

TRUCK NEWS

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Natalie and Jacquie Meyers talk about taking over the family business in the midst of a recession.

Port problems

Labour stoppage at B.C. port frays relations between port, truckers

By Carolyn Gruske

VANCOUVER, B.C. • Strike on. Starting early March 10, unionized container truck drivers began walking the picket line at Port Metro Vancouver.

Drivers represented by Unifor-Vancouver Container Truckers' Association (VCTA) weren't alone in their protest, as members of the non-unionized United Truckers Association (UTA) have been protesting at the port since Feb. 26.

Members of both organizations voted on March 8 to reject a deal created with the goal of establishing a temporary labour peace. UTA reported 100% of its members voted against the deal, while VCTA said 98% of its members were against it.

Vincent Ready was appointed by the federal transportation minister, Lisa Raitt, to serve as a mediator in the ongoing labour dispute between drivers and employers at the port. The same day he was appointed, word came that VCTA and UTA would be taking a deal back and presenting it to their members.

The point of the deal was to create a situation where the UTA would go back to work, VCTA would forego striking (the union was in a legal strike position) and Ready would prepare a report about working conditions at the port and submit it to the federal and provincial governments by May 30.

"We were kind of taken back with how fast things were thrown on the table. We

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Ravinder Athwal, a driver for Trimac, prepares to unload at a customer site. The professional driver left India where he was a biologist to pursue a new life here in Canada.

A long journey

Ravinder Athwal travelled from India in search of a better life for his family, and found it behind the wheel.

By Daniela Piteo

The journey from India to Canada is a long and sometimes difficult trek, but for one Ontario driver, it was a long haul worth the journey.

Ravinder Athwal left his native India over 15 years ago in search of a better life for his family – a better life he found on the road.

The first challenge Athwal faced was saving the \$10,000 proof of funds required by the Government of Canada for Federal Skilled Workers seeking residency – monies that cannot be borrowed and increase by \$3,000 per dependent, which for Athwal, meant a \$16,000 savings before he, his wife and young son could be granted citizenship.

"There are other ways to enter into the country, methods that aren't as expensive, but I wanted to move into Canada as a skilled worker," Athwal said.

In India, Athwal holds a bachelors degree in science with a concentration in chemistry. He worked as a chemist in the marketing division of a large pharmaceutical company in India.

"The company I worked for in India had a branch here too," said Athwal. "I contacted them and told them I had experience with their company."

While he had a degree from a university in India, to retain a position in his field he would require a master's degree. At the time Athwal made the call to the company, to further his studies would have cost almost 20 grand and on top of proof of funds, tuition was not another expense for which he could budget.

"There was no way I could (afford) that. So, I had to find other work," said Athwal.

His second and third challenges mounted quickly – he had to leave his wife and son behind and find a job.

"I told my wife, 'Let me go first for four or five months and I can find a job and a place to live,'" said Athwal. "It wasn't easy, believe me, I didn't know anyone here. I came here for three months and worked two jobs. I worked at a gas station

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CLASS 8 TRUCK SALES TRENDS

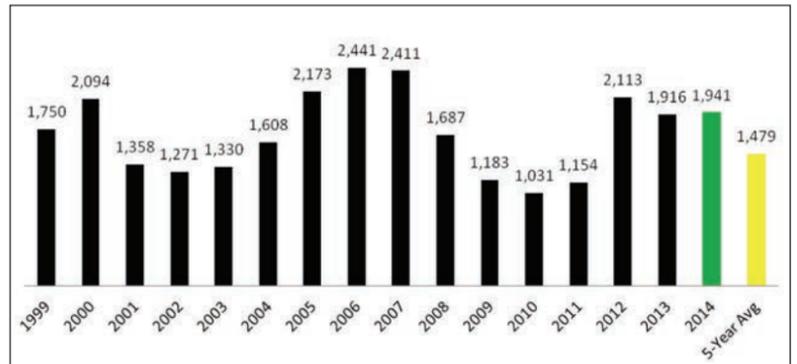
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Monthly Class 8 Sales – Jan 14

Class 8 truck sales have started the year on a mildly positive note, surpassing last year's January totals. They feel below the 2,000 mark, however, for the first time in 10 months. Last year's market leaders Freightliner and Kenworth both suffered setbacks in the early going of 2014, falling behind last year's totals. Mack and Peterbilt also suffered drops. International surpassed its monthly sales total from 2013, as did Volvo and Western Star.

OEM	This Month	Last Year
Freightliner	455	503
International	395	338
Kenworth	292	370
Mack	117	121
Peterbilt	250	288
Volvo	224	121
Western Star	208	175
TOTALS	1941	1916

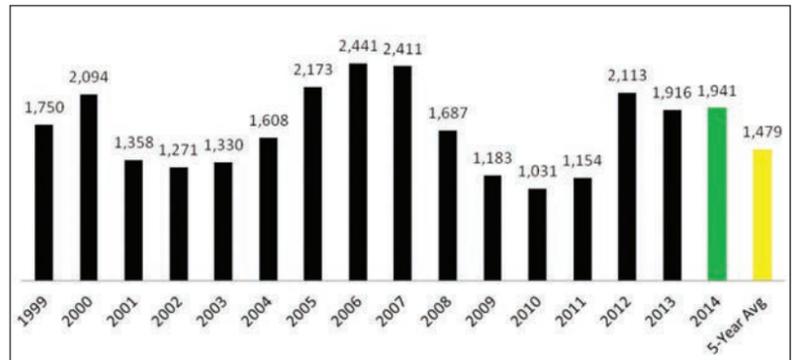
Historical Comparison – Jan 14 Sales



Class 8 Sales (YTD Jan 14) by Province and OEM

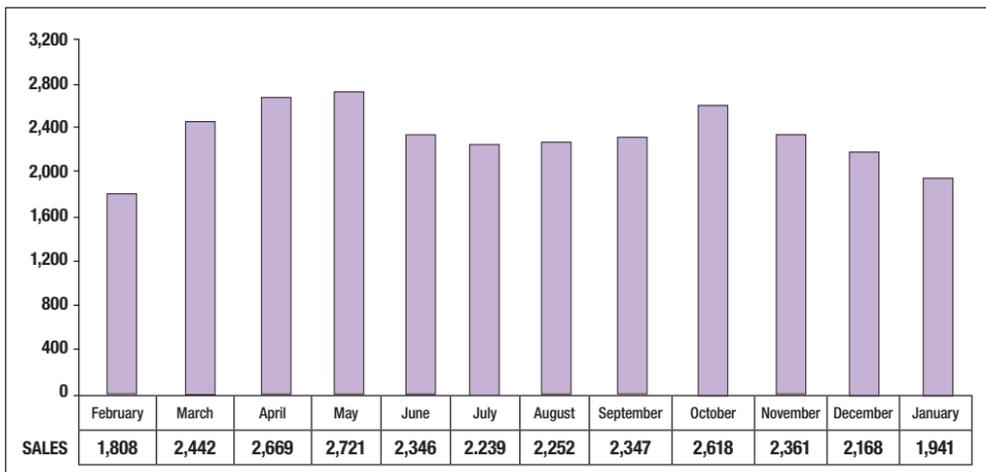
OEM	BC	ALTA	SASK	MAN	ONT	QUE	NB	NS	PEI	NF	CDA
Freightliner	41	82	17	12	183	99	14	7	0	0	455
Kenworth	56	128	23	1	46	32	6	0	0	0	292
Mack	11	21	10	2	56	12	1	2	0	2	117
International	11	70	12	12	182	77	18	5	3	5	395
Peterbilt	54	73	30	9	33	39	10	2	0	0	250
Volvo	31	52	13	8	71	42	5	2	0	0	224
Western Star	40	111	8	4	19	18	1	6	0	1	208
TOTALS	244	537	113	48	590	319	55	24	3	8	1,941

Historical Comparison – YTD Jan 14



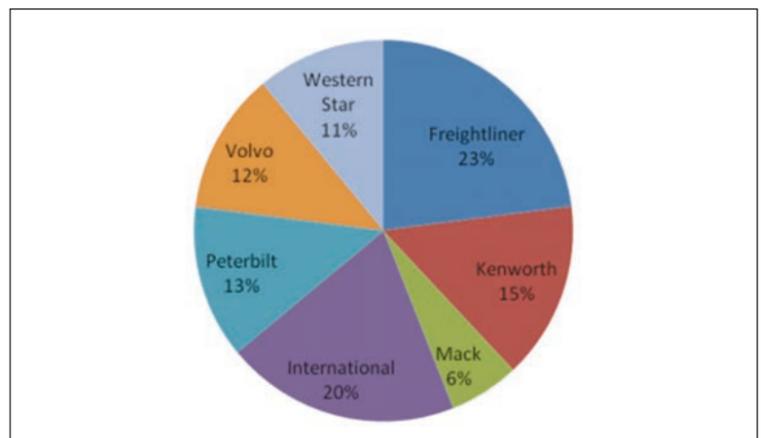
This was the sixth best January total since 1999. Monthly sales were a bit better than 500 units above the five-year average. There is optimism for an improvement in Class 8 truck sales in 2014 after 2013 proved a disappointing year. The first month's results, however, indicate a small improvement over the previous year. The big question is whether Canada's many small fleets are ready to buy new again. Our research shows large and medium-sized carriers are in a buying mood but small carriers are not.

12-Month Sales Trends



After 10 straight months of sales coming in above the 2,000 mark, reminiscent of the industry's capacity boom years of 2005 to 2007, they dropped slightly below 2,000 in January. Yet with the US economy regaining its stride and the value of the Canadian dollar dropping against the US dollar, economic forecasters anticipate exports will lead the Canadian economy in 2014. That may spark increased truck sales as trucking will be the main beneficiary of improved business volumes with the US.

Market Share Class 8 – Jan 14 YTD



Freightliner, last year's Canadian market leader, has started off with a bit of a drop in market share but remains strong enough to have a controlling lead. Kenworth finished 2013 in the number two spot for marketshare, enjoying the fact that its strong western network is able to tap into the stronger western economy. But the company faltered in January and ended up with just 15% market share, surpassed by International which has captured 20% of the market right out of the gate.

Source: Canadian Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association

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Editorial
Comment

JAMES MENZIES



A defensive driver is a fuel-efficient driver

When the private fleet of Hill's Pet Nutrition – predominantly comprised of straight trucks that average 15 drops a day – implemented a defensive driving program, it couldn't have expected to save a million dollars a year in fuel as a result.

It took the 220-truck fleet six years to save its first million, and now the company saves about that much every single year.

Bill Perry, safety and compliance manager, customer fulfillment with Hill's, shared his success story at the Green Truck Summit in Indianapolis in early March. The company, which leases its trucks from Idealease, began spec'ing more fuel-efficient vehicles in 2006. They adopted automated transmissions and installed electronic on-board recorders. The fleet was divided up by vehicle type and location and drivers worked as groups to improve their fuel economy.

They were trained to drive defensively, using the Smith System for defensive driving. Fuel economy baselines were established and operators

were given the opportunity to earn a 2%, 3% or 5% quarterly bonus depending on whether they met or exceeded expectations. Those who didn't got no bonus.

In the fourth quarter of 2013, the company's drivers averaged 8.6569 mpg – yes, Hills tracks fuel economy out to the fourth decimal. Its fleet-wide fuel economy before implementing the program was 7.1 mpg. Its top operator, running Florida, achieved 11.232 mpg. Its top 25 drivers are all achieving greater than 9.75 mpg.

Perry said it's possible to get an immediate one-tenth of a mpg improvement from drivers, just out of modifying driver behaviour. His team rides along with drivers every quarter to ensure they're implementing the skills taught through the Smith System. Each of its driver trainers are certified Smith System instructors.

Hills spent \$4.5 million on fuel last year, but that's a million less than it was spending before the defensive driving training was provided and the fuel economy incentives were

offered.

"With a little bit of training, a little bit of encouragement and a little bit of technology, you're going to see numbers very similar to that without a whole lot of effort," he said. "Get your folks involved and let it be part of their program. Dangle the carrot out there and you'll see some sort of difference in your organization."

We don't always think of fuel-efficient driving and defensive driving as being one and the same. But both types of training involve similar ideals. Don't follow too closely. Easy on the throttle and the brake. Look far down the road and anticipate stops. Use the vehicle's momentum to reduce braking.

All these things lead to a safer driver but also a more fuel-efficient driver. If you're having a hard time justifying the cost of defensive driving



training for your professional drivers, consider the Hills experience and the payback they achieved. They're proof that a defensive driver is not only a safer driver, but also a more fuel-efficient driver. ●

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The view
with Lou

LOU SMYRLIS



Respect has to be earned

My previous column, "Stop the Stupid Scorpion" seems to have resonated with many of our readers who drive truck for a living.

For those of you who haven't read it yet, I told the fable about the scorpion who asked a frog to swim him across the river. When the frog asked what assurance he would have the scorpion wouldn't sting him halfway into the river crossing, the scorpion replied: 'Why would I do that? I would drown with you.' And yet, sure enough, right in the middle of the river, the scorpion stings the frog, and both die as a consequence.

I used the fable as an analogy of how stupid we have been in trying to solve the driver shortage the past 20 years. I questioned: Can you really call it a driver shortage when driver turnover is so high?

From the e-mails and phone calls I received, it seems many drivers out there know exactly what I'm talking about. As one wrote: "Many companies increase the recruiting staff instead of listening to drivers' needs."

Another with several years of driving experience, including seven with his current employer, wrote to say he is looking to get out of the profession altogether. Why? Because after making "the big mistake" of agreeing to become an owner/operator for the company, he finds himself with his savings depleted and having to cash in RRSPs just to keep paying the bills. He's shocked at the difference between what he believes he was promised he would make and what he is actually making – and the lack of response he's getting from his employer.

We do have to be careful not to over-

generalize. Research shows driver turnover is much more prevalent among long-haul fleets than in other sectors and that the situation is worse among US carriers than Canadian. And I've come to know many fleet executives over the years who treat their drivers with absolute respect. At the same time, I've met some drivers and owner/operators I wouldn't want on my team.

But the comments shown above are not out of place with industry reality. I hear them all the time. As another driver mentioned, the scorpion stings the frog because "it's in his nature."

I sure hope that's not true of our industry, but it appears this is not a problem unique to North America. PwC surveyed 1,344 business leaders across 68 countries around the world, including 101 transportation and logistics

company CEOs, in the last quarter of 2013. A shortage of talent was one of their top concerns. Transportation and logistics CEOs overwhelmingly agree they'll need to change their talent strategies to cope with future trends, according to the survey. But just 19% are already doing so, compared to a third of CEOs across the overall sample and only 30% believe their HR departments are well-prepared.

I had a boss a long time ago who informed me one day that he DEMAND-ED respect from his staff. I was in my mid-20s at the time but still had enough pluck to inform him that respect has to be EARNED. That ass of a boss is long gone thankfully and I still abide by what I said to him 25 years ago.

If we want to solve the driver shortage and attract new entrants we have to gain the drivers' respect. Seems we have a long road ahead of us. ●

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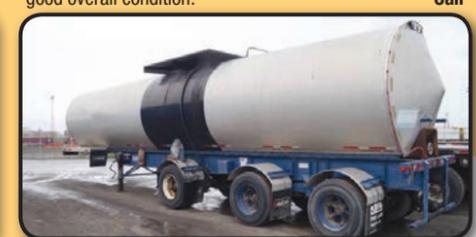
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Peace Bridge to pilot new border-crossing program for trucks

FORT ERIE, ONTARIO

Canada and the US have announced a one-year pre-inspection pilot program to be conducted at the Peace Bridge, which if successful could allow for the pre-clearance of trucks at certain border crossings. The Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA) said the new pilot marks the culmination of years of negotiations between the two countries.

A commitment to conduct a pre-inspection pilot was first outlined in the Beyond the Border Action Plan. It would allow border officials from the country of entry to conduct pre-inspections of trucks on the other side of the border, CTA reports. It is believed doing so would allow for more thorough and efficient vehicle inspections.

During the pilot, US CBP officers will pre-inspect trucks entering the US on the Canadian side, in hopes of avoiding backups on the bridge due to the size constraints of the Customs plaza on the Buffalo side, according to CTA. Two new US CBP booths will be erected on the Canadian side to facilitate inspections. Once inspected on the Canadian side, most trucks will only be required to come to a rolling stop at the US CBP exit booth.

"The trucking industry has a keen interest in facilitating the shipment of goods across the Canada-US border while maintaining security," Canadian Trucking Alliance president David Bradley said at the announcement. "The Peace Bridge pilot is indicative of innovative new thinking and its outcome is therefore of great importance to us and to the world's largest bilateral trade relationship." The program will be evaluated on its ability to more expeditiously move trucks across the border. ●

Winter storms take bite out of US tonnage

ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA

US for-hire truck tonnage fell 4.3% in January, but you can blame the weather. The American Trucking Associations said its tonnage index was still up 1.2% year-over-year. The softening from December was attributed to winter storms, and not a weakening of the economy or of freight demand. The index finished 2013 up 6.3% compared to 2012.

"Like most economic indicators, truck tonnage was negatively impacted by bad winter weather in January," said ATA chief economist Bob Costello. "The thing

about truck freight is that it's difficult to catch up. Drivers are governed by hours-of-service regulations and trucks are limited to trailer lengths and total weights, thus it is nearly impossible to recoup the days lost due to bad storms."

As such, Costello said it's tough to gauge January's demand.

