

# TRUCK NEWS

January 2014 Volume 34, Issue 1

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

Season's  
Greetings  
to you all!

## Shopping season

### M&A activity picks up in fourth quarter

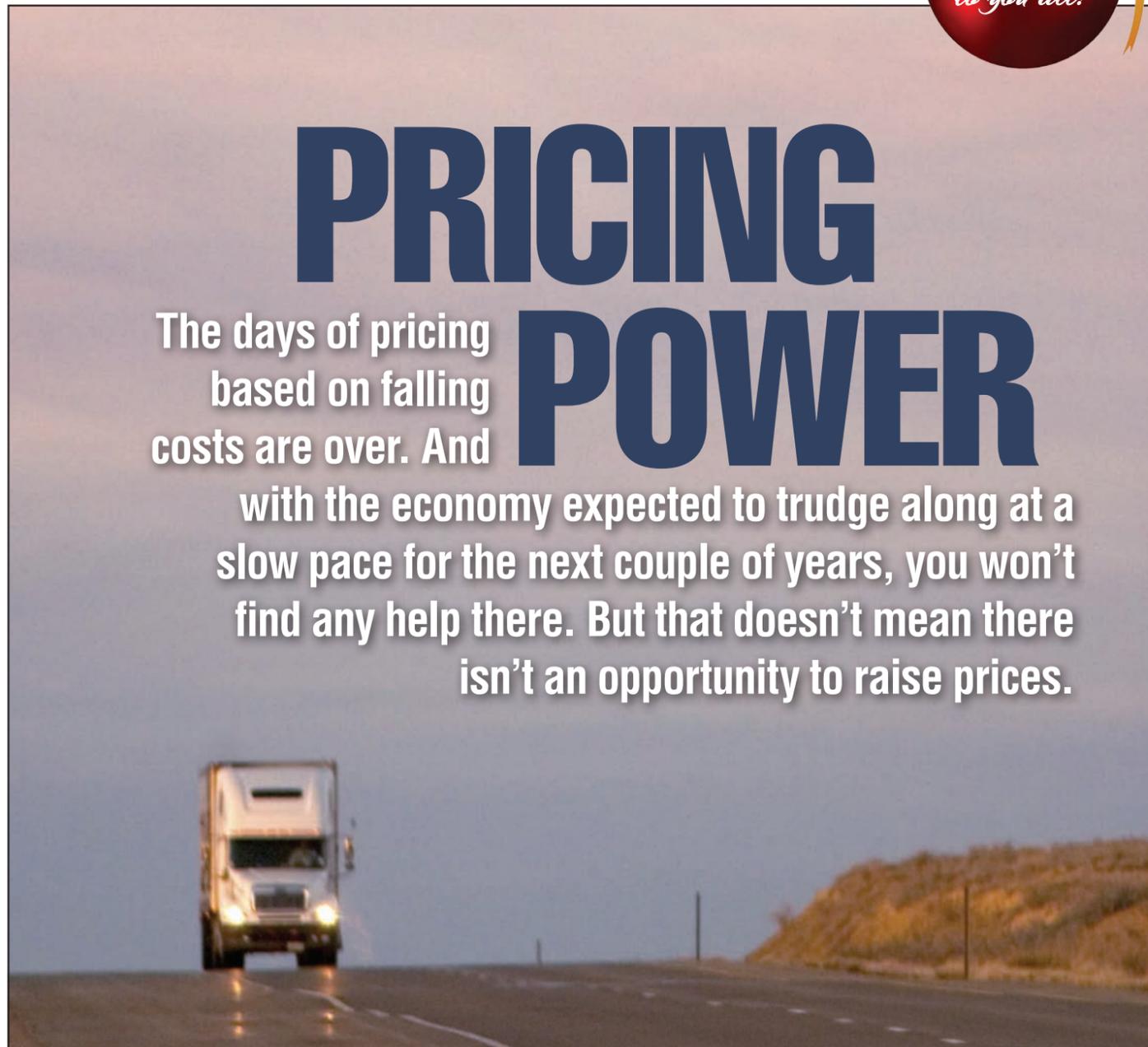
**TORONTO, Ont.** – Those who closely watch the Canadian transportation mergers and acquisitions scene have been bemoaning a lack of activity thus far in 2013. That silence was shattered in mid-November, beginning with the blockbuster acquisition of Yanke Group assets by Celadon Canada.

The acquisition, first reported on Trucknews.com Nov. 16, includes about 300 tractors, making Celadon one of Canada's largest trucking outfits with a truck count of about 800 units. Yanke's headquarters in Saskatoon – and the office staff that worked there – were not included in the deal.

In a message to drivers, Yanke founder Russel Marcoux, noted "The time has come for me to move on, and in keeping with the culture and values we created together at Yanke, it is important to me that the torch gets passed on to an organization that shares many of the same values and beliefs we all supported and practiced at Yanke."

He went on to say "I am confident that Celadon Canada is a company that will continue to respect and value you as individuals rather than unit numbers and that you can expect open and honest communication and genuine concern for your well-being, as

**Continued on page 18**



## PRICING POWER

The days of pricing based on falling costs are over. And

with the economy expected to trudge along at a slow pace for the next couple of years, you won't find any help there. But that doesn't mean there isn't an opportunity to raise prices.

**By Jason Rhyno**

**TORONTO, Ont.** – Noel Perry of FTR Associates is holding up four fingers and one thumb. He had asked a room full of Ontario trucking executives, rhetorically, "how many dry van carriers or reefer carriers have the capability to bid – in a big way –

on a Walmart tender?"

He was talking about pricing in trucking during the Ontario Trucking Association's (OTA) Annual General Meeting at its yearly, and very well-attended, economic outlook session. Perry, along with John Larkin, managing director, Stifel Associates; Doug

Payne, president and COO, Nulogx; and Emanuella Enenajor, economist, CIBC World Markets, talked about the economy and what to expect next year. The brunt of the conversation, however, was about the need for not only carriers and shippers to work

**Continued on page 12**

## Taking it off-road

Volvo has built a new off-road track. And we were among the first to drive it.



Page 44-45

## Inside This Issue...

- **Economic outlook:** Reports on the economy from the US and Canada paint different pictures of what to expect in 2014. And did somebody say recession? Pages 20-21
- **Protecting your investment:** Truck tires are an expensive investment. Are you treating them as such? Page 41
- **Trucking in Mexico:** What's trucking like in Mexico? We visited and found a surprisingly sophisticated fleet and an industry in transition. Pages 46-47
- **The Truxpo Gambit:** Mark Dalton continues to feel the heat from former foes at the truck show. Page 52

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# CLASS 8 TRUCK SALES TRENDS

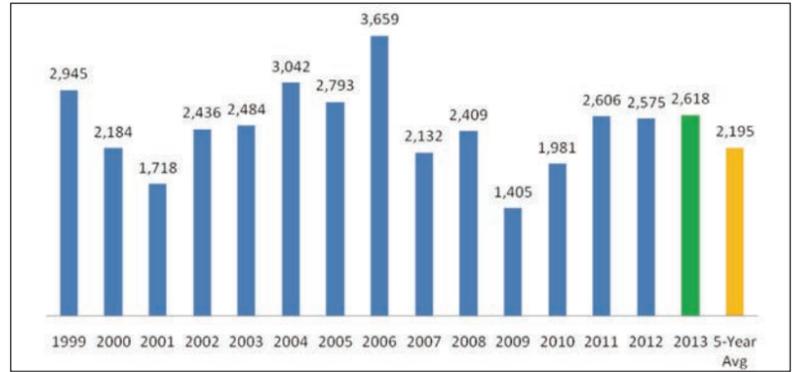
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The 2,618 trucks sold in October provided a pleasant surprise, being above last year's total as well as the total for 2011. This flies against the trend we've seen with Class 8 sales for the first three quarters, which have been good, but not as good as the previous year. It made for the fifth best October going back to 1999. International, Kenworth, Peterbilt, Volvo and Western Star posted slightly higher figures than the previous year. The sales total for the month is also more than 400 above the 5-year average.

### Monthly Class 8 Sales – Oct 13

OEM	This Month	Last Year
Freightliner	554	617
International	489	377
Kenworth	455	454
Mack	150	163
Peterbilt	342	334
Volvo	395	383
Western Star	233	247
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>2618</b>	<b>2575</b>

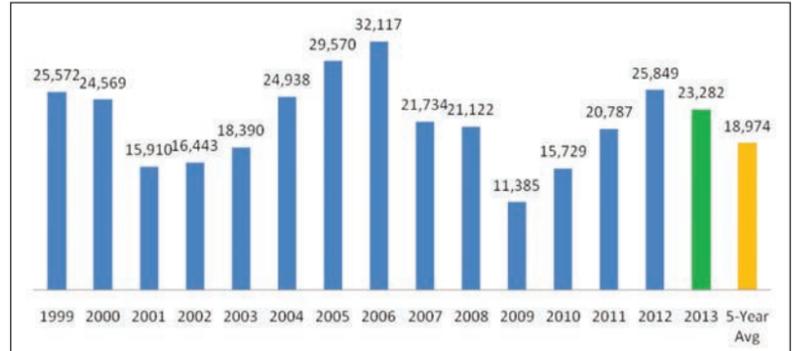
### Historical Comparison – Oct 13 Sales



### Class 8 Sales (YTD Oct 13) by Province and OEM

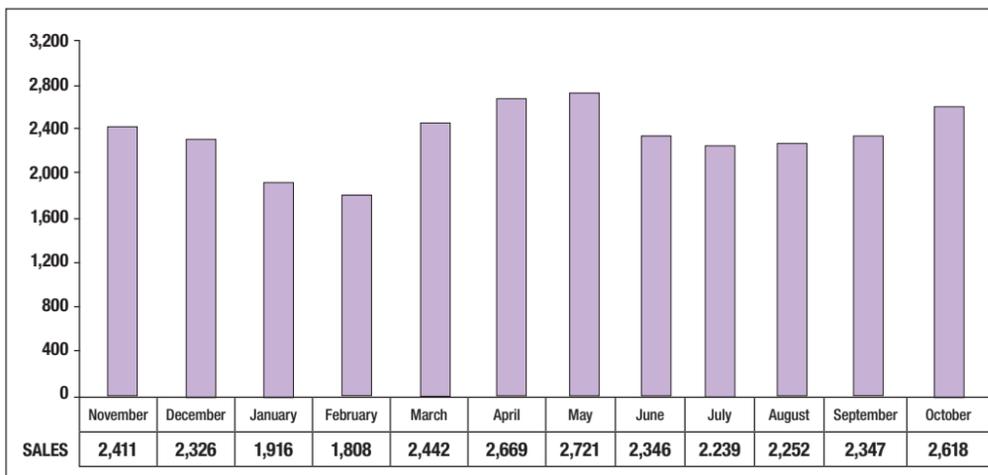
OEM	BC	ALTA	SASK	MAN	ONT	QUE	NB	NS	PEI	NF	CDA
Freightliner	494	686	186	317	2,592	991	312	107	21	38	5,744
Kenworth	667	1,509	419	104	700	742	95	0	0	0	4,236
Mack	142	280	165	55	681	327	67	65	0	14	1,796
International	140	578	70	164	1,538	670	108	45	33	31	3,377
Peterbilt	456	1,082	268	208	531	452	146	53	0	0	3,196
Volvo	314	239	114	191	1,222	647	121	50	0	8	2,906
Western Star	304	652	71	68	390	390	47	82	4	19	2,027
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>2,517</b>	<b>5,026</b>	<b>1,293</b>	<b>1,107</b>	<b>7,654</b>	<b>4,219</b>	<b>896</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>23,282</b>

### Historical Comparison – YTD Oct 13



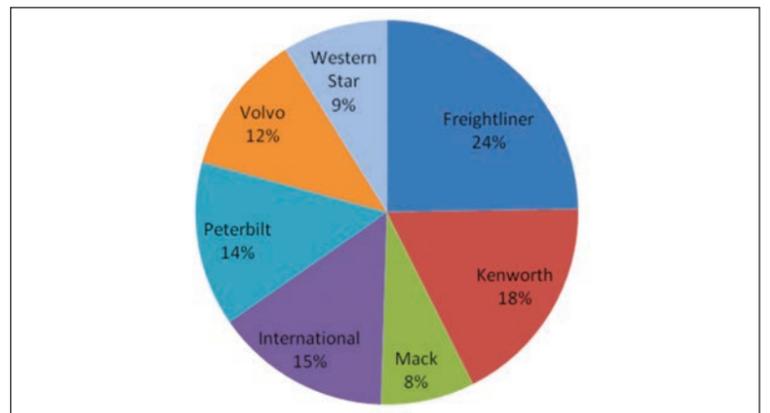
YTD Class 8 sales of 23,282 units places 2013 more than 2,500 trucks behind last year's pace but also more than 4,200 above the five-year average. So far this is the 7th best year in sales going back to 1999 and the slippage we were expecting for the final quarter did not surface in October. Our revised 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 eight 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 and now October. The big question was whether sales would hold up over the summer months and they have. Next question is how they will hold up for the final quarter of 2013 and October bore positive results.

### Market Share Class 8 – Oct 13 YTD



Freightliner, last year's Canadian market leader, is solidly in control of the market share lead with about 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 remains in a close race with Peterbilt which has 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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**Creative Directors:** Carolyn Brimer, Beverley Richards  
**Circulation Manager:** Mary Garufi  
**V.P. Publishing:** Alex Papanou  
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## Advertising Sales

Inquiries: Kathy Penner (416) 510-6892



**Lou Smyrlis**  
 Publisher  
 (416) 510-6881  
 lou@TransportationMedia.ca



**Kathy Penner**  
 Associate Publisher  
 (416) 510-6892  
 kpenner@trucknews.com



**Brenda Grant**  
 National Account Sales  
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**Don Bestler**  
 National Account Sales Manager  
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**Doug Copeland**  
 Regional Account Manager  
 (905) 715-9511  
 dcopeland@trucknews.com



**Laura Moffatt**  
 Research Director

## Editorial

Inquiries: James Menzies (416) 510-6896



**Daniela Piteo**  
 Assistant Editor  
 (416) 510-6890  
 dpiteo@trucknews.com



**Julia Kuzeljevich**  
 Contributing Editor  
 (416) 510-6880  
 julia@TransportationMedia.ca



**John G. Smith**  
 Technical Correspondent  
 wordsmithmedia@rogers.com



**Brad Ling**  
 Video Production Manager

## Subscription inquiries

Anita Singh (416) 442-5600 (Ext. 3553)

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# What's in store for 2014?

As we flip the calendar to 2014 and look back at the year that was, the main themes that emerged over the past year are likely to remain with us well into 2014. The last year started out with so much promise, which ultimately gave way to disappointment as a strong economic renaissance failed to materialize. Instead, we got what some described as “the new normal” or “the great ok” – sluggish growth that was difficult to get excited about.

Slow growth is still growth, but after surviving the Great Recession, motor carrier executives, trucking company owners, drivers and owner/operators all hoped for a more prosperous year.

Looking ahead, most prognosticators say there'll be more of the same next year, some even hinting we're due for another recession within the next two years. You may want to pour a little extra rum into your Egg Nog.

Aside from a sluggish economy, it looks as though the pace of mergers and acquisitions activity will pick up, if the last few weeks is any indication. After what some observers characterized as a slow start to the year, there were several key deals announced in recent weeks, which you can read about in more detail beginning on this month's cover. It looks as though consolidation in the marketplace will con-



tinue to be a trend moving into 2014. Manitoulin and Celadon have both established themselves as bona fide buyers as they look to expand their Canadian footprints.

Another trend that picked up steam in 2013 is the increased viability of natural gas as an alternative to diesel fuel. In the past year, we saw several more carriers add natural gas to their fleets, and further product is coming online over the next year. There are also rumblings of some fairly substantial fuelling infrastructure projects which could be just months away.

As the fuel becomes more easily accessible, and a wider range of natural gas-fuelled product becomes available, there's little doubt more fleets will embrace the technology – even if diesel prices have been reasonably stable over the course of the past year.

Another trend from the past year that isn't going anywhere is the regulatory onslaught both here in Canada and south of the border. In July, the US adopted new hours-of-service rules

that in practical terms are adding significant costs to the industry while reducing productivity.

There'll be more – not less – regulation foisted upon the industry in 2014 and beyond, which will further strangle productivity and force carriers and shippers to collaborate more closely than ever to ensure every ounce of waste is driven from the supply chain.

And of course, reduced productivity means the need for more drivers to do the same amount of work. The driver shortage continues to be one of the most pressing issues facing the trucking industry. I know, I know...many of you believe the driver shortage is a myth, that it's wages and working conditions that have caused perfectly capable professional drivers to sit on the sidelines.

That may be true, but it's still a driver shortage. If there's a lack of people willing to do the work that's required, it's a shortage, regardless of the causes behind it. The Canadian truck-

ing industry is on pace to be 25,000 drivers short of what it will require by 2020, representing about 14% of the driver population. Factor in lower productivity, which is possible – even likely – and you get a gap of 33,000 drivers. This data is available on the very well designed DriverShortage.ca Web site. As we head into 2014, the fact we'll still be talking about a lack of drivers at this time next year is the safest prediction I can make. □

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



## Dealing with Requests for Proposals

Freight bids are becoming increasingly popular as a mechanism to negotiate freight rates and service. Initially seen as a temporary initiative by shippers to lower their transportation costs during the recession, they remain very much with us four years into the economic recovery.

Even companies with as little as \$50,000 in annual freight spend are putting their transport business out for bid.

I believe freight bids are here to stay.

Rather than wishing for them to go away, I think the best approach is for motor carriers to learn how to best deal with them and to encourage shippers towards a better RPF process.

To that end, we assembled a panel of leading shippers and car-



riers at our recent Surface Transportation Summit and dug deep into the subject of RFPs.

I encourage you to read the transcript in the current issue of sister publication *Motortruck Fleet Executive* and watch for highlights of the discussion in a series of TMTV episodes over the next few weeks.

I also applaud Jacquie Meyers of Meyers Transport, Michelle Arsenneau of GX Transport and Bruce Jantzi of Erb International, who tackled the thorny issue at our Surface Transportation Summit.

They didn't mince words. They called it as they saw it.

Although RFPs can be effective if shippers take the time to properly vet the carriers they allow into the bidding process, investigating the carriers' operations and processes and meeting with their executives to ask and answer questions, too often it seems RFPs turn into an impersonal, multiple round attempt to simply drive down pricing.

As Meyers, whose remarks made her an instant industry celebrity, pointed out: the carriers who do “win” these bids are not actually winning. It simply means they are the cheapest or close to the cheapest and giving something up – Driver training? Safety? Security? – to be the cheapest.

All three affirmed the only ac-

tion that makes sense in dealing with such RFPs: Refusing to participate if they seem structured to reduce decision making down to price.

Meyers issued a call to action to both shippers and carriers.

To shippers, she urged “Please invite us to the table. We want to come to the party. Let us be a strategic partner.”

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, bring your A-team and find ways to do better.”

Damn good advice to follow in dealing with RFPs. □

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

## Did you know? Trucking's pricing power tops all other modes

An economy experiencing annual GDP growth of less than 3% is an economy not firing on all cylinders. This is where we have been stuck for most of this economic recovery. There is steady growth but not the kind of growth that acts as a rising tide that lifts all ships. The end result is uneven growth among industry sectors, regions, and transport modes.

How does trucking stack up against other modes in this environment? According to the re-

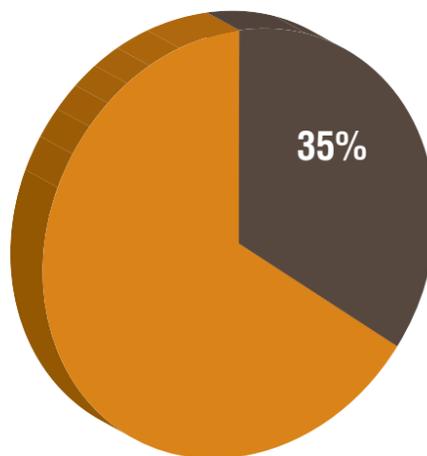
sults from our recently completed national Transportation Buying Trends Survey of Canadian shippers, it appears trucking is poised to do fairly well. Our survey, conducted in partnership with CITT and CITA, found that 39% of shippers plan to increase their use of LTL services in 2014 while 30% plan to increase their use of TL services. Both rankings are among the best of all the modes.

