes, poor speed management, hard braking, being quick to anger under stress, etc.

But Robie cautioned that before you start analyzing the behaviour of job candidates, it's important to look inward first. The first step in any selection program starts with a proper job analysis, which should include a thorough outline of the tasks, duties, and responsibilities of the job. Robie recommended the Web site www.onetonline.org as a good source to help companies get started on this task.

Robie also recommended using cognitive testing, such as the standard IQ tests, in pre-screening drivers, making the argument that research shows smarter people learn more quickly and get up to company performance standards faster. The disadvantage to including such tests in your hiring process, however, is that drivers don't like them and in an industry such as trucking where there is a shortage of qualified drivers that can be a roadblock.

The interview process itself is very important in gauging a candidate's potential and structured interviews are two to three times more effective than non-structured interviews. Asking all candidates

Continued on page 30

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ONTARIO

Take the next step to accident prevention, safety expert urges

By Lou Smyrlis

KITCHENER, Ont. – The rising cost of lawsuits, increasing government scrutiny and penalties for unsafe operators, and easily accessible technology that can turn any bystander at the scene of an accident into a star witness can mean only one thing for an industry as visible as transportation: Bad decisions when it comes to safety cost a huge amount of money these days.

That's part of the reason why motor carriers need to move beyond being incident-reactive to being prevention-proactive, according to Mark Skinner of the Infrastructure Health and Safety Association. For Skinner, who spoke at the Fleet Safety Council's 22nd Annual Educational Conference, that means moving beyond mere compliance with safety regulations towards predictive behaviour analysis – the science of analyzing past behaviours to predict the likelihood of such behaviours occurring in the future. In the context of safety, it's figuring out which behaviours can lead to accidents and taking action before the accident occurs.

"If all we are doing is compliance, we are not really helping anyone," Skinner said. "Predictive behaviour analysis is forward thinking, and I mean really forward thinking. But it's not magic; it doesn't just happen. It's a lot of hard work."

Fortunately for motor carriers

keen to take the road towards predictive behaviour analysis, all the data made available by technologies such as the engine control modules recording hard braking or rapid acceleration, provide a rich source of data to be mined.

So can simple observations such as how drivers get out of their cabs – do they use the proper three-point technique or leap out on a wing and prayer?

"A lot of companies may want to do predictive analytics but have yet to master basic recording," Skinner warned.

Observations of safety-related behaviour should be both frequent and plentiful – at least five or six times per week – he advised.

Record the number of safe behaviours observed, the number of at-risk behaviours observed, and apply a severity grade by calculating the percentage of risky behaviours observed that are of medium severity or above.

Take nothing for granted in your observations, Skinner said. For example, don't lull yourself into a false sense of security just because you are providing safety training to employees. Just as important as how many people attended the safety meeting and what you taught them is what information they actually retained. Do you test them afterwards to determine if the safety message sank in? Do you follow up

to ensure those safety-related behaviours are still being practiced months later?

Skinner also provided a checklist to follow to create a basic score card.

- Identify the objective (for example, no lost time injuries) and gather the relevant historical data;
- Build the scorecard by identifying the factors that will influence the objective; determining the weight of these factors; and assigning point values. He advised that point values are assigned intuitively – it's not an exact science;
- Develop a segmentation scheme so that the project can be broken down into digestible parts rather than one huge endeavor that overwhelms the organization. Skinner advised identifying three to six different segments;
- Develop the baseline by documenting current and historical performance of each segment identified;
- Compare the results of the model

with current performance. Sometimes it's important to test different versions of the model to achieve desired results.

Such models can be developed in-house on something as simple as an Excel spreadsheet program. But if you want more sophisticated and dynamic modeling, going to a third-party provider such as Deloitte Analytics would be best.

"In cases where predictive analytics is applied all the time, it works," Skinner emphasized. He provided the example of Cummins International's focus on its distribution branch. It collected a great deal of data: more than 210,000 audits, more than four million observations of which slightly more than 229,000 were deemed to be observations of "at risk" actions or behaviours. The company was able to correct more than 224,000 of those.

"Give predictive behaviour analysis serious consideration. It's the way of the future," Skinner concluded. □

Fleets urged to try behavioural interviewing

Continued from page 28

the same questions makes it easier to compare the results.

Robie spoke in favour of "behavioural interviewing." In the context of safety, such interviewing uses questions specifically designed to elicit responses about past behav-

aviours. The basic premise behind behavioural interviewing is that the most accurate predictor of future performance is past performance in a similar situation.

The interviewing focuses on experiences, behaviours, knowledge, skills and abilities that are job-related. Whereas traditional interviewing questions ask job candidates general questions such as "Tell me about yourself," the process of behavioural interviewing is much more probing. For example, you would ask a candidate:

"What were some of the most important safety rules at your prior job? In what ways did you follow them?" This would help determine the candidate's awareness of safety rules and how he has used them.

Or...

"Tell me about a time when you saw an employee working in an unsafe manner. What did you do?" This would determine whether the candidate would speak up and demonstrate concern for fellow employees.

Nor should you ignore the reference check process – even if you want to.

"Everybody thinks that reference checking is BS and it's a pain in the ass and that people don't get back to you. But if the candidate spent time working for five or six companies and they don't want to say anything about him, that should be telling you something," Robie said.

He also recommended the option of using standardized, Web-based reference checking systems as a way to make reference checking both easier and more effective.

Transportation Media was the media sponsor of the Fleet Safety Council's 22nd Annual Educational Conference.

The event featured a panel discussion on the future of behaviour analysis, moderated by Lou Smyrlis, publisher and editorial director of the Trucking Group, Transportation Media. □



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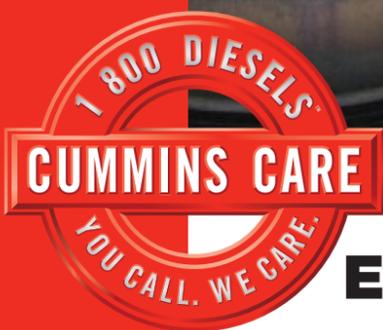
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COMPANY PROFILE

All in the family

Continued from page 1

a teen. As a teen, and working for a union, Attard was taught to splice cables by hand – a skill not acquired by many.

“An old army captain taught me how to hand-splice these chokers and the reason why he did that was because I was in a union working part-time and no one could bump me, because no one knew how to do it,” Attard said. “Every so often, a customer would come in and ask, ‘who is doing that?’ It’s a trade and its unheard of now.”

He began to recognize a specialized need in a niche market, so he branched out and registered as a small business working from his father’s garage and had founded own company, Steve Slings.

“I ended up selling my business to a large firm in Hamilton, CanSling, from there I still had the registered business, so I kept the S&S name,” Attard said. He didn’t enter the business world again for many years later, until he was at a crossroads after losing a comfortable position in management for a contracting company.

Attard was in his early thirties, looking after his three children on his own and out of work. As a teen he had his own registered business and by the time he entered his early twenties he owned and operated his own truck. His entrepreneurial spirit surfaced once more. He made a swift decision to go out on his own again, and build a small business.

“It was do or die,” Attard said. “It happened so fast, I didn’t have time to think about where I was going. I relied on my gut instinct and building a business just felt right.”

His gut was right and for the last 15 years, he has been running S&S Transport, which started out small and currently runs 15 trucks. The early days of S&S Transport weren’t easy, especially with three young children – one in diapers – at home.

“How does a woman go to work all day, then come home and cook and clean and keep house?” Attard said, noting that while some men bear the responsibility as a provider and caregiver, in his experience, the onus was usually on women. “It is a tough thing to do. Looking back, considering all the sleepless nights I’ve had, I would have probably run the other way.”

As business slowly began to pick up, Attard had live-in help, which alleviated a tremendous amount of stress and allowed him to be both a better father and business owner.

“Life doesn’t wait for anyone,” Attard said, recalling that the impetus for starting a new business came from losing a job. “You have to wake up and smarten up. In fact, this experience has made me a way better father because I had to support and raise my family on my own – we’re such a tight-knit group.”

Attard believes the success of his company grew from the attention he paid to both his staff and customers.

“My edge is, we are family and we care,” said Attard. “I’m not saying other companies don’t care, but when you call S&S you won’t get a secretary, you almost always get me. My opinion is that a lot of these large

companies are so large, they’re not connected to their staff. Their employees have the attitude of, ‘I’m just a number here.’”

It is important, according to Attard, that his staff are always treated like family so an atmosphere of pulling together and working together is established.

It isn’t just a familial and congenial attitude that drives S&S Transport.

“A successful company doesn’t just ship and receive, but they try and get involved with areas and build a strong rapport with customers,” Attard said. “There is a bond with my customers and they expect to get a hold of me. Everything I have in life I owe to my customers.”

Customers obviously help fuel his business, but reliable equipment is an integral asset.

“Most of our trucks are Macks and 90% of them are brand new,” Attard said. “I went with Mack, even though there are many different trucks out there, because anyone can buy a brand new truck, but they have the best service. When a truck is running great, they’re all great. It’s the service that matters.”

Even with some lean times in his books, Attard has managed to stay afloat during the recent recession that struck hard during 2008 and 2009.

According to Attard, they weren’t hit extremely hard by the recession because the condominium industry booms during an economic downturn.

“It was going very strong for us for the simple reason that recessions, in the condo business, is a very busy time for us. In condo growth, contractors take advantage of the re-

cession, because everything is at the lowest price it could possibly be,” said Attard. “Most recessions are two to three years and at that time, the condos are being sold, so that’s how we fall into that. When things are booming, (contractors) don’t start breaking ground, but when things start falling they start breaking ground.”

The industry has been known to have its challenges, but Attard sees opportunity for change that could make it better.

“I think electronic logbooks would be a great thing. It might be a challenge to adapt the drivers to the system, but once you do it’ll be a great system,” Attard said. “It will be easier for the office, less paperwork, which is a great thing because it is better for the environment and I think it will be more accurate information.”

But it isn’t just about tracking in-

‘My edge is, we are family and we care.’

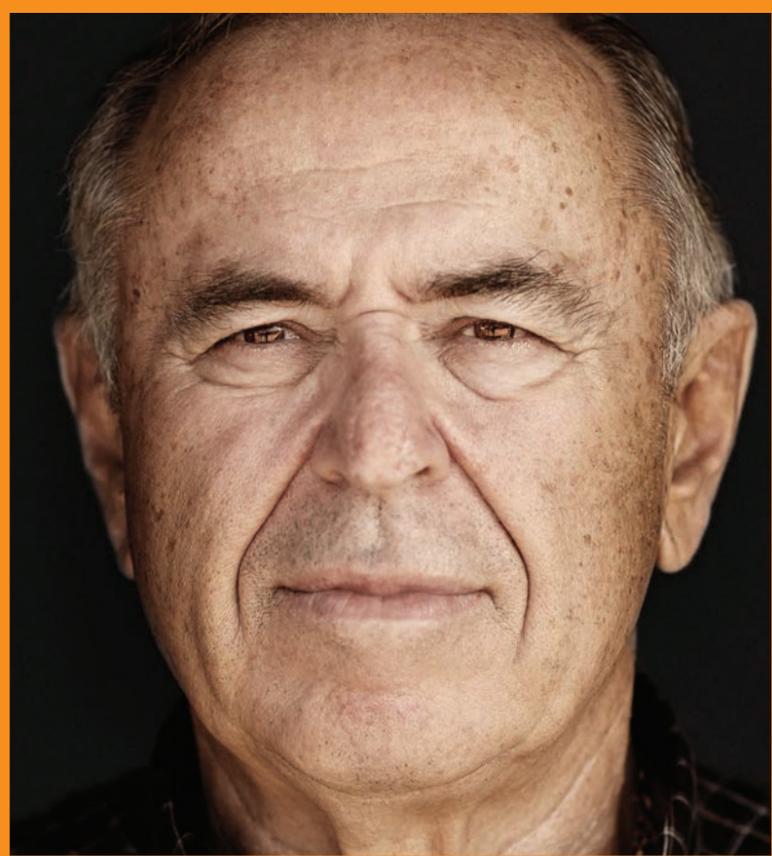
Steve Attard, S&S

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formation, Attard is concerned that too many young and inexperienced drivers are on the road as a solution for the impending threat of a driver shortage.

“I’m definitely concerned because there is a driver shortage and I feel a lot of the training facilities out there are teaching drivers too fast,” said Attard. “Let’s face it, everyone wants to get on the road as fast as they can, but I don’t think drivers are really up to what they are getting involved in – the actual hazards – and that is what scares me most of all. I don’t think there is enough training and I don’t think believe in two weeks or three weeks, that is enough to give a driver a licence.”

Attard believes a minimum of three months’ training and numerous long hours should be mandatory.

“Are we that busy that we are just throwing people in trucks and taking chances?” Attard questioned.