"January wasn't just one storm, it was several across a large part of the country. Therefore, I wouldn't panic from the largest monthly drop in two years," Costello said. "The fundamentals for truck freight still look good." ●



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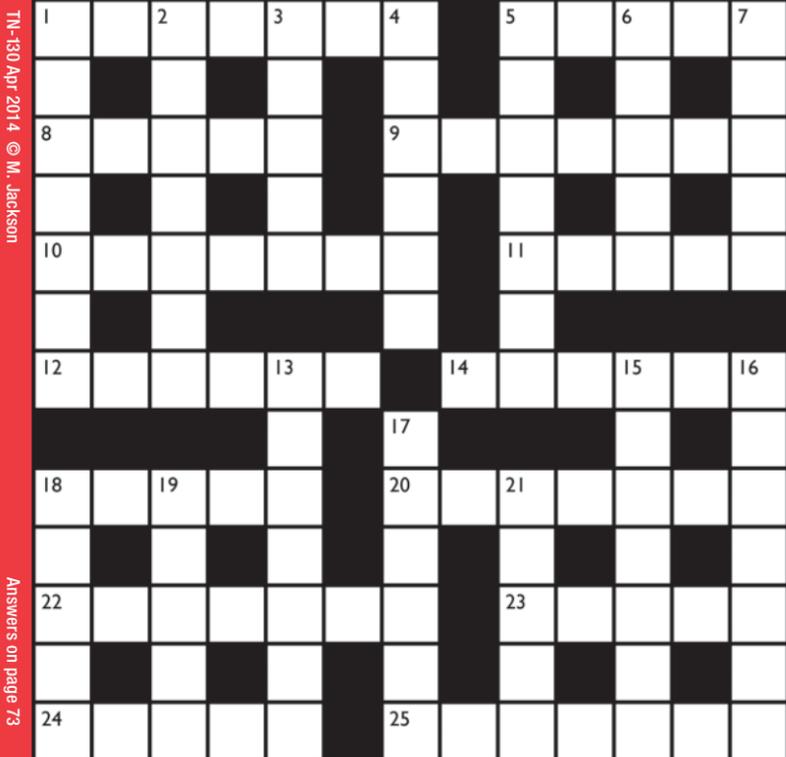
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THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD PUZZLE



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Answers on page 73

Across

- 1 Partial payment on new-truck order
- 5 Airtronic bunk-heater brand
- 8 Breakdown-warning device
- 9 Repo-truck sale, sometimes
- 10 Automotive lingerie (3,4)
- 11 Flowers on Alberta plates
- 12 Truckmaker Volvo's homeland
- 14 Volvo auto-manual transmission (1,5)
- 18 Cargo-restraint type
- 20 "____ Everywhere," Hank Snow song (3,4)
- 22 Goods trucked into Canada
- 23 GST component
- 24 Flexible coolant

Down

- 1 Truck-recall reasons
- 2 Saskatchewan scenery
- 3 Axle or tire type
- 4 Winnipeg-based ____ Group of Companies
- 5 Oversize-rig companion vehicles
- 6 Tire-construction layers
- 7 Piston jewelry
- 13 Goods trucked to USA
- 15 Temporary far-north highway (3,4)
- 16 Takes on fuel (5,2)
- 17 Certain slapshots
- 18 Simcoe, ON-based Bruce R. ____ Ltd.
- 19 Trucks reclaimed by lenders
- 21 International ProStar trim level

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Stronger economic growth, slower freight growth for US in 2014, FTR predicts

By James Menzies

BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA

The US economy will be slightly stronger this year than last, but freight growth will weaken.

That's the prediction of industry forecaster FTR, which held a Webinar Feb. 13 entitled *State of Freight: Trucking Outlook for an Uncertain Year*. Noel Perry, senior consultant with FTR, said there's an upside scenario for 2014 that could see a capacity crisis. Capacity utilization in the US currently sits at about 98% and will reach 99% – levels not seen since the boom period of 2004 – by the end of the year.

However, unlike in 2004, Perry said the build-up to that level has been very gradual, so there may not be a repeat of the capacity shortage that industry struggled with 10 years ago. This also explains why pricing hasn't fared better in light of near record-high capacity utilization levels.

“Regulatory drag (on capacity) is becoming the long-term issue.”

Noel Perry

“In 2004, that jump to 99% capacity utilization came out of nowhere,” Perry said. “Industry had great difficulty adjusting to that. But we've been at over 96% for three years now.”

US truck pricing actually softened slightly in 2013, Perry noted, even though capacity utilization was high and freight volumes strong.

But while the industry has learned to walk the tightrope of near 100% capacity utilization, Perry said it wouldn't take much in this environment to create a capacity crisis. Currently, the economic drag on capacity is modest, but the regulatory drag significant. If the FMCSA continues to impose tighter restrictions on the industry – as it did with hours-of-service reductions in 2013 – the US trucking industry could find itself seriously short of drivers and trucks.

“Regulatory drag is becoming the long-term issue here,” Perry said. “We don't know if the FMCSA is actually going to do what they say they're going to do, but if they do, it will throw this capacity issue into entirely new ground.”

The FMCSA, however, has a habit of postponing implementation deadlines for its various initiatives and with that in mind, FTR is forecasting trucking rates to climb only about 4% in 2014, well below the double-digit growth that was seen last time capacity utilization hit 99% in 2004. If everything goes right for the trucking industry this year, Perry said rates could climb by as much as 8-9%.

Perry also shared some insight into how the brutal winter weather has impacted capacity. He said about half the country has been hammered by winter storms and it's the Eastern half, which handles about 60-70% of US freight. Over the past month, weather reduced trucking's productivity in the East by 2-5%, resulting in a nationwide capacity loss of 1-3%.

“We're at 98% capacity utilization now. You add 2-3% to that and you get up around 100%,” Perry noted. “That puts you in a situation where the industry has great difficulty in providing adequate capacity. This has had a short-term effect. We'll likely have a make-up period of two to three weeks.”

For the economy in general, FTR's forecast is consistent with projections from other prognosticators,

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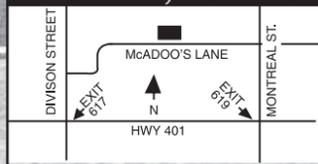
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fuel prices are projected - in the US, anyways - to remain steady at about US\$3.90 per gallon for several more years without volatility.

Perry characterized FTR's economic forecast as "conservative." He

advised carrier executives to "stay flexible," noting a capacity crisis equal to or greater than the one seen in 2004 is still possible. Much of that depends on if and when the FMCSA implements the 27 new regulations

currently in the works that will have an impact on trucking productivity and whether industry is able to find the manpower to keep up with the regulatory drag these new regs will create. ●



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US launches Phase II of fuel economy standards

By Carolyn Gruske

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Following up his State of the Union address in January, US President Barack Obama has detailed the changes he expects the trucking industry to adopt to improve the fuel efficiency of medium- and heavy-duty vehicles.

In a plan the White House says is designed to bolster energy security, cut

carbon pollution and spur manufacturing innovation, Obama has given the industry a March 2016 deadline for developing the next round of fuel efficiency standards for medium- and heavy-duty trucks. This round of fuel efficiency standards is expected to build upon the ones set for 2014-2018 model year vehicles.

The president expects the new fuel ef-

iciency standards to come about in a number of ways, including:

- Having the EPA and National Highway and Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) work with manufacturers, labour, states, NGOs, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) and other stakeholders to “develop standards that provide long-term certainty and promote innovation.”

- Having the EPA and NHTSA “assess advanced technologies that may not currently be in production,” including engine and powertrain efficiency improvements, aerodynamics, weight reduction, improved tire rolling resistance, hybridization, automatic engine shutdown, and improvements to accessories such as water pumps, fans, auxiliary power units, and air-conditioning.

Obama’s announcement also referenced the government’s SuperTruck program, which was launched in 2010 and created to improve freight-hauling efficiency of Class 8 trucks by 50% by 2015. According to White House figures, while working with the program Cummins and Peterbilt have demonstrated a “20% increase in engine efficiency and a 70% increase in freight efficiency, reaching over 10 miles per gallon under real-world driving conditions.” Other participants in the project, Daimler and Volvo have also seen engine efficiency gains of 50% and 48% respectively.

In addition, Obama asked the US Congress to end subsidies for oil and gas producers and to create an energy security trust fund to pay for research into new vehicle technologies.

In response to the announcement, organizations quickly issued statements reflecting their own positions.

Reaction from the trucking industry was mixed. Some companies like Cummins, whose participation in the P3 program was cited by the White House, were very supportive of Obama’s approach.

“The first phase of these regulations provides a strong foundation that recognizes the needs of business while offering clear direction to create innovative technologies. With the announcement today, it is clear that the government will again take a collaborative approach. We look forward to working with regulators, our customers and others on the next phase of standards that will lead to even greater reductions in greenhouse gases and fuel consumption,” said Rich Freeland, Cummins vice-president and president of the engine business.

The Diesel Technology Forum broached the proposed changes more cautiously by emphasizing its past accomplishments.

“Today’s announcement sets up the next challenge for clean diesel technology to further improve efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from commercial vehicles including medium and heavy duty trucks and buses,” said Allen Schaeffer, executive director of the Forum. “Engine and vehicle makers have all met the first set of Phase I standards for higher fuel efficiency in the current 2014 products that are now certified and for sale. Driven by customer’s fuel efficiency demands, OEMs made improvements which enabled them to meet requirements of Phase I.”

American Trucking Associations (ATA) executives counselled that a careful, thoughtful and cautious approach is needed to Phase II changes.

“We stood shoulder-to-shoulder with the President and his administration in 2011 when the historic first fuel efficiency standards were set for heavy-duty vehicles. As we begin this new round of standards, ATA hopes the administration will set forth a path that is both based on the best science and research available and economically achievable,” said ATA president and CEO Bill Graves.

“Fuel is one of our industry’s largest expenses, so it makes sense that as an industry we would support proposals to use less of it. However, we should make sure that new rules don’t conflict with safety or other environmental regulations, nor should they force specific types of technology onto the market before they are fully tested and ready,” he added. ATA chair Phil Byrd, president of Bulldog Hiway Express, in Charleston, S.C. also offered his thoughts.

“Trucking is a very diverse industry, and as such, whatever standards the administration sets should reflect that diversity and whatever tests are devised should accurately reflect what drivers face on the roads every day.”

Sandeep Kar, the automotive and transportation global research director for research firm Frost & Sullivan, offered his perspective on Obama’s plan.

“The president’s decision to elevate fuel efficiency standards for medium and heavy-duty trucks is definitely a strategic move. While it presents short-term pain for the industry, it will indeed deliver long-term gain both locally and globally. Trucks featuring better fuel-efficiency and economy will cost higher than the current breed of trucks, but will deliver reduced fuel expenses for fleets thereby reducing life-cycle costs and hence total cost of ownership, while simultaneously reducing freight transportation’s carbon footprint. While the standards are not yet formalized, it will be safe to assume that the limits that will be proposed could be met through some technologies that are already in the market, albeit in limited application areas.”

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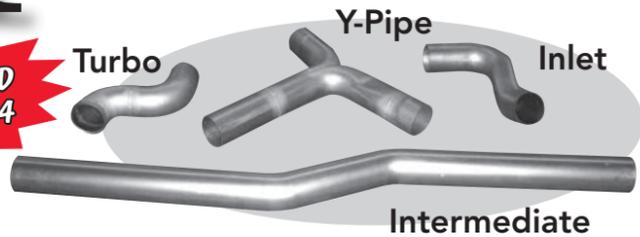
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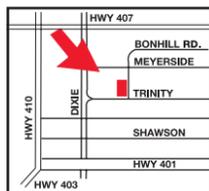
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GOODYEAR 
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In conversation with Eric Gignac

By Carroll McCormick

BOUCHERVILLE, QUEBEC

Fulfilling a lifelong dream, this January Eric Gignac became the president and co-owner of Groupe Guilbault, one of Quebec's largest trucking companies. He represents the third generation of family owners since his grandfather, Andre Guilbault, founded the company in 1929.

Gignac, his cousin Nadine Guilbault, and executive committee members Guylaine Ouellet, Daniel Garipey and Ghislain Poirier purchased Groupe Guilbault from Eric Gignac's father Michel and uncle Jean Guilbault, who purchased the company from Andre Guilbault in 1972.

Groupe Guilbault has 800 employees and annual revenues of more than \$100 million. *Truck News* contributing editor Carroll McCormick spoke with Gignac this February in his Boucherville headquarters about the new ownership, and trucking.

TN: The last time we met, you were the CEO. As the president and new owner, how have your responsibilities changed?



Eric Gignac

Gignac: It is no different, except that I owe money!

TN: Your press release describes the new owners as avant-gardiste, or forward-looking, in the English translation. What does this avant-gardiste team have planned?

Gignac: We have to be smarter every day. We must be more technology-oriented. I think that it is the solution for the future. We must not be afraid of technology. My controller is looking at the Canada Post increases and we are contacting all of our customers, asking to do paperless

Continued on page 16



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Gignac sees a bright future for trucking

Continued from page 15

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TN: Are you going to take advantage of the 30% Quebec government rebate to buy liquefied natural gas (LNG) tractors?

Gignac: I am not ready for LNG. Something else will come. We have to do something. In 10 years, I don't think we'll have diesel.

TN: Tell me about your pledge for

continuity as a new generation takes over the company.

Gignac: The sale stopped all the rumours that my competitors were spreading; for example, that the company would be sold. Our employees were very relieved. I met with the banks, suppliers and manufacturers. I told them, 'I will not change everything. I do not want to change everything.'

The major problem in next-generation transfers is that the next generation feels that it knows everything. It wants to change everything. I still call up (Jean and Michel) for advice. When the post-2008 recession hit, we spoke with them and they said, 'This is nothing compared to the high-interest '80s.' I ask my father about spec's. Continuity, but we are asking employees what can be improved?

TN: Do you see long combination vehicles (LCV) as the salvation of the trucking industry?

Gignac: Yes. We were the first to do LCVs, 28 years ago. In 2013, Guilbault did 1.5 million miles with LCVs. We saved a dollar a mile. From Jan. 1 to Feb. 8 2014, we did 351 LCV trips between Montreal and Riviere du Loup, compared to 169 between Jan. 1 and Feb. 8 2013.

TN: You mentioned to me last month, 'I've already started discussion with the Quebec Trucking Association and Transports Quebec about (running LCVs) on the 175 between Quebec City and Chicoutimi. It is the most beautiful road in Quebec. I want permission to take LCVs on the 175.' But my map shows it as only being twinned part of the way.

Gignac: The official opening of the twinned highway between Quebec City and Chicoutimi was last fall. In my life, I have only had a few goals. Own Guilbault, have kids and have LCVs go to Lac Saint-Jean (due west of Chicoutimi). I asked the Transport Minister to run LCVs (on the 175) from mid-May to mid-September. We will be doing some LCVs (this year). There is not a lot of front-haul, but I can say to the major shippers in the Lac Saint-Jean region...we can help them keep their plants open...and ship by truck instead of train. Alcan is asking all its carriers to reduce their rates by 15%. That is on the table right now. LCVs are competitive with trains from Quebec to the Eastern Seaboard.

TN: What provincial harmonization issues concern you?

Gignac: Running LCVs in Ontario is very, very expensive compared to Quebec. Ontario might be making a change to not recognize Quebec LCV drivers' licences. Our new drivers will have to take the Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) driver course. I don't know who is running the LCV file in Ontario, but sometimes we wonder if they know what they are doing.

TN: You have a ringside view of Autoroute 20 from your office. What will we see out there a few years from now?

Gignac: There will be fewer carriers, better rates, better fuel consumption, better trucks, better management. We will be more efficient and the government should understand this. In 10 years, I hope the respect between carrier and customer will be better. There is always a way to have a straight partnership, win-win. This is what I hope to see. ●



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Managing the gap

Industry leaders shed light on managing generational disparities in the workplace

By Daniela Piteo

TORONTO, ONTARIO

A panel of industry leaders gathered at the Ontario Trucking Association conference to address methods to manage generational gaps in the business of trucking.

Managing the Generation Gap in your Business, a session that was held last November at the Ritz Carlton Hotel in downtown Toronto, aimed to provide insight on how to narrow the expanding gap in the trucking business as boomers retire and the next generation steps forward.

Doug Robbins, author, business columnist and the president of Rob-inex, facilitated the session between veteran owners and the next generation of trucking professionals.

"Develop a 10-5-3 program strategic plan for your company," Robbins advised. "You need to establish what you would like to do in 10 years, in five years and in three years. Make a three-year business plan so you can meet your five-year goal."

Robbins has worked as a broker and would help veteran business owners sell their companies and in one case, Robbins ran into some trouble.

Robbins received a phone call from

a Toronto psychiatrist explaining that the deal he brokered left the former business owner suicidal.

"I was blamed for his attempted suicide. The psychiatrist explained, 'You sold his reason for living and you

"The outgoing leaders have to be around to mentor."

Jacque Meyers

didn't offer an alternative," Robbins said.

Robbins began to realize that you can't strip someone of their livelihood and expect him or her to move on effortlessly.

It is from there that he felt the generation on the way out could assist the one on the way in, in the way of a mentoring program. Robbins then invited the session panelists to discuss how the transition from an older generation to the new has progressed in their operations.

Continued on page 20

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Generational differences

Continued from page 18

Jacque Meyers, president, Meyers Transport

Meyers and her cousin Natalie are the fourth generation of the family to be running the transport company. According to Meyers, the transition of ownership from her father and uncle was slow.

"Evan and Larry (Meyers) were honestly tired and they knew they needed new leadership," said Meyers.

Both senior Meyers' stayed close by to offer guidance and support - a part of the transition that Meyers felt kept everything under control.

"The outgoing leaders have to be around to mentor," Meyers said. "We were fortunate that Larry and Evan were there for us."

Alex MacKinnon, vice-president, finance and administration, MacKinnon Transport

MacKinnon's great grandfather founded the business and like Meyers, he represents the fourth generation to keep the business running.

"You are not only trying to pass a torch, but you want it to shine - be better and brighter," MacKinnon said.

Adding to the smooth transition, MacKinnon said it is important to have respect for the generations that preceded you, even if there are noted differences.

"I don't drive a truck, but I am the

first generation to have a formal education," MacKinnon said.

That education has driven him to be involved in all aspects of the business and he isn't afraid to be assessed.

"It is very important that your colleagues assess your (performance) because you will improve where needed," said MacKinnon.

"I always ask questions," MacKinnon added. "Between my dad and grandfather there are over 100 years of experience."