Trucking rates were particularly hard hit during the recession due to a significant capacity overhang. The perception of trucking capacity appears to have changed significantly, however. Shippers perceive both TL and LTL trucking to be close to balanced capacity levels, our survey found.

Perhaps most encouraging for motor carrier executives is shipper responses to our question about which

TL FREIGHT SHIPPERS

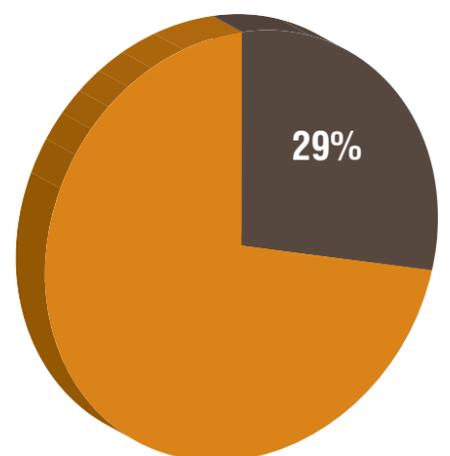
% expect this mode to have highest pricing power 2014



mode holds the greatest pricing power heading into the new year. Trucking led all modes by a wide

LTL FREIGHT SHIPPERS

% expect this mode to have highest pricing power 2014



margin, with 29% choosing LTL as the mode with the greatest pricing power and 35% choosing TL. □

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and straps.



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Hendrickson air ride suspension.



### (3) 2005 MANAC 53' x 102" DROP DECK VAN

Hendrickson air ride dock leveling suspension,  
well spec'd. Priced To Move!!



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**IN BRIEF**

# Moving dangerous goods by truck not so dangerous: Report

**OTTAWA, Ont.** – With the transportation of dangerous goods on the radar of federal Transport Minister Lisa Raitt following a devastating train wreck in Lac Megantic earlier this year, the Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA) is looking at its own industry's best practices.

The Alliance has issued a white paper on the transportation of dangerous goods by truck. This after Raitt said she would be conducting a review of the situation and would make recommendations to prevent tragedies such as the one that occurred in Lac Megantic from occurring again.

In an analysis of 328 incidents involving dangerous goods moving by truck that have occurred in 2012, CTA discovered the incident rate was just 1.64 per 10,000 shipments. Most (56.4%) that involved product releases were minor (less than 500 litres), which can generally be cleaned up with little or no environmental damage.

Eighty-six per cent of all incidents involved tank trucks. Most incidents occurred while loading or unloading (70.7%) and often the cause was employee error (28%) or equipment failure (34.1%). Accidents while on the road accounted for 16.2% of total incidents, for a frequency of 0.27 per 10,000 shipments. The major incidents (spills greater than 5,000 litres) were usually caused by on-highway accidents (56.8%). However, CTA reports major incidents represented just 6.4% of overall incidents.

Most incidents examined included flammable liquids, mainly crude oil.

"I think we can conclude from this white paper that overall the TDG regulations are effective in preventing dangerous goods incidents where trucks are involved," said CTA president and CEO, David Bradley.

Still, the CTA put forth some recommendations it said would further improve safety.

It would like to see trucks hauling dangerous goods – as well as all other trucks where the driver must carry a logbook – to be equipped with electronic logging devices. The Alliance would also like to see roll stability systems mandated on all new heavy trucks. And it also says a mandatory speed limiter law restricting trucks to 105 km/h would also help. CTA also said mandatory entry-level training for truck drivers based on a national standard is encouraged.

Meanwhile, the CTA said there should be clarity provided as to who is liable in the event of an accident. In the wake of the Lac Megantic tragedy, the CTA noted, there were issues involving who would be responsible for the massive clean-up costs. In its white paper, the CTA contended that a determination of liability and who shall bear the cost of negligence is "a statement of the public interest and public policy." □

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**BORDER**

# Are new US HoS rules a multi-billion dollar problem?

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – Just how much are the new hours-of-service rules implemented in the US last summer hurting the trucking industry?

The American Transportation Research Institute (ATRI) recently released results from an analysis that found more than 80% of motor carriers surveyed have suffered productivity losses since the rules went into effect. Nearly half of them said they will require more drivers to haul the same amount of freight.

Among commercial drivers surveyed, 82.5% said the new HoS have had a negative impact on their quality of life, with more than 66% reporting increased levels of fatigue.

Commercial drivers also said the new rules force them to drive during more congested periods. The majority of drivers, 67%, also reported a decline in their earnings since the new rules were implemented.

ATRI found the impacts on driver wages for all over-the-road drivers would be \$1.6-\$3.9 billion in losses.

The analysis was based on survey data from more than 2,300 commercial drivers and 400 motor carriers as well as a detailed analysis of logbook data, representing more than 40,000 commercial drivers.

“We anticipated significant impacts on our operations and across the entire supply chain from the new rules and our experience since July 1 is bearing that out,” said Kevin Burch, president of Jet Express. “ATRI’s analysis clearly documents the productivity impacts and real financial costs being borne by carriers and drivers. It’s only a matter of time before these impacts ripple throughout the nation’s economy.”

The full report is available at [www.atri-online.org](http://www.atri-online.org).

ATRI’s findings have been supported by an independent survey of more than 4,000 truck drivers in the US, conducted by the Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association (OOIDA).

The organization surveyed its membership and found drivers reported: increased fatigue and stress; less income and home time; more time driving in general; and more time spent in congested traffic.

The new rules implemented July 1, according to OOIDA, reduce flexibility in a driver’s workweek.

“The agency’s insistence on micromanaging a driver’s time is actually undermining highway safety,” said Todd Spencer, OOIDA executive vice-president. “Instead of providing the flexibility to drive when rested and stop when tired, the new rules have put drivers in the position of driving more hours than ever and in the worst traffic conditions, and spending less time at home. How is that safe?”

Of the 4,000 survey respondents, 46% reported feeling more fatigued since the changes were implemented, and 65% reported earning less income. The restriction to one 34-hour restart per week caused 56% of respondents to lose mileage and loads hauled per week, OOIDA says. Many respondents wrote they experience less time at home and increased stress under the new rules.

In some cases, drivers with long wait periods between loads were un-

able to use the restart because the 34 hours did not cover two periods from 1-5 a.m., or 168 hours had not elapsed since the previous restart. Drivers are getting less home time or accepting shorter hauls for less money, the survey found.

“The problem with time management is not new to truckers,” said Spencer. “And it isn’t new to the agency either because, over and over, drivers expressed at many FMCSA listening sessions that they have little or no control over their time, particularly because of the unpredictability of the job and due to shippers and receivers keeping them waiting to load or unload.”

“The rules need to reflect the fact that drivers have to accommodate numerous factors they have no control over such as weather and traffic, in addition to the schedules of shippers and receivers who don’t have to comply with any regulations at all,” Spencer added. “Truckers shouldn’t be expected to navigate the conflicting worlds of regulations versus reality and still operate safely and efficiently.”

In a Nov. 21 hearing, a US House of Representatives’ Committee on Small Business heard these complaints and others.

Among presenters was Duane Long, chairman of Raleigh, N.C.-based Longistics, who told the committee that the industry is suffering serious negative impacts as a result of the restrictions.

“Simply put, the July 1 hours-of-service rule changes were unnecessary; the regulations adopted in 2003 were working and the administration offered rhetoric but little data to explain why they needed to be changed,” said Long. “Unfortunately, the gap between the administration’s rhetoric and the trucking industry’s operating reality is very wide. These changes are having a very real, and very negative impact on hundreds of thousands of drivers and motor carriers.”

Long said the rules are particularly disruptive for team drivers, who “resent the new restart restrictions and the effect they are having on their ability to make a living.”

OOIDA was also at the hearing. Senior member Tilden Curl of Olympia, Wash. provided his account on how the rules are affecting operators. He complained of more restrictive, arbitrary changes that don’t provide any safety benefit while having a negative impact on driver wages.

“Less flexibility makes it more difficult to stop for rest, avoid traffic, or keep a schedule after being delayed by a shipper or receiver,” said Curl in his oral testimony at the hearing. “We must stop placing more rigid requirements on the driver, while allowing carriers and customers to make demands beyond the allowance of regulations and safety.” □

## US truck tonnage slides 2.8% in October

**ARLINGTON, Va.** – US truck tonnage fell 2.8% month-over-month in October, but remained stronger than in the same month last year.

The American Trucking Associations’ for-hire truck tonnage index grew 0.5% in September (revised down from the 1.4% initially reported). October’s tonnage was the lowest level since April. However, when compared to October 2012, US truck tonnage was up 8%, marking the largest year-over-year gain since December 2011. Year-to-date, tonnage is up 5.5%.

“From May through September, the index surged 3.5%, including only one monthly decrease over that period,” said ATA chief economist Bob Costello. “It isn’t surprising for volumes to fall back some after such a good run.”

He added: “Despite October’s month-to-month decrease, we saw a very robust year-over-year increase and I’m seeing some good signs out of the trucking industry that suggests the economy may be a little stronger than we think. Specifically, the heavy freight sectors, like tank truck, have been helping tonnage this year. But in the third quarter, generic dry van truckload freight saw the best quarterly gains since 2010. I view this positively for the economy. I view it positively for trucking. Now, we have to see if it continues.” □

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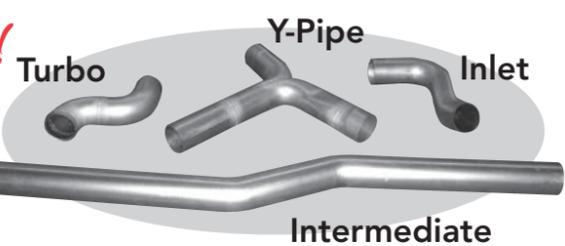
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EAST

# Marine Atlantic's commercial reservation system could return in 2014

By Daniela Piteo

**DIEPPE, N.B.** – The suspended commercial reservation system pioneered by Marine Atlantic may be reinstated if the Retail Council of Canada and a private consulting firm can sway stakeholders to amend their 2010 decision to scrap the controversial policy. Marine Atlantic is willing to revisit its commercial reservation system, even though the Atlantic Provinces Trucking Association (APTA) moved to disallow the system.

Jean-Marc Picard, executive director of the APTA, posits the current system suffices commercial needs.

“(Marine Atlantic) has added new boats with more capacity and the service has actually improved, but most delays are caused by weather and mechanical issues, which are still going to be there whether we have a reservation system or not,” said Picard.

“The first time the reservation system was launched, it didn't go very well,” he added. “It was just issue after issue and chaos. It was costing everyone more money, the service got worse instead of getting better, plus, they didn't have enough capacity back then to handle the volume either.”

A return to the former system, ac-

ording to Picard, would disrupt a process that is currently working well and has leveled the field for smaller businesses – a ground that was previously uneven, though not by design.

“Companies with good cash flow could pre-book as many spots as they wanted and they could book a couple of weeks ahead of time. Firms with not as much cash flow at their disposal had to wait until the last minute to reserve, which created some issues due to (a lack of) availability when they needed it,” said Picard. “Some companies had to wait five to six days before the first available spot opened up. The companies would also cancel spots at the last minute if they were no longer required, but Marine Atlantic couldn't manage filling those empty spots because you needed a reservation.”

While it is evident that the former system had flaws, Picard does not believe an open-session discussion amongst stakeholders can solve previous inefficiencies.

“They want feedback, but if you have 50 carriers at a stakeholders meeting, you are going to get 50 different suggestions,” Picard said.

Marine Atlantic, on the other hand, is willing to re-open the debate for a commercial reservation system.

Darrell Mercer, a spokesman for Marine Atlantic, contends that with the help of an outside consultant, Grant Thornton, a reasonable system may be implemented.

“We've received requests from the Retail Council of Canada to bring back some type of reservation system,” said Mercer. “We've hired an outside, independent consultant to help us with the consultation process. They are going to look at the old system, take into consideration both the viewpoint of the retail council and the commercial trucking industry and determine whether or not there is some common ground.”

Marine Atlantic is aware the former system was flawed, but has noted that no concrete decisions regarding the return of its reservation system have been made.

“We recognize that back in 2010 when we had an initial commercial reservation system, there were some problems – we didn't have enough capacity at that point in time. We know that any new system would have to look at the shortfalls of the old system,” Mercer said. “At this point in time, we haven't agreed to return to a system, all we have done is agreed to look at the potential to return to some system. For us to return to such a system, there would be significant planning internally. We would need to look at what technology would be required and of course and what upgrades would have to be made. At this point in time it would be premature to say that we were going back to such a system.”

At present, Marine Atlantic offers a premium booking service that allows a company to reserve a spot on a vessel should they need to move material immediately, but with a limited

number of spots at each crossing, earmarking a spot can become prohibitively challenging.

After inclement weather conditions, the number of companies looking to book through the premium service escalates beyond the available capacity on the sailing vessel.

“It is in place to make travel more convenient for people who need more certainty, again, we want to have a fair and equitable system for all of our users,” Mercer said.

The Retail Council of Canada (RCC) isn't satisfied with the prevailing model and has initiated the call for change. Jim Cormier, RCC's Atlantic office director, will help

Marine Atlantic find new common ground for the present problems.

“We've been working a lot with Marine Atlantic to improve the service and our members simply feel that a commercial reservation system would really improve the ability of business to move product,” Cormier said. “Getting product over into the stores to meet the needs of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador is always challenging. We understand that it is the North Atlantic and they get winter, there will always be delays. That said, once the weather is cleared, we want that improved predictability.”

Cormier and many of the companies he represents are not satisfied with the premium booking system.

“The premium booking basically says, ‘We'll give you the booking, but you have to pay double the price.’ That is a huge cost increase,” said Cormier. “It's hard justifying paying double for the exact same service.”

“We're not asking for the moon here. We, along with our partners, if we were to get the system back, would do the front end administrative work to ensure the bookings are done and we are open to talking to Marine Atlantic about ways that it could be done fairly.”

The RCC has considered several changes that could ameliorate the old system, such as clearly stating the number of commercial reservations a company is allowed to make on any given sailing, levying penalties for companies who overbook and considering a Web-based system that companies could have their own online accounts to make bookings or change bookings within an allotted time frame set by Marine Atlantic.

“You shouldn't charge additional fees for using the reservation service because it should provide administrative savings to Marine Atlantic and they should always honour the commercial booking – even if Marine Atlantic should fall behind schedule, which was an issue members complained about in the past,” Cormier said. The council also recommended lifting any cancellation charges as long as 12 hours notice has been provided as well as allowing for last-minute reservations within a pre-determined time from sailing.

“These are just ideas we put out for initial conversation,” said Cormier. □

‘The first time the reservation system was launched, it didn't go very well.’

Jean-Marc Picard, APTA



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## CROSSWORD PUZZLE

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24												

**Across**

- Certain cargo restraints (7,6)
- Roll along in neutral
- Cab-top noisemaker (3,4)
- Rural roadside channels
- Fort Erie's border bridge
- Finish on 9-Across item, often
- Warehouse forklift brand
- “Rebuilt” component synonym, briefly
- Flexible drive-train couplings (1,6)
- Cargo protection material
- Major truck-chassis component
- Certain city roads (3,3,7)

**Down**

- Participated in truck drags
- Big-rig power unit
- Pintle or fifth wheel
- Winnipeg-based \_\_\_\_ Group of Companies
- Radial layer, you might say (4,3)
- Word on Hawaii truck plates
- Castrol synthetic gear lube
- Between-rig talk tool (1,1,5)
- Home of “Treasure State” plates
- Industry cargo-volume term
- Truck-dealer's quest
- Boat on four-wheeler's roof
- Second 0 in truck-ad OBO
- Truck buyer's equipment needs, briefly

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QUEBEC

# High-voltage Volvo

## Two 24-volt European Volvos are taking the Canadian stress test

By Carroll McCormick

**MONTREAL, Que.** – Keep your eyes peeled for a black Volvo cabover with “GLOBETROTTER” printed above the windshield deflector and a moose bumper bolted to the grille. Transport Robert is running two of them under a Transport Canada waiver for the next two years in a test of the robustness of their 24-volt electrical systems.

This is a Volvo project. Volvo brought two 2013 Volvo Globetrotter European tractors across the pond in the spring of 2013 and modified them in its North American headquarters in Greensboro, N.C. for the Canada trials. Robert is leasing the vehicles, acting primarily as the operator and keeper of maintenance and repair records.

Volvo wants to learn more about the durability of the Globetrotter’s 24-volt electrical system in different duty cycles, driving styles, living styles and cold climate operation. “Utilizing the Volvo FH (Front High cab) was the quickest way to put a 24-volt system into operation in North America,” a Volvo official told *Truck News*.

“We will run them for two years and prepare a report for every repair or maintenance task. We keep any parts that have to be replaced. Then they will be sent back to Sweden for a component analysis,” adds Yves Maurais, technical director, asset management, purchasing and conformity, Transport Robert.

Perhaps it seems unnecessary that a vehicle type as well seasoned as the Volvo FH, which was introduced in 1993, should need more testing for life in North America. But, Maurais explains, “The trucks in Europe do not pull the same weights, nor are they driven as fast. The trailers are shorter. Volvo wants to make sure the system is sturdy enough for North America.”

Volvo adds, “We hope to learn how the electrical system behaves and reacts...North American applications are different and often require higher hotel loads – using electrical accessories while the truck is parked.”

Robert will be running the tractors in heavy electrical demand situations such as B-trains, long combination vehicles and heavy hauling; ie., over-

dimensional loads. “It is basically an endurance test,” Maurais says.

North American transport trucks have 12-volt systems, but there are advantages to 24-volt systems. “Advantages include enhanced startability, reduced cost and size of wiring due to higher currents and some opportunities to reduce the weight of the starter motor, alternator and window motors,” Volvo says.

“The 24-volt system has plenty of power for accessories and stronger electronic signals. With the amount of electronics involved in today’s trucks, the 24-volt system is better suited to handle all the requirements,” Maurais says.

Although Volvo’s main focus is on the performance of the 24V electrical system and driver and carrier feedback, Robert most certainly has an eye on the fuel consumption of the Globetrotter. In September 2013, Project Innovation Transport (PIT) compared the fuel consumption of the Globetrotter with a Volvo 2014 VNL 670 and a 2009 Volvo VNL 630 tractor. Robert is driving all three Volvo types and comparing them.

The test results are confidential, but according to Maurais, some Volvos can get up to 10 mpg, with an apples and oranges caveat that European and North American Volvos are set up to optimize fuel consumption at different speeds.

The Globetrotters have 460-hp engines, 1,696 lb.-ft. of torque, I-Shift transmissions and a 2.57 rear axle ratio. They are outfitted with Michelin XZA2 295/80 R22.5 tires on the steer-

axles; because of the forward location of the engine, the axles are rated for 12,200 lbs. The drive axle tires are the Michelin XDA 2+ 295/80 R 22.5. The wheelbase is 182 inches. The sleeper has a 30-inch bunk.

The Greensboro modifications include installing a 12-volt converter between the tractor and the trailer, a 90-watt solar panel on the roof, an electrical A/C and heating unit to eliminate idling and modifying the fifth wheel height to 47 inches.

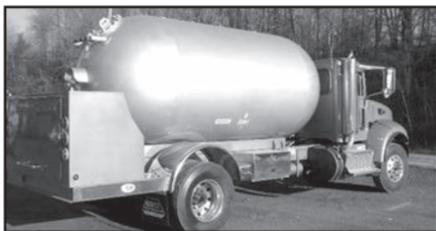
As well, the Globetrotters have lane departure, anti-collision and automatic windshield wiper systems. Robert also opted for an aluminum moose bumper, which Volvo installed at its plant in Sweden. It takes five minutes to remove.

Volvo is making no confessions about whether it is preparing to introduce 24-volt tractors to the North American market.