It hasn’t just been tough issues and highs and lows that Attard has experienced while owning a business, the

road has taken him down paths that are hard to forget.

“I love the adventure,” Attard said. “If you are happy in trucking, every day is like a holiday. We get to see so many different aspects of our country. We have so many jewels in our country you could spend your entire life exploring Canada.”

But not everything Attard has seen has been uplifting.

“We were hired to haul a lot of the supports used during the aftermath of 9/11,” said Attard. “We had specialty equipment that could haul reinforcements into Manhattan.”

An S&S Transport customer manufactured 65-ft. support tubes that Attard had previously hauled, and when it got the call to bring its tubes to Manhattan, the customer thought of Attard and his trucks. It would be the first time S&S Transport branched into the US.

“We went three months back and forth hauling material to ground zero,” said Attard. “It was the scari-



LONG HAUL: At just 19, Kyle Attard has already done a cross-country haul to Nanaimo, B.C.

est thing I have ever seen and the saddest thing I have ever seen. I didn’t even witness the actual incident. I just saw the aftermath. I still remember conversations I’ve had with firefighters to this day and other people that worked close by.”

Chad, a NYC firefighter, was at his

son’s birthday party on September 11 and by the time he got the call to go to the site, four of his friends had already been killed.

“At the time, his friends had been trapped in the rubble, but it wouldn’t be until later that he discovered his friends, the men he worked with, had all died,” Attard said.

Each story he heard from witnesses and survivors became grimmer.

“You could see the devastation, the cracks in buildings, from four blocks away,” Attard said.

The three months he spent on the road were trying, but it is an experience he’ll never forget and he’ll always be proud that he could help during the distressing months that followed the attacks.

It is that type of work – strenuous, tiresome and emotionally taxing, but eventually rewarding – which brought Attard’s two sons and daughter into the business.

He always encouraged his children to follow their hearts and never expected them to follow in the family tradition of driving truck.

“But they fell in love with trucking and they love what we do,” Attard said. “They are happy, they have a great income and that is half the battle in life.”

Kyle, Steve’s oldest son, has been driving for one year. At 19, he’s certain that he has made the right career choice.

“I’ve always been with my dad, since I was a little kid and I developed a passion for it. I just something I knew I wanted to do,” Kyle said.

Kyle foresees long-term contentment in the field, he loves the work, respects his co-workers and the job keeps him active.

With only one year that separates Kyle and Arron, a healthy dose of friendly rivalry exists between them – especially when determining who is better behind the wheel.

“My dad’s attitude is generally positive so everyone around him tends to be happy. It’s a great working environment,” said Arron.

Aside from the positives, both brothers acknowledge that the job comes with its fair share of perils.

“It is definitely a dangerous job and you have to be careful,” said Arron.

The youngest family member, 15-year-old Kaitlin, also helps in the yard on her time off from school shunting trailers.

“Shunting is something to get used to, it’s not the easiest thing to do. You follow instructions and I have three great trainers that help me out,” Kaitlin said.

“I might get my licence just to help out, but I don’t know what I really want to do,” she added.

While Kaitlin is considering pursuing a career in law, it is clear that the three young adults are drawn to the business.

“We are not just ordinary truck drivers, we get out on site and do whatever is asked of us. It keeps us active,” said Kyle.

“We do whatever we can do to help out,” Aaron added.

In the last year, Attard’s partner Cathy Berardicurti and her daughter Sarah, have joined S&S Transport.

With his family on board, he knows that one day he can pass the business down to his children, but in the meantime, it’ll still be Steve answering the call. □

we don’t have twice the profits,” jokes Mr. Kurtz.

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CANADA

Expect higher transportation pricing in years ahead: Cormark's Newman

By Lou Smyrlis
TORONTO, Ont. – The potential for synchronous global growth could ignite demand for transportation, leading to higher carrier pricing, a recovery of profitability, and the potential for industry consolidation, according to David Newman, a transportation market analyst with Cormark Securities and the luncheon speaker at CITT's conference Nov. 4.

Surface transportation volumes have actually been relatively sluggish with the railways realizing modest growth, although above GDP, and the TL and LTL trucking segments suffering declines. But motor carriers have done a "phenomenal job at cost and capacity management and their balance sheets are in excellent shape," Newman said.

There have been areas of strong performance in the niche/specialized markets, such as bulk/tank, heavy-haul and oilfield services.

"And everyone is expecting the fourth quarter and into next year to start looking better," Newman added. "Truck tonnage and our tracking of various indices seem to point toward an emerging recovery in volumes."

Newman said a variety of factors could lead to above average growth for carriers in the years to come. Europe's economy is turning the corner at the same time as the US economy

is improving and the Chinese economy is stabilizing at a lower but still robust growth level, Newman said. India is continuing to develop and Mexico is gaining momentum. He is expecting global growth around 3% next year.

Canada stands to profit from such synchronous global growth, Newman said, because it has the base metals, energy products and agricultural products required to feed the demand of an expanding world economy. The inventory-to-sales ratio is also in balance so if there is an increase in demand there should be an immediate impact on freight volumes.

"It won't be a dead cat bounce. It will be the real thing," Newman ensured.

Canada's West Coast ports are also doing well, and considerably outpacing their US counterparts. Containerized traffic for the three largest US West Coast ports has grown just 2% YTD while Canada's West Coast ports are experiencing 18% growth YTD.

Newman said the driver shortage, the new US hours-of-service, and demographics could also lead to higher pricing in the trucking sector as capacity is curtailed.

"We are actually seeing the acquisition of companies just to acquire drivers," he said. □

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OVER THE ROAD

Seeking the good life

Is it even attainable for full-time professional truck drivers?

Here we are again, another December and another year under our belts. For those of us on the front lines (and that's most of us), it's been a tough year, again. In fact we've had five difficult years in a row. Recent reports in the mainstream media tell us that economies around the world are on the mend but it certainly doesn't feel like any type of economic recovery I've experienced in the past.

Our youth are still struggling to find steady work, increasing numbers of people are dependent on food banks, and more folks seem to be only a paycheck or two away from financial dire straits. This is what the talking heads must mean by a "fragile" economic recovery.

Sitting in our den with my two grandchildren the other night, enjoying the quiet time that comes between bath time and bed time, I was thinking about the fragile state of affairs in the world and I couldn't help but reflect on the quality of life my grandchildren will experience 20 years from now as they move into adulthood. I was reminded that a life well lived is one based in generosity, that to live a good life is to leave the world a better place for future generations, or at least attempt to. There is a richness to a successful life that goes far beyond personal status and material wealth.

My father believed that his eternal life would be lived in the memories of the people he left behind and it was incumbent upon all of us to live a "good life."

The question for many truck drivers today is how do you find the time to live a good life? By that I mean, taking the time to spend with family, friends and community. The majority of our time is spent in the workplace. The trucking industry is no longer the goose that lays the golden egg.

Gone are the days of above-average income for drivers. A full-time truck driving job still provides a good income on which to build the financial foundation we need to live that good life, it just doesn't leave any time for you to live it.

So for the last couple of years I've been developing a sense of helplessness.

It's no coincidence that the feeling started to arise shortly after my grandson was born in the summer of 2011 and my thoughts turned to how the world will look 20 years down the road. I'm losing confidence in our ability as individuals to make any kind of lasting positive change in our communities and workplaces.

It's risky to write about this stuff, because it's so touchy-feely. It is easy to come off sounding like a victim or a whiner when we should be pulling up our bootstraps and putting our nose to



Over the Road

AL GOODHALL

the grindstone, at least in some peoples' opinion. But the stresses are real.

As drivers we are definitely torn between work and home. So is the answer as simple as, pay us more money so we can spend more time at home? From most of the drivers

I've spoken to about this, the answer is a resounding yes. But we're told this is not a realistic solution in today's marketplace. Back to that fragile economy again.

The only steps I see available to drivers to resolve the disparity between time on the job and time at home is to find a job that pays the same money for less work, or reduce your personal and family expenses to the point that enables you to work less and spend more time at home on a reduced income. Or it may be a combination of the two. None of these options are pretty. The final option is to change career paths. That appears to be an option many drivers are looking at.

So this isn't a very good way to wrap up the year, is it? But at the same time, if we don't ask the questions or call a spade a spade, we'll just remain in the same spot spinning our wheels. I don't see

the next five years being any better than the last five for individual wage earners.

The global marketplace is still growing and changing as billions of people strive to get to a place we have been enjoying here in the west for many decades. Perhaps we've taken our good fortunes for granted or perhaps we have simply become complacent and allowed ourselves to be led down a path not completely of our choosing.

What I do know is that if we want to live that good life, we need to wake up, participate, and influence change for the better in any way that we can. □

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

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OPINION

Are trucking 'reality' shows good or bad for our industry's image?

This monthly column is all about opinions. Well actually one opinion, to be more specific, mine. Every now and then I'll throw a few facts in to the mix, but mostly it is my take from behind the wheel on things that are happening in our industry.

Other people have opinions that may or not agree with mine and I respect that; after all, freedom of speech is very important. I have often learned things and changed my own opinions from listening to the opinions of others.

Members of the public also have opinions about our industry. Often they are misinformed opinions because they don't have to deal with the stuff we have to deal with on a daily basis, but they still have their opinions nevertheless.

It would be nice if we could edu-

You say tomato,
I say tomahto

MARK LEE



cate them and change their opinions to more positive ones, but often we did the things that made them form the negative opinion in the first place, so it is difficult. All it takes is two trucks having a progressive shifting drag race through a stretch of road with stoplights and the people in the following vehicles will form an opinion based on that one experience.

As will those who witness any of the many other forms of bad behaviour by truck drivers. People who work in offices and factories can also have a negative opinion from

late deliveries/pick-ups or goods that get damaged in transit as they can have an effect on their working day.

Then we have people who may have never been inconvenienced by a big truck, their jobs have nothing to do with trucks, but they have watched some of the 'reality' shows on TV, and have formed an opinion about us from that. From what I've seen, it won't be a very good one.

I have met a few 'stars' from these shows and having had a good chat with them I'm almost shocked when I see them doing something silly on TV. Take *Ice Road Truckers* as an example. You have Hugh and Rick clowning around smashing into things and wrecking equipment in every other scene. We all know that it is just Hollywood dramatization, but what does the public think when

they see them acting the fool?

As we work in the industry, we know this is not the usual way of doing things, especially out in the bush. Any driver with half a brain cell will know that the truck is the only thing that will keep him or her alive when the weather comes in, so they look after that truck as if their lives depend on it, which they do.

The same applies to the freight they are carrying, your job and the contract between your employer and their customers depends on getting the goods there, on time and in good condition, yet time and time again on this show we see freight getting smashed to smithereens and a don't care attitude from the drivers.

In the latest season they also have the rivalry between Hugh Roland and his previous employer. I shudder when I see this. It makes it look as though the experienced winter road haulers are a bunch of amateurs that need to be shown how to do it properly by some yahoo from out of town. They have even brought in the 'stars' from the Alaskan episodes to show the local drivers how it is done.

Some of the scenes are so obviously set up it isn't funny, yet Mr. and Mrs. 2.4 Children do not realize this; they are convinced that an experienced heavy-haul driver can get himself stuck at the bottom of a hill and close the road to everyone, at least until Barbie Doll turns up and joins together a couple hundred feet of straps and chains and drags the stricken truck to safety.

The newest show *Highway Through Hell* doesn't appear to use such tactics, although the narrator does make a mountain out of a molehill at times, if you'll pardon the pun. Even so, it is an entertaining show.

But seeing as the theme is the recovery of trucks that have fallen off the road, it doesn't present the best image for our industry either.

But you know what, I watch every episode. I even PVR them so I don't miss them when I'm out on the road. *Ice Road Truckers* may one day cause me to blow a gasket. As soon as the introduction comes on, my living room empties. Even the dog retreats to its basket. They know I will be getting bent out of shape at some of the Hollywood madness that I will see on my TV and so do I, but I'm still pleased to see the industry that I am a part of being recognized.

I also realize that they have to Hollywood-ize it. A TV show about a bunch of dedicated professionals going about their business without wrecking things and having confrontations would be about as interesting as watching paint dry, so it was always going to evolve into the farce that we see. But as they say in politics, there is no such thing as bad publicity, at least we're getting some attention. □

— 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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INDUSTRY

Training standards

What do we really want or need?

It may seem a little like reaching into a nest of spiders but we're willing to wade in on the subject of mandatory training for commercial truck drivers. It's a topic that garners attention for periods of time, disappears from discussion for a while, and then returns once again – it's a cycle.

Opinions vary widely on the need or even the desirability of making such training mandatory. Some hold very strong views on the subject while others are indifferent. Accepting that there are disparate views, it seems to be basic common sense that some level of training is a good thing when it comes to jobs that require the level of skill and knowledge as that of truck driving. If we accept that premise, the headline questions become, what should standardized training consist of and who should ensure the standards are met? The myriad sub-questions fall out of those headings.