Greg Palmer, owner, Trans-Frt McNamara

Greg Palmer's mother, Lorna Taylor, founded Trans-Frt McNamara and when it was time for him to take control, he opted for a five-year equity buy-out.

"I was fortunate that my mom stayed on and continued to work with me and my partner," said Palmer.

"She still mentors us."

The transition was definitely eye-opening for Palmer.

"I was suddenly thrown a lot of responsibility, but I couldn't miss the opportunity to own this business," said Palmer.

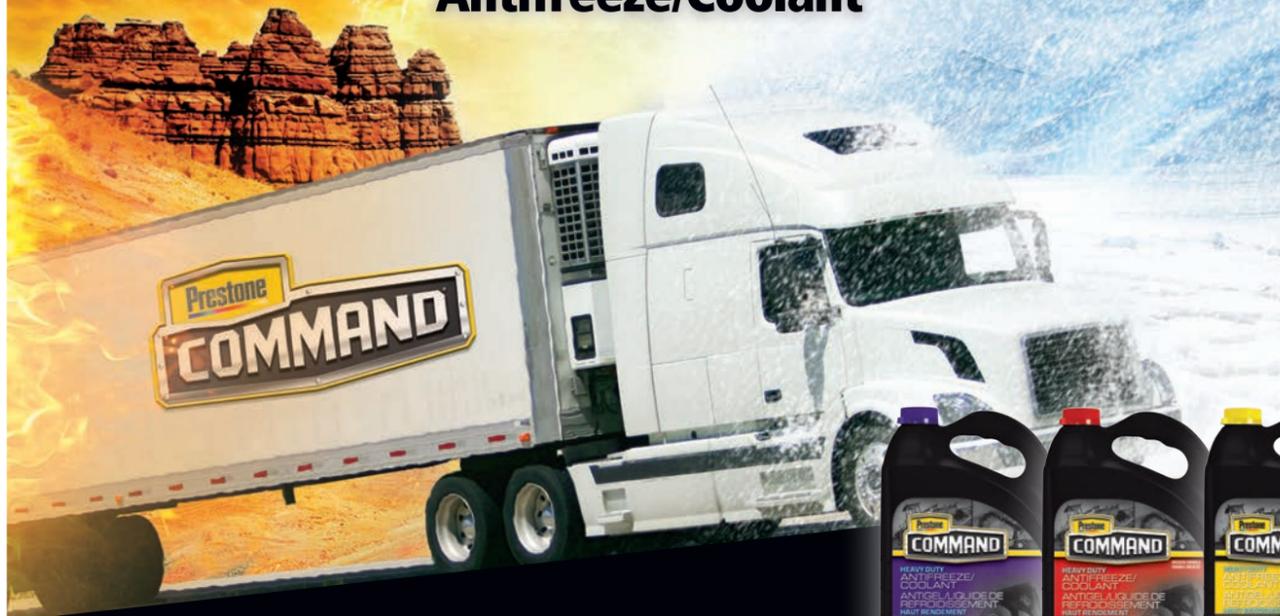
Palmer made it a point to educate himself in the areas where he knew he had weaknesses, a decision, along with his mother acting as his mentor,

Continued on page 22



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Successful succession plans

Passing on a business to new leadership can be equally difficult for both generations involved

Continued from page 20

has eased to growing pains of taking over an established company.

Scott Tilley, president, The Tandet Group

Tilley and his brother acquired The Tandet Group after they bought the business from their father, and the dynamic of going from employee to owner was clear.

"I'm becoming your banker, not your boss. Bankers aren't as nice as bosses," Tilley said.

The transition wasn't necessarily an easy one, especially for Tilley's father.

"My dad said to me, 'I don't want

to leave, but I know I have to,'" Tilley said.

It was a struggle for his father, which in turn became an area of difficulty for the company when his father began offering unsolicited work projects and ideas to the employees.

Eventually, Tilley had to explain that while his knowledge was appreciated, his direction was not.

"I had to tell him, you can talk, take notes or ask questions, but you cannot tell anyone what to do and what you think they should do," Tilley said.

Randy Veinotte, president, Harland Veinotte

Veinotte's father started Veinotte Harland in 1964 and Randy purchased the company, with his brother, in 1990.

"My father has always been *doing* as opposed to *teaching*," said Veinotte. "I learned a lot through osmosis."

When the company was purchased, Veinotte admits he wasn't ready for his new role.

"The company wasn't very big or complex, so we got away with it," said Veinotte.

It was important for Veinotte to find a business partner who was able to

“Leaving a company is worse than starting one.”

George Ledson

handle the job and who was also compatible with his personality – which he managed to find in his brother, as the two have never argued about business.

"It is important to always plan ahead and involve everyone in the company," Veinotte said, noting that an exit strategy has to be planned for as well. "I don't want to annoy (the next generation) by hanging around too long."

George P. Ledson, president, Cavalier Transportation

"I'm not ready to retire. I'm only 75 years old," Ledson told a crowd of conference attendees. "I really love trucking and I have been doing it for 57 years."

Ledson, as opposed to the other panelists, is the generation set to retire – he's not taking the torch, he's just passing it – and while his grip is still firm, he knows that he needs to be prepared so when the day comes to move on, the transition is relatively seamless.

"Leaving a company is worse than starting one," said Ledson.

Ledson's children are heavily involved in the day-to-day business and will eventually take over.

To prepare for the transition, Ledson made it a priority to ensure all paperwork was up to date and the company also instituted a stake freeze – which once implemented sees that all future growth goes to the estate.

"My children have already inherited the company," Ledson said. "They just have to wait for me to stop breathing." ●



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Optimism returns to trucking industry

TORONTO, ONTARIO

Ontario truckers expressed their most optimistic outlook in years, when responding to the Ontario Trucking Association's (OTA) first quarter business outlook survey. Carriers indicated across-the-board, even unprecedented, favourable conditions, demonstrating that improving economic conditions are being reflected by sustained freight volume increases. There has even been some positive movement on rates, according to responding carriers.

Freight volumes

While this time of year is normally slow, 42% of carriers said freight volumes within Ontario improved over the past few months, the highest number since 2011. At the same time, only 6% of carriers reported volume decreases.

Forty-eight per cent reported improved volumes in southbound US lanes, about triple the number who'd expressed this view in the last several quarters and the highest level ever recorded for this sector since the survey was launched in 2008. This marks the first time since early 2011 that more than 35% of carriers indicated improved southbound volumes, the OTA reports. Meanwhile, carriers also indicated northbound volumes are improving. Interprovincial volumes seem to be about the same.

Looking ahead, more carriers are expecting volumes to increase over the next six months, a break in the trend from the last few surveys in which carriers expressed concerns that improving freight volumes would not be sustained. Fifty-four per cent of carriers said they expect US volumes to keep growing, marking the highest level the OTA survey has ever recorded, by a whopping 14%. At the same time, pessimism about projected volumes tied an all-time low of 7%, a level not seen since the first quarter of 2011.

Rates

Carriers also indicated rates are finally improving. Twenty-nine per cent of carriers said southbound US rates are increasing, triple the number who said so a year ago. While 18% reported declining rates, that marks an all-time low. Within Ontario, 23% of fleets reported higher rates, a new high since Q3-2011. In Ontario, however, 28% reported rates are falling, indicating some pricing volatility within the province. The number of carriers who reported stronger rates for interprovincial lanes (28%) is more than double that of last quarter, and four times more than this time last year, the OTA points out. A new all-time low of 8% said interprovincial rates are softening.

Capacity

The OTA survey also found capacity is tightening. Twenty-seven per cent of carriers reported supply constraints, which is 10% higher than three out of four quarters from last year. Furthermore, 36% expect capacity to get squeezed further over the next six months, marking the highest response rates since 2010.

Just less than half of fleets plan to add tractors, trailers, drivers or owner/operators to keep up with demand.

Rising costs/exchange rate

Fuel costs are back on the rise, with 88% of carriers reporting higher diesel costs, up from 58% last quarter. Sixty-one per

cent of those respondents said fuel costs climbed 10-15%, the highest reported spike since OTA began surveying members on costs in 2011.

Also, the number of carriers indicating fuel prices are their top business concern shot up from 18% to 29%. Other issues of concern are the driver shortage (29%) and capacity (42%). The number of carriers who cited the economy as their primary worry dove from 30% to 19%.

Some carriers acknowledged benefiting from the weak Canadian dollar, but most said they don't want to see the dollar decrease in value much more. Only 15% of carriers said they're comfortable with a Canadian dollar as low as 80 cents, while 30% said an 85-cent dollar is a good place for it to be and 42% said they'd prefer it trade at 90 cents. ●

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MONTREAL, QUEBEC

FPIInnovations' Performance Innovation Transport (PIT) program has announced the launch of PIT Power, a new certification program fleets can use to identify the fuel efficiency value of a technology.

"With a long history of research activities in the forest industry's transport sector, FPIInnovations is proud to be working with the multi-national transport fleets in their efforts to improve fuel efficiency," said Pierre Lapointe, president and CEO of FPIInnovations. "PIT Power is only one of many steps we are taking to lead the global sector towards an intelligent transport system."

"We developed PIT Power based on our internationally recognized Energotest, which is the industry's most accurate, independent and indisputable evaluation process of the return on in-

vestment fleets can expect from green technologies," added Yves Provencher, director of PIT. "PIT Power uses the stringent testing protocols to reliably rank fuel efficiency. Suppliers can

Investing in technologies certified PIT Power will benefit (fleet) operations."

Yves Provencher

take advantage of this new certification process to demonstrate the real value of their technologies. Fleets will appreciate that investing in technologies certified PIT Power will benefit

their operations. PIT Power is a clearly a win-win approach."

PIT Power scores products submitted for testing on their fuel-saving potential. The ratings start at two, representing a 2% fuel savings. There is no upper limit, according to PIT. Suppliers receiving a PIT Power rating are able to display a PIT Power logo on their equipment. PIT says fleets can look for these logos as proof of performance.

"We use only proven evaluation procedures to provide the commercial vehicle industry with the information it needs to make sound equipment choices and capital investments," Provencher said. "With PIT Power we will provide independent verification of a technology's fuel economy performance so fleet managers can adopt the proven, cost efficient solutions best suited to their fleet's needs." ●

Commercial vehicle registrations down in 2013, Polk reports

TORONTO, ONTARIO

Canadian commercial vehicle registrations were down 5.7% in 2013, with increases recorded only in the provinces of P.E.I and B.C.

A recent analysis from Polk showed Classes 3-8 commercial vehicle registrations in 2013 totaled 78,700 units, down from 83,500 units in 2012.

Class 3 vehicles led the way, representing 40% of new registrations. Class 8 vehicles represented 37.6% of new registrations, but were off 11.7% compared to 2012.

"It should be noted that 2012 represented a record number of new registrations for all commercial vehicles in Canada since we began tracking in 1985," said Gary Meteer, director, global commercial vehicle products at IHS Automotive, which owns Polk. "New registrations actually began the year strong in 2013, but failed to equal or exceed their respective 2012 monthly volumes during eight of the next 11 months."

P.E.I. saw commercial vehicle registrations surge 14.6% over 2012, while B.C. recorded growth of 5.4%. Alberta set the pace with the largest number of new vehicle registrations (36.1%) for the eighth straight year. ●

Canadian ground rates strengthened in December: Freight index

TORONTO, ONTARIO

Canadian ground transportation rates climbed 1.6% in December, compared to November, according to the latest data from the Canadian General Freight Index (CGFI).

The base rate jumped 0.27% compared to November.

Fuel represented 20.84% of the base rate in December, compared to 20.54% in November.

"Total freight costs continued to climb in December for the fifth straight month. Both base and rates and fuel increased in December," said Doug Payne, president and COO of Nulogx. "With December's increase, total transportation costs finished 1% above a year ago."

For full details on the CGFI visit www.cgfi.ca. ●

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Spring is tax season, so be sure your papers are in order to minimize your obligation and take advantage of all the legal write-offs

By Harry Rudolfs

Hard-working truck drivers deserve every nickel that they're entitled to get back from Revenue Canada, so make it easier for yourself and your accountant. "Don't just throw all your receipts in a box," says Cleo Hamel, senior tax analyst for H&R Block Canada. She suggests owner/operators, whether self-proprietors or incorporated entities, should be sorting receipts and keeping track of expenses.

"From a business perspective, you

should have an idea of how your company is doing," she says. "You should review your expenses on a monthly basis: fuel, maintenance, meals, lodging and other administrative expenses should be clearly recorded."

Long-distance truckers are entitled to claim for meals and lodging expenses. Most long-haul truckers who file meal expenses do so using the simplified method, which allows them \$17 per each meal on the road without receipts, up to a maximum of three per day.

Drivers are allowed to claim 80% of the total meal expenses if they are away from the home terminal (outside of a 160-km radius) for 24 hours or more. Short-haul truckers who travel more than a 160-km radius from their home terminal can also claim for meals after 12 hours on-duty, and are allowed to claim for 50% of that amount. Those drivers using the detailed method must keep accurate meal receipts and corresponding log-book entries.

Deductions for meal and lodging expenses are a big deal for drivers whether they are company employees, self-proprietors or incorporated. The catch is that the company you haul for has to be engaged in transportation as its primary focus. Each driver has to get a TL2 form certified by their respective employer indicating they are indeed working for a transportation company.

This means that a driver employed hourly or as a contractor for a company whose primary focus is logging or making steel coils, may not qualify for meal exemptions. Those drivers require a T-2200 form certified by the employer indicating "conditions of employment," showing that they are indeed long-distance or regional truck drivers.

"Always keep a logbook. Even if you may not qualify for the TL2, with the proof of the 2200 form you can still write off some of your expenses," adds Hamel.

As mentioned above, logbooks can be crucial pieces of evidence when it comes to claiming "on-road" expenses, especially meals. H&R Blocks' Hamel offers some caution when it comes to electronic on-board recorders (EOBRs) which destroy saved data and driving performance records after six months. "You're required to keep your records for seven years," says Hamel. "The CRA can come back after you in three, four, five, six years. If you're using an electronic logbook, make sure you get a print-out every month."

Hamel suggests that some drivers should not overlook legitimate deductions, even if they don't qualify for meal deductions.

"If you're a trucker paying to stay in a motel overnight, and it's part of your job, you should be allowed to claim it." She also thinks that some rulings by the CRA can be arbitrary and can be successfully challenged. "It really is important that you've got good records, but if you believe you are correct you shouldn't be scared to fight it," she says. ●

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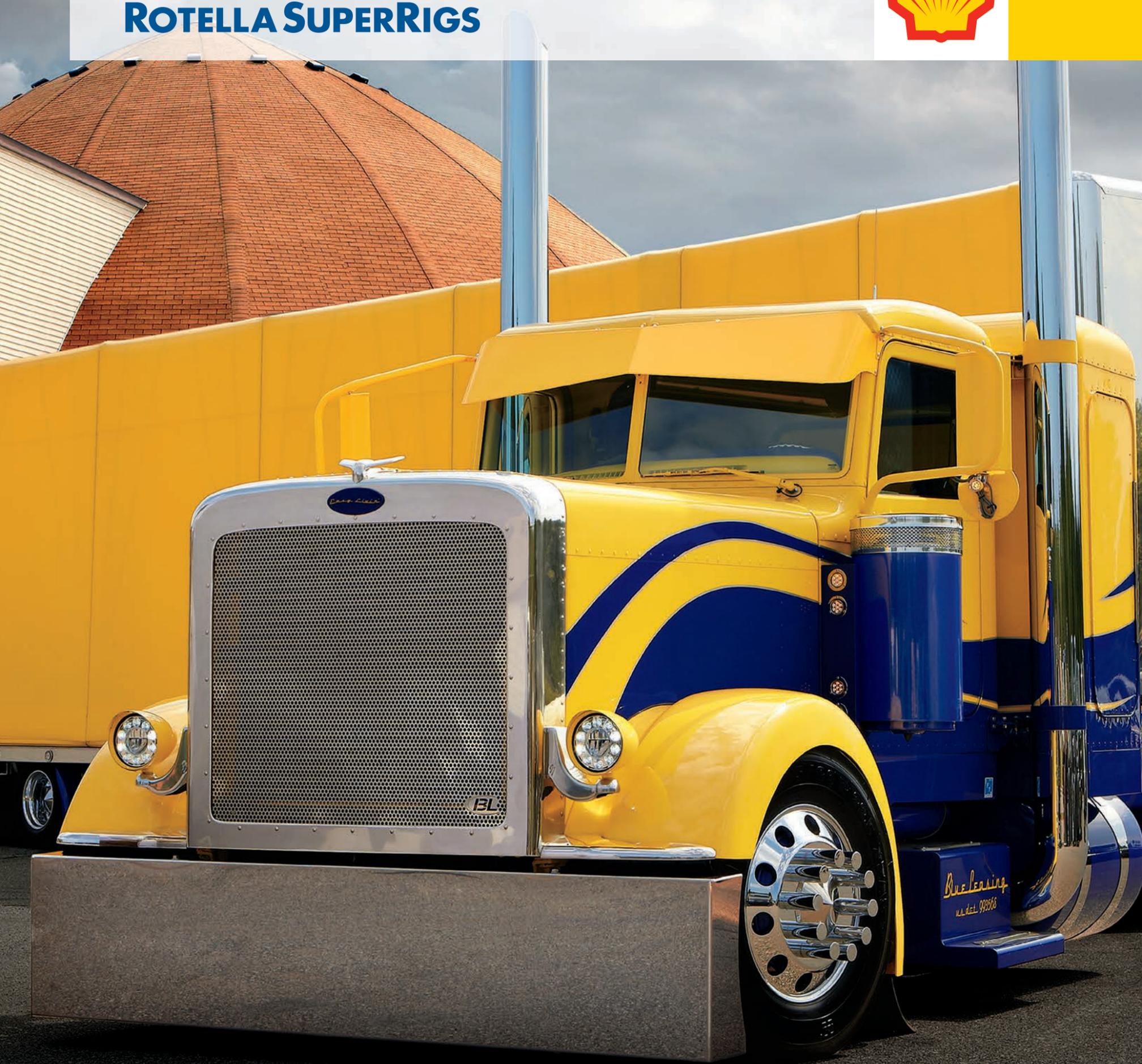
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NTEA sets up shop in Ottawa

OTTAWA, ONTARIO

NTEA, the association for the work truck industry, has announced the opening of its first Canadian office.