“This project is part of our normal evaluation of possible solutions for our products,” Volvo says.” So are 24-volt transport trucks the future in North America? “It’s too soon to say, but there are some advantages,” Volvo adds.

Maurais comments that 12-volt transport trucks are behind the curve compared to construction vehicles, for example. He also reveals an interest in the cabover. “The ride is different and we will collect data and comments from our drivers. I don’t think there is a formal plan to introduce European trucks in North America any time soon, but we never know.” □

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## ONTARIO

# Ontario truckers urged to master the art of raising prices

Continued from page 1

together, but also for carriers to work with other carriers. They also spoke about, as Perry phrased it, how trucking “is in radical need of a pricing renaissance, in understanding where you have market power.”

The session kicked off with Ene-najor giving CIBC’s outlook: think around 1.5% GDP growth, much of that tied to the US. Slow, flat growth, but growth, nonetheless. There’s been a pick-up in US manufacturing, she said, nodding towards re-shoring. But here in Canada? Not so much. In fact, that very same day Heinz announced it was closing its 104-year-old Leamington, Ont. plant.

“In terms of what is the outlook, given that Canada is leveraged quite heavily to the US, our leverage to the US has actually been a very good thing recently, from the perspective of exports.”

Canada’s exports to the US have increased throughout the recovery, she noted. “We do see improvements,” she said. “Canada’s going to be piggybacking a little bit on the US in terms of our ability to export to the US. We really need external growth to boost domestic growth and we’re likely going to see that in 2014 as we see US growth accelerate in the coming year.”

Still, don’t expect much from Canada’s manufacturing sector, she said. “It’s likely that manufacturing will be less and less an important part of the Canadian economy and resource extraction will increasingly be an important part – and when I say resource extraction, I mean primarily oil and gas.”

There’s lumber, of course, and other goods tied to housing. But while the US housing market has had a bit of a comeback recently, it’s hit or miss.

“You are seeing some recovery in housing, but it’s not universal,” Larkin said. “There’s a house across the street from us in Baltimore that’s on the market for what we paid for our house... over 20 years ago. It’s a little depressing to think about that, but it goes to show that the entire housing industry hasn’t turned around.”

As for how the trucking industry survives in a slow growth environment, with Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) regulations set to shave a few points off productivity, according to FTR, showing that capacity is at an all-time high, well, that’s where pricing comes in.

“The pricing culture in our industry, whether it be north or south of the 48th latitude, is based on 50 years of falling costs,” Perry said. “And therefore we didn’t have to learn the art of price increase in this industry. Well, them days is over.”

We need an environment where people know how to bring prices up when necessary, he said.

“The proof is if you look at Heartland and Knight, the publicly traded guys, who have answered this, their operating ratios are what? Ten points lower than the good carriers? And it ain’t because they hire cheaper drivers or buy fuel cheaper than you guys do, it’s because they know how to price with respect to the productivity of the move. I believe that in the US – and there is bound to be a big spillover in Canada – if indeed the FMCSA does what they say they are going to do, there is going to be a major capacity crisis. That ca-

capacity crisis may provide the market opportunity where truckers will re-frame the way they price. Right now they are shy, and I think you guys are shy, too. If the market tightens, we’ll get a change in that.

“Price has been near zero for the last year and a half,” he continued. “Most of the publicly traded guys either lost margin in the last quarter or came in below expectations. It’s because they have not been able to take advantage of this market opportunity, despite the fact that this market opportunity has

– and they expect their large suppliers to bid on most of those lanes.

Well, how many dry van carriers or reefer carriers have the capability to bid in a big way on a Walmart tender?”

Five. “And at some point, as the railroads have learned after years of chaos, those five guys are going to figure out how to price in a way where they don’t ruin their margins by market share competition.”

Payne backed Perry. Looking at his company’s Canadian General Freight Index (CGFI) from 2008 to August

‘The pricing culture in our industry... is based on 50 years of falling costs. And therefore we didn’t have to learn the art of price increase in this industry. Well, them days is over.’

Noel Perry, FTR Associates

been making their costs higher. So there’s a big issue here. We had it for a short time in ’04, but then the shock of the Great Recession caused everyone to go into the hole again. There is a major need for a complete re-framing for the way that we price in aggregate, and the reason is that instead of costs going down and not having to worry about price, costs are going up. That’s the simple conclusion.”

The trucking industry isn’t really an infinitely open market, he said. “It’s a collection of individual markets, each of which has two to five individual competitors. So it’s a collection of many oligopolies. For instance, take a look at Walmart’s bids. Walmart sends out these spreadsheets that have thousands of lanes in them – I’m sure some of you have competed on that

2013, pricing has only increased marginally, he said. “And if I look at a year ago, we are still three points behind where pricing was a year ago. We are getting the same trends and I do think those opportunities are there for the tide to change.”

The last time the trucking industry saw large-scale success in pricing was after the hours-of-service (HoS) changes in 2004, noted Perry.

“That particular change was distinguished by a large amount of public commentary by the carriers about the cost increase from hours-of-service; it legitimized the price increases. One of the things that’s happening right now is that the carriers... are doing the same thing with respect to the change this time. It’s a month or two late, but if you look at the trade press you’ll see

panels with five truckers and each one says the same thing: ‘Hours-of-service is decreasing my productivity by 3-5%, I’m taking prices up’.”

It’s those looming regulations that may be setting the stage for a capacity crisis. “There are 27 agendas now that the US regulatory agencies have and when these shocks hit the system, we get behind in the driver hiring and capacity shortages result,” Perry said.

If the FMCSA does what it says it’s going to do, there will be a major capacity crisis, Perry said plainly.

While being aware of the possible fallout from government regulations is important, it’s clearly not where you want to put all your chips. The best game in the house right now is working with shippers to cut costs.

“This is really where the big land of opportunity lies,” Larkin said. “We can’t really rely on longer trailers – rely on wider or taller trailers or longer combination vehicles – we’re not going to have more hours-of-service to work with, everything is pushing in the direction of less productivity. The real field of opportunity is shipper and carrier working together, and in some cases carrier and carrier working together, to turn equipment quickly.”

The industry can’t afford to have equipment tied up at loading docks for four or five hours, he said. “We have to figure out how to do that more efficiently. If it takes opening the loading dock off-hours, maybe we’ll have to try and figure out how to do that and split the benefits of doing so.”

The last couple of years have seen a focus on TMS systems he said, “better costing systems, better network optimization, no wasted available hours-of-service, minimized empty miles. There’s been a tremendous amount of progress in this arena,” he said, progress that has delayed “the mother of

## Fuel costs, diversifying and mergers

Here are a few other key areas the OTA’s Economic and Industry Outlook panel touched on:

### Driver shortage. Friend or foe?

The difference between the average wage of an American worker and that of your average American trucker is \$6,000. Still, said Larkin, he’s guessing that if trucker wages were in line with the national average, that still wouldn’t be enough. “We are aware of some companies – take Heartland Express as an example – that are at the very top of the pay scale. If you do everything that you are supposed to do as a driver, earn a little better pay in the northeast, you can make \$60,000 to \$65,000 relatively easily.”

Thing is, Heartland struggles to find drivers “and their pay scale is well above the limits. It occurs to me that there is something else going on here; it’s a very difficult job and we’re not making it a whole lot easier. But anything you do to relay freight and get your drivers home and allow them to see their daughter’s ballet recital really does help.”

Larkin said that it remains a big challenge, one that the big carriers are better suited to solve. “Ultimately, they will have what drivers are available working for them and that will put them in a strong position as regulations kick in here to upsize price increases.”

### Mergers and acquisitions

It’s picked up this year, especially in recent months. Heartland bought Gordon Trucking, Celadon purchased Yanke, and Vitran sold off its US LTL so it could focus on its much better performing Canadian LTL operation.

“It is tough to grow organically in this sluggish economy, so companies are relying on acquisitions to grow,” Larkin said. “Often times there is a generational issue where the next generation in line is not capable or willing to do so.”

And, added Perry, “if you were an aggressive trucking entrepreneur in 1980, you are now 70. So the people that built the industry are now retiring.”

### Diversifying

Are LTL and TL carriers diversifying their operations?

Yes, said Larkin. “The thought is customers are looking for a one-stop solution and the question then becomes, do you integrate those services or run them separately? Is your management team capable of handling all those different operations? Can your systems knit together all these operations?”

It may sound great on paper, but be careful of spreading yourself too thin. “We think it’s rather difficult to be all things to all people and do a good job. It has been our experience that those that are diversified really struggle to optimize all those operations and to get the marketing synergies.”

### Fuel surcharges

According to FTR’s Perry, fuel surcharges are not as important as they used to be, but that doesn’t mean you should ditch them.

“First off, no one is talking about the price of fuel going back down to where it used to be, so therefore if your fuel surcharges are pegged at let’s say \$2 a gallon, you still need that fuel surcharge to cover the cost unless you want to revolutionize your pricing and do away with it. The second thing, which is obvious, is that fuel prices aren’t changing anymore, at least not very much. So in the short-term, fuel surcharges are not that important. The danger here is we still have the opportunity for shocks, which either raise the price up or surpluses which lower the price and so my advice to is keep the ones you have because there is a chance we can get some variation on this.” □

all capacity shortages that may not arrive here until more and more regulations are put in place.”

“This really is the land of opportunity and it’s time for shippers to stop beating the carriers over the head on price and start working with their highest quality carriers to find a way to do things more ef-

ficiently and to split the benefits between the shipper and the carrier. That’s really, it seems to me, the enlightened way to do things in this environment.”

Perry seconded Larkin. “The smart guys are ahead of the curve and they are enlightened.”

Here again he pointed to Heart-

land and Knight. “They are twice as profitable as the rest of us. So as the industry gets better at pricing, the incentives to the customers to do exactly what John said will become far more powerful and it won’t be just the smart guys, people like Cargill who are doing it already – it will be everybody.” □

*Truckers aren’t the only ones looking for better rates. Drivers and owner/operators are also hungry for a fatter paycheck. Is hourly pay the answer? Is it even feasible? Find out with our exclusive feature Is it About Time? in the Jan/Feb issue of sister publication Motor-truck Fleet Executive.*



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# OTA recognizes industry contributions through annual awards

**TORONTO, Ont.** – The Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) gathered for its annual convention Nov. 13-14 at a new venue, the Ritz Carlton Hotel in downtown Toronto. As always, the association presented a number of prestigious awards to drivers and executives who have done the industry proud.

### Driver of the Year

Whether it's on the road, on the ice or under a steeple, 40-year-old truck driver Chris Bender is someone who people look to for guidance and leadership. Bender, a truckload driver for Steed Standard Transport in Stratford, Ont., was named the 2013 Volvo Trucks Canada-OTA Driver of the Year for Ontario. With his wife Brenda by his side, Bender accepted the award during a ceremony at the Ontario Trucking Association's 87th annual conference in Toronto.

The presentation of the award was made by Peter Currie, Ontario district manager, Volvo Trucks Canada.

"My fascination with trucking goes back to my childhood when I spent hours pretending to be a truck driver hauling sand from one end of the sandbox to the other," said Bender. "It's no wonder to those who know me where I ended up. Some days I feel guilty going to work because there's nothing else I'd rather be doing."

Over his 16-year driving career, Bender has amassed about two million collision-free kilometres and has received the Steed Standard Transport Driver Appreciation Award four years in a row.

In addition to his driving duties, he is a designated driver-trainer and has become a mentor to many of the company's new drivers.

Bender is a passionate advocate for safety in trucking and says he wants to change the negative way the industry is sometimes portrayed in the media. Bender is a member of the OTA Road Knights team, spending many hours educating school children and others about the industry.

"Truck drivers, by nature, are strong individuals who are used to tackling and completing tasks all on their own. Chris is that kind of person, but he also excels in serving others and his community. He's someone who others gravitate towards for support and guidance," said Currie.

"Chris is an exceptional class A driver," added James Steed, president of Steed Standard Transport. "We're honoured to have Chris as a part of our team and we thank him for his continuous dedication to safety and customer service."

### Truck Hero

On a spring afternoon in Oakville Ontario, a tanker truck negotiating a ramp at the QEW at Royal Windsor Drive suddenly rolled over at the mouth of the highway. The driver, suffering from life-threatening injuries, be-



**DRIVER OF THE YEAR:** Driver of the Year Chris Bender of Steed Standard Transport receives his award as wife Brenda looks on.

came trapped inside as diesel fuel quickly spilled out of the truck. Contrans Flatbed Group driv-

er Stephen Lill of Stoney Creek, Ont. happened to be travelling closely behind on the ramp and

witnessed the devastating accident first-hand. Overcoming his shock, Lill immediately pulled his truck over near the crash and sprung into action.

"When I got out of the truck there were some guys that told me to stop," Lill explained. "They said no one could have survived that, so don't bother going to the truck. I said 'Have you checked?' They didn't. So I said 'Get out of the way, I'm checking'."

Lill crawled partway into the cab and began talking to the severely injured driver, trying to keep him conscious and establish communication. During all this, Lill was on the phone with 911 while also calming tensions from bystanders who implored Stephen to leave the scene for fear the diesel fuel would ignite and blow up

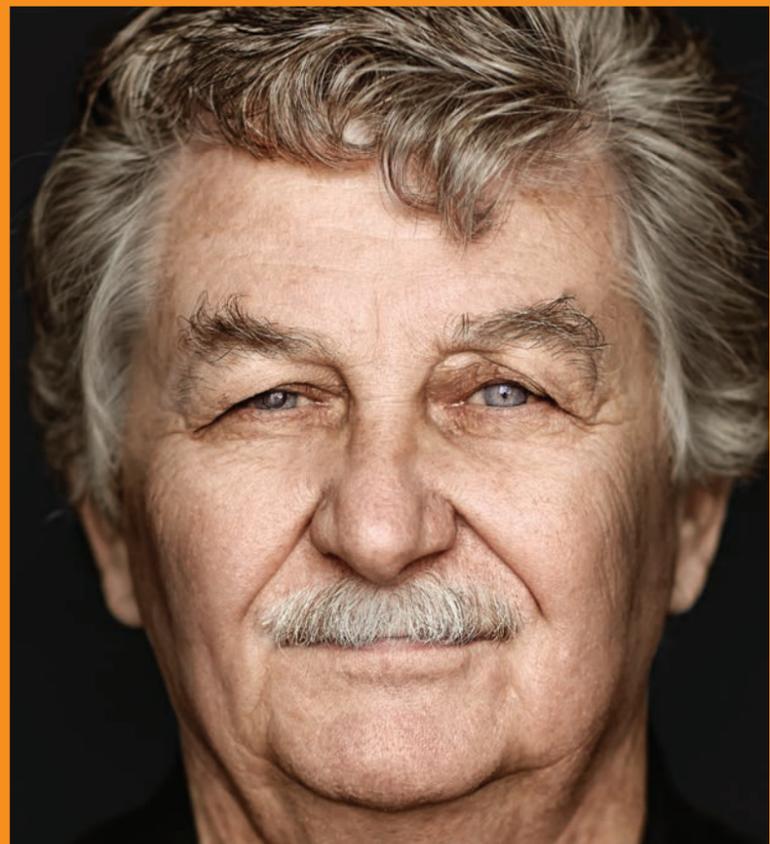
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the tanker.

"I just told him, 'I'm sorry but there's nothing I can physically do to help you.' But I told him that no matter what, I wouldn't leave him," Lill recalled. "I asked if he could hear me and he moved his fingers."

Due to rush-hour traffic, it took nearly half an hour for emergency personnel to arrive at the scene. Eventually, workers freed the injured driver and an air ambulance flew him to Hamilton General Hospital with life-threatening injuries. Fortunately, he made a full recovery.

Those actions were honoured at the OTA's annual convention. At a dinner ceremony, Lill was given the OTA-Bridgestone Truck Hero Award, which recognizes professional truck drivers who demonstrate courage, quick thinking and integrity in the face of an emergency.

"Stephen has made everyone at our company incredibly proud

and we are thrilled the OTA chose spotlight his extraordinary act of heroism," says Steve Brookshaw, vice-president of Contrans Flatbed Group. "His compassion for this driver whom he did not know is astounding, admirable and inspirational."

Kim Trudgeon, the daughter of the driver Lill helped, credits him for helping to save her father's life. "Stephen is definitely a hero to our entire family," says Kim. "We are so thankful that through divine intervention it was Stephen there that day, who put my dad's well-being ahead of his own. We honestly believe that staying there with my dad, trying to keep him conscious, offering encouragement is a big reason why he's still with us today. Stephen's amazing."

#### Service to Industry Award

The winner of the 2013 Shaw Tracking-OTA Service to Indus-

try Award is Norm Sneyd, vice-president, business development at Bison Transport.

Hundreds of his industry colleagues were on-hand at the OTA's annual convention, where Sneyd received his award.

"This award represents the highest honour that can be bestowed upon a member of the trucking industry," said Shaw Tracking vice-president Mike Ham, who presented the award. "I am delighted to present this award to Norm, a man whose dedication to this industry knows no bounds and someone who I am proud to call my friend."

David Bradley, OTA's president and CEO, added, "Norm is truly one of the great gentlemen of our industry; it is such an honour to have him as part of our association and to know him."

Over his career Sneyd has served on the OTA Board of Directors, its Executive Committee

and numerous other special and standing committees of the association. The OTA said Sneyd has been an effective and thoughtful champion of many of the association's causes.

"When you talk to anyone in this industry, he's just one of those rare guys that everyone knows of and absolutely no one has anything negative to say about," said Sneyd's boss, Don Streuber, president of Bison Transport. "And I think it's because Norm genuinely cares about everybody else, right to their core."

Sneyd's career in the trucking industry spans over 40 years, but he first got the itch for big wheels while driving part-time for the Simpsons department store in Toronto during his university years.

He went on to drive for the household moving division of CP Trucks before stepping into an office job and working his way up to general manager.

Sneyd then joined United Van Lines where he became a partner and helped grow the company into one of the most recognized moving fleets in Canada.

He changed lanes a couple of more times after that and was named president of Highland Transport before settling into his current position in 2008 as v.p., business development at Bison Transport. □

"We haul petroleum, so claims can be expensive because of environmental issues," says Mr. Archer. "Our previous insurer didn't understand our business. We had a truck burn and part of the highway had to be replaced. They weren't too happy. Northbridge doesn't get worked up when you make a claim."

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Ray Archer

## Driving for Profit to return Jan. 21

**MISSISSAUGA, Ont.** – Driving for Profit returns Jan. 21, featuring Tom Kretsinger Jr., Truckload Carriers Association chairman and president of American Central Transport.

Kretsinger will take part in the popular 'How We Did It' segment, in which he'll be interviewed by moderator Lou Smyrlis about the rise of his business.

American Central Transport is a truckload carrier running about 300 trucks serving the eastern half of the US. The company recently took top honours in the general commodities truckload/linehaul division (20-50 million miles) in the American Trucking Associations' national truck safety competition.

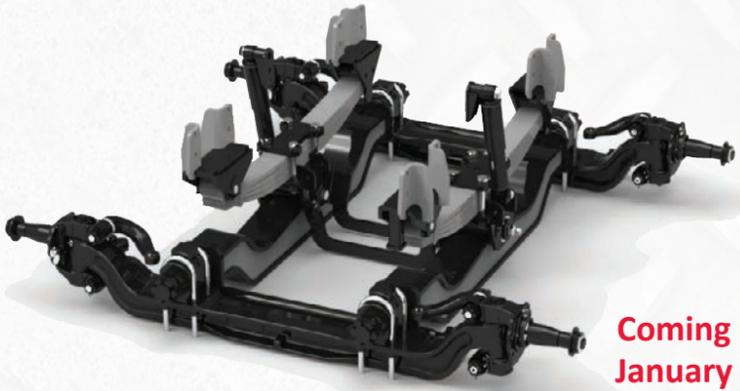
Also returning will be Chris Burruss, president of the TCA and Dave Heller, director of safety and policy with the organization. They'll provide an overview of the US regulatory environment.