Most carriers would like the assurance that a newly licensed driver has attained a demonstrable level of training, skill, and knowledge that could make that driver a so-called 'good hire.' Those carriers might support the concept of mandatory entry-level training coupled with standardized curricula, at least until the discussion turns to the cost of such training and the effect that might have on wages.

Of course employers are not the only ones seeking assurance that driver training is effective and meaningful.

The general public who share the roads with trucks want to know they are in safe company. Statistics confirm that experienced commercial truck drivers are among the safest drivers on the road – perhaps by a wide margin – but when we are discussing mandatory training, we are talking about new entrants to the field.

The students themselves should have a say in this as well. They have a right to expect that if they opt for training, what they are paying for meets some level of industry expectations. If nothing else, this is a consumer protection issue.

And of course there are certain schools that might love to hear that training is mandatory, but may not be quite so happy about having the standard of training determined and enforced by a third party.

It's clear that mandatory entry-level training for truck drivers is a complicated issue and there are lots of reasons why it hasn't happened – yet.

In most jurisdictions, it is seen as a basic right of an individual to challenge the test for a licence. If you fail, there's always the do-over, the only cost being the additional fees for re-testing.

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training standards for truck drivers a few years back and during the consultations there was a good deal of talk about which existing programs were suitable as models that could be adopted for potential standards.

But the key question of how to enforce mandatory training standards couldn't be answered because there were (are) not enough resources within the various ministries to ensure meaningful oversight.

In fact, at one point, it was suggested that any such program could be based on voluntary – rather than mandatory – training standards. I'll leave it for you to think about how well that might work.

Our American friends are struggling with the same question. Back in 2007, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration issued a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) that proposed mandatory entry-level driver training standards for individuals applying for a commercial driver's licence to operate in interstate commerce. They withdrew that NPRM in September 2013 and gave three reasons for doing so:

- During the public hearings there were 'substantive issues' raised which led the agency to conclude that it would be inappropriate to move forward with a final rule based on the proposal;

- Since the NPRM was published, FMCSA received statutory direction on the issue of entry-level driver training from Congress via the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) reauthorization legislation;

- And the agency tasked its Motor Carrier Safety Advisory Committee (MCSAC) to provide ideas the agency should consider in implementing the MAP-21 requirements.

Apparently there was a lot of support during the hearings for the concept of entry-level training, but differing views on some of the key provisions of the proposal.

For example, some felt that the training should be performance based – ie., once the student demonstrates the ability to do a task, they move on to the next one. Others wanted a standard that included a minimum number of hours of training, and there was disagreement as to the number of hours of behind-the-wheel training that should be required.

The overriding question remains: what does the industry really want in the way of training and what is it willing to pay for?

During its time, CTHRC developed the Earning Your Wheels program at the request of segments of the industry that thought a high-level training program would be readily adopted. The program is there but has not been widely used, the most common argument being that it is too expensive. That's the first contradiction. You can't buy a Cadillac if you're only willing to pay for a Chevette.

If a student is willing to pay a little extra for top level training, it's reasonable that they should expect to

move into a job that pays enough to offset the expense of that training; not many carriers think that way when it comes to drivers. That's the second contradiction.

And if, at some point, there was agreement on mandatory training and its component parts, it would raise even more questions such as who should pay?; should it be subsidized?; which students would qualify for a subsidy or a loan?; should it be considered an apprenticeship program?; and how much bureaucracy would we need to manage the whole thing to the results that we are looking for? The road to mandatory entry-level training consists of many hurdles. The first is agreeing that we need it. □

– *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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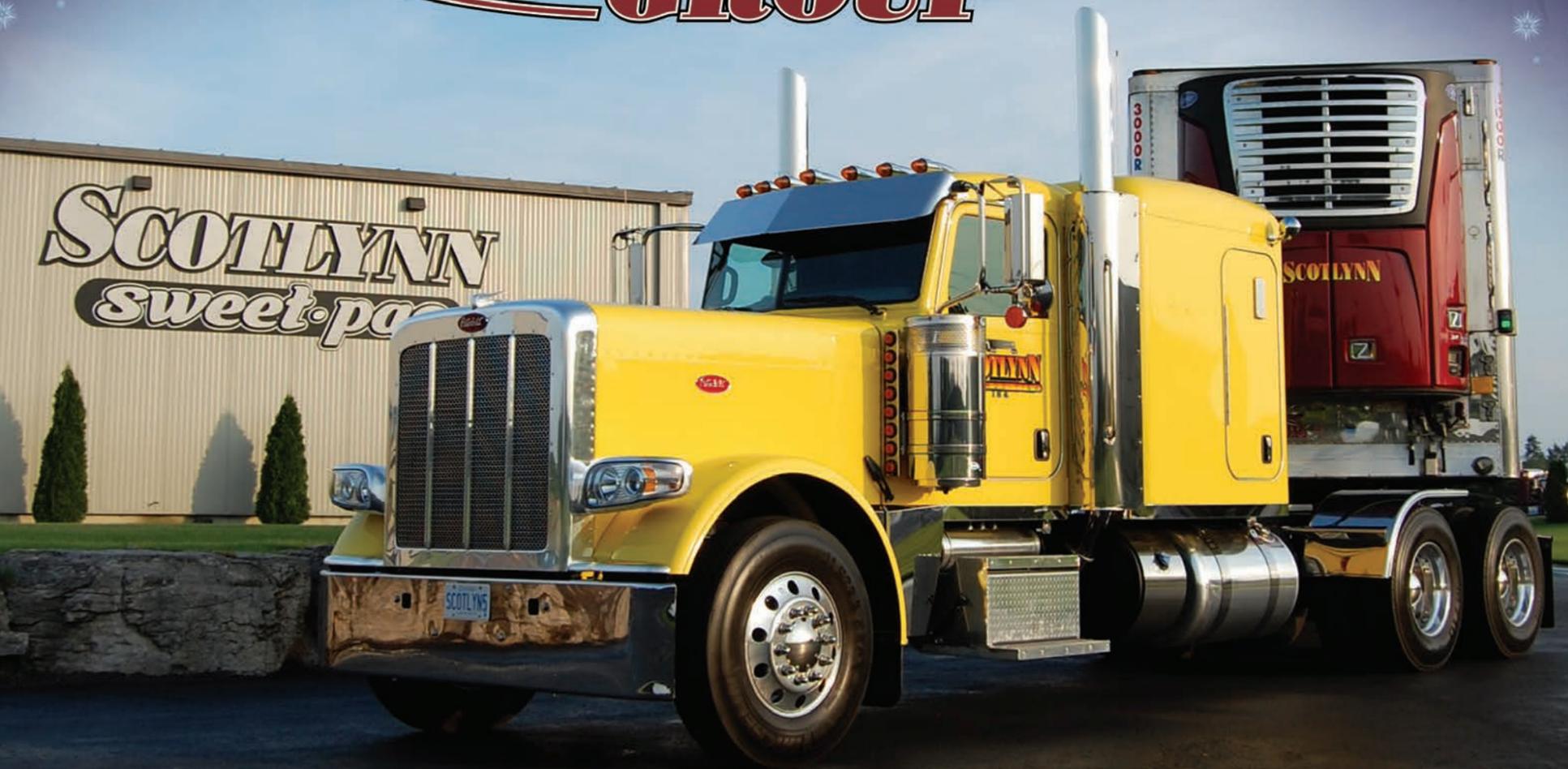


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INDUSTRY

Clearing the air on emissions tampering

There will always be folks who think that for every rule there is an exception – and unfortunately, there’s no shortage of misguided people willing to demonstrate it.

You’ve no doubt seen or heard about the advertisements that are out there in print and cyberspace from repair/maintenance shops offering to “service” your truck in order to enhance its fuel economy. While the ad might not explicitly state it, most people know what we’re talking about here – tampering with the truck’s emissions controls.

It’s not a new problem, but those marketing such services have become more brazen in recent years as the new EPA-mandated smog-free engines came on stream and it became clear that the federal and provincial governments in Canada were ill-equipped to deal with the situation.

While increased fuel economy is a good thing (it reduces greenhouse gases too) tampering with a truck’s mandated emissions control devices is not. At its March 2012 meeting, the CTA Board of Directors called for action to put an end to the practice. CTA followed up with governments in writing and has held various meetings with the federal ministers and departments of environment, natural resources and transport, as well as the Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators (CCMTA). A number of the provincial associations took similar action with their provincial governments and agencies.

Unfortunately, what this launched was another round of that great Canadian pastime: political/bureaucratic ping-pong between the various departments and the federal and provincial governments. Whereas in the US, legislative and enforcement authority for tampering rests squarely with the Environmental Protection Agency (which, by the way, has been known to slap down hundreds of thousands of dollars in fines on companies that provide emission control-defeating devices), Environment Canada contends that it has no authority under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act (CEPA) or any other legislation to deal with tampering. Its authority ends at the retail sale of the equipment. The department contends the authority to prevent tampering rests with the provinces. You know how this song goes.

The response from the provinces has been lukewarm at best. This is clearly not an issue most have given much thought to. Many provinces do not even have the legal authority to lay charges against garages for environmental tampering. Nor do they (as a collective) seem overly excited about allocating resources to the problem.

The province’s road enforcement resources are focused on safety issues, not environmental issues – as they very well should be. Besides, it is difficult at roadside for an inspector to identify modifications that even skilled diesel mechanics would be challenged to uncover.

The CCMTA is examining the inclusion of an inspection for tampering as part of the PMVI standards



Industry Issues

DAVID BRADLEY

re-vamp currently under development. So there is some hope/progress, although it appears that not all provinces support including a tampering element in the PMVI, which is a vehicle safety inspection.

Meanwhile, the problem is not going away. For example, provincial environmental inspectors in the British Columbia Lower Mainland recently conducted emissions tests of about 12,000 trucks. Although they were not specifically looking for evidence of tampering, the results could lead one to the conclusion that tampering is a serious problem: 20% of all

model year 2010 and newer trucks tested were found to be high emitters using standard-based cut-points. While a decline in the maintenance standards of vehicles would also be a contributing factor, it is hard not to suspect that tampering is playing a role with results like this.

At its October 2013 meeting, the CTA board took stock of the situation and reaffirmed its position that tampering with emissions controls is a serious matter that not only undermines the environmental performance of the trucking industry, but also creates an unlevel competitive playing field. The board repeated its position that targeted enforcement of the people undertaking the tampering – the garages, repair shops and service centres – is where governments should be focusing their efforts and resources.

In addition, it is recommended the Government of Canada introduce an amendment to the CEPA that would empower Environment Canada to fine/sanction garages and fleets engaged in environmental tampering. The CTA board further recommends that the Canadian Council of Environmental Ministers ensure that all provinces have legislation in place to take action against those that tamper with the emissions equipment on heavy trucks. This would give Canada’s truck environmental laws some real teeth as well as bolster governments’ credibility as stewards of the environment. From the very start, the trucking industry has been a leader in meeting its environmental responsibilities. Let’s not let a few opportunists spoil that unmatched reputation. □

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



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Bees produce honey in a wide range of colours: white, amber, red, brown and almost black, depending on which flower's nectar was used. There are more than 300 unique kinds of honey in North America. The most common honeys available come from clover, alfalfa, heather and acacia flowers, thyme and/or lavender. In general, lighter coloured honeys are milder in flavour, while darker honeys have a more robust flavour.

People have been taking advantage of this natural sweetener since ancient times. Although not dense in nutrients, honey offers some nutritional value, unlike refined white sugar. Honey contains Vitamin B2, Vitamin B6, iron and manganese.

Honey is not just a natural sweetener, though. Historically, people have

Preventive Maintenance

KAREN BOWEN



successfully used honey to treat a variety of ailments due to its antiseptic and antibacterial properties, which have only recently been chemically explained. Different honeys have different healing properties.

Honey is considered safe for everyone except infants less than one year of age. Since their immature digestive systems cannot fight the Clostridium botulinum spore, which is often found in honey, infants are susceptible to botulism poisoning.

If used to treat illness, honey is considered an alternative medicine. Medical grade honey is recommended for treating medical conditions, since it has been filtered and sterilized, making it free of impurities. In contrast, ordinary honey sold in grocery stores may contain pollen, bacterial spores, and other impurities.

When buying medicinal honeys, look for RevamilH (RS) honey and medical-grade manuka honey. RS honey is produced in the Netherlands in a controlled greenhouse environment. Manuka honey is produced from bees that feed on the manuka bush from New Zealand and Australia. Both types of medicinal honeys are effective in fighting infections in

Continued on page 45

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HEALTH

Using honey as a healer

Continued from page 43
wounds as described below.