The association also named Mark Woody, president of Palfinger North America in Niagara Falls, Ont. its new president at the Work Truck Show in early March.

"I look forward to filling this role and am driven to work hard to lead the NTEA during its 50th year of serving the work truck industry," said Woody, who has worked in the industry for 20 years.

The NTEA said its new Canadian Government Relations office in Ottawa will work with the Washington, D.C. office to provide a unified voice for the work truck industry across North America.

"Around the world, governments have begun to recognize the economic benefits associated with global truck platforms, harmonized safety regulations and emissions standards for commercial vehicles," said Steve Carey, NTEA executive director. "Having a second government relations office further strengthens the NTEA's ability to influence and respond to regulations and legislation impacting the North American market." ●

Trucking HR Canada makes changes

OTTAWA, ONTARIO

Trucking HR Canada is welcoming a new board member and saying goodbye to a departing one. Jean-Marc Picard, executive director of the Atlantic Provinces Trucking Association (APTA), has joined the board of directors.

"Like the trucking industry as a whole, APTA's members are not immune to the challenges of the intensifying driver shortage," he said. "I look forward to exploring the underlying issues further and, through this opportunity with Trucking HR Canada, contributing to the solutions."

Picard filled a vacancy created by Bob Dolyniuk, who is retiring from the Manitoba Trucking Association.

"Bob Dolyniuk has been a true champion of sound HR practices throughout Canada's trucking industry. We thank him for his service - and look forward to working alongside Jean-Marc Picard," said Angela Splinter, CEO of Trucking HR Canada. ●

CFMS returns to Toronto June 18

TORONTO, ONTARIO

The Canadian Fleet Maintenance Seminar (CFMS) will return this year to the Paradise Convention Centre on June 18. As always, the Volvo Fleet Maintenance Manager of the Year will be awarded at the show. Nominations for the award are being accepted at www.cfmseminar.com until March 31.

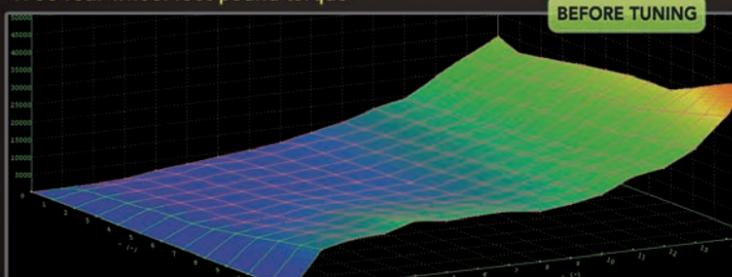
Trade show registration is now open, organizers say. More details will be posted to the Web site as they become available. ●

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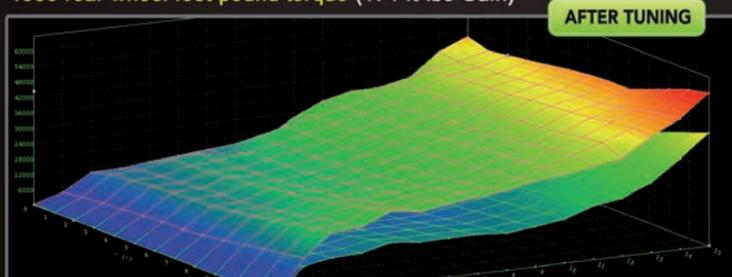
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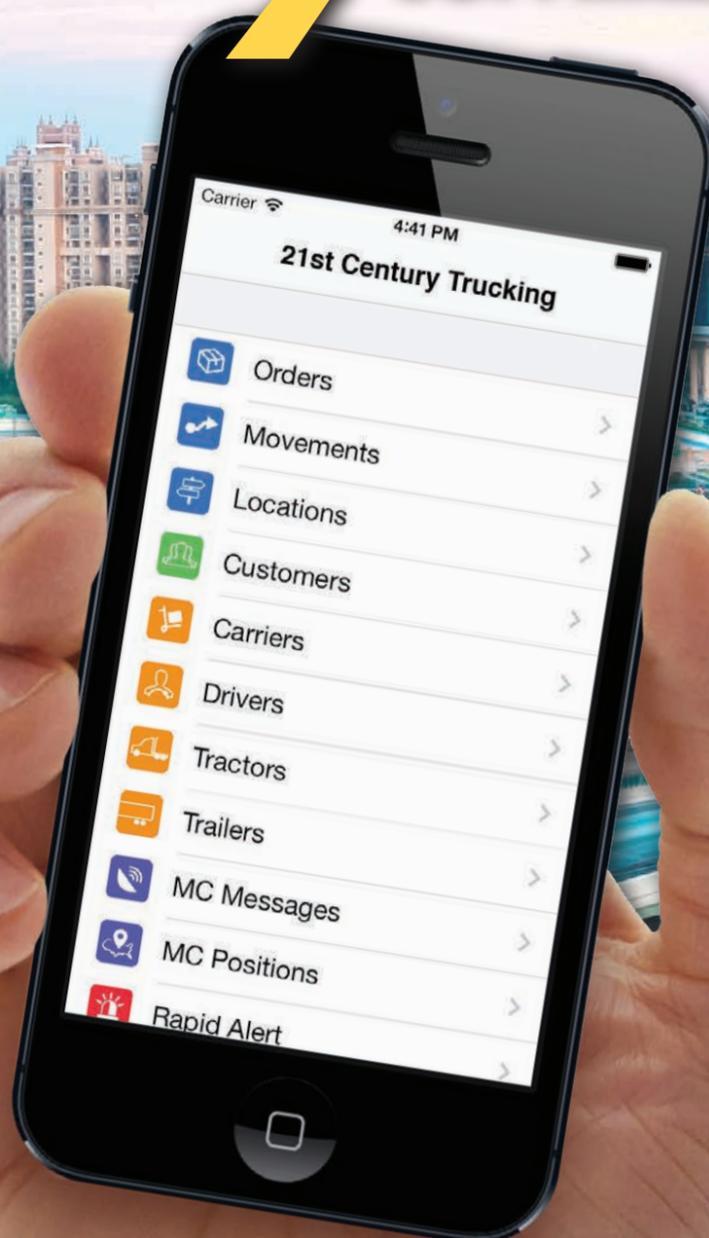
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T H E A B I L I T Y T O D O M O R E

Port strike

Continued from page 1

figured there might have been enough there to convince us all to get back to work while Mr. Ready does his report and makes his recommendations, but obviously there were issues with that package and it was rejected," said Manny Dosange, UTA spokesperson for government and public affairs.

"Basically it was a return to work agreement. For two-and-a-half months, they were supposed to stabilize the working conditions so they guys could get back to work and start making a fair living in order to pay bills," he told *Truck News*.

"What happened is they went from their regular income and it dropped by two-thirds to the point where they were struggling. We want to have the terminal services brought up so they were making their full turns, so they'd be delivering five or six deliveries a day. There was nothing in that language

that convinced the membership that was going to happen. Their fear was the drivers would get back to work and things would be nice and easy going for a week or two and after that they'd start playing silly bugger and we'd be right back to square one or even worse."

Speaking to *Truck News* Gavin McGarrigle, spokesperson for Unifor, described the negotiation process.

"We went in with Mr. Ready. There was a regional director there from Transport Canada and an assistant deputy minister there from the provincial Ministry of Transportation. Mr. Ready outlined the terms of reference and what was going to be covered in his review, which is all positive. We put forward some proposals to deal with the immediate situation and Mr. Ready tried his best to facilitate discussions between ourselves and Port Metro Vancouver," he said. "Through those discussions it was made clear there was no appetite for immediate changes. There were just protocol issues. But we thought we should take this to our members, just to ask are they prepared

to stand down for 90 days until we can hear from this. The overwhelming response from both sides was no, the conditions are too dire, they need to see some immediate improvement. That's why the result was 98% on our side."

The dire conditions UTA and VCTA object to include undercutting of rates, long wait-times at the port, concerns about fees and licences imposed by Port Metro Vancouver, and truckers not being permitted to have an active part in negotiations or ongoing discussions about port operations.

"These guys, they've been pushed around a lot," said Dosange. "We've been trying to get to the table for seven or eight months prior to getting here. (The drivers) did everything by the book and were gentlemen in doing so, and nobody listened to them. Now the tables are turned, so to speak, and it's a big jump to get everything back to work and get things fixed, and yet there are no solutions. Rather they are putting all their time and energy making backdoor deals with the BCTA (British Columbia Trucking Association). There is no trust

towards Port Metro Vancouver or BCTA at this point."

Like Dosange, McGarrigle said the union feels like it is left on the sidelines.

"Part of the problem is the way the federal and provincial government appointed Mr. Ready is they haven't really appointed him with any authority to force a resolution to the problem. We think they need to give him the tools to do that and get everybody around the table. At our meeting the other day, one of the significant groups wasn't there: all of the employers. And a big part of the problem is there is no single group that speaks for all the employers. On the dock side, there is the BCMEA, which is the British Columbia Maritime Employers Association. They bargain with the International Longshore and Warehouse Union [ILWU]. They have their bumps in the road, but they eventually reach agreements. On the rail side you have CN and CP and of course they're unionized, and they have their bumps in the road and they reach agreements.

"But if you look at the container truck side, which is 50% of the traffic, you've got something like over 180 different employers, different unions, fake unions, you've got associations, it's the wild west out there. Who do you bargain with is the question."

Although contracts and employment agreements exist between the drivers and their employers and not with the port itself, both Dosange and McGarrigle say Port Metro Vancouver ultimately controls the fate of drivers, and nobody - including the various levels of government - has done anything to put that power in check.

McGarrigle said in addition to imposing licensing fees, and limiting who comes into and out of the port through its truck licensing system (TLS), the port also imposes restrictions on the vehicles the drivers use.

The UTA, which Dosange said has approximately 1,200 registered members and another 200 completing the registration process, has had members protesting both at the port itself and off-docks at sites used to store empty containers. Over the course of the protest, Port Metro Vancouver has accused UTA members of engaging in "highly disturbing behaviour by some protesting truckers, including threats, intimidation and bodily harm towards those with legitimate right to carry on the business of Lower Mainland ports."

The port also claims to have video showing "members of the United Truckers Association stopping and possibly vandalizing a truck that was trying to gain access to the port."

According to the port "law enforcement officials have also taken affidavits from witnesses to threats, intimidation and/or sabotage of trucks and/or property. The port will wherever possible, identify these individuals and their licenses to access port property will be terminated."

Port Metro Vancouver said March 10 it had taken steps to "enhance the safety of the port for working truckers."

"Port Metro Vancouver will be seeking continuation and expansion of our injunction to keep protestors off port property. Additionally, we will continue a program implemented last week of placing security personnel in working trucks to record events and assist drivers wanting to access port terminals. Lastly, we will be enhancing the presence of security at key locations and access points for traffic headed to or from the port," the port said. It added the work stoppage was costing the economy about \$885 million per week. ●

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Over the Road

AL GOODHALL



Why dash cams are increasingly popular

Last month in this space I put forward the opinion that fleet executives and enforcement officials were missing the boat in regards to adopting social media to tap into the deep knowledge base that professional drivers possess. This month, let's take a look at a couple of performance monitoring technologies that are being widely adopted in the cabs of today's commercial vehicles and how we (drivers) are reacting to them.

The first is the electronic on-board recorder (EOBR) and the second is the dash cam. In the broadest terms, both of these platforms do the same thing: they measure driver performance. The other common thing they share is that neither one is currently required by law, but both are being widely adopted. The EOBR is seen by many drivers as being an invasive technology since it is installed by the carrier to monitor individual performance.

The benefit to the driver is not always clear. If only a portion of the total driver pool is monitored this way, the playing field is not level so a sense of unfairness results from its use. Dash cams, on the other hand, are being adopted by drivers - not just carriers. Dash cams are seen to balance the playing field, because they not only measure the performance of the individual driver but also the performance of every other driver on the road that the driver comes into contact with.

Let me make full disclosure here, and say that I have been using an EOBR for the past five years. So I've been subject to the performance monitoring that goes along with the full-featured EOBR that my carrier uses. Besides tracking my on- and off-duty time, it also measures hard brakes, rollover prevention, idle time, percentage of time spent on cruise control, percentage spent over speed, etc. This software allows the carrier to track individual trucks and drivers in all of these categories. At this point I have not installed a dash cam in my truck, but I don't see myself making it through 2014 without doing so. There are just too many benefits to having a dash cam as well as an EOBR.

As a driver, I don't think you need to make a choice between an EOBR and a dash cam. I believe these two technologies complement one another and your best option is to have both.

Let's say you're travelling down a two-lane highway and I'm approaching from the opposite direction. As I approach, my rig drifts a foot over the centre line and forces you to take the shoulder to avoid a collision. Your dash cam records this, you're ticked off, and so you contact the authorities and report this dangerous driving. The images from your dash cam allow authorities to track me down.

Another dangerous driver will be brought to justice. But when records from my EOBR are pulled, they show that I have a stellar driving history. My driver's abstract is also squeaky clean, along with my CVOR. What comes to light is the fact that I'm human and I screwed up. The EOBR provided some context to the incident recorded by the dash cam.

Of course, there are two sides to every coin. The EOBR could have shown

the opposite. I may have rarely been in compliance with hours-of-service laws, my driver's abstract may have read like a novel and my CVOR could have been

both monitoring technologies provides balance and can give us the big picture. It's pretty hard to go anywhere these days without having your actions cap-

"It would not surprise me if all vehicles are equipped with video recorders as standard equipment a few years down the road."

its sequel. In that case, I'd deserve to have the book thrown at me.

So the dash cam captures driver error at any point in time but it doesn't always provide context. Many times, a driver's poor performance is the result of negligence - but not always. Using

tured on video, whether you agree to it or not.

It seems we are all fair game in the public space that we live in. It would not surprise me if all vehicles are equipped with video recorders as standard equipment a few years down the

road. I would not want to be without an EOBR if this should come to pass.

Neither dash cams nor EOBRs can prevent collisions. But can they improve safety? They definitely provide a record that we can use in training, educating, and mentoring drivers to improve safety on our public roads - not just for commercial drivers but for all drivers. That should be our goal rather than simply going after everyone that makes a mistake.

This is another example of how important it is to have open and honest communication between drivers, carriers, and law enforcement.

Legislation imposing the use of EOBRs is still pending, but will in all likelihood come to pass. Will legislation in regard to video recorders in commercial vehicles be far behind? ●

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

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Don't be blinded by the fuel surcharge

When I started our business in late 1999, 'fuel surcharge' was a term I had never heard used. During my previous time in the freight business, fuel prices had not fluctuated so much that the increase wasn't covered by regular increases in the freight rate.

Since early 2000, however, the fuel surcharge is a term that has rarely gone away. It's also probably the source of the most confusion in this industry, from owner/operators all the way up to shippers and receivers.

A lack of consistency in the way they are administered has everybody baffled, and in the case of the shipper/receiver, it's often suspected to be a spineless method of increasing rates.

Many large carriers base their fuel surcharges on an index published online by the Freight Carriers Association, or other such groups. Two problems arise from this. First, these surcharges are based on average freight rates from several years ago. Why? Please don't tell me that none of you have increased your base freight rate since 2006.

The second problem is that, again, we are dealing with averages. I've whined repeatedly at what I feel are the ridiculous and insulting freight rates being offered by the dry van sector.

There are a lot more vans in circula-

tion than flatdecks, tanks, or specialized trailers, so they, by sheer numbers alone, pull the average down.

The suggested fuel surcharges online only distinguish between LTL, TL, and heavy TL. There is no distinction between trailer types. On the surface, using this method to calculate your surcharges seems to be a lazy and ineffective system. Your primary source of increased revenue, in this case, is the surcharge. As equipment and maintenance prices increase, you can still end up running cheaper if fuel prices decrease.

In our case, we have devised a formula that realistically reflects a fair fuel surcharge, based on our own freight rates. When submitting rates – either to a new customer, or revised rates to an existing customer – the rate list clearly states the local fuel price upon which the surcharge was based. Shippers may, if they wish, call the local fuel supplier for the current diesel price to verify what we are charging is realistic.

They may then – although none seem that ambitious – calculate their surcharge on the rate, and see that the increase is a net dollar figure that only covers our increased fuel costs for that trip. It's a fair and transparent surcharge. This honesty has caused headaches for some of our competition in the past.

One US customer, using our trucks as well as several American trucks, asked me what price diesel would have

“The fuel surcharge is probably the source of the most confusion in this industry.”

to reach for the fuel surcharge to disappear. Apparently, I was the only one who could answer the question, so ours was the only company that didn't have any problem collecting. A Canadian customer once phoned to ask for an explanation of how our surcharges were calculated.

Assuming I was on trial, I explained the entire process, even using the freight rates to a common destination, explaining typical fuel economy figures and showing that the surcharge covered our increased costs and little or nothing more.

He then asked what the online 'national average' was all about, so I explained. His final question explained this whole line of questioning: 'So how come your surcharge is 10% and your competitor's went from zero to 30% this

month when he claims to be using the national average?'

Several years ago, a shipper we dealt with was bought out by a larger manufacturer. The new shipping supervisor from the parent company informed all carriers that individual fuel surcharges would not be allowed; he would provide weekly updates as to what the accepted surcharge would be. Our freight rates were only one year old. He used the national average, and unwittingly handed us a 10% raise. Genius.

The fuel surcharges also can feed the fallacy among some owner/operators that their revenue is lower at a small carrier. Those who have a firm grasp of the numbers, and good enough math skills to be a successful owner/operator, figure out the truth quite quickly. Others never quite understand.