Sessions will be moderated by Smyrlis, publisher and editorial director of *Truck News*. Emcee will be Ray Haight, CEO of TransRep. The seminar series is hosted by NAL Insurance and sponsored by *Truck News*, Dalton Timmis Insurance and Daimler Truck Financial.

The cost to attend is \$85 and the half-day seminar includes lunch. It is held at the Capital Banquet Centre in Mississauga. For more details or to register, visit [www.drivingforprofit.com](http://www.drivingforprofit.com). □

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# Partnership brings dual fuel trucks to Ontario

Is the cost of natural gas-powered trucks keeping you on the sidelines? How about a dual fuel option with no up-front cost?

**By James Menzies**  
**MISSISSAUGA, Ont.** – The makers of an alternative fuels management system, a truck rental chain and a natural gas supplier have come together to bring the Ontario trucking industry an opportunity to enjoy the cost savings of natural gas, with no up-front costs.

Traditionally, natural gas-powered vehicles have cost considerably more than their diesel counterparts, which has proved to be a barrier to the more widespread adoption of clean-burning natural gas engine technology. Steve Baty, director of sales and marketing with Alternative Fuels, Alternative Solutions (AFAS), said his company produces a dual-fuel fuel management system that blends compressed natural gas (CNG) and diesel aboard commercial vehicles. The AFAS system is mounted in place of the passenger-side diesel tank and delivers CNG to the engine where it's

mixed with diesel prior to combustion. The percentage of diesel fuel that's displaced varies depending on application.

"If it's cold in the morning, the truck starts on diesel and once the engine reaches a certain temperature, it can start running on dual fuel," Baty explained. "At idle, when parked, it will run purely on diesel. Once you start to accelerate, it will start to add in CNG and as it's adding CNG, the diesel motor ECM reduces the amount of diesel (required)."

At highway speeds of 100 km/h, Baty said as much as 70% of the fuel consumed by the truck will be less-costly CNG. If a fleet runs on-highway 80% of the time, it will achieve about a 50-50 blend between diesel and CNG consumption. The AFAS kits can be retrofit on new or older model year vehicles. Universal Truck Rental Canada has set up a 2007 International 8700 with the system



Congratulations to Mike and Lori Whynot, winners of this year's NAL/WOW Trucks Photo Contest.

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and is preparing to make the truck available for demonstrations. The third player involved in the program is Chelsea Natural Gas, which through its CNG in a Box platform, is able to erect CNG fuelling infrastructure pretty much anywhere it feels there's a market.

Under the partnership, customers looking to achieve fuel savings without a significant capital expenditure can agree to meet minimum fuelling requirements through Chelsea Natural Gas locations without paying directly the cost of the AFAS fuel system, which will be built into the price of the gas.

Currently under the agreement, Chelsea is offering CNG at \$1 per litre, compared to diesel, which is retailing for about \$1.25/L. Baty said customers will enjoy 60 months of guaranteed pricing indexed to diesel on a fixed or variable rate, ensuring ongoing savings. A customer entering into the program today could lock in their CNG at \$1.009 per litre for 60 or 84 months, or sign a variable agreement at a discount of 19.85% less than the per litre rate of diesel.

"The idea is the floating rate can rise and fall with the price of diesel but will be approximately 25 cents per litre less," Baty explained.

Chelsea in turn pays the cost of the technology which retails for \$18,000-\$20,000 per kit.

There are benefits to the dual-fuel technology compared to dedicated natural gas solutions, Baty said. For one, since it's a dual-fuel system, the fuel tanks are less expensive since less on-board storage is required. There are no range limitations and if a problem with the fuel system occurs, the truck can continue to operate on diesel.

Under ideal conditions – a regional haul day cab running a return-to-base route – half the fuel consumed will be CNG. At current rates, this would translate into a 25 cent per litre savings for CNG, or an overall fuel savings of 9.9% (about \$5,000 per truck each year based on 100,000 kms averaging 7 mpg).

Rebate programs may also be available to provide further savings on the CNG fuel spend, Baty added. The program is viable for intraprovincial runs between Ontario and Quebec, Baty noted, since Chelsea Natural Gas is set up there, but fuel savings may be diminished since the truck would likely run out of CNG en-route.

"If you left Toronto, you would run out of CNG in Quebec, but you could get to Montreal, re-fuel and drive back and have benefits on both sides (of the border)," Baty explained.

Universal Truck Rental has 20 locations across Canada, and the plan is to expand the program across the country, to wherever Chelsea opts to locate its fuelling stations. Customers can also purchase the fuel system upfront if they prefer, and in doing so would not be required to meet minimum fuelling requirements through Chelsea. Baty also said more CNG – or even LNG – tanks can be added to the vehicle to make it viable for long-haul routes, but the limitation is accessibility of natural gas. □

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## CANADA

# Carriers go on buying spree to end 2013

Continued from page 1

you have become accustomed to at Yanke.”

Drew Shepherd, operations manager for Celadon Canada, said in a note to Yanke drivers: “Celadon Canada is honoured to take you on as a driver, and we are privileged to have Russell’s best wishes in working with you. As one of the (industry’s) safest drivers, we are excited to maintain your employment and continue helping you and other professional transport operators service existing customers across Canada and the United States.”

Since outlining its Canadian expansion plans to *Truck News* in an exclusive interview last year, Celadon has grown from about 200 trucks here to four times that. In addition to Yanke, it has bought up Hyndman Transport and Hoss Cartage.

“Yanke has been a well-respected Canadian truckload and multi-modal carrier that has provided a high level of dry van freight services for its customers since 1968,” said Paul Will, Celadon president and CEO. “We believe this acquisition offers solid potential to expand our domestic Canada footprint, both over the road and utilizing the rail, to advance our overall service offering growth plans. We’re excited to work with Yanke manage-

ment and look forward to continuing to provide the quality service that the Yanke core account base has come to expect. Based on previous acquisitions, we believe Celadon can enhance that service through upgraded equipment, advanced technology, additional assets, and an industry-leading safety record.”

One day earlier, RTL-Westcan was bought by US tanker giant Kenan Advantage Group, in what appears to be more of a bolt-on acquisition that allows the US company entry into the Western Canadian market. The deal included 480 tractors and 2,000 trailers that operate out of 16 terminals in B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan and the Northwest Territories.

“The acquisition of RTL-Westcan further positions KAG as the elite North American bulk transportation services and logistics provider,” announced Dennis Nash, CEO of Kenan. “The expansion into Canada extends our footprint to better serve a broader customer base while capitalizing on a highly attractive marketplace. Western Canada is a growth region with increasing demand for transportation and logistics services as a result of expanding energy markets, increased mining activity and strong macro drivers.”

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UNIT K496 - 1998 BEDARD 2200 cu.ft. aluminum pneumatic A/R quad, five hopper 4" discharge, Safetied.

In a press release, it sounded like Kenan may not be finished with its expansion.

“We intend to focus on growing with the combined customer bases while also pursuing strategic acquisitions that enhance our capabilities. Keeping true to our strategy of acquiring ‘best in class’ companies, we are proud to have Grant Mitchell and the RTL-Westcan Group’s talented employees represent KAG as the flagship company for our newly established Canadian platform,” Nash said.

Also in Western Canada, Manitoulin Transport announced on Nov. 25 it was taking over Smooth Freight and its Manitoba-based LTL, truckload and storage trailer operations. The company serves more than 300 communities in southern and western Manitoba from terminals in Winnipeg and Brandon.

“A key component of Manitoulin’s growth strategy continues to be building out our reach and service offerings in Western Canada,” said Don Goodwill, president, Manitoulin Transport. “We look for highly successful companies, with a customer-oriented culture that strongly reflects our own. Smooth Freight fit the bill on all accounts and we are delighted to welcome them into the Manitoulin family.”

The company adds 200 trailers and 25 trucks to Manitoulin’s fleet.

“Like Manitoulin, Smooth Freight has been a family owned and operated business for many years,” said Borden Hadley, founder and former owner, Smooth Freight. “We’re excited about this development and delighted to become part of a continuously expanding and highly reputable enterprise that shares our values and puts the customer first. Importantly, we believe our customers will benefit greatly from having more choice now in Manitoba when it comes to their transportation requirements, through easy access to the full suite of transportation services Manitoulin can provide.”

Manitoulin announced that Hadley would remain on in a consulting capacity, while Bobbi and Tobi Hadley would maintain their sales and management roles.

Not to be outdone, Contrans Group was also busy, announcing on Nov. 25 the acquisition of Guelph, Ont.-based Best Transfer. Best provides flatbed, tank and dry bulk transportation services and will add about \$8 million in revenue to Contrans’ operations.

The deal includes Best’s 30 highway tractors and 50 trailers.

“The purchase of Best Transfer fits well into the existing competencies of our Ontario divisions,” said Contrans’ chairman and CEO Stan Dunford. “We have existing relationships with many of the Best customers and believe that our purchase of Best Transfer will enhance those relationships with the ability to provide additional service capacity. The purchase also expands our terminal footprint with an additional terminal and yard space along the busy 401 corridor.”

And if that wasn’t enough M&A activity, Manitoulin was again active Dec. 9, announcing the acquisition of Vitran Corp. in a deal worth about US\$128 million, or US\$6 per outstanding share. The Vitran acquisition occurred just as this issue of *Truck News* went to press. Visit [www.trucknews.com](http://www.trucknews.com) for more details as well as reaction. □



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<p><b>SUPER CLEAN UNIT</b></p> <p><b>(10) 2010 INTERNATIONAL PROSTAR</b> 485 H.P. Cummins ISX engine, Fuller 13 spd. trans., air/ride susp., 3.70 ratio and 230 W.B. 12/40 axles. Call for Price.</p>	<p><b>I-SHIFT</b> <b>DEF/SCR</b></p> <p><b>2012 VOLVO VNL780</b> Volvo VED 16 550 H.P. engine, Volvo 12 spd. trans. 229 W.B. Power locks, windows, mirrors. Call for Special Price.</p>	<p><b>5 UNITS</b></p> <p><b>2009 INTERNATIONAL PROSTAR</b> Cummins ISX 435 H.P. engine, Fuller 13 spd. trans., 230 W.B., 12,350 lb. front axle, 40,000 lb. rear axle. Call for Price.</p>

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### ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

## 'Muted expectations,' advised for ongoing economic recovery

*Next recession could be just two years away*

**By James Menzies**  
**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – Motor carrier executives “Should not have high expectations for the remainder of this recovery.” That was the somber advice from Noel Perry, managing director and senior consultant with industry forecaster FTR, when addressing clients during a recent State of Freight webinar. While US GDP growth has been moderate through the first three quarters of 2013, Perry noted it’s

from 2009 is 2016, so you should have in your scenario portfolio a recession in the next couple of years, regardless of whether we or anyone else forecasts it.”

The economic outlook in the US seems destined to remain on shaky ground. Perry said its total debt is now greater than 100% of its GDP, putting it on par with nations such as Portugal and Ireland and worse than France and Italy. This is “no big deal” in the short-

‘You should have in your scenario portfolio a recession in the next couple of years.’

Noel Perry, FTR

expected the government shutdown in October could reduce Q4 GDP by half a point.

At the same time, the industrial sector and home sales have leveled off.

Worse yet, Perry noted, “We are now at the point where historically, you would begin to expect a recession at some point in the next two to three years...History says recessions tend to occur in five- to seven-year increments and seven years

term, said Perry, but it could “reduce our flexibility for the future.”

Since the credit markets continue to be willing to lend the US money, there’s no sense of urgency to resolve the debt situation, Perry explained. This means there could be further wrangling among politicians in Washington over whether to cut spending.

“The only real risk from this situation is that at some point, we could have a long-term shutdown of government,” Perry noted.

As for the freight outlook, that too could be softening. Industrial production thus far through the recovery has outpaced GDP growth, but that has come to an end as the recovery transitions into a “service-driven” recovery.

“Freight growth is likely to be less than it has been so far in this recovery,” Perry said, noting it so far has been quite strong, with freight demand growing at about 5%. “The industrial production bar is not as exciting as it was earlier in this recovery.”

Even Perry’s seemingly bleak forecast could get worse. He noted forecasts are built upon a “relatively calm world” and conditions could change in a hurry if consumers or investors overreact to negative quarterly indicators.

“This recovery has been unvolatile,” Perry said. “Even though we’ve had disappointing growth, we’ve had stable conditions. That makes it easy to invest and easy to manage a truck fleet because you’re not trying to chase the market up or down. One of the critical variables over the next couple of years is, will this stability continue? History says it won’t and therefore, my strong recommendation is that you keep your operations and your investment horizon flexible, because things can change rapidly.”

Perry did have good news to deliver on the fuel front, projecting diesel prices to remain flat through 2014 and “maybe as far out as 2016.”

An onslaught of new regulations continues to provide headwinds for carrier productivity. The new hours-of-service rules introduced last summer necessitated the hiring

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of 50,000 drivers in the US, Perry said, and for many carriers struggling with 100% turnover, that really means hiring two drivers for every one position that needs filled. But the real impact of the new HoS rules may not yet have been felt, Perry warned.

“The hiring mechanism is not that flexible, so people get behind and it takes three to four quarters

to catch up,” he explained.

Trucking is now enjoying strong capacity utilization, Perry noted, but to achieve that, it has shaken out its “excess surge capacity,” meaning a sudden spike in demand for trucking services would likely result in a strong pricing increase. And that just may be the best outcome carriers can hope for in the short-term. □

## Good news ahead for global and Canadian economies, CITT hears

**TORONTO, Ont.** – After five tough years, the global economic picture is starting to shape up for the better and Canada is well-positioned to take advantage of the new opportunities, according to David Newman, a transportation market analyst with Cormark Securities and the luncheon speaker at CITT’s conference Nov. 4.

Newman said from the outset that he was bearing good economic news and he delivered on several fronts.

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.

“What we are hoping is for all to align at once – synchronous global growth,” he said, adding 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.

“We have what the world wants and we stand to benefit,” Newman said, pointing out Western Canada with its strong raw materials base is particularly well positioned.

The growth in manufacturing is a good indication of what’s to come. Manufacturing around the world expanded in October and US manufacturing is at its strongest in 2.5 years. US auto sales are almost at pre-recession highs. They were at 16 million in 2007 and are expected to hit 15.7 million in 2014 and 16.2 million by 2015.

US housing starts, although nowhere near their peak levels from prior to the recession, are nevertheless continuing to recover and unemployment is down to 7.2% from the 10% peak during the recession and US consumer confidence peaked in June.

In Canada there are concerns about a correction in the condo market but the single family house market should be safe.

“It’s unlikely we will witness a US-style meltdown. It’s not going to happen,” Newman said, due to the much stricter Canadian lending rules.

Canadian unemployment is down to 6.9% from the peak of 8.7% back in August of 2009.

Newman forecasts GDP growth of 2.5% to 3% for the US and a more muted 2.2% in Canada for 2014.

“We are near recovery mode. Nowhere near the peaks of the past but we are on the right track,” he said. □

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## INDUSTRY

# Working together

Shipper-carrier forum building understanding, respect for challenges buyers and sellers of trucking services face

A little bit of tension between buyers and sellers always exists regardless of the product or service. A certain degree of tension is a good thing – it keeps everyone honest. This is as true for the buyers and sellers of freight transportation service as it is for anything else. No one involved in the supply chain will see this as a great revelation. It's a fact of life.

However, the existence of some level of tension should not preclude the development and nurturing of more constructive and productive business relationships and partnerships. The strength of any relationship, business or otherwise, is predicated on some basic traits: good communication and trust.

In an effort to improve the level of



DAVID BRADLEY & BOB BALLANTYNE

communication and trust between the shipper community and the motor carrier community, in 2013 our two associations established a joint forum to encourage informal discussion between OTA and CITA members. The primary goal was to share respective challenges in an effort to better understand their roots, generally aimed at building the relationships between both associations, and their members, necessary to undertake joint efforts to get waste and inefficiency out of the freight transportation system. A further objective was to work together to help address mutual concerns over service levels, capacity and cost.

No doubt both groups held certain biases heading into the discussions. Both groups were likely pre-conditioned to anticipate some of those biases. To some degree at least the carriers no doubt expected the shippers to be less than appreciative of the challenges posed by ever-increasing operating costs, the shortage of qualified drivers and the obligations that a carrier must accept in order to run a safe operation. The shippers on the other hand likely felt the carriers did not understand how their role within their organizations has changed over the years with the advent of purchasing departments, increased use of 3PLs, etc., and the pressures they are under to contain costs and to justify costs increases.

The first meeting of what has become known as the CITA-OTA Shipper-Carrier Forum was held in May 2013 in Toronto. There were few expectations for that first meeting, beyond "feeling each other out."

But what transpired was actually rather encouraging. In fact, the participants emerged from that first session developing some best practices for both groups to adopt in order to maximize the relationship and, most importantly, they agreed to meet again within six months' time.

The second installment of the Shipper-Carrier Forum took place in November, again in Toronto. While most of the participants were the same people that had met in May, there were also some new faces and fresh perspectives.

The discussion covered everything from when longer-term contracts were appropriate, to what both shippers and carriers need to do to make the bid process more transparent, accurate and fair to the incumbent carrier, to the impact of such things as the tightening of the US rules governing truck driver hours-of-service on productivity; the potential for changes to the transportation of dangerous goods regulations in the wake of the tragedy at Lac Megantic; to the need for all parties in the supply chain to accept their fair share of the liability in the event that something goes wrong. Calculating and administering fuel surcharges was identified as a challenge for both shippers and carriers. Carriers made the point that the fuel charge formula can be whatever shippers want it to be so long as at the end of the day  $2+2=4$ ; in other words that the combination of rate and the

fuel surcharge leave the carrier whole. Some shippers expressed the view that they preferred their carriers to submit a base rate then charge accessories for things like dwell time indicating that being charged for those costs separately may lead to a greater opportunity to reduce them.

The shortage of truck drivers was recognized by both groups as a looming threat to the unfettered access to freight transportation service. A study completed earlier this year by the Conference Board of Canada estimates that by 2020, the gap between the supply and demand of truck drivers in the for-hire sector of the industry will reach about 33,000. Market forces will inevitably prevail on such things as driver wages and benefits, which have been stagnant for the past two decades. (According to the Conference Board, since 1986 the for-hire trucking industry has given away 87% of the productivity gains it generated during the period).

The carriers will have to find ways to address the lifestyle issues which are currently a significant concern for people who might otherwise consider a career as a truck driver. But, there is also an important role shippers can play. They can provide spaces at their facilities to allow drivers to park and rest. They can allow drivers access to washrooms and fax machines. This seems like a simple and reasonable thing but it is a huge issue. By minimizing the amount of dwell time a driver is forced to endure they would actually help drivers and companies utilize their time and assets more appropriately to generate revenue. Drivers are paid to drive. Companies are typically paid to move goods. The window they have to get their miles in is restricted by the hours of service. Being delayed and forced to sit waiting to be loaded and unloaded is perhaps the most frustrating thing they have to deal with and it drives many out of the business.

Of course, both groups stated the views they were expressing were as individuals based on what works in their situation and not necessarily reflective – for better but usually for worse – of what others do. A key challenge for this process is to get the shipper community and the carrier community at large engaged in a similar dialogue. It is also expected that the increased understanding will be reflected in direct negotiations between individual shippers and carriers.

It would be easy to be cynical about the process. No one on the shipper-carrier forum is under any illusion that this can be quickly or easily accomplished. But they will continue to meet and to dialogue in the hope that in some small way the process will continue to contribute to the level of understanding and mutual respect of all concerned. Does anyone have a better idea?

In a small way, it also a good example of how associations provide a forum for dialogue and joint action eventually leading to constructive change. Rome was not built in a day. But not talking or not trying to communicate is no solution. □

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

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# Training needs go beyond those of drivers

Last month in this column we addressed the question of what the industry needs, wants, or can afford in the way of training for entry-level truck drivers. It's at least a three-part question: first, I think we can all agree that training for an entry-level job with safety implications such as that of truck driving is a good thing. It's the other two parts of the question that create the discussion points – ie., what does the industry want in the way of training and what is it willing to pay for?