The chemicals in diluted honey create hydrogen peroxide (H₂O₂), a natural antibacterial, when in an oxygen-available environment. Diluted honey slowly releases the enzyme glucose oxidase, which chemically reacts with external oxygen to form hydrogen peroxide (H₂O₂). For this reaction to occur, both external oxygen and water must be present; for this reason, honey is not as effective under sealed dressings or within the body.

Undiluted honey hinders the growth of microorganism. Since honey is composed of two monosaccharides that have very low water activity, when its few water molecules become associated with its sugar molecules, the environment becomes too dry to support microorganism growth.

As well, a protein found in the royal jelly bees produce to feed their queen, bee defensin-1, kills many antibiotic-resistant bacteria. Another potent antibacterial, methylglyoxal (MGO), is found in especially high levels in manuka honey. With these antibacterial qualities, honey can be useful for a variety of conditions.

Typically, honey is excellent for treating wounds. It promotes rapid healing by deodorizing and debriding dead tissue. In particular, honey works well for wounds that take a long time to heal, such as mild to moderate burns, postoperative wounds and chronic ulcers, particularly for diabetics who are unable to use topi-

cal antibiotics. The packaged sterile dressings containing medical grade honey to treat wounds and burns are quite versatile. They can be applied on wounds in all stages of healing – wounds that are dry or wet with blood and/or lymph. You can use honey to maintain your skin's quality. As a skin soother, honey can be found in natural lotions and lip balms, often paired beeswax. Honey's antibacterial activity can be effective for treating mild acne. A simple and gentle, natural facial scrub can be created by just combining oatmeal, water and honey.

Ingested, honey is easily absorbed and quickly used to boost your immune system, aid digestion, soothe a sore throat and even stop a cough. A study showed that two teaspoons of honey before bed can stop a cough as effectively as typical dose of dextromethorphan, an over-the-counter cough suppressant.

Eating honey can also prevent periodontal disease, including gingivitis, since it reduces the buildup of plaque. Honey soothes the digestive tract by reducing inflammation. Manuka honey is recommended to treat inflammation of the esophagus caused by chemotherapy treatments. Becoming healthier with honey – that's a sweet deal. No wonder honey is considered the nectar of the gods. □

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

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HEALTH

Telltale signs of TMJ

The temporomandibular joint (TMJ) is the hinge-like joint that connects the jaw bone to the skull. It is located directly in front of the ear.

TMJ injuries or disorders can

cause significant pain and discomfort in the jaw joint as well as the surrounding soft tissues.

In many cases, it is difficult to pinpoint the exact cause of a TMJ disorder. Physical injury to

the jaw such as those which occur during sports or a car accident are obvious causes. However, more subtle causes such as habitual teeth clenching or grinding are much harder to identify.

Dental problems and arthritis can also contribute to TMJ problems.

The signs and symptoms of TMJ disorders are relatively simple to

recognize. In most cases pain or tenderness of the jaw will be experienced. In addition, pain and discomfort around the ear may be present.

In severe cases, pain can radiate into the face or head. Mechanical signs such as difficulty or pain while chewing or joint locking are an indication there is a problem with the TMJ.

The good news is that most TMJ disorders will resolve on their own without treatment.

However, it is important to seek medical attention if the pain persists for a long period of time or if you are unable to open or close your jaw.

TMJ disorders are usually diagnosed following a detailed history and physical examination. If required, x-rays or a CT scan will be performed to better visualize the teeth and jaw joint.

If treatment is required, your health professional will discuss the different options available. Pain-relieving medication is usually the first line of defence and is used to control the discomfort associated with TMJ disorders. Muscle relaxants may be prescribed for short-term use to help relieve muscle spasms.

If the cause is due to chronic teeth clenching, a sedative medication may be helpful.

An oral splint or bite plate is a treatment that may be suggested by your dentist in order to prevent teeth clenching during sleep.



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Back behind the wheel



DR. CHRIS SINGH

Physical therapy treatments which include ultrasound and stretching exercises may also be beneficial. In very severe or resistant cases of TMJ disorders, corticosteroid injection or even surgery may be required.

However, all other forms of treatment should be exhausted before attempting these more invasive treatments.

There has been some evidence that alternative forms of treatment such as acupuncture and relaxation therapy may be effective in the treatment of TMJ disorders.

However, further research is necessary to confirm their effectiveness. It is important to inform your primary health care professional before starting any alternative treatments.

Although it is not possible to completely prevent TMJ disorders from occurring, here are a few helpful tips to keep in mind which will greatly reduce your chances of developing one.

First of all, try to be more conscious about your stress- or tension-related behaviours.

For example, avoid clenching and grinding your teeth or chewing on hard objects like pens.

I recently treated a driver that would have jaw pain and headaches every time he had a delivery in Toronto. As it turns out, he would grind his teeth whenever he sat in Toronto traffic.

By becoming aware of this fact, he was able to catch himself in the act and thus prevent any further pain.

Another tip is to reduce the amount of strain on your jaw muscles by eating softer foods and avoid sticky or chewy foods like toffee or gum. Stretching exercises and gentle massage can also relieve muscle tension.

So next time you are stuck in a traffic jam, keep these simple tips in mind. Until next month, drive safely! □

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

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OPINION

The actions of owner/operators can have big impact on small carriers

Any regular readers of this column might think there is very little about this industry that I wouldn't like to see changed. Unfortunately, you'd usually be right. What has me bent out of shape this month is something that a lot of small carriers can relate to, or possibly will be able to in the future. Large carriers, since most have a lawyer on retainer or are located near large cities, won't give my griping much thought.

My first concern is the way liabilities are assessed by various transportation departments. Small or large carriers usually follow similar due diligence with our procedural requirements. Drivers and owner/operators are instructed on the necessity of proper pre-trip procedures, hours-of-service regulations, load securement regulations, and company maintenance policies.



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This should create an iron-tight atmosphere, with no gray areas related to the proper and expected way to operate. The problem, as it unfortunately came to my attention a year ago, is that the driver or owner/op may agree to your conditions – even sign-off on official policy – then totally ignore it. This problem became obvious to me while paying legal fees to fight multiple charges – all caused by negligence or laziness – that were accumulated by an owner/operator.

There needs to be a way of conducting routine commercial vehicle enforcement without the carrier being

responsible for actions of the driver that are unapproved or beyond our control. Why should the carrier be responsible when an owner/operator truck is found with mechanical issues that should have been detected during the pre-trip, or when the driver neglected to throw on a couple more straps, or install enough load bars?

If I have provided the driver with our expectations and procedures, and he chooses to ignore them, why does *my* record take the hit? If I need to send a swamper with each truck to watch over their shoulder and to babysit during pre-trip or load securement, doesn't it defeat the purpose of having the driver in the first place? I can have a company mechanic check over a broker truck today, then have it written up tomorrow for a new mechanical fault that should have been detected.

It's no secret that the Ministry of Transport in Ontario has a quota to fail a percentage of inspected trucks. I would like to believe that the overwhelming majority of enforcement personnel are highly trained, qualified professionals, with a good measure of common sense. However, in any profession, there are always people who are not as qualified and professional as they should be, or in this case, a little too fond of the authority of a badge. These instances will be a tiny minority, but I think we've all encountered the individual within their ranks who proves it exists. Although the US CSA system now assigns fault to the driver where necessary, I'm still not pleased that a safe, compliant trucking company can have a spotless safety record sullied by the actions of others, beyond our control.

Have you ever been chased down the highway by an enforcement officer, lights flashing, or approached in a parking lot or rest area for a "random" inspection? In what other line of work can you be chased down for no apparent reason, while obeying the law?

Have you ever been pulled over in your car while following the rules, for a routine interview? Unlikely. Random RIDE checks, like temporary rest area inspection sites, are an accepted form of enforcement, but I take issue with the professionalism, or even legality, of pursuing a commercial vehicle for an inspection for which it hasn't shown any indication an inspection is necessary. Further, why are there enforcement officers that operate on the premise that every driver or vehicle is guilty of something? I can imagine that there are officers who have never inspected a vehicle without "finding" something.

My next issue is related to the administration of the IRP system. Your province may be different, but here in Ontario, IRP offices are located in somewhat large cities, while most small carriers are not. To get plates, we need to fax our paperwork to an IRP office, then present the originals to the office, which is 80-120 miles away, at an appointed date.

Why can't we present our paperwork to our local Service Ontario office, where they can confirm originality, and forward copies to an IRP office, then report back to the local office the following day with payment for our new registrations? With available technology, why should every carrier invest the time and travel the current system requires? In our case, my wife is dispatcher, manager, HR manager, and completes untold tasks I likely don't even know about. When she has to invest half a day just to pick up plates, it puts a noticeable dent in the operation.

If we can simplify and streamline this industry without sacrificing proper procedures and safety, I think it would just be a sensible thing to do. Simplification, reduced expense, and a transparent enforcement system benefits everyone, which to me, makes it worth considering. □

– Bill Cameron and his wife Nancy currently own and operate Parks Transportation, a four-truck flatdeck trucking company. Bill can be reached at williamcameron.bc@gmail.com.

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Meet Daimler Trucks' new global boss

For Dr. Wolfgang Bernhard, it's all about product

By James Menzies

ORLANDO, Fla. – Dr. Wolfgang Bernhard, the head of Daimler Trucks globally, was introduced to the North American trade press during a roundtable discussion held at the American Trucking Associations' Management Conference & Exhibition. Bernhard was appointed to his new position in April. He emphasized there will continue to be a strong product focus from Daimler Trucks under his watch. Bernhard already has obtained his European commercial driver's licence, and he will repeat the process in the US so that he can drive the vehicles offered by Daimler and its competitors.

"I think it's very important to know the business from the ground up," Bernhard said. "You need to know what your customers are sitting in."

Bernhard has spent his first few months on the job travelling the world to get up to speed on Daimler's global truck operations.

"I'm deeply impressed with what I've seen," he said.

Bernhard said he's fortunate to be taking the reins at a time when Daimler boasts its "strongest truck portfolio" in company history. In the US, Daimler is enjoying Class 8 market share of nearly 40%, driven largely by the Freightliner Cascadia Evolution, for which Daimler has received 20,000 orders. The Detroit DT12 automated transmission is also driving demand for Daimler's products. Martin Daum, president and CEO of Daimler Trucks North America, said the company has already received 3,600 orders for trucks with the DT12, and it has only been offered since April with the DD15 and since September behind the DD13. Production of that transmission will be brought to the US in 2015, and Daum said it's now expected that there'll be enough demand for the product here that no, or very few, units will be exported to other markets.

Daimler's North American Class 8 market share through September is up 5.4% compared to a year ago.

"Business, I'd say, is going well," Bernhard said.

In North America, 60% of Daimler's orders come from its top 30 customers. The company has been collaborating closely with these customers on new product developments. As an example, Bernhard spoke of a project with Nussbaum that resulted in a 6x2 drive configuration with direct drive transmission that improved fuel economy by 20%. In another example, Freightliner worked with Saddle Creek Transportation to develop a natural gas-powered Cascadia with aerodynamic fairings that will improve range to about 700 miles. Saddle Creek has ordered 10 of these trucks.

Still, natural gas is one area where Daimler executives are dissatisfied with their current position – if you can be dissatisfied with a 45% share of the market.

Daum acknowledged the brand is lacking a 15L natural gas engine and that it needs to broaden its product range.

"It's a good business, but it could be a far better business," he said. "We'll focus on that more in the future to come up with even better solutions."

Daimler has plenty of reason to be satisfied with its North American business as a whole. It boasts the industry's top market share in the US Class 8, US Classes 6/7, Canadian Classes 6-8 and NAFTA Classes 6-8 segments. However, Bernhard said the truck maker would like to see a more stable political environment in Washington.

"It is in our industry's best interest that Washington finds a way to provide a stable budgetary climate," Bernhard said. "Not just brief increments (of stability) with another looming crisis over the horizon. The

US economy is too important to the rest of the world to be in a continued state of uncertainty."

Bernhard would also like to see global emissions rules be harmonized. The NOx and particulate matter reductions in most of the developed world have been fairly consistent, yet Bernhard said there are subtle differences between the rules, which complicate compliance as a global manufacturer.

"We all need to park our regulatory egos in the loading dock," he said. "Standardization would strengthen our competitiveness."

As for future emissions standards, Bernhard feels that instead of bringing in more stringent rules for new vehicles, that there should be a greater emphasis on removing old trucks from the highways. Only 40% of the trucks in service today are of an

EPA04 or newer vintage.

"You could reduce NOx by 60% if you just replaced all the old trucks with new trucks and you could reduce particulate matter by 99%," Bernhard said, adding that repealing the federal excise tax on heavy-duty trucks would be one way Washington could encourage the removal of older vehicles from the industry.

Looking ahead to 2014, Daum predicted truck demand will be slightly better than it was this year. However, a return to boom times for truck makers isn't expected until 2015 at the earliest.