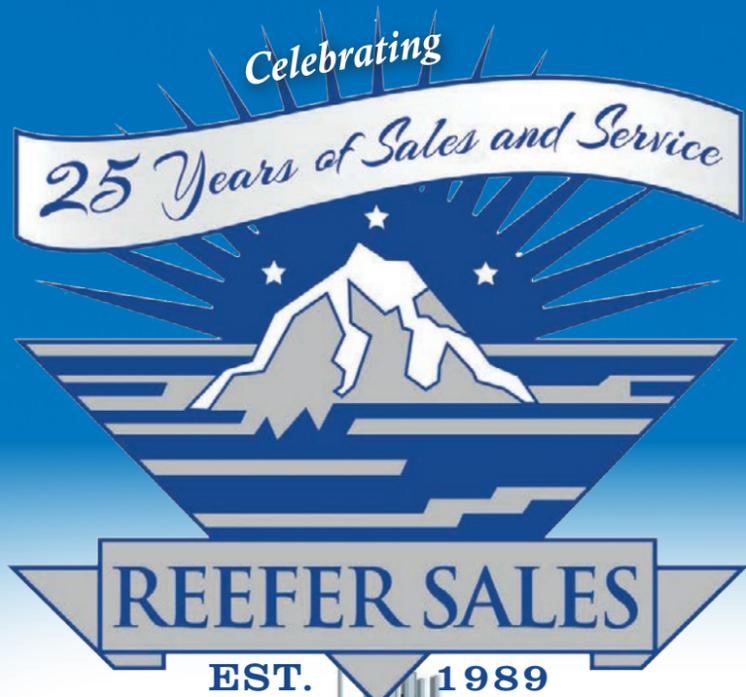
I had one applicant ask what our fuel surcharge was. At the time it was 10%. He angrily lectured me about how my business was being run, stating he was currently paid a surcharge of 18%. When I asked him what his base rate was (a question he hadn't even asked me yet), he responded with a rate that was about 40 cents per mile less than I paid. I told him he should do the math instead of lecturing me. The end result on the owner/operator's paycheck was going to be 30 cents per mile more with us than at his current job, so the difference in the surcharge rate wasn't as critical as he thought. ●

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

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Mark Seymour
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Tax
Talk

SCOTT TAYLOR



There's more to life than trucking

It goes without saying that a Tax Talk column in April should be about personal income tax returns.

Of course, I dedicated my last two columns to tax tips and ideas about how to reduce the tax you owe.

And so this month I find myself turning to recent conversations with clients for inspiration.

While most of the tax questions I get are related to trucking, clients have a lot more going on in their lives than hauling freight. We do tax returns for clients' spouses and children. We pretty much see everything.

Consider the topics I've talked about with clients in the last few weeks:

Can I deduct my...?

Textbooks: Textbooks are not a stand-alone deduction. They are part of the education deduction for students of qualified institutions and there is a set amount per month based on the number of months the student is part-time or full-time. So those textbooks your kids bought at the school book store are not deductible, and nor are the books your wife bought for that course she took. If you don't have a T2202 in your hand, there is no textbook deduction.

Parking at the hospital: Yes, it's expensive; yes, you're stuck with the hospital lot unless you want to hike a mile; and no, parking is not an allowable deduction. That is, unless you had to travel at least 80 kms one way

from your home to obtain medical services. If that's the case, then accommodations, meals, and your vehicle expenses are deductible as well.

Cell phone: Unless your employer completes form T2200 verifying that you are required to have a cell phone, you cannot deduct this expense.

Commuting and uniforms: Driving to the truck, yard, or office is a personal expense and is not deductible whether you are an employee or self-employed. Additionally, as an employee, you cannot deduct the cost of special clothing you wear or have to wear for your work.

Meals: Let's not forget that there are two deduction rates for meals eaten while you're on the road.

All meals claimed using the sim-

plified method (ie. your logbooks) are calculated at \$17 per meal. You can claim 50% of that amount unless you qualify as a long-haul truck driver, in which case you can claim 80%.

A long-haul truck driver is defined as an employee whose job is transporting goods in a long-haul truck that has a GVWR of more than 11,788 kgs; is away from his home municipality or metro area for at least 24 hours; and travels at least 160 kms from the establishment to which he regularly reports to work.

Basically, if you're home every night, your meal expense deduc-

CRA doesn't mess around when it comes to deadlines. The last day to submit your 2013 personal income tax return is April 30.

tion is 50%. Even then, you must have been away for 12 consecutive hours from your municipality or metropolitan area in order for the expense to qualify.

I'm late...

Two years ago, we helped an owner/operator file GST/HST and income tax returns for 2005 to 2007. Recently, he came to us about preparing his 2008 to 2010 returns. While reviewing everything he sent to us, I found Notices of Assessment for his GST/HST account for 2005 to 2007. Everything had zeros on it. CRA had denied his claims for GST/HST paid on expenses because they were more than four years old.

We warned him that this could happen. This guy does a lot work in Canada and he was eligible for almost \$12,000 in claims if only he had filed sooner. Now, as we start work on his claims for 2008 and 2009, we're going to have to tell him that they're too old as well.

CRA doesn't mess around when it comes to deadlines. The last day to submit your 2013 personal income tax return is April 30.

If your return is late, there's a minimum 5% penalty on the balance owing plus 1% per month for a maximum of 12 months.

If you have filed late before, the penalties may be higher.

Even if you can't afford to pay the balance, filing your return on time can save you penalties and fees. You'll also be in a better negotiating position with CRA regarding a payment plan.

Preparing your personal tax return may be a once-a-year thing but tax planning and managing your finances takes constant effort. It's not most peoples' idea of fun. However, the commitment is worth it. We all work too hard to give up opportunities to reduce the amount of tax we owe. ●

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 18

Registration & Coffee

Seminar I: Managing in a Multi Generational Workplace

Today's workplaces now include multiple generations – more than ever before, and managers must understand how to get the best from each of their employees. Learn strategies for handling the challenges of a multi generational workforce.

Seminar II: Equipment Acquisition – Tips for the Buyer

A panel of industry experts will explain the pros and cons of renting, leasing, purchasing and financing your equipment acquisitions – advice that will help you make the right choice.

The Conference Exhibitors' Showcase

Visit with our conference exhibitors and network with fellow registrants. Meet old friends, make some new ones, and see products and services that can make your fleet more effective.

PMTC – Huron Services Driver Hall of Fame Luncheon

Every year we induct up to four professional drivers who have compiled outstanding safety records over the course of their career. Recognizing their individual achievements is always a conference highlight.

Seminar III: Pro-Actively Addressing Driver Fatigue

We're all concerned with driver fatigue but one major fleet has taken a pro-active approach to studying the issue and addressing it with their drivers. Learn how you can benefit from their experience to improve safety in your fleet operations.

Seminar IV: Truck Technology – What's New and in the Works

Advancements in truck technology that improve safety and reduce operating expenses is always a popular topic at this conference. Here's where you discover the latest in truck technology.

Networking and Reception in the Exhibitors' Showcase

Another opportunity to network with your peers, continue conversations, and visit with exhibitors as we prepare for the Fleet Safety Awards Dinner.

The Chairman's Dinner Evening

Recognizing private fleets with exceptional safety records is an important part of the conference. Join us for the presentation of the 2014 awards and dine with the private fleet community.

THURSDAY, JUNE 19

Registration and Coffee

Seminar V: The Canadian EOBR Standard – How It Affects You

Canada has developed a proposed standard for implementation of mandatory EOBR's and you need to know what it means to you. You can hear first-hand from the people who wrote the standard and get your questions answered.

Seminar VI: The CVOR – How Effective Is It?

Significant changes to Ontario's CVOR program were implemented in 2008, and as a follow-up Ontario's Ministry of Transportation commissioned an independent review of the program and its effectiveness. We will report on changes that were recommended and give you your say on the program.

Seminar VII: The CVSA Inspection Model

Do you really know what happens when your trucks are pulled in for a CVSA inspection? In this presentation you will learn from field officers how the inspection process works and what you and your drivers need to be aware of to help keep your fleet running with a minimum of delay.

Exhibitors' Showcase Reception

Relax in our reception area, chat with friends, and inspect the products and services on display that can make your fleet even more effective.

Annual Meeting & Vehicle Graphics Awards Luncheon

Following the business session you'll be treated to a video display of some of the best truck graphics to be found anywhere. These fleets are proud of their image and so they should be. Always a highlight of the conference, the fleet graphics awards luncheon wraps up the conference.

Conference Adjourns

PMTC 2014 ANNUAL CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM

3 WAYS TO REGISTER: 1. EMAIL TO INFO@PMTCC.CA 2. ONLINE AT PMTCC.CA 3. FAX TO 905-827-8212

REGISTRANT INFORMATION

Name: _____

Company: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Additional registrants:

1. _____ Email _____

2. _____ Email _____

Non-PMTC members please complete the following:

Address: _____

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INDICATE HOW MANY WILL ATTEND EACH EVENT

WEDNESDAY

- _____ Seminar I: Managing in a Multi Generational Workplace
- _____ Seminar II: Equipment Acquisition – Tips for the Buyer
- _____ The Conference Exhibitors' Showcase
- _____ PMTC - Huron Services Driver Hall of Fame Luncheon
- _____ Seminar III: Pro-Actively Addressing Driver Fatigue
- _____ Seminar IV: Truck Technology – What's New and in the Works
- _____ Networking and Reception in the Exhibitors' Showcase
- _____ Chairman's Dinner Evening: PMTC – Zurich Private Fleet Safety Awards

THURSDAY

- _____ Seminar V: The Canadian EOBR Standard – How It Affects You
- _____ Seminar VI: The CVOR – How Effective Is It?
- _____ Seminar VII: The CVSA Inspection Model
- _____ Exhibitors' Showcase Reception
- _____ PMTC - 3M Vehicle Graphics Awards Luncheon

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Note: Those cancelling prior to June 1, 2014, will be entitled to a refund less a \$50.00 processing fee. No refunds will be offered after June 1, 2014.

CONFERENCE FEES

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\$445 + HST = \$502.85

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\$300 + HST = \$339.00

Non-PMTC Member
Full Registration¹
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Spousal Plan¹
\$175 + HST = \$197.75

¹ Includes all events and meals.

ADDITIONAL TICKETS

Hall of Fame Luncheon
\$150 + HST = \$169.50

Fleet Safety Dinner
\$150 + HST = \$169.50

Graphics Luncheon
\$150 + HST = \$169.50

Questions? Call 905-827-0587 or email info@pmtc.ca

ROOM RESERVATIONS

Reservations can be made by calling the Kingbridge Centre directly at 1-800-827-7221.

Be sure to mention you are with the Private Motor Truck Council Conference.

The room rate is \$180.00 per night plus tax.

Rooms are allocated on a first-call, first-served basis, so reserve your room as soon as possible.

If you have any questions regarding room reservations, please contact Kingbridge directly.



Voice
of the O/O

JOANNE RITCHIE



The six-point plan to achieving success

For better or worse, there are fewer owner/operators with us today than just a few years ago. The recession claimed its share of poorly capitalized independents.

Regulatory pressures pushed many others over the cliff, while credit troubles and high operating costs took care of a bunch more. But if you think the

recent cull is going to make it easier for those left standing, you had better think again.

It's tougher than ever for single-truck operators to stay in business, which means if you hope to survive you have to be better than just good. And you have to choose your carrier partner more carefully than ever. There are a growing number of carriers who are beginning to realize

that the business-as-usual mindset just isn't going to cut it anymore, and they're struggling to adapt to 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.

If the winds of change are blowing in a new breed of carrier, it's more important than ever that owner/operators are up to the challenge and ready to bring their best business practices to the table.

When I ask the most successful owner/operators I know what those best practices are, these are six that top the list:

Know your costs

This is fundamental to running a successful business. Gone are the days when you could wing it, when it comes to knowing the real cost of keeping your truck on the road, paying yourself a decent wage, and ending the year in the black. Well-run businesses should operate at a profit, and that begins with knowing and doing everything possible to control and manage costs.

Lower costs translate into higher profit margins; charge enough to cover your costs and to earn a profit on each load.

There's no such thing as a backhaul rate, so don't haul freight that doesn't pay what you need.

That said, make sure your costs are realistic. Nobody's going to pay more to compensate for inefficiencies like poor fuel economy.

Don't haul cheap freight

Run your truck like a business, with profitability and sustainability as your goals.

Make a business plan and stick to it; just make sure you've built in the flexibility to make the oft-required mid-course corrections and adjustments.

But go only so far - rate cuts and clawbacks of fuel surcharges, for example, are not in the plan, especially today.

If the shipper or your carrier partner isn't prepared to pay, you have to be prepared to walk away.

But remember, it's only when you know your costs that you'll know for sure what freight is too cheap to haul.

Get it in writing

You'd be surprised how many calls I get every month from owner/operators at the apparent tail-end of their relationships with carriers. The calls usually go something like, "Is it legal for the carrier to deduct damage to a trailer from my statement even if I didn't cause the damage?" or, "Can the carrier reduce the rate I was getting when I hired on?" Always, my first question is, "What does it say in your contract?"

All too often owner/operators get burned for agreeing to work under terms and conditions of contracts they either do not understand or have never read.

A good contract is one of your key business tools. The terms of the business relationship should always be spelled out in the contract, whether it's with a shipper or a carrier.

Outside of a contract, there are no laws protecting you from unscrupulous

business associates, so don't leave anything to chance in terms of unplanned changes or impromptu deductions from a settlement. Owner/ops don't have the same rights under labour law that company drivers have, so make sure the contract covers all the bases and protects your interests too.

Run compliant

It's safer, cheaper, and less stressful in the long run. And with HoS in particular, it just doesn't make sense to keep reinforcing the reprehensible habit of *giving away* your time.

And that's exactly what you're doing every time you adjust your logbook to compensate for screw-ups or poor planning.

With HoS in particular, it just doesn't make sense to keep reinforcing the reprehensible habit of giving away your time.

You can't complain about unpaid delays at the same time you're hiding the hours. It's only when those hours gets logged where they should that carriers and their customers will have no choice but to ante up. Smart drivers take advantage of electronic logs and EOBRs and make them work to their advantage. 'Nuf said.

Know the sector you work in

There's freight out there paying two, three bucks a mile, sometimes as high as five bucks or better, if you know where to find it. The real pros know the markets they work in and they follow the good-paying freight.

Say you're heading west with your flatbed. Is the freight moving in the other direction scarce or really low-paying? If so, your outbound rate had better be sufficient to cover the empty miles back to greener pastures. All that comes from knowing and understanding the sector you work in. Watch, listen, read - keeping on top of things is a continuous learning process.

Look before you leap

You've got to know when it's time to move on. There's lots of freight to move, and there are lots of good carriers out there moving it. Compare apples with apples when you're looking at carrier operations and pay packages. Interview them with a list of questions that will help you make an informed choice - and don't sign on until you have the answers you need.

We can debate the definition of 'good' and 'bad' when we're talking about carriers and owner/operators, but 'bad' in my books certainly includes those who don't take the business part of trucking seriously enough. So set your standards high, aim for success, and don't settle for less. ●

Joanne Ritchie is executive director of OBAC. Do you know what's good for you? E-mail her at jritchie@obac.ca or call toll free 888-794-9990.

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Keep your eyes moist

During the winter months, the air in our living and work environments tends to become very dry due to heat sources such as furnaces or vehicle heaters. This drop in humidity will often cause minor problems for our bodies. Issues such as dry skin and eyes are common complaints.

Simply stated, dry eyes occur when your body is unable to produce enough moisture for your eyes. Our tears are composed of a mixture of water, fatty oils, and mucus. Tears function to lubricate and protect the eyes.

There are several possible causes of dry eyes. In some individuals, dry eyes occur due to poor tear quality. This is usually due to an imbalance in the composition of the tears. There may be too much or too little of either the water, oils or mucus within the tears. Another cause of dry eyes is a decrease in tear production. As you age, tear production tends to decrease. In fact, it is quite common for people over 50 years of age to have dry eyes. Some medications such as antihistamines and decongestants may also cause dry eyes. This type of dry eye is usually temporary and resolves itself when the medication has been stopped.

Occupations that require a lot of computer work or reading often increase your risk of experiencing dry eyes, as they tend to reduce the frequency at which you blink.

The symptoms of dry eyes most commonly affect both eyes. Symptoms include a stinging or burning sensation in your eyes, eye fatigue or redness and a sensitivity to light. Some people will also experience periods of excessive eye watering and occasional blurred vision.

Generally, dry eyes do not cause significant problems. However, it is important to rule out more serious underlying conditions. It is important to seek medical attention if you suspect that you are experiencing prolonged dry eyes.

After examining your eyes, your family physician will decide whether a referral to an eye specialist is required.

The good news is that most cases of dry eyes can be treated or controlled with simple over-the-counter eye drops. These drops are designed to lubricate and coat the eyes in order to prevent them from drying out. Lifestyle changes such as introducing Omega-3 to -6 acids into your diet and reducing the amount of caffeine consumed may help to relieve the symptoms of dry eyes. In addition, adding moisture to the air by using a humidifier may also help.

For those working on a computer or reading, it is important to take breaks to allow your eyes to rest.

During these breaks it is advisable to close your eyes or blink repeatedly to help spread the tears across your eyes. Finally, avoid having air blow directly into your eyes. This is especially important for professional truck drivers who spend many hours in the cab of their trucks. Position the heater vents so that they do not blow directly into your eyes.

As you can see, dry eyes is not usually a significant medical condition, however it can cause a great deal of discomfort. Next time your eyes are feeling dry, try some of these tips and you will be well on your way to having well-lubricated eyes.

Until next time, drive safely. 🚚

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

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Join us for Trailer Wizards' Grand Openings (Delta, BC & Cornwall, ON) and Customer Appreciation Events across the country this spring!



Food Banks
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Once again, we would like to take the opportunity to show our appreciation by inviting you over for lunch on us! We'll be giving away some great prizes as well as featuring exclusive specials and more!

Trailer Wizards is also, once again, proud to be a sponsor of **Food Banks Canada's Hunger Awareness Week** campaign (May 5-9, 2014). **Food Banks Canada** is the only national charitable organization representing and supporting the food bank community across Canada.