In addressing the topic last month I pointed out that there are some existing training programs that are capable of doing a fine job of preparing an entry-level driver for a career. There is one in particular that was developed by the industry group, the Canadian Trucking Human Resources Council, which has been called the Cadillac of training courses, but that is seen by naysayers as too expensive.

Absent mandatory training with specified components and outcomes, it is currently left to would-be drivers to find a training centre that will prepare them for that entry-level job with a fleet that cares enough to hire trained applicants. The sheer number of training establishments and the lack of oversight of the quality they deliver can make the choice of school a gamble.

And yet it is a reasonable expectation for any new driver who is shelling out hard-earned money (or for government assistance programs that pay for the training) that he or she will receive a level of training that will qualify them for a decent job. And that's often an unfulfilled expectation.

However, entry-level drivers are not the only workers that need or want suitable training to help them, once they gain some experience, to become professionals. It is generally agreed that one of the most challenging jobs in the industry is that of the dispatcher. To be successful in this role an individual must be part planner, part operations director, part disciplinarian, part human resources expert, part salesperson, part empathetic listening-post for drivers, sales personnel and customers, part expert on transportation regulations, and dare I say it, part magician.

The typical dispatcher in a busy organization needs to be a good communicator, organized, knowledgeable, compassionate, understanding,



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demanding, and who knows what else? Demands come from the boss, from drivers, from customers, and from mechanics who want to service a vehicle that is needed for deliveries or pick-ups at the same time.

And yet, despite the demands inherent in the dispatcher position, experience shows that few dispatchers received any significant amount of training prior to taking on the role, or even as an ongoing part of the job. Indeed, most receive what is loosely described as on-the-job training – the sort that says “here is your desk and Fred here will show you the ropes.”

In that scenario it's anyone's guess as to how your new dispatcher will learn the skills required to do the job well. For example, is it likely that 'Fred' has the expertise (or time) to teach the interpersonal skills that good dispatchers utilize to calm irate drivers or customers? Who will teach the planning methodology required to keep the freight moving as scheduled? How will your new dispatcher react to emergency situations that disrupt those plans? The list goes on, of course.

If you are operating the type of fleet that settles for on-the-job training for your dispatchers the best you can do is keep your fingers crossed that they are quick studies and that nothing goes off the rails while they are climbing the learning curve. Or, you might consider changing your approach in order to utilize some of the established and well-regarded training programs designed specifically to prepare dispatchers for the job you hired them to do.

Of the available programs, there are two with which we are familiar – one classroom and the other online. We do not as a rule mention specific companies or products in this space, but consider these as suggestions as you begin your research into the most suitable program for your dispatchers.

We know that adults have different learning styles so selecting the most suitable type of learning experience is important. You are looking for positive results for your trainee, not an exercise in frustration.

For example, some people learn best in a classroom setting and Transcom Fleet Services has been providing that type of training for dispatchers for many years. Roy Craigen, owner of Transcom, once made an impassioned case for dispatcher training at PMTC's annual conference. It was so well received that we invited Roy back to speak to us again.

Alternatively, for those who can't live without their dispatcher while they are off-site for training there are online courses that the student can work through at their own pace. Trucking

Human Resources Canada provides this type of program. It is intensive, structured, and a good alternative to the classroom. A search of the Internet on this topic found even more dispatcher training programs, so there are choices. As with entry-level driver training however, it's best to check references and examine program contents as well as instructor qualifications prior to signing on. Dispatchers obviously play an important role in the success of your fleet. Do them the courtesy of preparing them for that role. □

– The PMTC is the only national association dedicated to the private trucking community. Direct comments to trucks@pmtc.ca.

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- Jan. 18-22, **National Private Truck Council**, Private Fleet Management Institute, Jacksonville, Fla. [www.nptc.org](http://www.nptc.org)
- Jan. 20-23, **National Biodiesel Conference and Expo**, San Diego, Calif. [www.biodieselconference.org](http://www.biodieselconference.org)
- Jan. 24, **Toronto Trucking Association, Annual Ski Day**, Devil's Glen, Glen Huron, Ont. [www.torontotrucking.org](http://www.torontotrucking.org)
- Jan. 26, **Retail Industry Association Leadership Forum**, Naples, Fla. [www.rila.org](http://www.rila.org)
- Jan. 27-31, **COHMED Conference**, Sarasota, Fla. [www.cvsa.org](http://www.cvsa.org)
- Jan. 27, **Heavy Duty Remanufacturing Group Summit**, Las Vegas, Nev. [www.hdr.org](http://www.hdr.org)
- Jan. 27-30, **Heavy Duty Aftermarket Week**, Las Vegas, Nev. [www.hdr.org](http://www.hdr.org)

## FEBRUARY

- Feb. 10-17, **Toronto Trucking Association Convention**, Grenada [www.torontotrucking.org](http://www.torontotrucking.org)
- Feb. 11-13, **SAE Hybrid and Electric Vehicle Technologies Symposium**, LaJolla, Calif. [www.sae.org](http://www.sae.org)
- Feb. 24-27, **Cold Chain and Temperature Summit**, Montreal, Que. [www.coldchainpharm.com](http://www.coldchainpharm.com)

## MARCH

- March 4-5, **Green Truck Summit**, Indianapolis, Ind. [www.ntea.com](http://www.ntea.com)
- March 5-7, **The Work Truck Show**, Indianapolis, Ind. [www.ntea.com](http://www.ntea.com)
- March 10-13, **Technology & Maintenance Council Annual Meeting**, Nashville, Ten. [www.trucking.org](http://www.trucking.org)
- March 10-14, **Truck Renting and Leasing Association Annual Meeting**, Scottsdale, Ari. [www.trala.org](http://www.trala.org)
- March 11, **Manitoba Trucking Association AGM**, Winnipeg, Man. [www.trucking.mb.ca](http://www.trucking.mb.ca)
- March 23-25, **IWLA Convention and Expo**, Phoenix, Ari. [www.iwla.com](http://www.iwla.com)
- March 23-26, **Truckload Carriers Association Convention**, Grapevine, Tex. [www.truckload.org](http://www.truckload.org)
- March 24-26, **The Logistics Management Course**, Miles S. Nadal Management Centre, Toronto, Ont. [www.seec.schulich.yorku.ca](http://www.seec.schulich.yorku.ca)
- March 27-29, **Mid-America Trucking Show**, Louisville, Ken. [www.truckingshow.com](http://www.truckingshow.com)

## APRIL

- TDB, **Truckers Association of Nova Scotia AGM**, Truro, N.S. [www.tans.ca](http://www.tans.ca)
- April 6-9, **Retail Asset Protection Conference**, Indianapolis, Ind. [www.rila.org](http://www.rila.org)
- April 6-10, **CSVA Workshop**, Los Angeles, Calif. [www.csva.org](http://www.csva.org)
- April 8-10, **SAE World Congress**, Detroit, Mich. [www.sae.org](http://www.sae.org)
- April 10-12, **Truck World**, Toronto, Ont. [www.truckworld.ca](http://www.truckworld.ca)
- April 13-15, **NPTC Education Management Conference & Exhibition**, Cincinnati, Ohio [www.nptc.org](http://www.nptc.org)
- April 13-16, **National Shippers Strategic Transportation Council Logistics Conference & Expo**, Orlando, Fla. [www.nasstrac.org](http://www.nasstrac.org)
- April 24, **BCTA Annual Associate Dinner Meeting**, Surrey, B.C. [www.bctrucking.com](http://www.bctrucking.com)
- April 25, **MTA Spring Fling**, Winnipeg, Man. [www.trucking.mb.ca](http://www.trucking.mb.ca)
- April 25-26, **Alberta Motor Transport Association Annual Conference**, Banff, Alta. [www.amta.ca](http://www.amta.ca)
- April 25-26, **Salon CAM Quebec**, Quebec City, Que. [www.masterpromotions.ca/](http://www.masterpromotions.ca/)
- April 27, **Warehousing Education and Research Council Annual Conference**, Chicago, Ill. [www.werc.org](http://www.werc.org)

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April 29, **IANA's Operations, Safety and Compliance Seminar**, Oak Brook, Ill [www.intermodal.org](http://www.intermodal.org)

April 30 **Trailer Wizards Delta BC Grand Opening** [www.trailerwizards.com](http://www.trailerwizards.com)

## MAY

- May 1-3, **Quebec Trucking Association Convention**, Quebec, Que. [www.carrefour-acq.org](http://www.carrefour-acq.org)
- May 3-7, **Material Handling Equipment Distributors' Showcase**, Orlando, Fla. [www.mheda.org](http://www.mheda.org)
- May 7 **Trailer Wizards Edmonton AB Open House** [www.trailerwizards.com](http://www.trailerwizards.com)
- May 8 **Trailer Wizards Calgary AB Open House** [www.trailerwizards.com](http://www.trailerwizards.com)
- May 12-14, **Transplace Shipper Symposium**, Dallas, Tex. [www.transplace.com](http://www.transplace.com)
- May 14 **Trailer Wizards Winnipeg, MB Open House** [www.trailerwizards.com](http://www.trailerwizards.com)
- May 15, **Toronto Transportation Club Spring Golf Tournament**, Brampton, Ont. [www.torontotransportationclub.com](http://www.torontotransportationclub.com)
- May 24-25, **Road Today Truck Show**, Brampton, Ont. [www.roadtodaytruckshow.com](http://www.roadtodaytruckshow.com)
- May 25-28, **Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators Annual Meeting**, Toronto, Ont. [www.ccmta.ca](http://www.ccmta.ca)
- May 28 **Trailer Wizards Saskatoon, SK Open House** [www.trailerwizards.com](http://www.trailerwizards.com)
- May 29 **Trailer Wizards Regina, SK Open House** [www.trailerwizards.com](http://www.trailerwizards.com)
- May 31-Jun 3, **Heavy Duty Distributor Council Annual Conference**, Gatineau, Que. [www.hddc.ca](http://www.hddc.ca)

## JUNE

- June 3, **Truck News/Chevron Charity Golf Day**, Uxbridge, Ont. Kathy Penner (416-510-6892) or Brenda Grant (416-494-3333)
- June 4, **Toronto Trucking Association Spring Social**, Toronto, Ont. [www.torontotrucking.org](http://www.torontotrucking.org)
- June 11-13, **Supply Chain Canada**, Edmonton, Alta. [www.supplychaincanada.com](http://www.supplychaincanada.com)
- June 12 **Trailer Wizards Montreal (Lachine) QC Open House** [www.trailerwizards.com](http://www.trailerwizards.com)

## JULY

July 25-27, **Fergus Truck Show**, Fergus, Ont., [www.fergustruckshow.com](http://www.fergustruckshow.com)

## AUGUST

- Aug. 11-14, **North American Inspectors Championship 2014**, Pittsburgh, Penn. [www.cvsa.org](http://www.cvsa.org)
- Aug. 21-23, **Great American Trucking Show**, Dallas, Tex., [www.gatsonline.com](http://www.gatsonline.com)

## SEPTEMBER

- Sept. 22-24, **SAE Thermal Management Systems Symposium**, Denver, Colo. [www.sae.org](http://www.sae.org)
- Sept. 4-6, **North American Trailer Dealers Association Trade Show and Convention**, St. Louis, Mo. [www.natdatradeshow.org](http://www.natdatradeshow.org)
- Sept. 17-19, **North American Powertrain Conference**, Chicago, Ill. [www.sae.org](http://www.sae.org)
- Sept. 19-20, **Truxpo**, Abbotsford, B.C. [www.masterpromotions](http://www.masterpromotions)

## OCTOBER

- TBD: **APTA Convention**, Moncton, N.B.
- Oct. 4-7, **ATA Annual Management Conference & Exhibition**, San Diego, Calif. [www.truckline.com](http://www.truckline.com)
- Oct. 5-8, **SAE Brake Colloquium and Exhibition**, Burlingame, Calif. [www.sae.org](http://www.sae.org)
- Oct. 15, **Surface Transportation Summit**, Burlingame, Calif. [www.sae.org](http://www.sae.org)
- Oct. 22-24, **National Conference on Supply Chain and Logistics presented by CITT**, Calgary, Alta. [www.citt.ca](http://www.citt.ca)
- Oct. 27-30, **Canadian Transportation Equipment Association Manufacturer's Technical Conference**, Edmonton, Alta. [www.ctea.ca](http://www.ctea.ca)

## NOVEMBER

- TBD: **OTA Conference**
- Nov. 7-9, **Fleet Safety Council**, Niagara Falls, Ont. [www.fleetsafetycouncil.com](http://www.fleetsafetycouncil.com)
- Nov. 19-20, **Canadian Waste and Recycling Expo**, Toronto, Ont. [www.cwre.ca](http://www.cwre.ca)

## DECEMBER

Dec. 4, **BCTA Christmas Part**, Surrey, B.C. [www.bctrucking.com](http://www.bctrucking.com)

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**HEALTH**

# A flexible shoulder to lean on



Your shoulder joint, the body's most mobile joint, is quite complex.

Most people think their shoulder is just the ball-and-socket shoulder joint (glenohumeral joint) on top of the arm bone (humerous). However, your shoulder actually connects three bones: the upper arm bone, the collarbone (clavicle) and the shoulder blade (scapula). In addition, another smaller joint (acromioclavicular joint) attaches the collarbone (clavicle) to the shoulder.

This smaller joint acts as a stabilizing pivot point, which lets your arm lift above your head.

The main shoulder joint has two kinds of cartilage with two different roles. The white articular cartilage on the ends of the bones allows the bones to smoothly glide and move across each other.

The labrum cartilage circles the shallow shoulder socket (glenoid) and deepens the socket. This cuff of fibrous, rigid cartilage increases the shoulder's stability and allows for a wide range of movement.

The shoulder joint itself, is encapsulated within a tough, fibrous sleeve (synovium), which holds the joint together. The outer layer provides stabilizing protection while the inner layer produces a fluid to lubricate the joint and feed the cartilage.

The four muscles grouped together in the shoulder, along with their accompanying tendons and ligaments, comprise the rotator cuff, which holds the joint together and controls movement. The tendons, tough cords of tissue holding the muscle to bone, enable the muscles to move the joint.

The ligaments, fibrous tissue connecting bone to bone, hold the three shoulder bones to each other to help stabilize the shoulder joint.

Because of its unique construction, the shoulder joint is the only joint in your body that can complete so many actions.

It can make your arm flex, bend, raise forward, extend, pull out, pull behind, pull away, pull into, rotate towards, rotate away from, or circle. Free movement of this joint is essential to complete all these activities.

Lifestyles like truck driving, which keep the shoulder immobile for extended periods of time, can impact the joint's flexibility. People who spend long hours sitting in one position – whether behind the wheel or behind a computer screen – often sit relaxed, with their shoulders curved forward.

Holding this position over a long period of time can eventually cause your shoulders to permanently retain an improper, hunched posture.

On occasion, continued immobility of the shoulder can lead to frozen shoulder (adhesive capsulitis). This immobility may be caused by chronic pain, rheumatic disease, tissue growth within the actual joint, or too little fluid to keep the joint lubricated.

Common treatment for frozen shoulder includes medication (aspirin and ibuprofen) to reduce pain and swelling, heat to improve

blood flow, gentle stretching exercises, electrical stimulation of muscles and nerves, cortisone injections, and as a last resort, surgery.

Rotator cuff disease can also affect the shoulder; this disease includes two conditions: tendinitis and bursitis.

Tendonitis occurs when the tendons become inflamed after being pinched within the shoulder. Bursitis, inflammation of the small fluid-filled sac (bursa) that helps protect the shoulder joint can be caused by disease, such as rheumatoid arthritis, and/or by overuse of the shoulder in activities that include frequent overhead reaching.

Tendinitis and bursitis may occur independently or concurrently. Treatment for both can include rest, ice packs, medicine to reduce pain and swelling (aspirin and ibuprofen), ultrasound to warm deep tissues and improve blood flow, and gentle stretches and exercises to build strength, cortisone injections, and again as a last resort, surgery.

Often rotator cuff disease leads to a rotator cuff tear, which is treated like Rotator Cuff Disease with these additions: hot/cold packs, electrical stimulation of the muscles and nerves, and exercises to improve range-of-motion, strength, and function.

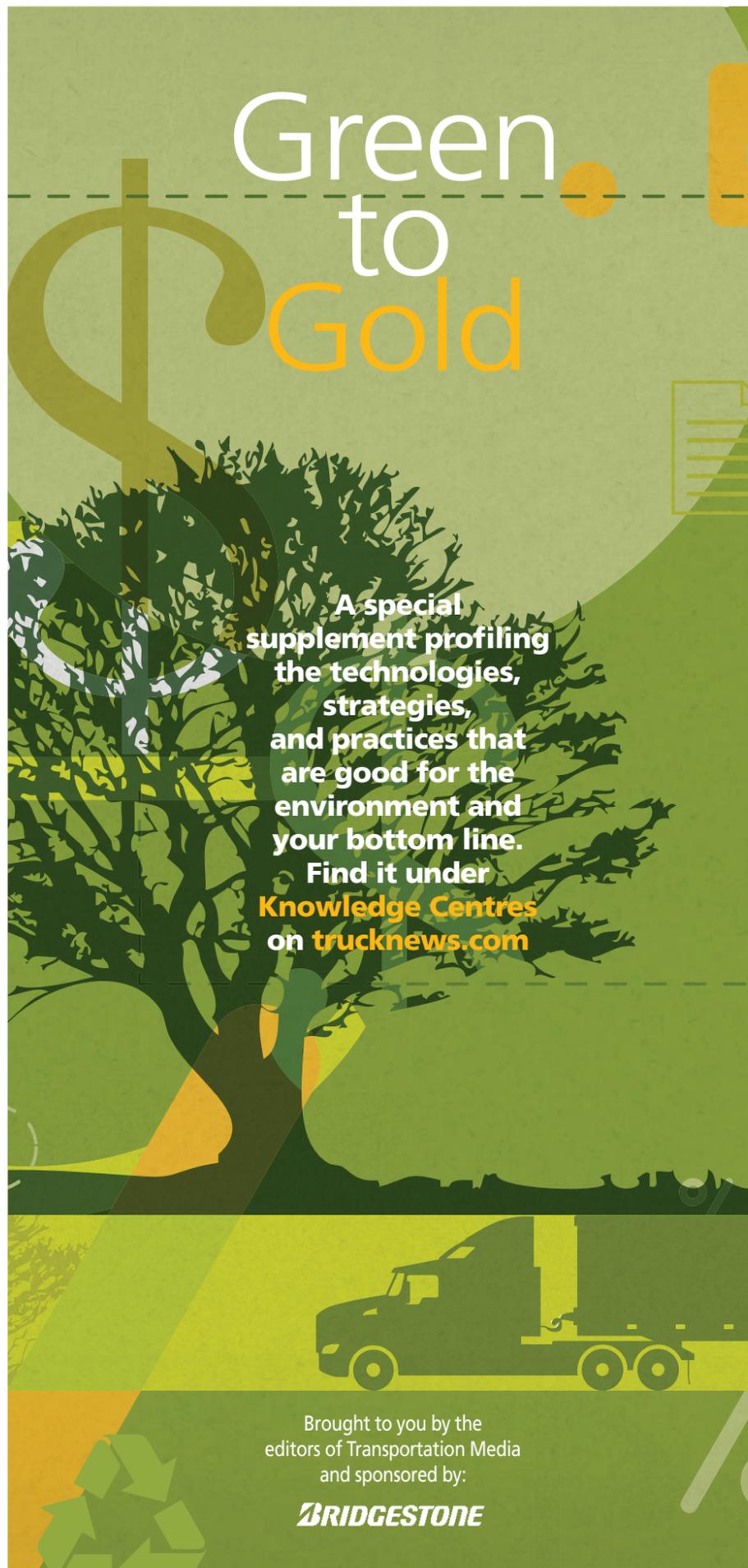
Recognizing all the arm movement your shoulders are involved in, it makes sense to keep them as strong and flexible as possible.

Some simple exercises can help maintain a good blood flow to your shoulder joint and also improve posture.