For Daimler itself, Daum laid out several priorities for the next year. They include: maintaining a "dominant market position"; continuing to develop the Cascadia Evolution for ever greater fuel economy; building upon the recently announced Detroit Connect telematics division; and boosting Western Star's presence in the market. □



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Volvo optimizes regional haul tractors

GREENSBORO, N.C. – Volvo has introduced an Optimized Series of regional haul tractors, which the company says offer improved fuel efficiency and payload.

The series includes eight models intended for regional tanker, bulk haul, refrigerated, dry van or flat-bed applications. The line also includes a mid-roof design for the VNM 430 and VNL 430 sleepers, providing additional headroom.

“In their constant quest for more fuel-efficient trucks, our customers are looking at every part of the fuel efficiency equation and that includes tractor weight,” said Goran Nyberg, president of Volvo Trucks North American Sales and Marketing. “For our customers, it’s all about the bottom line, and our Optimized Series delivers even greater value of ownership without compromising on features or performance.”

“The Optimized Series was born from our close relationships with motor carriers and a data-driven understanding of the optimum specifications for their intended purposes,” added Chris Stadler, Volvo Trucks product manager.

The new line includes: the VNM 200 and VNL 300 day cabs; the VNM4 30 and VNL 430 flat-top sleepers; the VNM 430 and VNL 430 mid-roof sleepers; and the VNM 630 and VNL 630 mid-roof sleepers.

The day cabs, 430 sleepers and VNM 630 feature a Volvo D11 engine with 405 hp and 1,550 lb.-ft. of torque, as well as the Volvo I-Shift automated manual transmission as standard equipment. The VNL 630 comes with a D13 engine featuring 435 hp and 1,750 lb.-ft. Each of the models comes with an aluminum fifth wheel, Michelin wide-base tires, aluminum wheels, and a 6x2 tandem rear axle configuration with rear tax axle, as well as Volvo’s optimized air suspension rated at up to 38,000 lbs. □

Mack to build axles in Hagerstown

HAGERSTOWN, Md. – Mack has announced it will bring production of its drive axles and carrier housings to the company’s Hagerstown, Md. plant.

The move is part of a \$30-million investment in the plant, which already produces all Mack engines and transmissions. Heavy-duty drive axles will be assembled in Hagerstown, and Mack carrier housings will be machined there, with the transition expected to be completed in 2015. “Coming on the heels of the \$8-million investment that brought production of the mDrive transmission to Hagerstown last year, this decision is another indication of our commitment to excellence in integrated powertrain design and manufacturing,” said John Walsh, Mack vice-president, marketing.

Mack also plans to upgrade the engine assembly process and centralize its aftermarket core warehousing operations. □

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Navistar launches open architecture remote diagnostics program

By James Menzies

ORLANDO, Fla. – Navistar has announced an open architecture remote diagnostics program that works with a fleets' existing telematics provider and covers all makes of vehicles. The OnCommand Connection program was demonstrated during the American Trucking Associations Management Conference & Exhibition. It is currently being field-tested in preparation for a January launch.

"By partnering with our customers' existing telematics providers, we can pull diagnostics-related data to create easy to understand vehicle health reports," said Nadine Haupt, director of powertrain product marketing. "The visibility into the operational health of the vehicle empowers customers to understand the severity of vehicle issues and determine the appropriate actions – ultimately leading to increased uptime."

Fleet owners or service managers are able to view their vehicles through a proprietary portal. There, they can identify fault codes and determine the severity of a situation. The program can direct the operator to the nearest dealer location – including competitor dealerships if the vehicle is not an International. Haupt described the Navistar program as being more "fleet-centric" than existing remote diagnostics

programs in the market.

So far, the system has been approved for use with Omnitracs, PeopleNet, Teletrac, GeoTab, XRS Corp., CyntrX and Pedigree technologies, which provide telematics services to the vast majority of International truck customers.

When a problem with a vehicle is identified, the program creates a case file for the vehicle. Included in this file is an easy to understand description of what needs to be done, as well as links to additional reference material.

Hirschbach Motor Lines is currently testing OnCommand Connection.

"Based on my vehicle's location, fault severity and load schedule, Navistar's OnCommand Connection helps me prioritize how and where to implement needed repairs and maintenance," said Jim Coffren, vice-president of fleet management for Hirschbach Motor Lines. "Before my vehicle reaches the dealership, I have already received a diagnosis and a recommended solution, which allows me to make better decisions."

OnCommand Connection will initially monitor fault codes generated by the engine, but can be expanded in time to include the transmission, body controllers and other components. □

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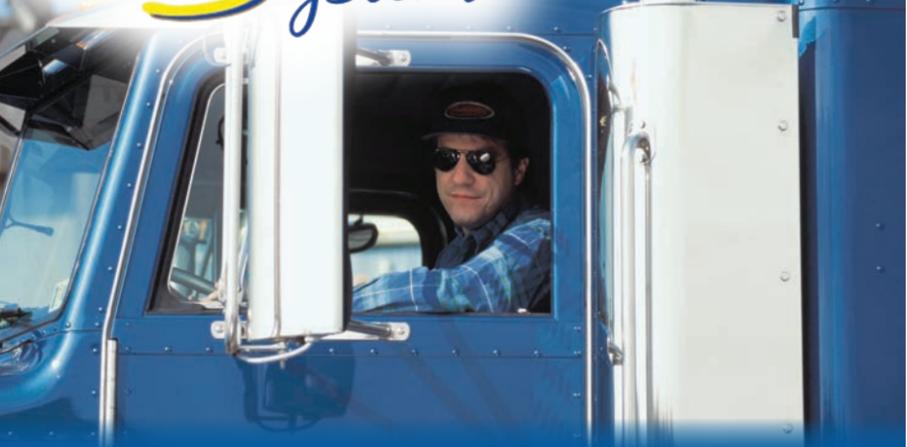
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OEM/DEALER NEWS

Utility provides first look at proprietary trailer manufacturing processes

By James Menzies

CLEARFIELD, Utah – Utility Trailer bills itself as the longest running, privately owned trailer manufacturing company in the US, and next year will celebrate its 100th anniversary. The company claims to be the largest producer of refrigerated van trailers, which are produced at Utility's Marion, Va. and Clearfield, Utah facilities.

Utility has a number of proprietary production processes it says result in a better-built, more efficient refrigerated trailer. Recently, Utility allowed a small group of truck journalists to

tour its Clearfield plant, where these highly guarded manufacturing secrets were put on display for the very first time. We followed up the visit with an interview with Craig Bennett, senior vice-president of sales and marketing with Utility, to discuss these processes and other trailer industry trends.

TN: Craig, it seems trailer order activity has been up and down throughout the year, with no real sustained increases in demand. How would you characterize the current state of the industry for Utility, and for the trailer

industry in general?

Bennett: The market generally gets softer seasonally in late summer, then a little stronger in the fall. We had a typical seasonal slowdown in the late summer, July and August, and it got better in September and a little better in October, but it's not as good as we'd like to see it and it's not as good as we were hoping it would be.

I would classify it as okay. In the trailer industry, we are all operating at very high production output levels and it's always challenging to maintain those levels with new order intake, once you get the crews built up. That's the challenge we all have. A 240,000-250,000 trailer year would be a good year by any measure – not a great year, but a good year – and that's probably where we're at. We don't see that changing a lot.

There's a lot of activity, with people looking at stuff going into next year, but with so much uncertainty relative to the health care law, and new regulations that face trucking, for-hire carriers especially are challenged in their ability to make new equipment acquisitions. They're having difficulty paying for all the new higher-priced trucks and higher-priced refrigeration units. Even the trailers cost a little bit more – not a lot – but passing the costs along in an environment like we have today, where we're only growing at 1-2% GDP, is difficult.

TN: One of the techniques you showed us at the plant is a dipping technique, in which the entire coupler assembly is immersed into a hot liquid to provide a complete coating that protects against corrosion. I know it's a proprietary process, but coupler corrosion is a big issue for us in Canada. How much can you tell me about the benefits of this process?

Bennett: Before we used this process – this material, this heat and the dipping process to get 100% coverage inside and outside of that assembly – upper couplers would last, in the Midwest or Canada, typically seven to eight years and then they would rust out.

Since we started this process, they basically don't rust out anymore. The life is more than double – somewhere in the neighbourhood of 18-20 years or more – depending on the environment they're exposed to. That weak spot in the trailer has been eliminated in our trailer. That's an expensive fix when it used to rust out, as you can imagine. You can still beat them up structurally – bang them up, overload them, hit them with a yard jockey – but they don't rust out like they used to.

TN: Another unique manufacturing process you demonstrated was the way Utility insulates the entire trailer, once it has been fully assembled. What is unique about this process and why do you do it this way?

Bennett: You get a better-insulated product, ultimately. Instead of building the sidewalls foamed and a floor that's foamed and a roof assembly that's foamed and bringing them all together and sealing up 53-ft.-long joints from the floor to the wall on both sides and the roof to the wall and the front wall to the sides, rather than having to try to seal all those things up, we let the foam do that in our process.

We build the whole shell, as you saw, the complete body, and then inject the foam using a mandrel process. We inject that foam in there so it goes around all the corners. It seals it up and expands to six times its original size. We build our box very tight with sealer tape, overlapping joints, etc., to make sure the foam doesn't squirt out on the ground, so we have a complete 360-degree envelope of foam all around the product that prevents moisture entry and it prevents air loss, which is money going down the drain.

It just makes a better product. We chose not to go away from that foam mandrel process in favour of a panel process, which all our competitors have done. The reason they have done it is it's a more production-friendly system, but you sacrifice the quality of the finished product, which we've chosen not to do.

TN: You've also made some changes to the floor design. Tell me about those.

Bennett: With the 3000R reefer, we eliminated the floor screws that attach the aluminum floor to the wood pillar underneath. Those were always the spots where the floor would wear out. As the floor pumps up and down and as it flexes going down the road, that's the area that would always wear out and then you get moisture penetration and corrosion.

We created a floor clipping system, where the aluminum top floor surface snaps into those clips you saw, so there is no screw that goes through the aluminum top surface. All the screws are underneath in those clips, and there are two of them where there used to be one that went all the way through the floor. So the stresses have been cut in half and we have not had those things wear out, they just last and last.

We eliminated the moisture penetration points of the floor screws, which everyone else in the industry still has, and we have the clipping, which cuts the stresses in half because there are two screws where there used

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to be one, but they are all underneath.

TN: During the tour, we saw several finished trailers, decaled up and ready to roll. You provide decaling on-site. How important is that to the customer?

Bennett: It's really important. Our philosophy is, we want to deliver a road-ready trailer. We want the trailer to be able to go into service and haul freight when it leaves our factory doors. So we have a partnership with an installer who works with their people at all our factories every day. We make space available for them to do that. By doing that, customers don't only have their trailer decals finished and installed properly, we do it to a very high quality because we have the same people there every day and they are experts in what they do.

TN: How many customers take advantage of that option?

Bennett: I'd say we put the decals on about 30% of the vans and reefers. We also install refrigeration units, liftgates, walk ramps, toolboxes, load temperature monitoring devices and all types of accessories so the trailer is ready to go haul freight when it leaves the factory. The trailer doesn't have to be shipped from our place to a decal location to a refrigeration unit location to a liftgate location. That can take a lot of time and be costly to the customer.

TN: There's a lot of customization that I saw taking place at the plant. What trends are you seeing in terms of options customers are looking for today that maybe wasn't on their radar a few years ago?

Bennett: More and more tire inflation systems, more single tires, more refrigerated, multi-compartment food service-type trailers. We have a lot more accessories of all types.

All types of ramps, slide-in ladders that go underneath the floor cavity. And a lot of temperature monitoring devices, because with the Food Safety Act that's coming in the US, truckers are going to have to monitor the cargo temperature from beginning to end and prove the temperature was held at proper set-points while it was in



TEMP CHECK: A thermal inspection is done on a new Utility refrigerated trailer.

their possession.

There are more disc brakes being sold, even though they're a pretty costly item. More aerodynamic devices, side skirts and trailer tails.

TN: As far as the skirts go, are you seeing increasing demand for skirts or has it leveled off?

Bennett: I think it's growing. California is driving it in the west. The economics of it make sense if you're

in long-haul, running 60-plus mph. If you're running a city operation, it doesn't make sense. I think we're going to see a lot more of that, because fuel prices are going to remain fairly high.

In an effort to attract owner/operators, some fleets are putting side skirts on their trailers because the O/O pays the fuel bill and if they can lower his cost of operation, it makes the driver want to drive for

them more than somebody else.

TN: Besides spec'ing aerodynamic devices, what can customers do to lower their cost of operation as it relates to trailers?