Also, during the months of April to June 2014, we invite customers and suppliers to stop by any Trailer Wizards location nationwide and bring in non-perishable food donations in support of local food banks.

Watch out for our Customer Appreciation Events this spring and help us support those in need!

We look forward to seeing you!

April 30: Delta, BC **Grand Opening!**
May 7: Edmonton, AB
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Preventive Maintenance

KAREN BOWEN



In the spur of the moment

An old western tune speaks of “spurs that jingle, jangle, jingle” as the cowboy singer “goes riding merrily along.”

This pleasant description may hold true when a spur is made of metal and sits behind the heel of a cowboy boot.

However, when a spur is an extra growth of bone, protruding from the end of a bone in your shoulder, spine, finger, hip, knee, and/or heel, this type of spur is nothing to sing about.

Bone spurs (osteophytes) are pointed, bony projections that develop along the edges of bones, particularly in joints, where bones meet each other. Injury to nearby tissues or wear-

and-tear arthritis (osteoarthritis) most commonly cause bone spurs. When injury or osteoarthritis breaks down the cartilage that cushions the ends of your bones, your body creates new bone to repair that damaged area.

The extra bone created for this repair increases the bone's surface area, allowing for better load bearing. However, when this extra bone extends out from the smooth surface of the original bone, it creates a problematic bone spur.

Bone spurs most often go unnoticed because they cause no symptoms.

In this situation, no treatment is required. However, when bone spurs

do cause pain, they can affect your health and lifestyle, depending on where they are located and which joints are affected.

If in your shoulder, bone spurs can rub on the muscles and tendons in the rotator cuff, causing swelling and/or tears. This could limit your ability to raise your arm, lift objects, and steer your rig.

If in your spine, spurs on the vertebrae can narrow the space cradling your spinal cord.

This constriction can pinch the spinal cord or its roots, leading to numbness or weakness in your arms and/or legs, which could impact your ability to sit for long periods of time, and to tolerate the jostling of a bumpy road.

If in your fingers, spurs appear as hard bumps, making your finger joints large and knobby. Finger spurs can interfere with hand dexterity, which could affect your ability to hold the wheel for extended periods of time, and/or to have the strength and mobility to secure your load.

If in your hip, spurs can make it painful to lift your leg, causing pain that radiates down to the knee.

The spur's position can even decrease the range of motion of the actual hip joint, which could reduce your agility and ability to get in and out of your rig.

If in your knee, spurs can make it painful to extend and/or bend your leg. The bony growths can affect how bones and tendons slide over each other, reducing the fluidity of movement, which could prevent you from effectively using your rig's pedals and/or properly lifting with your knees.

If in your heel, spurs may make walking difficult due to painful weight-bearing.

If a spur sits at the bottom of the heel bone, the entire bottom of your foot may become enflamed (plantar fasciitis).

Bone spurs anywhere on your foot can lead to developing corns and calluses as your body builds up this extra tissue to provide padding and protection over the affected area.

In addition, bone spurs can break away from the larger bone, creating bone fragments that float around within the joint.

These fragments may eventually become embedded in the joint lining (synovium) and cause inflammation; or, they may become trapped between the ends of the joint bones, causing the joint to unpredictably lock intermittently.

With bone spurs, getting appropriate treatment early can help slow, or even prevent further joint damage. So, if you have pain and/or swelling in one or more joints, if you have trouble moving a joint, or if a joint occasionally locks - make an appointment with your doctor to see if you have a spur. Sometimes, a corticosteroid injection may greatly reduce the pain and inflammation of affected soft tissues.

However, when a spur is limiting your range of motion, damaging other tissues, and/or irritating nerves, your doctor may recommend that the spur be surgically removed.

Outside of surgery, you can take the following steps to reduce your painful symptoms: rest the affected joint; apply ice; use over-the-counter pain relievers like ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin, etc.) or naproxen (Aleve, etc.) Lose weight to reduce the pressure your joint must support. Stretch the joint to maintain blood flow and flexibility. Go to physical therapy. Try ultrasound or deep tissue massage.

For relief with foot spurs, in particular: experiment with different footwear styles to find one with support and comfort; and/or, use padding or a shoe insert, such as a heel cup or orthotic to reduce pressure and pain, and to avoid corns and calluses.

In your bones, you know that travelling through the countryside is more comfortable without spurs - even if you are a country and western fan! 🌟

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Private Matters

BRUCE RICHARDS



Getting tough on distracted driving

In last month's column I expressed bemusement with drivers who ignore bad winter weather and try to go about their business as though it's always a sunny summer day and they are the only ones on the road.

I mentioned that technology can help when common sense is absent and offered several examples of technological innovation commonly used in trucking that could likely be adapted for passenger vehicles. One of these suggestions struck a nerve with a reader.

Kevin wrote in to say that one of the pieces of technology I referred to in my column isn't all that it's cracked up to be in the eyes of some professional drivers. He provided a few examples of issues that he and other drivers have had with the equipment and suggested that regulation and technology can't be entirely relied on to correct all bad driving habits.

Let me say first that I appreciate hearing from Kevin, and as I promised him, I will be discussing his concerns with the manufacturer. Secondly, I agree with his point that regulation and technology combined can't provide a complete answer to the problem. We do however need to embrace technology that has been proven to work.

Continuing on the theme of trying to correct poor driving habits, a judge in Ontario recently announced that the fines for distracted driving (ie., using a prohibited hand-held device while driving) will nearly double beginning in March. The judge apparently sees this issue as a particular bugbear because the government didn't even ask her to weigh in on the subject prior to her announcement. But she may be on the right track.

The evidence is in: the existing level of fines for the use of cell phones and other hand-held devices while driving simply do not provide enough of a deterrent for many drivers, and that's likely why she acted. Anecdotally, we all witness inappropriate and illegal cell phone use almost every day and statistics confirm the risks involved.

The OPP reported that in 2013 more traffic fatalities were the result of distracted driving than drunk driving - 78 vs 57.

Toronto police reported that over 55,000 distracted driving charges were laid in the city between 2010 and 2012. Fifty-five thousand! Add to that the 19,000 charges laid by the OPP in 2013 alone and the picture becomes even clearer - the risks inherent in distracted driving are simply not a concern to many drivers.

The CAA provides some alarming statistical evidence on its Web site.

Here's a sample: Drivers engaged in text messaging are 23 times more likely to be involved in a crash or near crash event compared with non-distracted drivers. (Virginia Tech Transportation Institute, 2010); 80% of collisions and 65% of near crashes have some form of driver inattention as contributing factors (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 2010); International research shows that 20-30% of all collisions involve driver distraction (Alberta Transportation, 2011).

In an earlier column in this space I referred to a CCMTA study entitled *Addressing Human Factors in the Motor Carrier Industry*. The report addresses a number of factors that result in collisions, mainly relating to inattention caused either by fatigue or distraction. There it is again - distraction.

Transport Canada published a report in late 2013 expressing concern over the proliferation of in-vehicle telematics, devices incorporating wireless communications technologies to provide information services, vehicle automation and other functions to drivers.

Here's a quote from the executive summary of that report: "Transport Canada is concerned that in-vehicle telematics devices are a threat to road safety because they can increase driver distraction and cause an increase in distraction-related crashes. This concern is based on a substantial and mounting body of evidence indicating that using these devices impairs driving performance."

The report suggested that although cellular telephones are currently the most common type of telematics devices used in vehicles, other technologies and applications, such as navigation, adaptive cruise control and Internet access, are increasingly entering the market, and are expected to become standard features in vehicles in the near future.

There's more: in the July 2013 issue of *Canadian Family Physician*, Dr. Victoria Lee addressed the topic and made the point that, much like the issue of drinking and driving, addressing the problem of cell phone use while driving will not be easy. Several observations

in her article merit consideration. For example, employers should prohibit cell phone use while driving on company time and cell phone modifications could be designed to block cell phone use while driving.

While that latter suggestion may seem drastic and counter to the argument that favours hands-free, or Bluetooth-enabled devices, there is also plenty of informed opinion that believes holding the device is not the real problem - it's the distraction of the conversation.

As Dr. Tom Schweizer of St. Michael's hospital in Toronto said, "Hands-free isn't brains-free."

We've still got a potentially long, uphill battle ahead if we are to eliminate the most common form of distracted driving - cell phone use - but one judge has taken an important step.

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<div style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; color: yellow; background-color: black; padding: 2px;">2 UNITS</div> <p style="font-weight: bold; color: red;">2009 VOLVO VNL300</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Volvo 485 H.P. VED13 engines with Volvo 12-spd. I-shift trans. Ratio 3.73 and 176 W.B.</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; color: red;">Price \$43,900.</p>	<div style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; color: yellow; background-color: black; padding: 2px;">4 UNITS</div> <p style="font-weight: bold; color: red;">2009 VOLVO VNL670</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Volvo VED13 485 H.P. engine with 12-spd. I-Shift trans. Ratio 3.55 and 220 W.B., 12.5/40 axles.</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; color: red;">Price \$47,900.</p>	<div style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; color: yellow; background-color: black; padding: 2px;">4 UNITS</div> <div style="text-align: right; font-weight: bold; color: yellow; background-color: black; padding: 2px;">DEF/SCR</div> <p style="font-weight: bold; color: red;">2011 VOLVO VNL670</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Volvo VED13 475 H.P. engines with Fuller 13-spd. trans. Ratio 3.70 and 230 W.B. 61" Raised Roof sleeper.</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; color: red;">Price from \$62,900.</p>	<div style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; color: yellow; background-color: black; padding: 2px;">3 UNITS</div> <div style="text-align: right; font-weight: bold; color: yellow; background-color: black; padding: 2px;">DEF/SCR</div> <p style="font-weight: bold; color: red;">2012 VOLVO VNL670</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Volvo VED13 475 H.P. engines with Fuller 13-spd. trans. Ratio 3.70 and 230 W.B.</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; color: red;">Price from \$77,900.</p>

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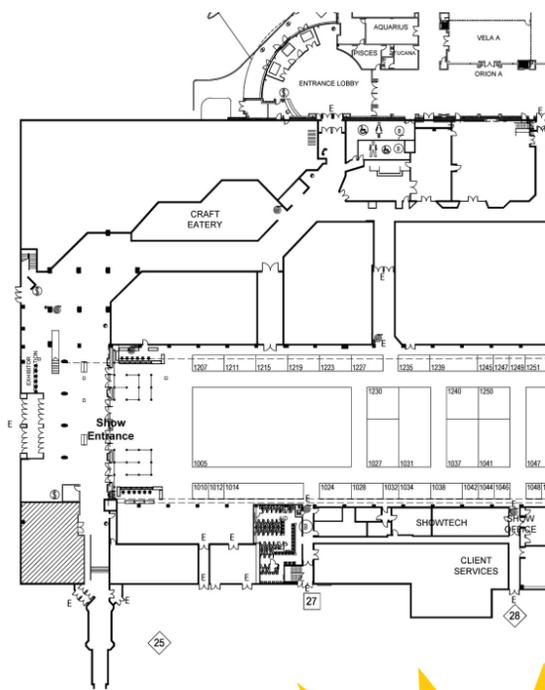
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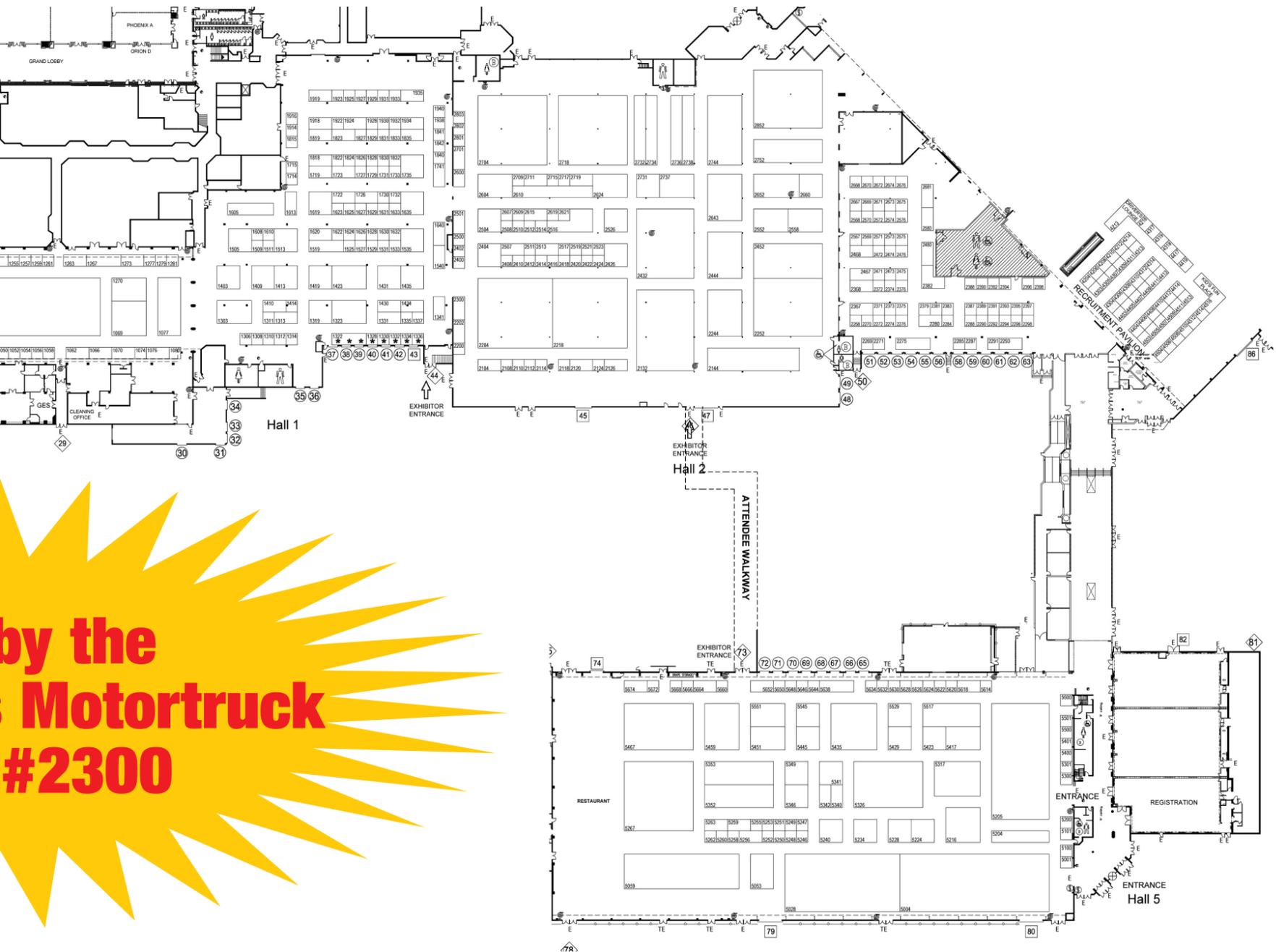