While driving, complete 10 repetitions of this stretching sequence every few hours: tighten your shoulder muscles and pull your shoulders forward toward each other, hold 10 seconds, relax for 10 seconds, and then pull your shoulders backwards toward each other, hold for 10 seconds and relax for 10 seconds. Repeat every few hours.

At your destination, take a few minutes to complete these additional exercises: Holding your arms out horizontally to the side, slowly rotate them 10 times forward and backwards; Keeping your arms straight, slowly lift your hands above your head, hold for a few seconds and bring them back down; Standing against a wall with your hands behind your ears, touch your elbows to the wall, draw them forward towards each other as far as comfortably possible, then move them back against the wall. Repeat each 10 times. You've got a lot of responsibilities on your shoulders; keep them flexible. □

– Karen Bowen is a professional health and nutrition consultant, and she can be reached at [karen\\_bowen@yahoo.com](mailto:karen_bowen@yahoo.com).



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# Identifying and treating Scoliosis

Scoliosis is defined as a lateral or sideways curvature of the spine. In its most severe form, scoliosis can be a disabling condition. However, most cases of scoliosis tend to be mild. In fact, many people live their entire lives not knowing they had a scoliosis of the spine.

The most common type of scoliosis is called idiopathic scoliosis. This is a fancy way of saying that we don't know why it occurs.

However, there does seem to be a genetic component, as it tends to run in families.

Other less common causes include neuromuscular conditions such as muscular dystrophy and cerebral palsy.

Congenital conditions such as birth defects of the spinal bones can also cause scoliosis.

The symptoms of scoliosis may include noticeable physical differences such as uneven shoulders, waist or hips. Asymmetrical shoulder blades are also a common symptom of scoliosis.

As scoliosis progresses and the curvature of the spine worsens, the spine may rotate which will cause the ribs on one side of the body to become more prominent than the other. If this occurs, back pain and difficulty breathing may be present.

It is important to note that the first signs of a scoliosis often appear after a growth spurt.

It is important to consult with a doctor if you notice signs of a scoliosis in your child.

The doctor will take a detailed history and perform a physical examination.

If your doctor suspects a scoliosis, he or she may send you for an x-ray.

More sophisticated imaging techniques such as MRI or CT scans are generally reserved for the most severe cases.

The good news is that the majority of people with a scoliosis do not require treatment. Most of the time, all that is needed is for the doctor to monitor the spine for any significant changes in the curvature.

Often, children will require check-ups every six months. Generally, scoliosis will stop progressing after bone growth is complete.

In moderate cases of scoliosis in a still growing child, bracing of the spine may be needed. Although bracing will not cure or reverse a scoliosis, it usually will prevent further progression of the curvature.

There are two main types of braces used today to treat scoliosis. The first is called a low profile brace. This type of brace is made of plastic-type materials that conforms to a person's body. It sits under the arms and wraps around the rib cage all the way down to the hips.

The second type is called a Milwaukee brace. This is a full torso brace that has a flat bar in the front and two flat bars in the back.

As you can imagine, this type of brace is very uncomfortable



to wear. Braces are usually discontinued once bone growth has stopped in the individual.

In severe cases in which bracing has failed, surgery may be considered. The most common type of surgery is called a spinal fusion. This surgery involves permanently connecting two or more spinal vertebrae in order to straighten the spine.

Fastening devices such as metal screws, rods, hooks and wires are routinely used in this type of surgery. If surgery is necessary, it is usually postponed until bone growth has stopped.

Other forms of treatment such as physical therapy and chiropractic care may help relieve the discomfort associated with scoliosis. Exercise, stretching and good posture also seem to have a beneficial effect on scoliosis symptoms. 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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**NEW PRODUCTS**

**Accuride launches new coating for steel wheels; extends service life by up to two years**

**By James Menzies**  
**EVANSVILLE, Ind.** – Accuride has announced the development of a new coating technology for steel wheels, which it says will extend service life by two years.

The new Steel Armor coating will better protect against corrosion, and will be available at no additional cost compared to today's process, the company announced in a Webinar with journalists. The new coating will be available in January 2014, Accuride announced.

"The introduction of our revolutionary Steel Armor coating technology ups the ante for steel wheel corrosion protection in the commercial vehicle industry," said Rich Dauch, Accuride president and CEO. "Corrosion continues to be a multi-billion-dollar problem for fleet operations, and demands a solution. Steel Armor provides that solution for steel wheels. Its premium rust protection leapfrogs other wheel coatings with its ability to dramatically reduce fleet maintenance costs."

Accuride conducted extensive testing and found that steel wheels with Steel Armor coatings can be run two additional years before they need to be removed and refinished.

This can provide cost savings of about \$630 per truck, company representatives said.

They also provide better UV durability, boasting a 90% gloss retention compared to today's standard of 75%, so that wheels continue to look better longer, officials said.

Accuride has instead more than \$6 million into powder coating technologies at its plants in Henderson, Ky. and Monterrey, Mexico.

"While others outsource their steel wheel coating, we're committed to keeping that expertise in-house," said Craig Kessler,

vice-president of engineering with Accuride.

"Coatings and their application methods are among our core competencies. This means that Steel Armor is specifically formulated and precisely applied to deliver improved corrosion resistance, as well as UV and chemical durability for the tough steel wheel environment."

The new coating is especially effective around perforated edges, preventing rust from getting in underneath the paint where it can spread, the company claims. The Steel Armor coating will be made standard on all steel wheels beginning in January.

The development of Steel Armor caps a three-year, \$90-million investment into Accuride's wheel-end businesses. □

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Every trip to New York City or Calgary left time to meet friends at a favourite restaurant; famous monuments were always just an off-ramp away.

But my young children were growing up without me. On the road for two to three weeks at a time, I felt that I was missing too many family events. Like every other owner/operator, I also struggled with rising equipment costs and fuel prices.

Collectively, it led me to jump at the opportunity to work in the fleet operations, overseeing trucks, drivers and owner/operators across Western Canada.

The new role offered a chance to apply my skills in an industry I loved, and sent me home at night.

It was everything I wanted. But the change was also a shock to my system.

Like many former drivers who exchange a cab for a desk, I struggled with some of the realities of a workplace without wheels.

Freedom on the road was replaced with a structured schedule and a steady stream of phone calls, e-mails and satellite messages.

The peace and quiet in my cab was exchanged for the never-ending din of a crowded office. Fellow drivers continued their journeys without me.

They are issues that lead some former truckers back to a life behind the wheel.

Experienced drivers can be great candidates for many of a fleet's office-based tasks.

Many successful dispatchers, trainers and safety teams rely on skills that were honed while following a highway's little white lines.

#### Key traits shared

But finding and retaining someone who is the best fit for an office environment will involve looking beyond a clean abstract.

Leading candidates for a new career path or supervisory role tend to share a number of traits. They are the drivers who are always approached by their peers for answers and advice.

And while other drivers prefer to stick with the same routes and customers, these are the employees who appear equally as comfortable when shifting to a new lane or dealing with the demands of the latest client.

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Above all, they have the positive attitudes, which are welcome in every workplace.

Formal orientation programs will prepare these workers for the challenges to come – and set realistic expectations about how lives will change.

Some of the most jarring changes have nothing to do with the office itself.

Drivers who come to enjoy personal downtime can struggle with a new schedule which sends them home to a house full of screaming kids.

And uninterrupted nights in a sleeper might be exchanged for a cell phone that rings in the wee hours of the morning.

**Mentors help with transition**

It's why a new office employee would benefit from the guidance of a trained mentor and a clear description of what a job will be like. Nobody will offer more insight than workers who have gone through such a change themselves.

As experienced as a driver may be, there will also be new skills to master. Formal orientation checklists can help to ensure that steps in a new role are not overlooked, whether scheduling a load or filing an Automated Commercial Environment (ACE) manifest. But learning each skill takes time.

The human dynamics in a workplace might require some attention of their own.

Even the most popular driver can run into jealous peers who feel they are more deserving of an office job.

Extra attention from fellow managers will help to lessen or avoid such complaints before such feelings have a chance to fester.

A new job can represent one of the biggest changes in a driver's life, and any successful transition requires a dedicated focus.

In my early days at a desk, I still found opportunities to deliver an occasional load and bobtail back to the office.

A few trips back and forth to Michigan helped retain my skills at the wheel, and other changes at a personal level made differences of their own.

I found that workouts released some of the stress.

We know that a successful driver orientation program involves more than tossing someone a set of keys.

There should be no surprise that the plan to prepare a driver for a new job will involve more than handing over the keys to an office. □

– This month's expert is Matt Graveline, senior risk services consultant with Northbridge Insurance. Matt has more than 20 years' experience in the trucking industry as both a long-haul driver and an owner/operator. Northbridge Insurance is a leading Canadian commercial insurer built on the strength of four companies with a longstanding history in the marketplace and has been serving the trucking industry for more than 60 years. You can visit them at [www.nbins.com](http://www.nbins.com).



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OPINION

# My 2014 wish list

It happens every year about this time. With the flip of a calendar page, we're into a brand new year. Like many folks, I try to remain optimistic, and look forward with hope and resolution to a year that's better than the one before. Some industry analysts say the second half of 2014 should bring the economic turnaround we've been hoping for, others say we're due for another recession. Apparently, this is all part of the so-called "new normal" for trucking: slower and steadier economic growth, greater emphasis on cost reduction, demand for greater productivity, and a continued emphasis on safety.

Really, the new normal doesn't sound so bad to me, as long as the system is prepared to make the necessary adjustments. Sadly, much of trucking is holding out, waiting for the old normal to return. Rather than hold our breath till we turn blue, here's what I wish would happen as we ease – rather than kick and scream – our way into the new normal.

**Constructive dialogue between shippers and carriers:** Through improvements in productivity and efficiency, trucking has always been able to lower the cost of transportation. But really, that cupboard is bare now; there's nothing left to give up. Shippers don't seem to get this, so carriers need to do a better job of convincing them.

Equipment costs are skyrocketing and any fuel economy gains that could accrue from the new fuel economy

## Voice of the O/O

JOANNE RITCHIE



regs have already been spent. Drivers' wages are pathetic, and there are signs of an exodus on top of the difficulty in drafting new drivers. Shippers need to understand that low rates beget lower wages, and we're already dangerously close to the red line here.

I wish carriers would learn to say no, and shippers would learn the real cost of transportation.

**Restore common sense to our regulatory environment:** Safety remains a top priority for most drivers, but some of the rules we have now, and many we're likely to see in the coming years, are simply over the top. Trucking can't do its job with one foot nailed to the floor. The single most requested change to HoS, for example, is flexibility, and that seems to be my most impossible wish. The new US HoS regs, mandated electronic logging devices, GHG rules, medical requirements, and more, are all pointing to vastly restricted productivity. At what point will drivers just toss in the towel and seek work in some other sector?

**Action on CCMTA's Addressing Human Factors in the Motor Carrier Industry in Canada report:** I'll bet

Continued on page 38

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**OPINION**

**Wishing for change**

**Continued from page 37**

most of you have never even heard of this. The study took three years to complete, and a report was released to government members of CCMTA in 2011. The research resulted in 44 action items to address fatigue, distraction, and risky driving, and was supposed to be the starting point to encourage new discussion among stakeholders. The report acknowledges that human errors are the main causes for crashes, but observes that things like inattention, distraction, and decision errors are not violations of laws and regulations *per se*, so regulations and enforcement alone won't produce safer drivers. Regulators don't like being told that HoS are imperfect and insufficient, and need to be part of a more comprehensive fatigue management strategy, which must include adequate rest areas.

And they are also loathe to look at the inter-relationship between risk-taking and health-risk and the importance of promoting healthy lifestyle programs and encouraging adoption of a health enhancing lifestyle to decrease risky driver behaviours. In my opinion, this report could be a template to repair a lot of what's wrong with the driver end of the equation, including training, wages, fatigue management, and more.

**Meaningful change to recruiting and retention programs:** In 2012, the CTA's Blue Ribbon Task Force on the Driver Shortage released an eye-opening report, which is a comprehensive and honest attempt by the industry to tackle questions surrounding the driver shortage.

Along with frank admissions about mistakes trucking has made in the past, it contained some constructive proposals to improve the situation. Regrettably, that's about as far as it has gone. Not much will change until shippers wake up (see my first wish). Wages won't rise until rates rise. Labour costs are a business input, just like equipment and fuel. Industry recoups other costs, to a greater or lesser extent: why not wages? As I said, the red line of driver tolerance is rapidly approaching, and meaningful increases are long overdue.

**Incentives for improvement:** As odd as it sounds, it's still easier in this business to make more money by breaking the rules than following them. Or another way of putting it, even if one does the right thing, it often comes with a cost rather than a reward.

Things as seemingly simple as fuel incentives for drivers who save their companies the big bucks, and an HoS regimen that encourages compliance rather than the opposite, would get people thinking about how to do the job properly rather than dreaming up ways to cheat the system. I wish carriers would learn that reward works better than punishment – every time.

At the end of the day, it all comes down to wanting a safe workplace, a decent wage, and good work/life balance – what anyone wishes for in their job. And if some of my wishes came true, there just might be a lot more folks looking for a job behind the wheel of a truck. □

– Joanne Ritchie is executive director of OBAC. What are you wishing for? E-mail her at [jritchie@obac.ca](mailto:jritchie@obac.ca) or call toll-free 888-794-9990.

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**TAX TALK**

# So CRA sent you a letter

Starting this month, Canada Revenue Agency is sending out 33,000 letters to help Canadian taxpayers (as they put it) “better understand their tax obligations and to encourage them to correct any inaccuracies in their past income tax and benefit returns.” This is the fifth year that CRA has sent these letters, focusing on certain areas where the CRA has encountered compliance issues in the past. This year, taxpayers who claimed self-employment or rental losses, or who have claimed certain employment expenses on their T1 income tax return, are the target.

If you receive one of these letters it means that you are in this target group. Don't presume that you've done something wrong. Consider it a friendly reminder about how to qualify for certain types of claims and just as importantly what kinds of receipts you'll need so you can support your claims.

If the claims you made on your T1 were accurate, no further action is required. If you think you've made a mistake, you have 45 days from the date of the letter to voluntarily come forward and fix it before the CRA may come knocking on your door.

It's far better to make a voluntary disclosure instead of having CRA initiate a compliance action against you. The process for prosecuting tax-related offenses and recovering taxes owing may be long, but CRA rarely loses once it gets to court (the conviction rate is typically around 95%).

CRA posts details about tax cases on its Web site. While these people represent the extremes in terms of negligence and dishonesty, virtually every case has elements that you may be dealing with yourself. Here are some recent examples:

**GST/HST:** Jean Cormier, owner of a furniture store in Richibucto, N.B., was convicted of tax evasion and fined \$173,129 after investigators found more than 2,500 invoices that were doctored so they appeared to be exempt sales to a Status Indian in order to avoid remitting HST.

The invoices provided to the real purchasers didn't include this information. Auditors discovered the scheme by matching sales invoices, purchase slips, and credit card information seized from the store.

**Cash sales:** Geoffrey Shui Lung Young, a director and one-third shareholder in a company that owns a Chinese restaurant in Winnipeg, pleaded guilty to tax evasion for failing to report \$757,496 in the tax years 2006, 2007, and 2008. The unreported income included cash sales that were deleted from cash register tapes and earnings from private functions held at the restaurant. The corporation was fined \$127,499, or 75% of federal taxes evaded. It also had to pay GST not remitted to the CRA on the unreported income amounts.

**Unreported benefits:** Haverluck Enterprises, a pharmacy in Dauphin, Man., pleaded guilty to federal tax evasion after it failed to report \$481,764 in the tax years 2004, 2005, and 2006. The unreported income included benefits received from a pharmaceuticals company that provided more than \$100,000 of household furniture, a custom wine cellar, and a golf cart.

A drug wholesaler also paid for a family wedding and another golf cart that were improperly claimed as busi-

ness expenses. Personal expenses of Myles Haverluck, one of the corporation's directors, were also falsely claimed as pharmacy purchases or advertising expenditures.

It's incredible to think that Canada's tax system is based on what amounts to an honour code. While 90% of

**Tax Talk**

SCOTT TAYLOR



Canadian taxpayers meet their obligations and file on time, 10% is still a huge number for the CRA to contend with. If you receive a CRA letter, see it as an opportunity to learn

more about the types of claims that CRA is looking at and how to support those claims. Request an adjustment if you find items that were incorrectly claimed in any of the past tax returns you filed. Talk to your accountant about what to do next, before the crush of a filing deadline. □

– Scott Taylor is v.p. of TFS Group. Learn more at [www.tfsgroup.com](http://www.tfsgroup.com) or call 800-461-5970.

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**TIRES**

# Generating savings out of air

Tire manufacturers have been preaching the importance of inflation pressure maintenance for 100 years. Why isn't the message getting through?

**By James Menzies**  
**TORONTO, Ont.** – “Steer tires mounted two weeks ago were found today at 90 psi. A result of pressure set at indoor temps moving to cooler outdoor temps.”

The above tweet was from professional driver Angelo Diplacido, who through his 30-year career as a company driver and owner/operator has become attuned to how ambient temperatures affect tire inflation pressures. Diplacido's tweet was sent out in early December, when much of Canada was feeling the first icy blasts of winter.

According to Donn Kramer, director of marketing and product innovation with Goodyear, every 10 F drop in temperature results in an air pressure loss of 2 psi. So a properly inflated tire at 50 F (10 C) will lose 6 psi at 20 F (-12 C).

“So the tire is already at 94 psi, and if it wasn't at the correct inflation pressure to start with, it might be assumable the tire is below 90 psi,” Kramer explained. “Then you have a 1% drop in miles per gallon and anywhere from 9-16% drop in overall mileage if it's not addressed. It can have a huge impact.”

And that's just the impact of tem-

perature alone. Unfortunately, few fleets and drivers are adequately maintaining inflation pressures even in ideal weather.

“It doesn't matter if you're a big or small fleet, air pressure is the number one thing,” said Stephane Beaudoin, marketing manager, Michelin truck tires.

It would be wrong to assume that large fleets are always better at managing tire inflation pressures than smaller fleets or owner/operators.

“I've seen large fleets with poor tire management,” pointed out Robert Loranger, business development manager, central region, with Yokohama. “They sometimes do not realize that (tires) are their second biggest expense after fuel.”

Tire manufacturers have been preaching the importance of maintaining inflation pressures for 100 years, but “It's still not being given adequate attention,” Kramer contended. Technology such as tire inflation monitoring and management systems have come on-board to help address the issue, but even those systems, when adopted, are not a panacea.

“The reason adoption has not

**Continued on page 42**



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## TIRES

# Tire maintenance requires regular pressure checks

**Continued from page 41**

gone further with that technology is, there is no foolproof solution yet that exists," Kramer said. "There are deficiencies with each one and that has hindered further adoption by fleets, so air pressure is still a major issue."

Ideally, inflation pressures should be checked – with a tire gauge, not a hammer – at least once a week.

"Air pressure is still the most critical component to maintenance of a tire," agreed Bert Jones, product marketing manager at Bridgestone Commercial Solutions. "It's not just keeping it from overheating or blowing out. Air pressure that's properly maintained increases the life of the casing, so you can retread it. So, you're preserving your asset and preserving the value of the casing that you paid for when you bought the new tire."

Perhaps the biggest problem is that too few fleets think of tires as an asset. Certainly, total cost of ownership (TCO) is a concept tire manufacturers often speak of, but how many customers actually evaluate the complete life-cycle cost when selecting a tire?

"One of the issues we see, is some outfits being lured into buying low-priced tires that may not prove to be the best overall choice when the full value of the product is considered," said Greg Cressman, technical services director with Yokohama. "Early tire removals, driver complaints, lost casing value, fewer retreads and lack of service support from the brand are classic pitfalls of just buying on price."

Fleets that don't consider transportation their core competency are among the most likely to buy cheap tires, according to Good-year's Kramer.

"Some of the mid-sized fleets, where transportation is not their business – they need trucks to move their goods – they have a tendency on the maintenance side to look at tire price. That affects their budget. What they don't realize is, they need to manage the tire asset over its life-cycle and in order to do that, they need to partner with a good tire supply vendor," Kramer said.