Bennett: If it's a refrigerated trailer, you want to buy a good tight box so you don't leak a lot of air and run the diesel fuel bill up. I think the single tires is a big thing, you get better fuel economy with single tires, typically. In general, you want to spec' the trailer for the type of freight it's going to be hauling. If you're beating up your floors or sidewalls, additional wear bands, stronger wear bands, stronger sidewall linings, thicker floors. With the price of trucks and trailers these days, people want their equipment to last longer. They want it to live longer so there's more of a move towards higher-spec' items. Even if it's a little bit heavier and a little bit more costly in the short run, if it lives an extra two to three years, they've made money in the long run. □

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ROAD TEST

A tough act to follow

As the eventual successor to the time-tested T800, the Kenworth T880 has big treads to fill. Is it up to the challenge?

By James Menzies

When Kenworth announced in March the introduction of the T880, my initial reaction was 'But why?' Kenworth has, in its T800, one of the longest-running and most successful vocational trucks on offer.

It has served both the truck maker and the industry well for 26 years, over which time more than a quarter million have been placed into service and, more impressively, an estimated 80% of them continue to be operated.

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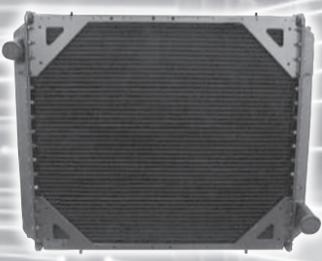
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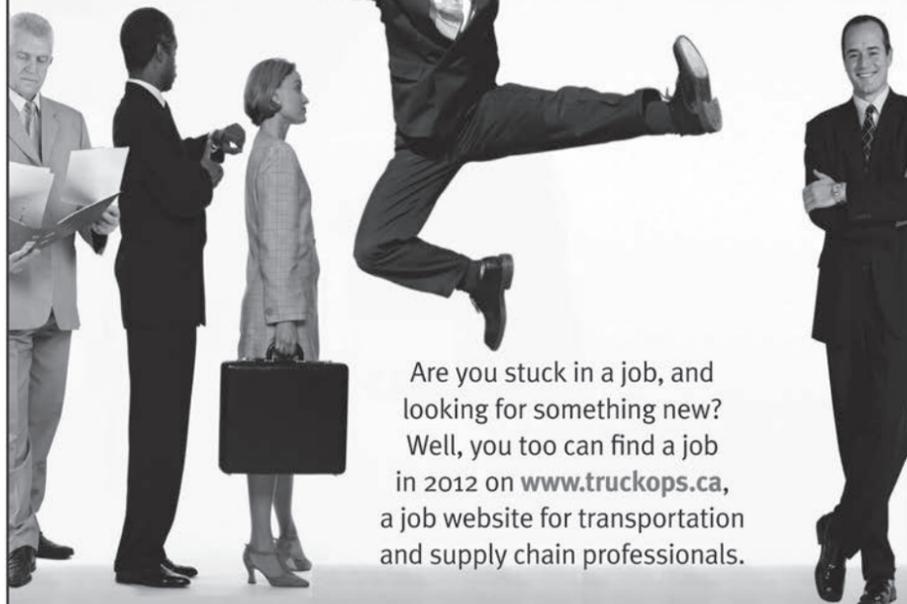
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'The T8 ain't broke,' I felt then, 'so why fix it?' In late October, I finally had an opportunity to drive the T880, which will eventually replace the time-tested T800. To be clear, the T800 isn't going anywhere for a while. It's such a diverse truck, used for so many different things, that it will take some time for the T880 to be configured to fit every application in which the T800 currently performs. So as to not leave any holes in its coverage, Kenworth will keep both models in the lineup for as long as it takes for customers to become comfortable with the T880 and to stop asking for the T800.

This could take a while, because the T800 has many loyal fans, especially here in Canada. I count myself among them. And it was with that mindset that I stepped into a T880 dump truck just outside the Kenworth plant in Chillicothe, Ohio on Oct. 25. This truck was an Ohio spec' dump truck with three lift axles, a 24-ft. aluminum end-dump body, a Paccar MX-13 engine and Eaton UltraShift Plus automated manual transmission. The engine produced 485 hp and 1,650 lb.-ft. of torque and the truck was equipped with air disc brakes at every position.

The truck was set up to comply with Ohio bridge law requirements, so the T880 you'll find on dealer lots in Canada will look different. The cab, however, will not. The first thing I noticed upon climbing into the T880 is that the cab is noticeably larger, yet the dash is laid out intelligently so that I never found myself reaching for switches or controls. The bumper-to-back-of-cab (BBC) measurement has been retained at 122.5 inches (a short-hood version with 116.5-inch BBC is also available), but the ceiling is a full two inches higher. Things like headache racks may have to be adjusted accordingly, but upfitters shouldn't have any trouble attaching bodies to the larger cab.

Alan Fennimore, Kenworth vocational marketing manager, told me the new cab platform was designed from the inside out, and proof of this can be found all over the place. Exploring the new cab was like going on an Easter egg hunt; small treats could be found in the most unlikely of places. For example, a coat hook has been placed on the rear wall, a magnet replaces the traditional, breakage-prone sun visor hook over the driver's side window and armrests are built into the doors at just the right height. These are small things that collectively provide a more driver-friendly work environment. Small things shouldn't be underestimated, because they do contribute to a more comfortable, satisfied driver and a happy driver is a safer driver, or so goes the theory.

Speaking of safety, the most obvious and immediate upgrade as seen from the driver's seat is improved visibility. The view from behind the wheel of the T800 was good, but the view from the T880 is even better. A new panoramic windshield and a seemingly sloper hood combine to provide excellent forward visibility. The cowl-mounted side mirrors have even been lowered slightly, to afford greater visibility over top of them, which will provide a better view of the job site, with no com-

promise in rearward visibility along the sides of the truck.

The T880 has an automotive-inspired dash, which is modern looking and easy to clean. This seems to be a trend in the industry and a welcomed one as far as I'm concerned; I'm no fan of the plastic wood interiors that were the norm for so long.

Having familiarized myself with the interior of the T880, and replaced my cynical frown with a cautious smile, I headed out on the highway for a 40-minute drive on area roads. What really leapt out on the road was the quiet ride of the T880. Paccar would like you to believe this is attributable to its MX-13 engine, and there could be some truth to that. But all diesel engines have gotten quieter, and my hearing isn't supersonic, so I can't tell you for certain the MX is any quieter than a Cummins without driving them back-to-back.

But more impressive to me than the quietness of the engine was the complete lack of wind and road noise audible in the cab. I asked Fennimore how Kenworth achieved this, and he said it's a byproduct of the new stamped aluminum cab construction and the fact the vehicle is more aerodynamic than the T800. An aerodynamic front end that slices through the wind more efficiently is likely to create less noise in doing so. Kenworth designers have painstakingly removed from the front end, any place where air could become trapped and in doing so they also eliminated the noise air produces when it smacks up against a flat surface area. Look no further than the flush-mounted headlights for evidence of the attention to detail that went into removing obstructions that lead to drag, and subsequently to wind noise.

The quiet ride was noticeable the moment I reached highway speeds, but noise is more than just an irritant and the true benefit of a quiet cab can be better appreciated over time. Wind and road noise is 'white noise,' the same type that sound machines emit to help people fall asleep. Listening to white noise all day long has the same fatiguing effect on drivers, so I suspect the T880's quiet cab will leave a driver feeling fresher at the end of a workday.

About 15% of Kenworth's vocational trucks are now spec'd with Eaton UltraShift Plus automated

The spec's:

Model: Kenworth T880

Engine: Paccar MX-13, 485/1,650

Transmission: Eaton UltraShift Plus VCS

Front suspension: Taperleaf with shocks

Rear suspension: HMX460 w/ 3 WCAL 8k Pushers

Body: Ohio-spec' aluminum 24-ft. end-dump

Interior: Diamond VIT, Slate Gray □

manual or Allison automatic transmissions. I'd be perfectly happy with either option – anything but a manual. I know I'm still in the minority, as the stats will attest, but I truly believe most vocational truck drivers who are averse to auto-gearboxes haven't yet tried the latest generation versions.

The UltraShift Plus in the T880 I drove offered features such as Intelligent Hill Start Aid and Creep Mode. Hill Start Aid will hold the truck's position when on an incline without rolling back while you move your foot from the brake to the accelerator. Creep Mode allows the vehicle to crawl along smoothly at low speeds, which is great for precision operations such as laying asphalt.

If you prefer a manual transmission, you'll like the air-assisted hydraulic clutch that's new in the T880. It allows for easier shifting – once you learn to avoid the temptation to mash the pedal through the floor – with considerably less foot pressure required.

There are mixed opinions on the use of automated transmissions in vocational applications. Some fleet owners love them, because it allows them to hire less-skilled drivers. Others hate them because, well, it allows less-skilled drivers to find gainful employment in the industry. But the reality is, vocational truck operators are a special lot. They have to be safe and competent drivers, but just as importantly, they must know how to skillfully operate whatever specialty equip-



MOVE OVER, T8: This Kenworth T880 Ohio spec' dump truck boasted an extremely quiet cab while on the highway. *Photo by James Menzies*

ment the truck is equipped with at the job site.

My thinking is, why wouldn't you give your drivers an easier truck to operate, equipped with an automated or automatic transmission, to simplify the driving portion of their job as much as possible? Apparently 85% of buyers disagree with me on principle, or are too cheap, though I can argue all day long that the higher up-front cost associated with an automated or automatic transmission provides a payback over the life of the equipment when in the hands of an average driver.

The T880 I drove was empty, so it was difficult to evaluate the MX-13 engine. However, Fennimore told me that engine has undergone continuous tuning for vocational applications and is just now hitting its stride. Some dump truck operators, he said, are now getting close to 8 mpg with the MX. The MX engine was brought to North America from Europe and then adapted to meet our vastly different operating requirements.

"The duty cycles here are so complex, it takes a while to get them all dialed in," he said of vocational ap-

plications in North America. "It's really starting to come into its own."

For an empty dump truck, the T880 rode well on the highway, its suspension system effectively absorbing the worst of the bumps and providing a smooth and comfortable ride inside the cab.

Back at the Kenworth plant, I took another walk around the T880. I noticed the hood has been redesigned. Instead of the one-piece attached to the T800, the T880 features a five-piece Metton hood. This at first seems counterintuitive, since Kenworth designers went to such great lengths to eliminate every nook and cranny where air can become trapped from the front of the truck; after all, moving to a five-piece hood necessitates the addition of a couple new seams. But just one ding to the side panel, and the repair savings will more than offset many years of microscopic fuel savings that a smoother, one-piece hood may – or may not – provide.

I stepped out of the T880 convinced there is a place for this model in Kenworth's lineup alongside the T800. It is indeed an upgrade. In the T880, Kenworth hasn't taken anything away from fans of the T8. In fact, it has given them more. More room. More visibility. And while it's too early to say for sure, probably more money in their bank accounts, if the improved aerodynamics translate to actual fuel savings. Saying goodbye is never easy, but the arrival of the T880 makes it just a little easier to bid farewell the T800. □

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Goodyear has come out with a new **single-axle drive tire** the company says offers better traction for 6x2 applications. The Goodyear G572 1AD drive tire is SmartWay-verified and offers enhanced traction, long tread life and other benefits, according to the company. Features include: Fuel Max technology; a highly siped center rib and lateral grooves for traction; semi-solid ribs and a 24/32nds tread depth for



traction and long tread life; and a retreadable casing.

Bridgestone has come out with a

new **R268 Ecopia tire for high-scrub environments**, including regional and P&D applications. The all-position radial offers fuel-efficiency advantages as well as durability in high-scrub environments, the company claims. It also offers protective features in the casing to help resist damage from curbing and maneuvering scrub, while extending tire life. The R268 Ecopia is available in size 295/75R22.5 in the US and Canada with additional sizes to be added soon, Bridgestone announced.

The Leek-Seeker is a **shop system that allows technicians to identify air leaks** without resorting to a dunk tank, according to the company. The system saves floor space by up to 80% compared to dunk tanks and can handle any tire and wheel assembly easily and safely, the company says. It can be installed in the shop or on a mobile service truck and is easy to operate. For more information, visit www.leekseeker.com or call 403-330-6347.



closed tandem set at the front, a full 10-ft. spread axle or any combination in between, the company announced. The trailer is constructed of fabricated steel mainbeams and steel cross-bracing, with an aluminum floor and rear skirt and Fontaine's RASR routed aluminum side rail. For details, visit www.fontainetrailer.com.

Mobile Awareness has launched a **back-up warning system for trailers** that are frequently pulled by different tractors. A sensor on the trailer communicates with an in-cab warning system, regardless of which truck and trailer is paired, making it ideal for drop-and-hook applications, the company announced. The SenseStat Wireless system retails for about US\$400 and can be installed in about an hour. More info is available at www.mobileawareness.com.