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Company Name	TW Booth #	Company Name	TW Booth #	Company Name	TW Booth #	Company Name	TW Booth #
4Refuel Canada LP	4218	Birdseye Security Inc.	5445	DOD Tech Canada	1842	Groeneveld CPL Systems	1918
730 Permit Services Inc.	1048	Blue 1	5626	Dometic Corp	2368	Groupe Bibeau Inc.	5459
Abrams Towing	1306	Blue Tiger USA	2471	Donaldson Company Inc.	1046	Groupe Robert	4319
Acadian Driveway	2609	Border Connect Inc.	1826	Drive Logistics	2276	Haas Security	5251
Accutrac Capital Solutions Inc.	1635	Bose Corporation	1413	Drive Products	5429	Haldex Limited	1513
ADF Diesel	2404	Brenntag Canada Inc.	1034	DriverCheck Inc.	1257	Halco Industries Inc.	1631
ADP Distributors	1610	Bridgestone	1250	DriveWise	5255	Hallmark Insurance Brokers Ltd	2410
Advance Fleet GPS Services	1080	Bryson Insurance	1531	Durham College -		Hankook Tire Canada Corporation	5620
AGF Brome	5451	Bully Dog	1916	Corporate Training Services	2572	HDDC (Heavy Duty Distributor Council)	1626
Airtime Express	2671	Burrowes Insurance Brokers	1341	Eagle Hook / Nine Star Safety Solutions	2513	Healthy Trucker	1410
Air-Weigh	2715	C. B. Stealth Express Inc.	2467	Eaton	2643	Hebei Longgu Auto Parts Import &	
Alemite Equipment		C.A.T.	2126	Eberhard Hardware Manufacturing	2110	Export Trade Co., Ltd	1932
- Stewart Warner Canada	5247	Canada-Wide Parts	1054	EBI Canada Inc.	1931	Hendrickson	5216
Alex Fix Equipment & Sales Ltd	1930	Canadian Kingpin Specialists	1929	ECA-SSI Simulator Systems Intl.	2371	High Hope Zhongding Corporation	2375
Alliance Truck Parts	5228	Capacity Trucks	5417	EKU Fren Kampana Ve Dok.San.AS	1823	Hino Motors Canada, Ltd	2432
Allison Transmission	1403	Caravan Logistics Inc. /		ElCargo Fabrication Inc.	1240	HI-TECH Original Seat Cover	2114
Alutrec Inc.	2752	Jobs Training Centre	1714	Element Financial Corporation	2118	HK Truck & Trailer Inc.	2284
Alvan Truck Bodies Inc.	2737	Carriers Edge	2468	ENN Canada Corporation	2104	Horton Inc.	5340
American Truck Technology	5256	CBSA (Canada Border Services Agency)	1819	Erb and Erb Insurance Brokers	2420	Hotsy Cleaning Systems	1037
Ancra Canada	1239	Celadon Canada Inc.	4304	Erb Group of Companies	1505	Howes Lubricator	1741
Andersen Flaps	1613	CG&B Group Inc.	1627	ESI Cases & Accessories	1815	Humber Institute of Technology &	
Anteo	5259	China Tire Distribution Center		Espar Climate Control Systems	1435	Advanced Learning	2298
Aqua-Hot Heating Systems, Inc.	5234	(Canada) Inc.	1840	Eveley International Corp	2660	Hunter Engineering Company	2736
Arctic Breeze Truck A/C	5634	CIT Financial Ltd	1249	Execucor Financial Limited	2414	Husky Energy Inc.	1322
Arnold Bros. Transport Ltd	5246	Clarke Road Transport	5630	FBC, Canada's Small		Hyva Corporation	1230
ATDynamics	5204	Class Eight Manufacturing Inc.	1540	Business Tax Specialist	1052	Iconic Elements - Iconic Metal Gear	2701
ATR Transmission Remanufacturing	1922	Consolidated Metco	1431	Federal Mogul Canada Ltd	1273	IMT-Ingersoll Axles	2444
Avaal Technology Solutions Inc.	1727	Continental	2144	Filco Inc.	1919	Industry Diesel & Turbo Service Ltd	1058
Awash Systems Corp	2288	Counteract Balancing Beads	1640	Fil-Mor Automotive	1245	Infosite Technologies	1308
Axle Surgeons	1279	CrimsonLogic (North America) Inc.	1509	First BIT Canada	1827	Innovative Access Solutions	2801
Axon Development Corporation	1632	CTS Cargo Tie-Down Specialty	1014	Fleet Brake & Fleetstop Trailer Sales,		IPS Invoice Payment System	1062
AZ Driver Service Inc.	4204	Cummins Canada Limited	2624	Parts & Service	1024	ISAAC Instruments	1414
Aztrix Solutions	5650	Currie Heavy Towing	1277	Fleet Engineers Inc.	2709	JD Factors	1332
Balance Cléral Scales	1050	Dal's Fuel Injection & Turbos Ltd	1314	FLO Components	5638	JM Turbo Technology Corp	1831
Baldwin Filters	5624	Dalton Timmis Insurance Group	1215	FMGPS (Fleet Manager GPS)	1925	JW Sales (Retrac Mirrors)	2400
Barnes Distribution - A Business of		Dana Holding Corp.	5346	Forster Instruments Inc.	2202	Kal Tire	1077
MSC Industrial Supply Co.	5263	Day and Ross	2422	Fort Garry Industries Ltd	1066	Karcher Canada Inc	1267
Bedard Tankers Inc.		Deloupe	1633	FP Innovations (PIT)	1533	KAS Personnel	1933
/Citernes Bedard Inc.	2610	Desi Trucking	2571	Freightliner Trucks	5004	Kenwood Electronics Canada Inc.	2120
Bee Line Company	5660	Detroit Diesel	5004	FSI Freight Solutions	2512	Kenworth Truck Company	2218
Beijing Eastyida International Exhibition Co., Ltd		Dhollandia Canada Inc.	5551	FTI 2810026 Canada Ltd	4404	Key Maintenance Technologies	1818
1527, 1623, 1625, 1715, 1729, 1731, 1733,		Dican Inc.	5252	Gaz Metro Transport Solutions	2719	Kim-Tam Truck Leasing Limited	4214
1828, 1830, 1832		Diesel Spec Inc.	2367	Glasvan Great Dane	2452	Kinedyne	1303
Beka Lube Products Inc.	5262	Dieters Metal Fabricating Ltd /		GN Transport Ltd	4313	Krown Rust Control	2426
Bibby Financial Services (Canada) Inc.	1259	Panelite Inc.	1235	Goodyear Canada	1027	Landstar Transportation Logistics	5668
Big Front Grill Inc.	5258	Ditas Dogan Yedek Parca		Gordon Food Service	4414	LH Workwear	2376
BigRoad Inc.	2296	Imalat Ve Teknik A.S.	5349	Great Dane	2252	LifeLine Truckers Logistic Services	2200



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Lionhart Capital Ltd	2717	OnSpot Automatic Tire Chains	2124	S & V Manufacturing Ltd.	2521	Mfg, MAC Trailers, Strick Trailers	2734,
Loblaw Companies Ltd.	4413	Ontario Hose Specialties Limited	1247	SAF Holland Canada	1069	2718, 2732	
Lubecore International Inc.	1042	Ontario Truck Training Academy	2474	Safeplast NA Company Ltd	2511	Transportation Compliance Services Inc. /	
MacEwen Petroleum	5240	Ontario Trucking Association	2504	Safety-Kleen Canada Inc.	1076	Simple Border Inc.	1310
Mack Trucks Canada	1005	Ontario Trucking News	5644	Schaeffer's Specialized Lubricants	1624	Transportation Fleet Services	2475
Magnum Trailer & Equipment Ltd	5618	Over the Road Group of Companies	2275	Scotlynn Commodities Inc.	2552	Tran-Steer Inc.	1281
MAHA	1833	Owner-Operator's Business		SETI Imports Inc.	2416	Transport Routier	2516
Mailhot Industries	2519	Association of Canada (OBAC)	2480	Shaw Tracking	1028	Transtex Composite	2408
Maizis & Miller Recruitment Specialists	1211	Pat's Driveline	1056	Shell Lubricants	2731	Transx Group of Companies	4314
Manac Inc.	2704	Pegasus TransTech	5666	Shenyang Tiancheng Huizhong		Tremcar inc.	5326
Manley Tire	1535	PeopleNet Canada	1223	Industry & Trade Co., Ltd	1723	Trimac Transportation Services Inc.	1261
Marketbook	5628	Petaparts Inc.	1923	Sinto	2280	Trison Tarps Inc.	2852
Max-Atlas	5352	Peterbilt of Canada	2204	SiriusXM Canada	5249	Truck & Trailer	2516
Maxima / MIT Automobile LLC	5053	Peterson Manufacturing	1207	Smart Truck Canada	2744	Truck 'N' Roll Magazine	2424
Maxon Lift Corp	5614	Petro-Canada Lubricants Inc.	1227	Sound Insurance Services Inc.	1032	Truck News /	
McCann Equipment Ltd	1311	Pewag Inc.	5248	Southwood Graphics	1251	Motortruck Fleet Executive	2300
McDougall Energy	1924	Phillips Industries	2418	Specbilt Enterprise Inc.	1255	Trucker's Guide	5200
McDougall Energy	4212	Pierquip Inc.	5467	Spectra Products	1529	Trucking for a Cure	2373
McLeod Software	5648	PiiCOMM Inc.	1313	Spindle Dynamics	1927	Truck-Lite Co. LLC	5224
Mercer Transportation	2472	Pilot Flying J	5674	Stemco Canada	1219	Truck-Pro	1525
Meritor	5435	Prema Canada	1735	Tankmart International	1263	Trucks for Change Network	2287
Merrit Capital Corp	2402	Premier Mfg. Co.	1719	TDSM	5646	Trux Accessories	1722
MGM Brakes	1038	Pro Fleet Care	2607	Tectran	1938	Trux Solutions Inc.	1012
Michelin Canada	5317	Pro Force Marketing Ltd	5001-5101,	Temper Axle Products Corporation	2412	TST Truckload	2388
Minimizer	1605	Prolab Technolub Inc.	1511	TEXIS Truck Exhaust	2293	Turbo Images	2711
Ministry of Transportation	2558	Prolam	1074	The Face	2383	Universal Boot	1328
Mobil Delvac	5059	Pseco Inc.	2290	The Toy Truck Place	1935	VDO RoadLog	2615
Money In Motion Inc.	5632	Quality Carriers	1629	The Truck Exhaust Place	1334	Veolia ES Canada Industrial Services Inc.	1732
Morrice Transportation	1730	Quick Truck Lube	1726	Thermo King Eastern Canada	2244	Verduyn Tarps	5353
Motor Information Systems	5250	RAV Ontario HD	5529	Thompson Emergency Freight Systems	4403	Volvo Trucks Canada	1047
MS Gregson - Division of RAD		Reefer Sales and Service	2604	TICO of Canada	1323	Wajax Power Systems	5423
Technologies Inc.	1620	Ridewell Suspensions	2526	Tirecraft Ontario Inc.	2507	Wakefield Canada Inc.	1270
National Leasing	1628	Rig Matters Inc.	5260	Toromont	2132	Webasto Thermo	
National Research Council Canada	5253	Right Weigh Load Scales	1824	Toronto Digital Imaging	2501	& Comfort North America	1619
National Trailer Dealers Association	2112	RigMaster Power International Ltd	1409	Toronto Trailers Inc.	2510	Westcan Bulk Transport Ltd.	4317
National Truck League		Ritchie Bros. Auctioneers (Canada) Ltd.	1031	Today's Trucking	2516	Western Star Trucks	5028
Insurance Solutions	1010	RM2J Inc.	1312	Total Canada Inc.	5517	Wheel Monitor Inc.	5672
Navistar Canada Inc.	5205	Road Today	5664	Trackem Canada	1337	WIX Filters	1622
Ningbo Shenfeng Automotive		Röchling Engineering Plastics Ltd	2600	Traction	1419	Women In Trucking Association	2374
Brake System Co., Ltd	1829	Rock Hard Liners Ltd	1330	Trailers Canada	2738	WORX Environmental Products	5622
Nitro Canada	2387	Rodeo du Camion / Truck Rodeo	2372	Tramec Sloan LLC	2514	X-Copper Legal Services	1070
North American Tire Co., Limited	1928	Ronnoco Sales Ltd	2523	Trans Plus Systems Corp	1044	Xpert-It Solutions	2508
NTN Bearing Corporation	1914	Rotary Lift	1630	TransCore Link Logistics	1519	XTL Transport Inc.	1940
OBD Monitor	1841	RS 2000 Tax Consultants	1608	Transit Trailer Limited	5267	YEU YUEH Enterprise Co., Ltd	1822
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Company of Canada	2500	RST Industries / Sunbury Transport	1336	Transport For Christ	2619	Pressure Machinery Co., Ltd	5342

A long journey for a new beginning

Continued from page 1

and I washed the cars and a month or so later I got another job as a labourer at Freeze Co. Systems. Once I was working at that job, I became fascinated by seeing the trucks on the highway. I was a very good driver back in India, so I thought I would do

some research on a career in trucking.”

Already in Canada for three years, with his family in tow, Athwal decided to undertake the challenge of acquiring his A/Z licence – a decision that Athwal credits to giving him and his family a life in Canada that he may never have had in India.

Admittedly, it’s a long way from being a chemist and a career Athwal would not have considered back home.

In India the roads and trucks are small and they can’t travel more than 60-70 km/h.

“I wouldn’t think of doing that kind of job in India,” said Athwal. “Driv-

ing there was very hard. Nobody cares about the rules on the road or whether their car gets dinged or scratched.”

In May 2001, Athwal had earned his A/Z licence and found work soon thereafter.

was a financial challenge juggling payments with other daily expenses, but that eased over time.

“I take my work very seriously and I work very hard. If you work properly in a company, you’ll get enough work

“I take my work very seriously and I work very hard. If you work properly in a company, you’ll get enough work to make your payments.”

Ravinder Athwal

“As soon as I got my licence I got a job at Cargill Foods and that company gave me exposure in Canada, especially in Ontario. I used to deliver meat – chicken and pork – I used to drive all over,” said Athwal.

It had taken Athwal a relatively short period to carve out a career for himself, but his challenges weren’t yet over. Athwal was happy driving truck, but he wanted to own the vehicle in which he spent the bulk of his day.

It took four years to save money for a down payment on his first truck.

“I was new to Canada, so it was very hard for me to get a loan,” Athwal said. “So I saved some money while I was working at Cargill and I used that savings to buy my first truck. It was a very good Mack truck and I drove it for almost five years, it was getting old and I was making a lot of runs to Quebec so I decided to sell that one any buy my Western Star.”

When he first bought his truck, it

to make your payments,” said Athwal.

Still, there was one other leap Athwal would make – from Cargill to chemicals.

After countless runs on the road, he began to think that as a driver, he should venture into the transportation of dangerous materials, as he had experience working with chemicals.

This decision led him to Trimac Transportation – a company that provides bulk transport of chemicals, industrial gas, petroleum, oilfield services and many other materials.

It was a juncture in his life where his past experience had finally intertwined with his present – a point in time where he knew many of the challenges he faced were behind him and he had found a company where he loved working and knew he could grow.

“I have a lot of opportunities here,” said Athwal. “In fact, Trimac has given me opportunities to grow as a

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driver-trainer. I go to various truck shows and help (recruit) safe drivers."

He enjoys the independence working on the road offers and he especially loves the drive itself, where he can enjoy the diversity of the Canadian landscape, its seasons and its people.

"Since I have come here, I have met so many people from all over the world living in Canada, just from driving a truck," said Athwal. "If you like travelling, it is like you are being paid to travel. You get to see so many different places. I know so many people who work in factories and I have told them to do research on trucking and get their licence. It's a great opportunity and (there are) so many ways to grow within the industry - recruiting, driver training, product handling - there are so many opportunities if you want them. People see a truck driver and they think, 'He'll be a truck driver all his life,' but I don't see it that way. It's all how you view it."

Sitting behind the wheel has given Athwal the chance to become a valued member of a community, a role he relishes.

"I worked as a Road Knight with the Ontario Trucking Association," said Athwal.

OTA Road Knights are first-class drivers that value safety and professionalism. These drivers travel to schools, car clubs, community groups and other organizations as ambassadors promoting safety, how to share the road with tractor-trailers while also touching upon the professionalism of drivers and the vital role they play in every community.

"I used to take my own truck to schools and show the kids how to walk or bike safely near a truck," said Athwal, who was one of seven knights chosen because of his safe driving record.

"It is important for people to know that a truck driver isn't just about his truck - it's about safety, accountability and education," Athwal said. "It's a great job and it pays well."

When his tenure as an OTA Road Knight was over, Athwal didn't slow down. He decided to volunteer his time with St. John's Ambulance as a car seat technician.



Ravinder Athwal behind the wheel of his Western Star while making a delivery for Trimac.

"About 70% of people don't know how to install the car seat properly," Athwal said. "Installing a car seat is a two-person job. It's a free service and it definitely helps to save the

lives of kids."

From St. John's Ambulance, Athwal decided to devote a little more of his time to volunteering, as an auxiliary constable with the Toronto police,

division 22.

"I've been working with the Toronto police for one year now. We do a lot of crowd control and patrolling in the police cars (with an officer) on the weekends," said Athwal. "A uniformed presence always makes the community safer."

Being a part of a community is an important aspect of Athwal's life, and something he wants to instill in his eldest son, and a younger son that followed after settling in Canada.

"It's important for me to show my children that community is important," said Athwal. "We all live in a community together, so we should all do our part to give back. I wouldn't have the nice life I have if it weren't for my job, for Trimac and for my community. Canada has given me a lot and I like to give back."

It's been a long road for Athwal, and the starting point veered dramatically from the destination, but it is a journey he says was worth each step. ●

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Van trailer decking systems becoming more popular

Fleets challenged to get the most out of their existing equipment are looking to decking systems to pack more freight into van trailers.

By James Menzies

The trucking industry's mantra, in the face of a productivity-choking regulatory environment, has been to do more with less – to squeeze more profit out of its existing assets. Few companies today are adding capacity and are instead looking to generate more revenue out of their current equipment and drivers, even as regulations like the new US hours-of-service rules implemented last year provide an opposing force.

One clever way fleets are boosting their productivity is by spec'ing trailers with decking systems that allow them to increase the carrying capacity of a typical 53-ft. van trailer by 30-40%.

Con-way Freight is the most notable company to implement a fleet-wide roll-out of decking systems. In January 2011, the company announced it was retrofitting 16,800 trailers with the Lift A Deck 2 decking system from Ancra International.

That announcement, and a subsequent improvement in Con-way's operating ratio, which some observers attributed to its improved carrying

capacity, has spawned plenty of interest in such systems.

"It has been a growing trend," Brian Larocque, managing director of Ancra Canada told *Truck News*. "Con-Way Freight did a huge change-over and retrofitted the majority of their existing fleet and that got a lot of attention from a lot of fleets. They realize that to compete with that, they have to go to a similar type of equipment."

Decking systems can be ordered factory-installed or retrofit into existing van trailers.

"It's more cost-effective to do it when you buy the trailer new, and some trailers like reefers you just can't retrofit in the field," Larocque pointed out.

In addition to allowing fleets to take advantage of the trailer's full cubic capacity, the systems also have proven to reduce freight claims since cargo is not stacked directly on top of other cargo.

Typically, publicly traded LTL fleets that use decking systems have an

Continued on page 47

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The Lift A Deck 2 system from Ancra allows more cargo to be packed into a traditional 53-ft. van trailer.

Decking systems gaining in popularity

Continued from page 45

operating ratio that's nearly twice that of carriers that do not, Larocque noted.

Before decking systems like Ancra's Lift A Deck 2 or Kinedyne's K2 Kaptive Beam were introduced to the market, many fleets would cobble up their own makeshift decking systems, using loose beams and decks that had to be stored when not in use.

The advent of fully integrated decking systems like the ones mentioned above, mean they travel with the trailer at all times, simplifying operations. Still, some training is required when a decking system is first installed.

"It's a learning curve for any operation," said Mark Arnold, manager, process improvement with Kinedyne. "You're literally changing the dynamics of the trailer. It really requires a re-education of the employee base."

When loading a trailer, the person responsible must not think only of the best way to place freight horizontally and laterally within the trailer, but vertically as well. And this of course means placing the heavier freight along the bottom.

"The deck will hold a lot more than you really should put up there," Arnold warns.

Once the systems are installed, maintenance requirements are usually minimal. Some systems require greasing but Ancra's Lift A Deck 2 does not.

"Other than a periodic inspection, very little (maintenance is required)," Larocque said. "It doesn't require grease. Other systems do, but especially in a reefer, as you can imagine the last thing you want in there is grease."

Ancra's system uses machined aluminum for the tracking and footing.

Continued on page 49

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Decking systems

Continued from page 47

Larocque said it also incorporates multiple locking plugs for additional durability. That does add about 50 lbs of extra weight per trailer, but Larocque said most fleets feel the additional durability is worth the trade-off.

"We are carrying a little more weight in our extrusion," he said. "I think our system is the most robust one out there. From what fleets tell us, they have lower maintenance costs and less headaches with our system."