Some of the larger fleets have very sophisticated tire management programs – some even have a dedicated tire guy or gal – and conduct extensive evaluations that measure total cost of ownership. However, smaller companies that lack the resources to do their own testing can tap into a reputable vendor and access the same expertise. The truck tire market is highly competitive and the in-the-field support being offered by the biggest suppliers is comprehensive. Consultations, however, should begin even before the first tire is installed, pointed out Michelin's Beaudoin.

"When purchasing tires from their dealers, fleets need to make sure they tell their dealers what kind of application they'll be doing," she said. "If you purchase the wrong tire

**Continued on page 53**

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# Glasvan Great Dane shows off CNG-powered shunt trucks

By Daniela Piteo

**MISSISSAUGA, Ont.** – Glasvan Great Dane has announced it will be carrying the Autocar shunt tractor featuring a natural gas Cummins ISL-G engine at all its locations.

On Nov. 12, George Cobham Jr., vice-president of sales with Glasvan, officially made public Glasvan Great Dane's decision to carry the natural gas tractor in an effort to offer the latest and most environmentally sound equipment.

Autocar, North America's oldest manufacturer of truck equipment, now offers alternative fuel-powered vehicles and has seen a 25% increase in the proportion of truck orders with natural gas engines in the last year.

"The truck has more horsepower – 300 hp – and produces around 650 lb.-ft. of torque, but despite the higher ratings on horsepower and torque the truck is expected to burn equal to or around 5-10% more fuel by volume than a diesel," said Cobham.

While the truck may burn slightly more fuel, natural gas costs approximately half as much as diesel.

"The truck is more money. It costs about 40% more than a diesel truck, but there is a payback and amortized correctly, this truck can be cash flow positive right from month one," said Cobham.

The tank on the truck is worth \$25,000, Cobham noted.

"A lot of people think the cost of these natural gas-powered trucks is in the engine or the electronic system, but they are incorrect," said Cobham. "The cost is in the tank."

The engine isn't just larger than the diesel, but also significantly cleaner.

"We look at this diesel truck and we have a very complicated exhaust system on it. It's got SCR – so it's using urea to scrub the exhaust. It's got an EGR valve that takes the exhaust back into the engine," said Cobham. "It's got a DPF – all these terms SCR, DPF, urea, EGR – these are all hot-button terms for trucking companies. All these items, which are EPA-mandatory, cause downtime and that downtime is normally unexpected. It's always a wild card. The truck rarely gives you a warning to when these things are going to happen, this is the same for all diesel engines."

Now, with the Autocar shunt tractor, many of these things have been eliminated because they run on natural gas.

"Natural gas burns very clean. The carbon footprint will be less – we are looking at reductions here as much as 70-80%," Cobham said.

This type of vehicle will become more commonplace in yards and it has been reported, according to Cobham, that Autocar, as of late August, has numerous customers commissioning compressed natural gas powered (CNG) and liquefied natural gas (LNG) engines. □





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**OEM/DEALER NEWS**



**GETTING DIRTY:** Volvo customers can now put a truck through its paces in an off-road environment at the company's new track. *Photo by James Menzies*

### Volvo building off-road track at Virginia truck plant to showcase vocational capabilities

**By James Menzies**  
**DUBLIN, Va.** – Volvo Trucks North America is constructing a road course and vocational track at its New River Valley Truck Plant, where customers can put new vehicles through their paces with or without a commercial driver's licence (CDL).

Work on the track began in the spring, after plant managers devised a plan to keep costs low while building a "state-of-the-art" facility.

Lars Blomberg, vice-president

and general manager of the plant, said "It's always difficult to get money approved, so we sat down together with the union and it turned out we have six to 10 people – maybe more – in the plant who are really skilled when it comes to driving excavators and graders. So we created a team of six people and we started to make some sketches and drawings of how it should look."

Next, a call was placed to Volvo's construction equipment group, and a good deal secured on equipment rentals. Before long, the dirt



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behind Volvo's sprawling 1.6 million square foot truck plant was being rearranged and the track began to take shape.

Two months of near-steady rain slowed progress, but the track is now drivable, and on schedule to be completed by next summer. When complete, it will feature a 1.1-mile paved road course (with banked corners so trucks can easily achieve highway speeds) with an off-road vocational truck track within its perimeter.

This marks the first time Volvo will have a place of its own to demonstrate the capabilities of its VHD vocational truck in an off-road environment. It also means customers – including fleet owners who may not have a CDL – will be able to get behind the wheel of Volvo vehicles without venturing onto the Interstate.

"We will keep an off-road section for our VHD, because we know we can talk a lot about the VHD and we can talk a lot about the I-Shift (automated manual transmission), but it's a completely different thing when you use the I-Shift on a fully loaded dump truck," Blomberg explained during an exclusive visit to the track. "I think you don't realize the benefits of the I-Shift until you sit behind the wheel and try it."

Though it's still incomplete, Volvo recently gave a group of customers an opportunity to drive the track. Their reaction was "very, very positive," Blomberg said, adding "I do believe this will sell a lot of trucks for us if we can get customers inside the truck and give them the complete customer experience."

The facility had another important visitor in recent weeks; Olof Persson, Volvo's global president and CEO, wasn't apprised of the undertaking until he arrived at the plant for a visit.

"He liked it," Blomberg said with some relief. "I took him out on it and he got an opportunity to drive it himself, and he really liked it."

I also had the chance to drive the track, from behind the wheel of a

Volvo VHD dump truck, powered by a D13 engine with 500 hp and 1,750 lb.-ft. of torque. The truck was equipped with Volvo's I-Shift transmission, so I had the opportunity to see first-hand how several of the I-Shift's features contribute to greater productivity and safety in construction applications.

Among the features I experienced were Power Launch (accelerating up an incline, out of a muddy mess) and a feature that allows the operator to rock the truck back and forth out of a sticky situation. This is achieved thanks to the incredibly quick clutch actuation, which allows the transmission to alternate between reverse and forward gears almost instantly.

The VHD itself is a vehicle that probably doesn't get as much attention as it deserves, overshadowed as it is in the construction market by the popular Granite, produced by sister company Mack. Among

the VHD's attributes are a wider cab than what is available with the Granite, and a large, one-piece windshield. The interior of the VHD is spacious and comfortable and it's a handsome truck when viewed from the outside.

Another of the features that was apparent during my off-road drive was the articulation of the rear axles when crossing uneven terrain. This VHD rode on a 46K Volvo T-ride rear suspension.

The off-road section of the track includes grades of various lengths and pitches, some bumpy, rocky sections, dips of varying degrees of intimidation and lots of mud – Mother Nature's contribution.

The I-Shift transmission can handle gross combination weights of up to 164,000 lbs, but Volvo has some reservations if it will be required to handle those types of loads in soft sand.

"You can do almost anything

with this, but for dump applications the concern is where you want to take it and how soft the sand is where you want to take it," explained John Moore, marketing product manager, powertrain. And unlike fully-automatic transmissions, the I-Shift can also be mated to engines that produce 1,850 lb.-ft. of torque.

The VHD has never reached its full potential in the vocational truck segment. But when Goran Nyberg was appointed Volvo's North American president of sales and marketing last year, the vocational segment was one in which he asserted Volvo must become a stronger player.

Volvo now has at its disposal a powerful tool with which it can demonstrate the capabilities of the VHD in a harsh, off-road environment that closely mirrors – or surpasses – the rigors this truck will face on a daily basis. □

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# Progressive fleet first in Mexico to receive Volvo I-Shift

A visit to Transportes Monroy Schiavon reveals a highly sophisticated, safe and driver-focused Mexican trucking company.

By James Menzies

**MEXICO CITY, Mexico** – The Mexican truck market often gets overlooked when new technologies are introduced to the industry in other parts of the world. It's a constant frustration for Laura Mandujano Valdes, director commercial with Transportes Monroy Schiavon (TMS), a sophisticated fleet based just outside Mexico City, which is trying to elevate the professionalism of the industry here.

"The technology that arrives in Mexico is lower than what is offered in other countries," Valdes said dur-

ing a tour of the company's facility.

But that could be about to change. Mexico represents a growing truck market, totaling about 25,000 new vehicles per year, putting it on par with Canada. Truck OEMs are aware of the opportunities this represents.

Volvo has announced a new strategy for the Mexican market, which involves providing feature-laden, high-tech trucks rather than decontented, lower-cost vehicles. TMS has had its eye on the I-Shift for some time, and leapt at the opportunity to be the first Mexican fleet to place

an order for VN tractors with the I-Shift transmission. It ordered 100 such trucks earlier this year, and has already taken delivery of 25 of them. So far, with nearly 300,000 kms of experience, the benefits of the I-Shift are meeting expectations.

Raul Monroy Otero said the I-Shift-equipped VNs are averaging 5% better fuel economy than similar trucks with manual transmissions, and these trucks are not yet broken in. Drivers are reporting feeling less fatigued after a day of driving, and after some initial reticence about using automated transmissions, are beginning to embrace the technology, Monroy Otero said.

The trucking industry in Mexico is facing many of the same challenges it is here in Canada, yet it also has to contend with the perception it's a low-tech industry running shoddy equipment. That may be true of some Mexican carriers, but TMS demonstrated during a visit, a high level of sophistication and professionalism.

For example, while driver wellness has in recent years been brought to the forefront in the US and Canada, TMS has a program that would rival any you'd find north of Laredo. The company runs an on-site medical facility 24/7, and requires drivers to undergo a mini-physical before setting out on each and every trip. Things like temperature, blood pressure and vision are tested a maximum of one hour before the driver leaves the yard. Think of it as a pre-trip inspection for drivers. If medication is required, the fleet provides it free of charge on the spot.

"Through this pre-trip medical service, we check that and we follow up," said Valdes. "The nurse will tell us if he is in the condition to make a trip. If the nurse says he's not able to go, he won't take the trip."

Running close to 500 tractors and serving major customers such as Walmart and Ryder, TMS is large by Mexican standards, where only 100 carriers operate 100 trucks or more. Its nearly all-Volvo fleet averages just four years of age. TMS partners with several major US carriers, with whom it swaps trailers at the Mexico/US border for delivery into their respective countries.

Asked if TMS is interested in participating in the US pilot project that allows qualifying Mexican carriers to deliver into the States, Valdes said she prefers the current arrangement. She worries Mexican drivers would abandon their trucks and never come back, lured by the potential for greater earnings north of the border.

"We have the big risk of losing them," Valdes said. "Every day, Mexicans are trying to cross the border into the US."

While a life in the US may be alluring to some, drivers at TMS make a good wage, one that in some cases can exceed that earned by doctors and other professionals, Valdes said. Drivers there earn about 1.2 pesos per kilometre, or about \$30,000 per year, which goes a long way in Mexico.

Still, the profession remains stigmatized, with few young people looking at truck driving as a viable



**AUTOMATING THE FLEET:** TMS, Mexico's 16th largest trucking company, is the first in Mexico to deploy I-Shift automated transmissions.

career. TMS is aiming to change that. It has built a training school at its headquarters and hopes to begin developing its own drivers. Turnover at TMS is about 25%, well below US standards but still a costly problem.

TMS has an extensive hiring process, which is both costly and time-consuming, but important to weed out undesirable drivers. Valdes admitted trucking attracts some unsavory characters, including those who feel their carrier's diesel fuel is an extension of their own wages.

"They think fuel is part of the salary and that they can steal fuel, that every trip they can take some of the fuel and sell it on the road," Valdes said of some drivers. "We believe we cannot allow them to do that. If we allow them to steal the diesel, the second part will be the tires and at the end they'll take the cargo."

To avoid these issues, TMS conducts extensive background checks, numerous interviews with various departments, a road test and a mentoring program. For every 10 drivers who apply for a position, only one is selected. It takes about a month, and costs \$1,000, to hire a new driver, Valdes explained.

"Sometimes this can be expensive, but we believe we need that special and professional driver to have our units, otherwise we prefer to have the unit just laying there."

Security is not just a concern within the fleet. TMS also contends with real concerns over hijackings and stolen loads. To reduce the risk, drivers travel in convoys and must stop only at pre-authorized locations for food or fuel. Every truck is satellite-tracked and dispatchers closely monitor the movements of loads. When loads do get stolen, two-thirds of the time TMS is able to recover the cargo with the help of law enforcement.

In Mexico, hours-of-service are not yet regulated, but TMS enforces its own rules. Drivers can work just 12 hours a day (including non-driving related work). While TMS brings to the Mexican trucking industry a progressive attitude and heightened level of professionalism, it's keenly aware that it all begins with the driver.

"We see them as our main asset," Valdes said. "It doesn't matter if we have the best truck or the best facility, at the end of the day it's only one man that has everything in his hands...our daily challenge is to make our drivers believe in the importance of what they do." □



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# Why's Volvo hot on Mexico?

## Mexico is evolving into a hotbed for new truck orders, not just a place to export old iron

**By James Menzies**  
**GUADALAJARA, Mexico** – Volvo Trucks has set out to become a more prominent player in the Mexican truck market, by expanding its dealer presence here and re-evaluating its traditional approach to this market.

That was the message from an invigorated Matthew Walsh, managing director of the Mexico region for Volvo, during a media roundtable held prior to the Expo Transporte trade show. The Mexican truck market is growing and now represents about 25,000 Class 8 vehicles per year, putting it on par with Canada. Volvo's share of that, year-to-date, is about 7%, but closer to 10% in the Class 8 tractor segment where Volvo plays.

Volvo this year is on pace to sell nearly three times as many new trucks in Mexico as it did in 2011. The company has launched an ambitious initiative to gain 15% of the market by 2015 (a market share goal it hopes to also achieve in the US and Canada). A key component of that plan in Mexico will be expanding its dealer network from 36 locations today, to about 65 by the end of 2015. That would put it behind only Paccar in terms of dealer footprint, Walsh noted.

Volvo, up till now, has been unable to crack the large private fleets belonging to the ANTP association of private fleets. However, Walsh said the company now has demo units with eight of the largest ANTP fleets and that they are performing favourably.

"We're very optimistic that next year we will see very good penetration from the Volvo brand into these large private fleets," Walsh said.

There are about 750,000 Class 8 trucks in Mexico today, and 400,000 of those are at least 20 years old. The government is now incentivizing the purchase of newer models, by issuing tax vouchers that can be redeemed towards the purchase of new trucks when older units are scrapped through government-approved agencies.

These vouchers cover about 16% of the cost of a new truck.

"Eighty per cent of our sales here in Mexico involve scrapping certificates," Walsh said.

There's also a healthy import market to contend with. Walsh said about 8,000 used Class 8 trucks will be imported to Mexico from the US and Canada this year. Many of them will come from Canada, since Mexican trucking companies favour a Canadian-spec', with 46,000-lb rear axles.

Mexico allows EPA04 and Euro 4 emissions-level engines, but Volvo adheres to the more stringent Euro 4 standard, Walsh said.

"We, as Volvo Group, certify our engines to Euro 4, but the rest of our competition certifies to EPA04. We produce half the particulate matter than our competition does, with similar NOx, so we do run a cleaner solution here in Mexico than our competition," Walsh said.

In 2018, Mexico will adopt the EPA10 emissions standard.

Part of Volvo's strategy for Mexico

is to focus on value, rather than the price of its new trucks. Initially, the company entered the Mexican market in 1994 convinced it needed a low-cost product to compete. However, Walsh said customers are beginning to see value in things like stability systems, automated transmissions and even disc brakes.

One example of this new approach is the launch of the I-Shift automated manual transmission in Mexico. Walsh said he'd like to see at least 35% of Volvo trucks sold here equipped with the I-Shift by 2015. Seven fleets are piloting the transmission with good results, running between one and 100 units.

"These were strategic relation-

ships or strategic applications where we wanted to get in-market verification, to make sure they have the performance and fuel economy we were looking for," Walsh said of the testing. "We have yet to put the I-Shift in a demo unit where the customer does not want to buy it at the end."

Goran Nyberg, president of North American sales and marketing with Volvo, said Mexican fleets want the same things carriers in the US and Canada do: fuel savings; reliability; safety; and the ability to more easily attract and retain drivers. Next year, Volvo will bring its Remote Diagnostics to the Mexican market, providing fleets with a way to reduce downtime.

Volvo's investments into the Mexican market mirror the initiatives it has undertaken in the US and Canada over the past few years, Nyberg noted. Since 2010, Volvo Trucks North America has: invested \$350 million into its dealerships; launched 52 projects to improve capabilities (such as building or renovating facilities);

increased service bays by 31%; expanded its technician base by 54%; increased parts inventory by 37%; and expanded its parts department staff by 68%.

With Volvo placing a renewed emphasis on the Mexican truck market, one had to wonder if it would eventually move production there, like many of its competitors have done. Nyberg said emphatically that will not be the case. The company has examined the viability of building trucks in Mexico, and found the logistics involved in delivering them to Canadian and American customers would negate any savings.

"We have made major investments in the US (plants) and we have capacity for our growth from there," Nyberg said. "We haven't seen the benefits of moving any production to Mexico, yet we are actively investing in the commercial side of the Mexican business. Manufacturing today for North America is in the US and that's our plan to continue." □

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OEM/DEALER NEWS

# Parts availability, connecting with customers the path to growth for Alliance Truck Parts

**By Daniela Piteo**  
**MIAMI, Fla.** – The bright yellow logo is definitely a standout feature of Alliance Truck Parts, but where the company – a division of Daimler Trucks North America – really excels is in its unwavering commitment to being a leading provider in the aftermarket.

Todd Biggs, director of parts and service marketing, Daimler Trucks North America, says the company continues to set the brand apart by ensuring availability – Alliance Truck Parts are stocked at over 800 North American locations; through recognition – the Web site is constantly evolving and a continued social network

presence is being built; and through education – Alliance truck parts are serviced and maintained by qualified technicians that thoroughly understand the Daimler product. While Alliance Truck Parts are available throughout North America, the company will continue to expand in the market, hoping to gain the attention of small fleets and owner/operators.

“While large fleets do use Alliance Truck Parts to help improve their total cost of ownership over the time they hold their trucks, the owner/operator and small fleet customers are more likely to be running older trucks and mixed fleets that have more frequent

parts and repair needs,” said Biggs. “By renewing our attention on the second and even third owner of the truck, we open up new market potential for Alliance and help deliver better uptime for this often underserved customer.”

According to Biggs, it is also an advantageous practice for O/Os and small fleets to return to the dealer when purchasing aftermarket products.

“There are clear choices between OEM parts, the all-makes parts that Alliance Truck Parts offers, and the generic white box. Often ‘right-fit’ generic parts really aren’t all right. In the end, the location isn’t as important as access to the right quality part at the right time. From a parts perspective, that means the real importance is parts distribution speed and in-stock availability,” said Biggs.

With over 800 locations offering Alliance parts, distribution speed and stock availability are both in a solid position to help reduce downtime for drivers and furthermore, its widespread market presence makes it easier to contact a qualified technician for vehicle service, repairs and maintenance, according to the company.

“There are often service level advantages to visiting a reputable dealer, like an Elite Support certified dealer, but from a parts perspective, any real advantage is again related to having the right parts in stock, or having quick access to parts distribution systems so any repair can be made quickly,” Biggs said.

While the retailer aims to be physically visible in the market, to best serve its customers, Alliance has also shown a commitment utilizing technology and social media to diversify the brand.

“Alliance Truck Parts has really embraced technology as a way to help customers get the parts they need to keep their trucks on the road. Better communication tools allow our customers to find parts locations, specific parts and specials much more easily than

ever before,” said Biggs. “Alliance uses social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter to inform and to hear back from our customers.”

Alliance isn’t just a tweet or Facebook status update away from its customers, but optimizing its Web site also helps achieve better communication.

“Our own Web site continues to evolve to provide the parts information that our customers need most with all-makes part search function in online catalogs and with links to useful parts information such as product brochures and a bumper customization tool,” said Biggs.

In addition to a Web presence, Alliance Truck Parts has invested in mobile technology that works to serve customers on the road.

“With mobile apps like TruckerNet and TruckerTools available on smartphones, drivers can find parts and service locations, parts specials and more from wherever they are,” said Biggs.