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Phillips Industries says its new Permalite XB **interior lamp** for trailers is now 30% brighter. It says its new offering is brighter than many other interior LED trailer lamps on the market with 1600 lumen output and 175-degree spread. The dome lamp is encased in an impact-resistant, low-profile polycarbonate housing to prevent damage. For more information, visit www.phillipsind.com.

Accessories



Tracking

Orbcomm has introduced a **solar-powered trailer tracking system**, the GT1100. The system features a low, one-inch profile, making it easy to install on trailer rooftops, according to the company. It can be installed on intermodal containers or any other unpowered asset and derives its power from the sun. It also features CargoWatch, a Web application for device management, providing fleet managers with asset visibility through near real-time alerts on trailer status, location, history and arrival and departure events. Orbcomm says its solar solution eliminates frustrations over battery changes, reduces maintenance and provides a reliable tracking solution with less cost over time. For details, visit www.orbcomm.com.

More than 40% of truck downtime is related to cooling system failure, according to Alliance Truck Parts, which has launched a new line of nitrite-free organic additive technology and nitrated organic additive technology **extended life coolant and anti-freeze** to its product line. The products are designed to improve heat transfer and water pump seal life. Customers are able to save about \$600-\$900 per year in coolant and maintenance costs by switching to the "red" extended life coolants, according to the company. For more, visit www.alliancetruckparts.com.

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Trailers

Fontaine Trailer Company has introduced a **new trailer** featuring independent sliding axles. The Infinity Superior Slide is touted as the most versatile platform trailer on the market, and can be configured as a closed tandem set at the rear, a

Flex Trax says its GoClaws and SnoClaws products offer a simpler, safer **alternative to traditional tire chains**. GoClaws are a tire traction system designed for use in mud, sand, snow and ice. It features an injection-molded, high-strength polyurethane assembly that once installed, is locked into place and won't come loose, according to the company. It claims the system offers a smoother ride and extends tire life. SnoClaws feature a ratchet fastening system and provide the same benefits, Flex Trax says. The product must be test-fit and adjusted to the exact dimension of the tires. GoClaws and SnoClaws are available for all tire and vehicle types, right up to tractor-trailers, the company says. For demonstration videos, visit www.flextrax.com. □

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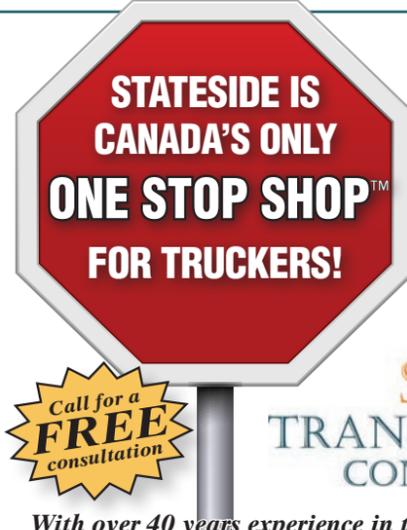
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TAX TALK

Family gatherings: Rules for hiring relatives

There are many reasons why hiring family can be a minefield for business owners, but taxes shouldn't be one them. Bringing a spouse, parent, kid, or other relative onto the payroll even on a part-time basis can generate big savings, especially if you're splitting income among family members who are in a lower tax bracket than you are.

Canada Revenue Agency has specific rules for hiring relatives. Basically, family members must

do the work for which they are paid.

The wage or salary must be in line with what you'd otherwise pay Joe Average to do the same job. And the work must be necessary and not some frivolous project that you wouldn't otherwise hire someone to do.

When you hire a relative, you can never lose sight of your responsibilities as an employer. You may have tax and legal obligations including source deductions like

Tax Talk

SCOTT TAYLOR



Employment Insurance and/or Canada Pension Plan. Then again, you might not.

CRA defines a relative as someone who is connected by blood relationship (like a father and son), marriage, common-law partnership, or adoption. You also can be related to a corporation if you're related to one or more of the people who control the corporation, or when a corporation employs someone who controls more than 40% of the corporation's voting shares.

The Employment Insurance Act states that employees who are related to their employer – be that a sole proprietor or corporation – may not be eligible for EI benefits and should not have EI premiums deducted from their pay because they do not deal with each other “at arm's length.”

On the other hand, some employees who are relatives might indeed qualify for EI. For example, a related employee may be insurable if it's reasonable to conclude that you would have hired a non-related person to do the same

job at a similar rate of pay.

What is reasonable? Here are some of CRA's criteria:

Remuneration paid: When the amount of the remuneration and the manner of payment reasonably compare to those that a guy off the street would accept for similar work, an arm's length relationship is suggested. The pay you offer your related employee should be in line with what a non-relative would accept for similar work.

Terms and conditions: Are the terms and conditions of employment substantially similar to the ones in an arm's-length employment relationship?

Duration of work performed: The timing of a job – when it occurs and how long it lasts – should correspond reasonably to the length of time such work should take to perform, and to the employer's normal business cycle and history.

Nature and importance of the work: Are the services you hired your relative to perform necessary and important to the business operation? Have you historically hired an employee to perform this work?

How to request a ruling

If you're not sure whether to deduct EI premiums for your relative-employee, you can ask CRA to rule on your case. Rulings clarify your obligation as the employer and will define whether your employee is covered should he make an EI claim (due to lay-off, pregnancy, or sickness).

To request a ruling, send a letter or a completed Form CPT-1 to the nearest tax services office no later than June 30 of the year following the year in which the employment occurred. If you have a payroll account and are registered on My Business Account, you can use the “Request a CPP/EI ruling service” online.

Hiring family takes serious forethought.

Don't try to arrange a haphazard payment formula or job description after your year-end.

Do put an employment agreement in place at the beginning of your fiscal reporting period and be ready to defend the value and worth of your family members' contribution to the business and to the bottom line.

Speaking of family, I hope you're able to set aside work and enjoy time together at this time of year. Here's to you and yours during the holiday season, and to a successful, prosperous 2014. See you next year. □

– Scott Taylor is vice-president of TFS Group, providing accounting, bookkeeping, tax return preparation, and other business services for owner/operators. Learn more at www.tfsgroup.com or call 800-461-5970.

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SAFETY

'Acceptable' risks can reduce margins for error, erode safety

Professional truck drivers learn to expect the unexpected, but some lessons are learned the hard way.

I came across a clear example of this reality after an experienced fuel hauler faced a few unusual delays when arriving at his New Brunswick destination. Traffic had been snarled due to unforeseen circumstances. To compound matters, people were parked on top of the access points for the service station's tanks. By the time a path for his connection was cleared, he was behind schedule. But this trucker knew what he was doing, and premium gasoline was soon pouring into the first tank. Then he turned his attention to the manifold to connect to another grade of fuel.

The sudden bang that sent him running to investigate wasn't a gunshot. It was simply the loud echo of an empty intermodal container as a nearby truck slammed into a pothole; yet another distraction in a frustrating day. He returned to the controls and absentmindedly began to unload the remainder of his liquid cargo.

It took about 30 seconds to realize he had not changed the connection to the station's fuel tanks and was now mixing two different grades of gasoline. The end result required the entire tank to be emptied.

The steps designed to avoid this problem were clearly explained with illustrated instructions, stressing the



Ask the Expert

KEVIN DUTCHAK

need to switch between a customer's tanks before connecting to another compartment of fuel. But the driver believed he was taking an "acceptable" risk. He was already standing next to his vehicle, and fuel would not actually begin to flow until he activated the controls. What harm would be caused by dealing with the connections in reverse? After all, he had done it before.

Risks are a reality in every workplace, but some drivers may be accepting more risk than they should – building a false sense of security and confidence while actually eroding their margins for error. Sooner or later, the luck will always run out.

The posted speed limits on an off-ramp will always seem like a safe target until a load begins to shift, and highway speed limits can appear appropriate until a bank of fog descends. Even supposedly menial tasks can lead to dire consequences of their own when different factors align.

Driver Distraction in Commercial Vehicle Operations, a 2009 study by the US Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, found that drivers were significantly more like-

ly to have a "safety critical event" when distracted by tasks like texting, cleaning a mirror, interacting with a dispatching device or writing a note.

The reasons for accepting these extra risks vary. Unusually tight schedules might encourage drivers to speed. Unresolved conflicts with family members can build a sense of frustration. The elevated perch of a driver's seat or previous incident-free trips can leave people feeling more invincible than they really are. But those who commit to minimizing unnecessary risks will reap long-term rewards in the form of a safer job.

Even the risks around "unavoidable" collisions can be reduced. Parked trucks that are struck from behind may have had access to safer parking areas. And an animal strike, caused by the unpredictable leap of a deer, could have been minimized if a driver was extra vigilant when travelling through areas that are known for the threat or avoid them if possible.

Yes, the trucking industry has a few "bad apples" prone to taking risks at any time. But the willingness to accept risks is not limited to high-risk drivers alone. The most experienced truckers can still become complacent with time, while trained dispatchers have still been known to bend to the demands of a screaming customer.

The fundamental difference is made when a fleet embraces a true culture of safety at all levels of the business. It is a focus which helps to show drivers they do not need to speed or break hours-of-service rules to remain on schedule at all costs. Dispatchers can be trained in the so-called "soft skills" which identify when drivers are frustrated and need added support. Safety managers, meanwhile, can continue to share the details of real-life experiences, reinforcing the need to reduce risks at every opportunity.

As for the high-risk drivers, they can be identified through formal screenings and reviews, and exposed to defensive driving programs that encourage safer practices.

They are the risk-reducing steps that will deliver rewards for years to come. □

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



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Mark Dalton: Owner/Operator

The Truxpo Gambit

By Edo van Belkom

The story so far...

Mark is attending Truxpo Can, his favourite truck show of all. While he's at a booth he overhears two men talking. One tells a story about how a driver got him in trouble with the police, while the other says a driver put colored diesel into his tanks. Both men would sure like to find the guy. Mark knows they are talking about him and slinks away...

Mark made small talk with the light salesman for a while, constantly looking over the man's shoulder to see if the coast was clear. Finally, when the two men who'd been talking like they wanted to tear a strip off his hide had moved on, Mark turned to the salesman and said, "All this stuff is really cool. Maybe you could give me a card or something and I can give you a call when I want to trick out my truck."

"Certainly, sir!" the salesman said, pulling a business card out of his shirt pocket and handing it over to Mark. "Perhaps we could send you a catalogue or put you on our mailing list?" the salesman said, but by then Mark was gone.

Mark had been shaken up a bit by the experience. After all, it was one thing to call the police on someone who is breaking the law, or exact revenge on someone who did you wrong, but it was an entirely different thing to meet that person face-to-face. And it wasn't as if there had been just one person out for his blood, there had been two of them and each one wanted blood.

Mark walked quickly past the exhibits, trying hard not to look as if he were rushing, or in a hurry, but moving quickly so as not to stay in one place for too long. It was a heck of a way to try and enjoy the show. Just then, Mark's cell phone rang. He pulled it from the case on his belt and brought it to his ear.

"Dalton, it's Bud!"

"Bud who?"

A sigh. "Bud-jet. I'm starting a discount airline and I want you to be my first pilot."

"Nice," said Mark. "I wouldn't mind being somewhere else right now."

"Is there a problem?"

"I don't know, maybe."

Silence.

"Do I have to guess or are you going to tell me?"

Mark took a deep breath, then said,

"There are a couple of guys here at the show that I've run into on the road."

Bud didn't respond for a while, but when he did it was a soft knowing sort of laugh. "Why don't you sit them down, buy 'em a beer and spend the rest of the day telling them it's all your dispatcher's fault and you'll all have a great time."

That would be great, thought Mark, but impossible. "These aren't people I met on the road who want to have a beer with me."

"Oh no?"

"No, they just want to kill me."

"You're being too negative here. What you need to do is look on the bright side."

"Yeah, what's the bright side?"

"These guys are probably on probation, so if they do anything illegal, like kill you, they'd end up back in jail for sure."

Mark thought about that a moment. "Wouldn't they end up in jail if they killed me anyway, even if they weren't on probation?"

"Look Dalton, I'm trying to make you feel better here."

"It's not working."

"What would work?"

"A load that took me far away from here."

"Okay, I'll call you back in a bit."

Mark nodded, but then a thought struck him. "Bud, why did you call me?"

"You're at the show, right?"

"Yeah."

"And there are all kinds of trucking companies there hiring drivers and signing up owner/operators, right?"

"Always."

"So I'm just keeping in touch in case, you know, someone makes you an offer to come work for them."

"Are you saying you value me as a driver, Bud?"

"Uh, let's not get crazy here, Dalton. You're a driver. Hard working. You answer your phone. And you deliver your loads more or less on time. I need that kind of driver and I'd hate to lose you to a company offering you an extra half-cent per kilometre."

Mark was almost touched by Bud's sincerity. "Don't worry, Bud. I think you and I are destined to cause each other grief till the end of our days."