And then there’s Alliance Truck Parts relationship with NASCAR – where through technology and social media, race fans are offered an up-close view Alliance Truck Parts Racing Team.

Together, Alliance and NASCAR travel throughout North America visiting dealerships and other locations with one of the number 12 Ford Mustangs – allowing customers to enjoy the thrill of race day miles away from the track.

“Seeing the actual machine and hearing the sound of a real track-worthy engine has been a great way to engage customers and introduce them to the complete Alliance Truck Parts product portfolio,” Biggs said.

In the end, it’s always about providing exceptional service to its customers, the company claims.

“Our dealer kits and the Parts Promoter programs are designed for our retail partners, providing them the tools they need to better serve the end customer at their locations across North America,” Biggs said. □

## Daimler delivers five-step plan to improve uptime

**MIAMI, Fla.** – Managing fuel economy, services charges, parts prices and downtime are all an integrated function of the total cost of ownership (TCO) for any fleet, so at Daimler, the promise to deliver uptime is one standout method it has employed to offer the best in customer service.

Friedrich Baumann, senior vice-president for aftermarket, Daimler Trucks North America (DTNA), explained the five key steps that deliver uptime.

“We must first broaden our retail approach,” Baumann said. “We can only survive and excel by providing a better platform for the ease of doing business.”

The platform, according to Baumann, must be built from over-the-counter excellence, a strong digital presence and expanding the Alliance truck parts portfolio. Once the retail sector has been broadened, Baumann notes that Daimler must revamp its retail inventory management (RIM) system.

“It is time to revisit this system and take the next step in improving it,” Baumann said. According to Baumann, Daimler’s goal is to construct a fully functioning system that can easily locate and track parts and then quickly send them out. Revamping the current system means more parts will be available at service points, a direct delivery system will be implemented and customer service outside of an area of responsibility.

Detroit Connect, which offers a virtual technician and an onboard tablet, will assist with diagnostics and also reduce downtime.

“It’s a much more integrated approach between the truck that is rolling and all other aspects of the road,” said Baumann.

Baumann also noted that Daimler plans to leverage Detroit Reman. Lastly, Daimler aims to raise distributor and dealer network performance as a part of its five-step plan to deliver uptime.

“Downtime is often more expensive than actual repairs,” said Baumann.

With quick diagnostics, companies can effectively plan an efficient delivery route when a truck isn’t running.

Bauman, quoting a colleague, said, “Bad news given early is better than bad news given late.” □

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FLEET NEWS

### Bison wins award for corporate culture

**WINNIPEG, Man.** – Waterstone Human Capital, one of Canada's leading executive search firms, has announced the national winners of the Canada's 10 Most Admired Corporate Cultures of 2013 program.

The program is divided in four separate categories – Enterprise, Mid-market, Growth and Small Capital and lastly, Broader Public Sector – and recognizes 10 national companies in each category.

This year the trucking industry's own Bison Transport was hailed as one of the top 10 most admired corporate cultures in the mid-market category. This recognition signifies, in terms of a three-year average revenue growth, that Bison Transport has notably outpaced the largest companies of Standard & Poor's/ Toronto Stock Exchange ninefold.

Bison Transport executive vice-president and COO Robert Penner is pleased that the company has been poised as an admirable corporate culture.

“Being selected as having one of the most admired corporate cultures in Canada is a true honour for our organization,” said Penner.

“As a company, it is important that our beliefs and behaviours are instilled in the workforce and that the environment we create allows our people to grow, prosper and excel,” Penner said. “It is gratifying to know that the collective efforts of the people of Bison Transport are being recognized in this great manner. It also serves as a great reminder that it is not just about what you do, but also how you do it and how you treat and interact with others matters too.” □

### Clarke sells to TransForce, exits trucking

**HALIFAX, N.S.** – Clarke Inc. has agreed to sell its freight transportation business to TransForce for \$88 million.

Included are its truckload, LTL and freight logistics business. The deal is expected to wrap up before the end of 2013, Clarke announced.

“This is a bittersweet moment for Clarke as we have enjoyed working with Dean Cull and his entire team in the freight transportation business over the last decade,” said George Armoyan, CEO of Clarke. “We wish them all the best as they join the TransForce organization.”

Armoyan added: “The sale of Clarke's freight transportation business provides the company with good value and helps unlock the significant shareholder value that exists at Clarke which has not been recognized by the capital markets. Following the transaction, Clarke will continue to own its Commercial Tanks and Home Heating segment, its Investment segment and the ferry and container shipping units within its current Freight segment.” □

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## Canada Cartage hit with \$100-million lawsuit over overtime pay

**TORONTO, Ont.** – The debate over unpaid overtime in the trucking industry is heating up, with a \$100-million class action lawsuit launched against Canada Cartage.

The law firm Lax O’Sullivan Scott Lisus LLP has launched the suit on behalf of workers who claim they were not paid for overtime.

The lawsuit has been launched on behalf of representative plaintiff Marc-Oliver Baroch, a shunt truck driver who worked at Canada Cartage’s Mississauga location for about seven years. The lawsuit will represent workers who’ve been at Canada Cartage since March 1, 2006.

The statement of claim alleges that Canada Cartage regularly required or permitted some or all of its employees to work hours in excess of their standard hours of work, in order to complete the common duties of their employment, the law firm alleges. The statement of claim also alleges that around July

2012, Canada Cartage reduced wages “without reasonable notice” in order to make it appear as though class members were being paid overtime.

The lawsuit alleges that Canada Cartage actually “manipulated class members’ rates of pay such that their gross weekly earnings remained unchanged.”

“This case seeks to pull back the curtain to reveal the long-standing and systemic practice by Canada Cartage of not fully compensating its employees for overtime,” said Eric R. Hoaken, a partner at Lax O’Sullivan Scott Lisus LLP. “The essence of the claim is that Canada Cartage did not meet its obligations to the class members and actively sought to mislead them about their entitlement to overtime. These practices must stop.” □

### Caravan rebrands, launches new Web site

**TORONTO, Ont.** – Caravan Logistics has a new name and look. The company has been renamed Caravan Group of Companies as part of a rebranding effort aimed at bringing Caravan’s complementary operating units under one corporate umbrella.

The rebranding marks the first such change Caravan has undergone since its inception 16 years ago. At the same time, Caravan has launched a new Web site, which provides features such as 24-hour online customer freight tracking and instantaneous freight quotes.

The company said in a release that it has “extensive expansion plans,” which will make it “an even more powerful player in the trucking and transportation industry.” The new Web site can be found at [www.caravangroup.com](http://www.caravangroup.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 coloured diesel into his tanks. Both men would sure like to find the guy. Mark knows they are talking about him and slinks away.

Then, as Mark is having a bite at the food court, he overhears two other drivers talking about how some guy got him in trouble with the law, one with the Canada Border Services Agency, the other with police. Mark knows for sure they're talking about him because he knows one of them by name. He needs to get away and calls Bud for a load...

When the coast was clear and the two drivers who'd been talking about him had left the food court, Mark decided it was probably a good time to leave the show. He could just as easily wait for Bud's call in Mother Load as he could moving from booth to booth waiting for someone to tap him on the shoulder and say, "I always hoped I'd run into you somewhere," and punch him in the mouth.

Just then, someone in the crowd bumped him from behind. Mark gasped spun around and took on a half-fight/half-cower sort of stance.

"Hi there," said a woman pushing a stroller.

"Hey," Mark responded awkwardly as he stood up and straightened his shoulders.

"I'm sorry," she said. "I wasn't looking where I was going."

Mark tried to smile. "Nice bumping into you."

The woman returned the smile, but her attention was drawn to the child in the stroller.

Mark took it as his cue, turned away and headed for a quiet corner of the show hoping he'd be able to sneak out one of the smaller exit doors and make his way to Mother Load without any more delays.

In the northwest corner of the hall there was a display of 20 or so antique trucks, most of them serving as rolling advertisements for the companies that owned them. There were a couple of vintage dump trucks from the 60s, a couple of milk delivery vans from the

50s and no less than three flatbed delivery trucks from the 1930s. Normally Mark would spend an hour going from truck to truck checking to see if each vehicle had been restored to original or updated with modern upgrades that would allow them to keep up to traffic on today's roads.

Mark liked trucks that were kept as close to original as possible and there were probably a few at the show that were concourse caliber, but he didn't have time to appreciate their beauty. He was more concerned about preserving himself and keeping all his own parts totally original.

He got out of the exhibit hall easily enough and found himself at the opposite end of the parking lot from Mother Load. But that was a small price to pay in exchange for getting out of the exhibit hall unnoticed.

Mark checked his phone for any messages or missed calls, but there were none. He started walking south through the lot, keeping his head down and turning away anytime anyone drove or walked past him.

He realized he was acting a little paranoid and doing things that were counterproductive to his own safety, but he couldn't help himself. After all, which was safer...walking alone through a desolate parking lot, or getting lost in the crowd inside the show. How many times had he actually looked for someone he knew, spending hours searching and never finding the person at the show? Still, here he was walking by himself and constantly looking over his shoulder. It wasn't a good feeling.

Mark turned the corner outside the exhibit hall and saw Mother Load in the distance. She was parked in the back row of the lot in a line of maybe two dozen tractors. He was glad to see she was still there, but there was also something troubling about the scene.

Standing in front of Mother Load were five men, two in one group, three in another. Their talk was spirited, with wild arm gestures and plenty of body language. One guy, Mark could just make out, was pounding a fist into his palm. Mark wasn't an expert in sign language, but this guy's gesture left no doubt in Mark's mind that someone was going to get hurt...real bad.

Mark moved more slowly now between the cars, careful not to expose himself in a clear line of sight to the men milling about his truck.

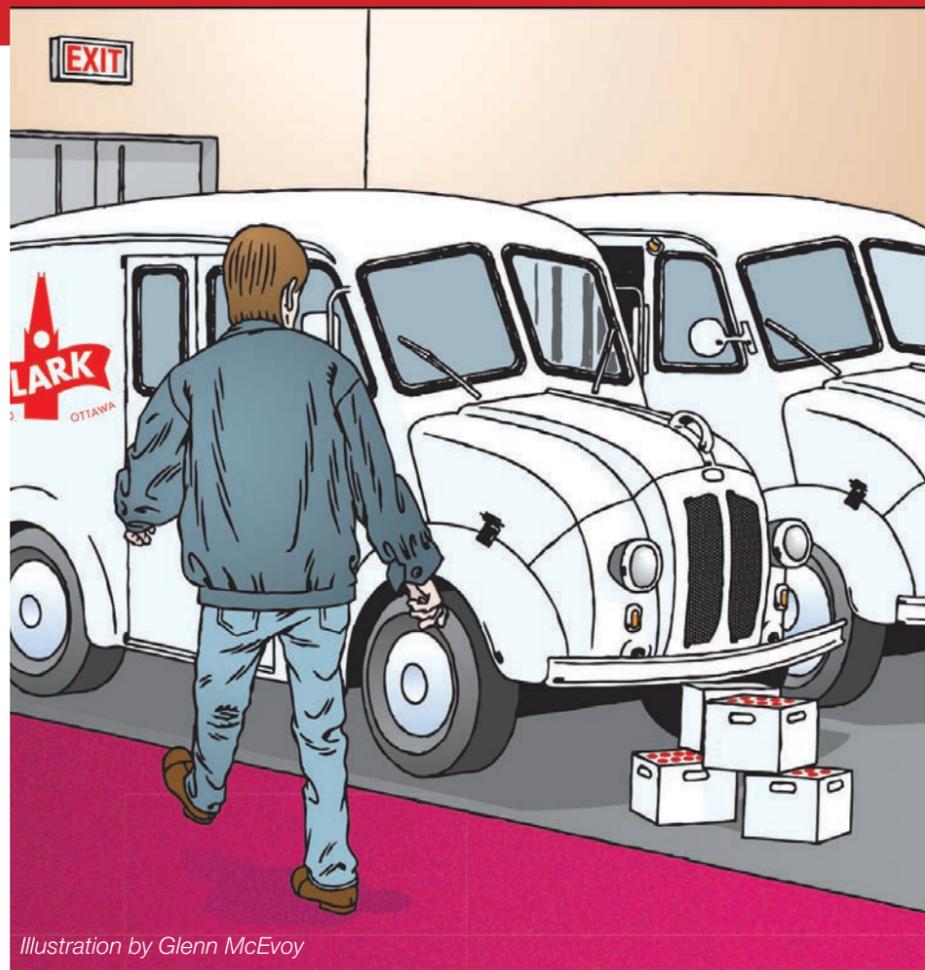


Illustration by Glenn McEvoy

Obviously they'd recognized Mother Load from their dealings with Mark on the road. Then, after checking out the truck, they saw the words "Mother Load" painted on the rear of the sleeper and anyone with a brain would come to the conclusion that – "Hey, this is the truck of the guy that screwed me over. I bet he's at the show." Then it was another small leap of logic that if they waited long enough, the guy who owns that truck is bound to show up.

Mark was about 10 cars away now, partially hidden by the rear end of a Hummer. He used to wonder why anyone needed to drive such huge gas-guzzling cars, but not anymore. Sure they used a lot of gas, but they were perfect for hiding behind.

Of the five men, Mark recognized two of them from his dealings with them on the road. The other three men appeared to be buddies with the first two and were likely there for support, and back-up if things turned violent.

Mark took a quick look around to see who he had with him. Nobody. He checked his phone. Not even a call from Bud.

What to do?

He could try to outwait them, but there were five of them and they could easily take shifts watching his truck for hours. Besides that, at least one of them might have a truck of his own on the lot and could easily wait and watch for him throughout the night.

He could call the police, but what would he tell them? "I think someone

wants to hurt me." And when they asked why he thought that, it wouldn't take long before he sounded crazy and paranoid enough for the police to come looking for him.

Maybe he could take a cab to a nearby hotel and pick up Mother Load on Monday. If he were lucky, all of his tires would still have air in them and all of the windows would be free of cracks and clear enough to see through.

Or, he could go back inside the show, spend a few hours looking around and maybe these guys would lose interest by then and go home. That seemed like a plan. If the coast wasn't clear in a couple of hours, then he could try one of his other ideas.

So, without a sound, Mark turned and headed back to the main entrance, hooking up with two teenage boys to make it look as if he were attending the show with them, his two sons.

"Hey mister," one of the boys said when it was obvious Mark was walking with them. "Do we know you?"

Mark shook his head, "I sure hope not." □

– Mark Dalton returns next month in the conclusion of *The Truxpo Gambit*.

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



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**TIRES**



**NO SHORTCUTS:** Tire pressures should be measured once a week with a calibrated tire gauge, not a hammer, experts suggest.

## Not all SmartWay tires created equal

Continued from page 42

for the wrong application, you can put all the air you want into your tire – you’re not going to get the performance you’re looking for.”

With fuel economy being a priority for most fleets today, many buyers gravitate to SmartWay-approved products. But it’s important to remember not all SmartWay tires are created equal.

“Keep in mind that SmartWay verification is done by the tire company involved – so it’s self-policing,” warned Cressman.

Achieving SmartWay certification is not an easy process, but tire companies can choose different paths to compliance – and it may involve compromises in other equally important areas.

“It’s not easy to hit the SmartWay target, but sometimes it’s such that you sacrifice all other performance attributes,” Kramer noted of some suppliers.

“One of the problems is that fuel efficiency is very difficult to measure,” added Bridgestone’s Jones. “There are so many factors involved.” However, he said SmartWay, as a whole, has been a good thing for the trucking industry.

“It has had a major impact on the industry and it has required a push in technology that I think has been

very successful,” Jones said.

Rolling resistance, which influences a tire’s contribution to fuel economy, is a relatively new concept, he added.

“We as manufacturers are expending great effort to find new and better ways to achieve the performance characteristics that our customers want and need,” Jones said. “Initially, I think there was some compromise (when maximizing fuel economy). You did have to give up something else in order to achieve ultra-low rolling resistance. But we are able to advance technology at a faster rate these days.”

If fuel economy is important – and it usually is – it’s okay to seek out a SmartWay tire, but also ensure the tire’s performance in other areas will be up to expectations, advised Michelin’s Beaudoin.

“Sometimes, you need to sacrifice on mileage to have a SmartWay tire, so you have to be careful about that,” she warned. “They may have a great tire on fuel, but if it only lasts 100,000 miles instead of 500,000 miles, it may not be worth it to you.” □

*– In Part 2 of this series on tires, our tire experts will offer practical tips on maximizing your tires’ performance and reducing overall cost of ownership.*

# MISSING PLEASE HELP

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Missing Since:	<b>Jan 27, 1999</b>
Date of Birth:	<b>Nov 3, 1983</b>
Missing From:	<b>Toronto, ON</b>
Height:	<b>5’5”</b>
Weight:	<b>120 lbs</b>
Eye Colour:	<b>Brown</b>
Hair Colour:	<b>Black</b>



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(THIS WILL BE YOUR USERNAME ACCOUNT)  
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**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

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TSQ

**MISSISSAUGA, Ont.** – This year I resolve to get in shape, start eating better, show more patience as a parent, read more and finally learn to tap dance.

It sounds good, doesn't it? But if I must be honest, at least to *Truck News* readers (because I am clearly lying to myself when I make these resolutions), I'll likely break each and every one before January wraps up.

But what if my physician urged me to resolve my poor dietary habits and sedentary lifestyle? Can my son, with his large doe-like eyes and sweeping lashes, persuade me to nag less and cuddle more?

If my boss suggests it's time to put down the remote and pick up Tolstoy, will my resolution bear more weight? I won't even attempt rationalizing tap lessons, because a Rockette I will never be.

Change is imperative; it's often healthy and usually difficult



**Truck Stop Question**

*What should be trucking's New Year's Resolution?*

DANIELA PITEO

to admit that the time to make amends is nigh.

Sometimes, we need a gentle reminder that the old way of doing things isn't the best way – and that doesn't exclusively include people – but governments, businesses and even social attitudes can often stand for a good dose of change.

Now that 2014 is here and it is resolution season, at *Truck News*, we asked a few drivers what resolutions the industry should make and the results were nearly unanimous.

So, if the trucking industry were to make a resolution in 2014, what should it resolve? We went to the Husky Truck Stop to find out.



Rick Runge

**Rick Runge** said wages need to be brought in line with the cost of operating, or owner/operators will have to sell their trucks, as he did.

“A good resolution should see truckers making more money – since I've started doing this I've lost about 50% of my pay, because companies are cutting rates and maintenance and fuel costs keep going up. I used to own my own truck at one time and I had to give it up.”



Len Stanley

**Len Stanley** also felt driver wages were the item needing the most urgent attention in 2014.

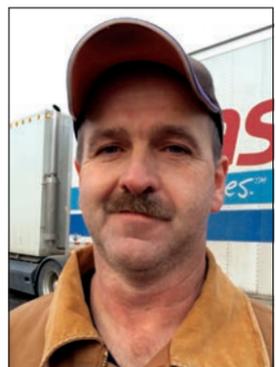
“The industry needs to increase pay rates because they are no better than they were 15 years ago and the fuel has gone from 30 cents a litre to \$1.25,” he said. “The problem isn't necessarily the fault of trucking companies, but the government needs to intervene and lower the cost of fuel. How would you do if you had to take \$1,200 from every weekly pay just for gas?”



Phil Diaconescu

Fuel prices were also the top concern for **Phil Diaconescu**.

“Fuel prices need to be lowered,” he said. “We don't get paid enough. I remember when I started I used to fill my truck with \$200 and now it costs me \$1,100 and I still get paid the same thing per mile. Either lower the price of fuel or increase the driver's wage.”



Kevin McLean

**Kevin McLean**, took a different approach, wishing for better training for entry-level drivers.

“I'd like to see more thorough training for drivers,” he said. “We see young drivers that were trained in an automatic truck getting behind the wheel of a standard transmission tractor and they don't have enough training or practice to handle it. It's not good for the truck and can be unsafe for drivers. We need to see better training for drivers before they get put out onto the road.” □



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Rick Reinbolt,  
President, Lomak Bulk Carriers Corp.

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