"That's a comforting thought."

"Now," Mark said, "about my load."

"Give me some time, will ya. I'm sure no one really wants to kill you. Just walk around the show a bit, have some lunch and I'll try to get back to you this after-



Illustration by Glenn McEvoy

noon with a load."

"Alright, I'll do that," Mark said, hanging up. He felt a little better about things, but not much. He did have an empty feeling in the pit of his stomach and thought a bit of lunch might hit the spot.

At the show's food court, everything was small-portioned and overpriced. The problem with these shows was that the conference centers were usually in the middle of nowhere, or far enough away from anything else that it would take a car ride and at least an hour to get a bite to eat. So, if you wanted to eat on site, you had to pay for that privilege.

Mark decided on a hamburger and fries because it was a food that was very hard to screw up. The burger might be greasy, the bun a bit stale, and the fries too soft, but after you smothered everything in ketchup and condiments, it would all taste pretty good. Halfway through his burger Mark became aware of two men over at another table having an animated discussion about life on the road.

"Dispatchers always have their favourites," a guy was saying. "They give the best loads to the drivers who kiss their ass, and they leave the other drivers to try and make a living on short-haul and city driving."

Mark recognized the voice as that of Manny Giron, a driver who had worked for Bud for a while, but who was always complaining about the best loads going to other drivers...like Mark. Mark had thought he'd helped to adjust the man's attitude by asking Bud to give him a cross-border load that was too compli-

cated for him to handle, but here he was still complaining. Mark realized that the man would never change and would only grow more bitter in the years to come.

"I hear you, brother," said another man at the table. "There's always someone out there trying to keep you down. Me, I had a nice business going, moving heavy equipment. You know, bulldozers, excavators, cranes...Well, one time I got a new guy into the business, happy to take my cash, but not too interested in working hard for his money. After a couple of jobs he calls the cops on me and puts me out of business."

Mark recognized that voice too. It was a good story, except the man telling it forgot to mention that he didn't own any of the machines he moved, and he'd hired Mark to basically steal them from construction sites around the GTA. "The guy who screwed me over's named Mark Dalton."

"Hey, I think that's the guy who did me in too."

Mark turned his head, leaned forward and put his face as close to the table as he could. □

— Mark returns next month in Part 3.

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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OPINION

Working OT on overtime

Overtime pay – the lack of it – is one of the most hotly-debated and ultimately misunderstood topics in the complex regulation we call Part III (Labour Standards) of the Canada Labour Code (CLC), which sets out minimum standards that federally regulated employers and employees must follow.

My September column, which asked (rhetorically) if we were overdue for another look at overtime, stirred the pot again. The subsequent outpouring of comments, along with many conversations on Canada Calling (our radio show), and on Facebook, led to renewed discussions and a meeting with the folks in the Workplace Directorate, part of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC), the federal department responsible for the Labour Program and the CLC.

I should say here that our discussions have been specifically about drivers working for a federally regulated employer, defined as any business or industry that operates inter-provincially.

However, if you *do not* work for a company covered by the CLC, that is, for a company domiciled and operating within one province, your provincial or territorial ministry of labour regulates employment standards, including overtime. So while the fine print may vary from province to province, there is no getting around it. Every employee is entitled to be compensated for the time they work over and above their standard hours of work.

It's also worth noting that we're talking about *employees* which means company drivers, not owner/operators. If you're the boss, it's up to you to make sure you're charging your customer (the carrier you work for) enough to pay yourself a decent wage, including overtime. But that's another column for another day.

Our meeting with HRSDC was productive, and a good start to clarifying many of misconceptions about overtime. Thanks to those who shared their overtime experiences with us, we went to the meeting armed with eight pages of comments, questions, and a long list of reasons drivers have been given by carriers who don't pay overtime, and indeed why drivers themselves believe they aren't eligible.

Our HRSDC friends are well aware of the disproportionate number of complaints from trucking, which are often rooted in misinterpretation or misunderstanding on the part of both employees and employers about their rights and responsibilities under the CLC. Still, they were astonished by some of the excuses.

"It's already included in the mileage rate," caused a loud groan. Others on the myth list? You're not eligible if you are paid by the mile; it doesn't apply unless you have a union contract; you can't get paid overtime if you aren't paid by the hour; drivers aren't eligible because trucking is not a skilled profession. And my favourite, an actual quote from a carrier, "...if we had to pay long-haul drivers overtime we'd just have to drop the base rate of pay they're getting now and come up with another scheme to pay them the same amount."

But the bottom line? Notwithstand-



Voice of the O/O

JOANNE RITCHIE

ing the nature the job and the complexities in the way drivers are paid, the law is quite clear: if an employee works longer than the standard hours (in a day or a week), he or she must be paid at least one-and-one-half times the regular rate of pay. Convolved and creative interpretations of "standard hours" and "regular rate of pay" and "city or highway driver" don't let employers off the hook.

At our meeting, it quickly became obvious that a myth-busting exercise is in order, and Directorate staff are currently working their way through the list to come up with a catalogue of plain-language FAQs that will hopefully enlighten both carriers and drivers and lead to an informed industry-wide discussion on the issue.

Not that there hasn't been lots of "discussion" in the past. In 2004, the feds set up a special Federal Labour Standards Commission and embarked on a comprehensive two-year review of Part III of the CLC. Recognizing the significance of trucking and the unique workplace and labour problems it faced, a separate study of the trucking industry was commissioned.

The study was carried out by UBC professor Garland Chow, and his report "Labour Standard Issues in the Inter-Provincial Canadian Trucking Industry" was presented to the Commission in 2006.

Chow's research was extensive, and included interviews with motor carriers, trucking associations, driver agencies, journalists, and most importantly, with hundreds of truck drivers, working in every sector, from one end of the country to the other.

If you're looking for a catalogue of trucking workplace woes, you'll find it in Chow's report. He does a pretty good job of telling how things are *supposed* to work – in the opinion of the carriers, the drivers, and the regulators – and how things *actually* work in the real world. At the end of the day, the bosses blame the workers, the workers blame the bosses, everyone blames the regulators, and nothing changes.

I mention this report because although eight years old, it is actually full of useful information and recommendations. But make no mistake. HRSDC is not a proactive organization when it comes to the Labour Program. The whole process is complaint-driven, so if no one complains or questions, nothing happens.

Watch the OBAC Web site for a new Labour Standards section in the Toolbox. The first thing posted will be the trucker-friendly FAQs, along with a number of studies and reports I've been busy retrieving from cyberspace recycle bins. Restarting the discussion is fine, but this time, let's finish it. □

– Joanne Ritchie is executive director of OBAC. Are you driven to complaining? E-mail her at jritchie@obac.ca or call toll free 888-794-9990.

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We will enter your information in Driverlink where companies and recruiters search for drivers.

First Name _____ Last Name _____
 Address _____ City _____
 Prov/State _____ Postal/Zip _____ Email _____
(THIS WILL BE YOUR USERNAME ACCOUNT)
 Home Tel _____ Cell _____

BEST WAY TO CONTACT ME: Home Tel Cell E-Mail Other _____

WORK PREFERENCES: Owner Operator Local Hwy Team Hwy Single/Company Driver
 Lease Purchase Moving Driver Trainer Other _____

OWNER OPERATOR? Manufacturer _____ Year/Model _____ Engine/Size _____

Preferred Trailer Type (check all that apply):
 Flatbed Heavy Hauling/Specialized Moving Van Tanker Straight Truck Super B Reefer Van Other _____

Trailer Type Experience (check all that apply):
 Flatbed Heavy Hauling/Specialized Moving Van Tanker Straight Truck Super B Reefer Van Other _____

CURRENT DRIVERS LICENSE: Do you have a Commercial License? Yes No

License# _____ Prov/State issued _____ Type _____ Exp Date _____

Total Truck Driving Experience _____/yrs Has your license ever been suspended? Yes No

Last Employer _____

Name _____ Company City _____ Prov/State _____

Tel _____ Start/End Date _____

Job Description _____ Reason for Leaving _____

CERTIFICATION / TRAINING: Can you lift 50lbs? Yes No

Name of School _____ Doubles/Triples

Name of Course Completed _____ Air Brake Adjustment

Prov/State _____ Start/End Date _____ Over-Size Loads

Hazmat

Air Brake (Drive)

Tankers

CROSS BORDER TRAVEL: I am able to cross the Canada/U.S. border to haul international loads Yes No

I am willing to cross the border Yes No

I am FAST approved (for expedited border crossing) Yes No

Would you like to be contacted by driver agencies? Yes No

By filling out and signing this application, I agree to abide by Driverlink's terms and conditions and consent to the use of personal information according to the Driverlink privacy policy.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Driverlink is proud to protect the privacy of your personal information as required under federal privacy laws. If you would like to see a copy of our privacy policy, please go to www.driverlink.com/privacy, or call us at 1-800-263-6149.

TSQ

MISSISSAUGA, Ont. – Truck drivers often feel that their profession is not valued as much as it should be. Moreover, many people involved in the trucking industry have come to believe there is a pervasive cultural bias that is stacked against us.

Most truck drivers love their job; they'll tell you it's a great trade with opportunities for good remuneration. But why doesn't this get passed on to the next generation? Why do young people eschew driving truck, and view it as a less-than-desirable career? Could it be the oft-times dismissive portrayal of our profession from the media and other institutions adumbrates societal perception?

On top of that, the public is ignorant of why we drive the way we do. They see a big machine that's an impediment to them and that's where the thinking usually stops. A semi swinging wide at a right turn intersection is as much of a head-scratcher to some motorists as is a load-



Truck Stop Question

Does the public have a negative view of trucking?

HARRY RUDOLFS

ed truck that slows down on steep grades and accelerates on the downward side.

Truck News went to the Toronto-Husky Truck Stop at Dixie and Shawson in Mississauga where I talked to drivers who were buying chips and pop. Interesting to note, every driver mentioned "courtesy" as the antidote to poor driving habits. And who knows, it might just work if enough of us do it.

Jeff Lowengren drives for Atlas Van Lines out of Vancouver, B.C., and thinks that the media definitely paints trucking in a negative light. "But the big problem is that the roads are crowded and there are



Jeff Lowengren

too many of us out here. And people don't want to give an inch especially in cities. But I'm always pleasantly surprised when I see an act of courtesy or consideration. And it can happen anywhere: from the

Port Mann Bridge in Vancouver to the 401 in Toronto or the 40 in Montreal. So I try to do the same when I can.

"Motorists are usually in a hurry to get home or in a hurry to go shopping, and they don't want a big truck in their way. They don't realize how important trucks are to the economy."

Lowengren would love to see a campaign aimed at sharing the road with trucks but he doesn't know of any. "We (truck drivers) aren't even courteous with each other. We could start by encouraging respectful behaviour among ourselves."

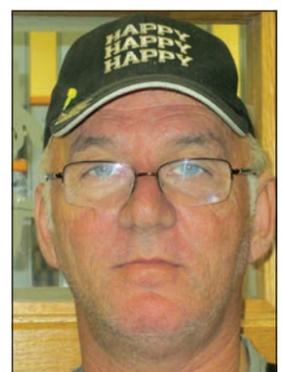


Rob Moncrieff

Rob Moncrieff is an owner/operator for Maritime-Ontario and runs switches between Toronto and White River, Ont.

"I've been driving for 38 years and an owner/operator for 22 of them. There's a bit of that (negativity from the media). Every time I see a bad crash involving a truck on the news it's always made to appear that the truck is at fault. But there's always some jackass out there driving a truck badly that reflects on the rest of us. And there are the odd nasty truckers out there. But a lot of four-wheelers are just as bad or worse.

"I don't know. I smile a lot (and curse under my breath) and let them in. Losing a couple of minutes isn't going to matter a whole lot in the long run. It's easier that way. What can we do to make things better? A little more courtesy and a little more politeness among all drivers would make the roads safer for one thing."



Tom Robinson

Does the public have a negative view of trucking? "Very much so," says **Tom Robinson**, a lease/operator for TransX, who lives in Barrie, Ont. "You can thank the media for that. They sensationalize bad examples. Most truck drivers are hard-working family people and very good drivers.

"Individual truck drivers can do more to make themselves look better in the public eye by showing more courtesy. I don't know about the provincial trucking associations – they don't necessarily speak for drivers – but it's possible that groups like OBAC and OOIDA (to which I belong), might be able to do something to educate the public. Drivers could get a lot done if they only got together." □

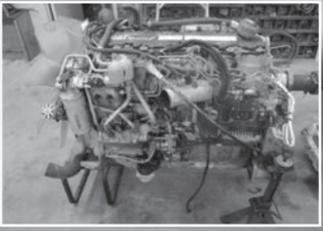
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KINGSTON, ONTARIO



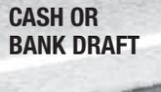
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