For its part, Kinedyne's K2 Kaptive Beam system is flush-mounted.

"A lot of trailer OEs over the years have been looking at ways to make that wall as smooth as possible, to not have anything protruding out of the wall," said Scott Frazier, national product manager, engineered solutions with Kinedyne. "When we designed the K2, that was the main idea, to make a flush system."

Calculating a return on investment, without an intimate knowledge of a fleet's application, is a tricky business. But a payback comes easily to fleets that can take advantage of the extra carrying capacity.

"Typically, if you're on a dedicated run hauling the same types of products, you can see a very quick pay-

back, within half a dozen loads," Larocque said, adding for the average fleet, "We've been told an 18-month payback is realistic."

Of course, a van trailer decking system is more beneficial to some fleets than others. Some applications just seem like a natural fit. For example,

Larocque recalls one customer that was shipping bathtubs and ceramic tile in separate trailers. By installing a decking system, it was able to consolidate the cargo and reduce its shipments in half.

Regardless of the type of freight you're hauling, the need to maximize

productivity is universal.

And this is why decking systems are receiving some extra attention these days.

"Fleets need to utilize as much cubic capacity as the vehicle has to offer," Arnold said. "They more air they ship, the less profitable they are." ●



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Maxim brings on a fluids specialist; AMTA has a new leader; Transcourt has a new tank expert; and Meritor promotes a pair of execs.

Maxim Truck & Trailer has hired a fluid and filtration specialist, to help customers in Manitoba and Saskatchewan to better understand these requirements. **Kevin Webster**, who has spent 17 years in industry sales and customer service roles, has been named Maxim's first fluid and filtration specialist. He'll focus on oil, anti-freeze, DEF, windshield washer fluid and various additives. On the filtration side, his expertise will include medium- and heavy-duty truck filters as well as heavy construction equipment filters, Maxim announced.

"We created this new position because we wanted to provide more focus on this important but often under-served area of our parts business," said Steve Young, vice-president of parts at Maxim. "Fluids and filters are essential to so many of our customer segments including fleets."

Webster can be reached at 204-790-8158 or at kwebster@maximinc.com.

Transcourt Tank Leasing has hired a new leasing manager. **Tony Jelcic** will oversee customer service and leasing operations in Ontario, Quebec and the Maritimes. He will also be responsible for developing the company's new tanker markets and expanding its existing liquid and dry bulk business.

He has over 10 years of experience in sales and account management, and has worked in the Canadian tank trailer industry.

"We're confident that Tony will help us increase our presence and profile in the marketplace," said Transcourt president Bruce Daccord. "We're experiencing tremendous growth right now and the addition of a new leasing manager helps us meet our clients' business requirements and maximize their tanker investment. Tony has the experience and drive to ensure our clients succeed."

The Alberta Motor Transport Association (AMTA) today announced a reorganization that sees it part ways with executive director **Don Wilson**.

Wilson was appointed to that position in December 2010, and before that, spent more than 32 years working within the Alberta Transportation Driver Programs and Licensing Standards divisions of government.

"Effective immediately **Richard Warnock** will serve as interim executive director," the AMTA announced. "Don Wilson, who served in that capacity previously, has decided to pursue other business opportunities. On behalf of the Board we wish him well in his future activities and thank him for his years of service to the organization."

Drivetrain and braking parts manufacturer Meritor has made two new senior executive appointments.

Chris Villavarayan has been promoted to the position of president of the Americas with responsibilities for the company's North and South America truck, defence and specialty businesses. Before the appointment, he served as vice-president of international operations.

Meritor also named **Joe Plomin** as president, International, Europe and Asia Pacific. ●

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New Mack president vows to grow market share

'We're going to execute better than we've ever done,' Stephen Roy declares

By James Menzies

ALLENTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA

Stephen Roy, the newly installed president of North American sales and marketing for Mack Trucks, knows there's work to be done.

Mack's market share isn't where he'd like it to be, and a recent focus on product and customer support has taken attention away from Mack as a brand. But he also feels the pieces are in place to revitalize one of the oldest brands in trucking. This effort of-

officially commenced with a re-launching of the Mack brand at the ConExpo construction show in early March (see story, opposite page).

And you can also look for Mack to aggressively grow its on-highway presence in the months and years ahead.

"If we are going to improve share, we need to have a larger presence in the on-highway market," Roy said during a recent meet-the-press-type roundtable discussion with truck journalists.

The last five years have seen Mack

dealers invest more than \$300 million into their facilities to better serve customers. They've increased bay capacity by 40%, added 50% more technicians, and trained those technicians so that now one in four are top-certified Master Technicians. Dealers also have increased their hours of service, and 60% now forward after-hours calls to Mack's call centre, so that customers can receive support around the clock.

Last year, Mack launched its GuardDog Connect remote diagnostics program, which allows Mack to remotely monitor engine fault codes and advise operators on the best course of action. Included in that service is dealership geofencing, which will notify Mack when trucks have been in the shop too long.

"With GuardDog Connect, we have a geofence around every one of our dealerships," Roy said. "Starting this year, we'll know when a truck comes into a dealership and when a truck leaves a dealership. To assist a dealer, we'll call the dealer and say 'We no-

tice this truck is in, what can we do to help you get the product in and out the door as soon as possible?'"

Mack officials working out of a new three-storey Uptime Centre, to be built at the company's Greensboro, N.C. campus, will be able to intervene when trucks are down for repair too long.

This may mean directing them to a less busy dealership nearby or expediting delivery of the required parts. Later this year, Mack will also be teaming with Telogis and PeopleNet to stream its remote diagnostics data to those telematics providers, who will then convert the data into useful information for fleets.

"We're never going to be the gurus of telematics, there are too many good companies doing that," Roy said. "But since we put GPS on the trucks standard, we're able to transmit this information to other companies to provide all the things fleets need from a productivity standpoint."

Mack continues to be strong in the vocational segment, which has seen double-digit growth in each of the past few years. But its overall share of the North American Class 8 truck market remains just under 10%. Roy hopes to change that as early as this year.

"With our backlog and the amount of activity we see now, there's no reason Mack can't be above 10% this year, with a vision to being much greater than that," Roy said.

Having spent the last five years bolstering its customer support, Roy said the time is right to make a push in the on-highway market.

"We're known for our vocational side, but my focus is to make sure - because we now have the network support, which is key - that we get back in front of our customers and let them know we do have a value proposition for them," Roy said. "The timing is right but it's not going to happen overnight."

Mack's dealer network, meanwhile, is continuing to strengthen, with another 40 projects currently underway.

"Our dealers are re-investing and the company is re-investing in research and development for new product as well as for infrastructure and support," Roy said. "We feel Mack is very well positioned with products, we're continuing to invest in R&D and we're well positioned with our dealer network."

Roy cited the recent World of Concrete show as evidence the vocational truck market has been revitalized.

"The activity at World of Concrete was as high as we've seen since 2006," he said. "Customers were not looking at two or three trucks, they were looking (to buy) 25-50 trucks, which is great...We've seen double-digit increases the last few years. Housing starts, GDP - everything points to improvements on the vocational side."

Roy is projecting about 250,000 Class 8 truck sales this year in Canada and the US, which would represent a slight uptick in demand from 2013, when close to 235,000 units were sold.

Roy demonstrated the passion and exuberance for the Mack brand that industry observers have come to expect from people holding senior positions at that company.

"I'm passionate about the Mack brand and where we can go," he said. "I'm 50 and I plan to do this for the next 15 years."

Asked what customers and industry observers can expect to see over the next year, he said "We're going to execute better than we've ever done." ●

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Mack unveils new logo, tagline

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

Mack Trucks has given its 114-year-old brand a touch-up, debuting a new logo and slogan at the ConExpo construction trade show.

In the biggest event ever held at the Las Vegas World Market Center, Mack revealed a new tagline: Mack Trucks...Born Ready.

It also introduced a sleeker, more modern logo, which features the Mack Bulldog symbol, poised above the Mack word mark.

"We're extremely proud of our 114-year legacy as the American truck you can count on," said Stephen Roy, president, Mack Trucks North American Sales and Marketing. "It gives us credibility in forging a very bright future for Mack, our dealers and our customers. We believe the refresh of our brand embodies what we've stood for in the past and continue to stand for today. We're confident and passionate about our trucks and our customers. We have a great history, great momentum and the conviction that our best days are ahead of us. The brand work we're rolling out here in Las Vegas clearly communicates the strong position Mack holds today."

Mack officials say the company has injected \$64 million into its Hagerstown, Md. plant since 2010, and its dealers have spent more than \$300 million upgrading their facilities.

"We've got a very solid foundation," said John Walsh, Mack vice-president of marketing. "It's time we told our story in a way that captures both the essence of the brand – what has always made Mack great – as well as all of the exciting things happening with Mack today. That's really what the new work we're debuting today is all about." ●

Volvo shifts toward LED lighting

GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

Volvo Trucks has made in-cab LED lighting standard on all vehicles, and is offering LED headlamps on its VNL and VNX models.

Volvo says the LED interior lights and headlamps consume one-eighth the energy required by standard incandescent bulbs and are designed to deliver a significantly longer life.

The headlamps, designed by Truck-Lite, improve nighttime visibility through an expanded beam pattern

and provide daylight-type light colouring, Volvo says. The interior LED lighting provides longer life than standard bulbs and places less strain on the truck's batteries.

"In addition to improved efficiency and visibility compared with incandescent lighting, LEDs are designed to last far longer, so use of LED lighting can help reduce vehicle downtime and potential CSA violations," said Jason Spence, Volvo Trucks product marketing manager. ●

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Navistar adding SCR to mid-range MaxxForce engines

LISLE, ILLINOIS

Navistar announced it will be adding selective catalytic reduction (SCR) aftertreatment to its MaxxForce 9 and 10 engines, completing its mid-range engine transition to SCR.

The company already offered the Cummins ISB 6.7 engine with SCR in its International DuraStar. The MaxxForce 9 and 10 will be offered in DuraStar and WorkStar vehicles.

"Our medium-duty transition to SCR started strong with our DuraStar with Cummins ISB6.7 and we have high expectations for this chassis/engine combination as we see the construction market continue to rebound," said Bill Kozek, president, North America Truck and Parts, Navistar. "We also know a number of our customers require more horsepower and torque and we're pleased to offer these customers an expanded engine choice by adding SCR to our 9-litre and 10-litre engines."

Meanwhile, Navistar is also making an Allison Optimized 1000 Series transmission with an optional sixth speed available on its International TerraStar. Navistar says the sixth speed will provide improved fuel economy and lower engine noise.

Also new to the TerraStar is a refined front suspension with redesigned front spring and bumper, which the company says offers a smoother ride over rough terrain. ●

February a great month for truck orders

February marked the fifth best month for Class 8 orders since the second quarter of record-setting 2006, according to preliminary data from industry forecasters. ACT Research reported preliminary Classes 5-7 orders totaled 19,600 units and Class 8 net orders came in at 29,200 units.

"February's Class 8 orders were the fifth best since Q2 2006," said Kenny Vieth, ACT's president and senior analyst. "Despite falling 16% from January, February's net orders were up 30% compared to a year ago. Since October, Class 8 orders have been booked at a 320,000 SAAR. Going even further afield, since the beginning of Q3 2013, Class 8 net orders have been booked at a 299,000 SAAR."

Medium-duty orders were up 14% from January and 22% compared to last February. FTR also released preliminary orders, indicating it expects 28,876 Class 8 net orders to be recorded, marking the best February - and combined with December and January, the best three-month period - since 2006.

"Orders were strong for the third consecutive month and in line with expectations with the market now officially in a growth cycle," said Don Ake, FTR's vice-president of commercial vehicles. "The confidence in the industry is picking up steam and we expect 2014 to be a healthy year for Class 8 trucks." ●

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Prestone gives tips on coolant maintenance

LAKE FOREST, ILLINOIS

Prestone Products has published a white paper designed to educate fleet owners and maintenance managers on the importance of cold-weather anti-freeze/coolant maintenance in heavy-duty vehicles.

"If the cooling system is unable to satisfy the essential requirements put on it by the heavy-duty engine, the vehicle's horsepower, fuel efficiency, emissions and overall durability may be compromised," said Colin Dilley, director of technology, Prestone Command Technology Center. "Selecting the highest quality AF/C products and replenishing at the recommended interval will ensure operating efficiency and optimal performance."

The white paper focuses on testing essentials for coolant concentrations and the important role they play in winter engine management. Because glycol and water are naturally corrosive, coolant manufacturers add inorganic and/or organic salts and other chemicals, known as corrosion inhibitors, to the glycol/water mixture in order to prevent the cooling system components from corroding. It is imperative to test for these corrosion inhibitors to ensure engine metal protection, the white paper outlines.

"Having the ability to proactively initiate testing on any engine coolant system is imperative to making the right decisions for maintaining the correct levels of coolant concentrations," said Dilley. "The new Prestone Command test strips and kits offer the ability to test a wide range of important variables from basic glycol concentration to the level of inhibitors for corrosion protection."

The white paper can be found at Prestone.com.

Truro Mack dealer named tops in Canada

TRURO, NOVA SCOTIA

MacKay's Truck Center of Truro, N.S. has been named Mack Trucks' Canadian region Dealer of the Year.

Mack announced its Distributor of the year awards last month. The top prize was taken by East Texas Mack Sales in Longview, Texas.

Distributors were awarded based on sales, facilities, service, general management, customer satisfaction, parts, personnel and community service.

"I'm very proud of all our award winners for their excellent work representing Mack Trucks," said Stephen Roy, president, Mack Trucks North American Sales and Marketing. "They bring a great understanding of this dynamic and diverse industry and are dedicated to helping customers achieve success."

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Daimler looking for even bigger slice of truck market

By Lou Smyrlis

CABO SAN LUCAS, MEXICO

Enjoying a strong uptick in market share in 2013 and its strongest orders this January since the heady days of 2006, Daimler Trucks North America (DTNA) is cautiously optimistic about the rest of the year and further extending its market dominance.

"When we are looking at the economic environment, a lot of things are lining up," David Hames, general manager, marketing and strategy for DTNA told transportation media journalists gathered here in February for a briefing on the company's outlook.

DTNA enjoyed a market leading 38.2% share of the Classes 6-8 NAFTA market in 2013, and a 4.2% increase in its share from the previous year.

The numbers look even better to start off 2014 with a 39.3% share of

truck orders.

That left Hames wondering if market share numbers couldn't be pushed to the 40% threshold in 2014.

DTNA's numbers also look good on the vocational side, noted Hames. The truck maker finished 2013 with a 31% vocational market share.

Despite the optimistic outlook, Hames was careful to note no one is considering a return to the aggressive new truck purchasing plans experienced prior to the Great Recession.

"For the last few years we have been counting on a significant upturn in the market. But more and more we are now seeing that this is a different market. We may not see the great booms we saw in the past. That's a reflection of the discipline of fleets not to get over-extended," Hames said. "We will see more disciplined purchases based on what business requires. We won't

see the speculative kind of purchases we saw in the past."

Hames stressed that "vehicle" integration (rather than "vertical" integration) will be a large component of DTNA's future growth plans. He described "vertical" integration as internally focused, creating vehicles that are best from the manufacturer's standpoint but not necessarily placing the customer first. "Vehicle" integration, according to Hames, does place the customer first when it comes to product development.

"You want customers wanting your solution because it's a better offering than what they could get by combining separate brands," Hames said. "Do it right and they will want your product because it is going to give them the lowest total cost of ownership."

He noted that DTNA's Detroit DD15 diesel engine was installed in 51% of

all new Freightliner Cascadias in 2013.

A challenge in moving towards "vehicle" integration is breaking old habits in equipment spec'ing.

"In our industry when you get a solution that works, you don't want to change it. But product design is changing quickly and it's incumbent on our salespeople to challenge the status quo to continue to lower total cost of ownership. We still see a lot of sales come in that are, frankly, based on the truck of yesteryear," Hames said.

That is starting to change, however.

"Customers used to give us the spec's. Now the conversation is starting to turn to where they are asking us to provide the solution. That's a pretty major shift," he said, adding it's time to leverage all the engineering knowledge available within the company in properly spec'ing vehicles. ●



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Shell says PIT tests prove Diesel Extra saves fuel

CALGARY, ALBERTA

Shell Canada says independent testing of its Shell Diesel Extra fuel proves it delivers fuel savings of greater than 2%.

Shell Diesel Extra was tested by FPInnovations' Project Innovation Transport in June and September 2013. Two tractors (plus two control tractors) were used in testing, with one showing a fuel savings of 2.18% and the other coming in at 2.61%, for a combined average fuel savings of 2.4%.

Shell says its Diesel Extra fuel provides fuel savings of up to 3% by preventing the accumulation of carbon deposits in the injector nozzles. It also claims operators will lower their maintenance costs, since the engine is kept clean from deposits and the corrosion they can cause.

PIT tests the effectiveness of fuel-saving devices or technologies, using the SAE J1321 Joint TMC/SAE Fuel Consumption Test Procedure - Type II. It says its results represent a confidence level of 95%, as required by the standard.

The test trucks were 2009 Freightliner Cascadias with DD15 engines.

Because of the volatility of diesel prices, PIT noted it was difficult to determine a payback period. So instead it established a break-even point for Shell Diesel Extra of three cents per litre, meaning fuel savings will likely be achieved if the price gap between regular diesel and Shell Diesel Extra is less than three cents.

"It should also be mentioned that according to the manufacturer, Shell Diesel Extra helps to reduce the deposits on the injectors and improve combustion; therefore there may be additional savings possible from reduced maintenance expenses," PIT reported. ●

Daimler says 'si' to growth in Mexico

By Lou Smyrlis

CABO SAN LUCAS, MEXICO

Canada's market share leader, Daimler, is now setting its sights on dominance of the Mexican truck market.

Daimler Trucks North America executives shared their ambitious plans for a Mexican market full of potential at a special press briefing here in February.

Daimler Trucks has been operating in Mexico for more than 40 years and runs two plants and more than 90 sales points across the nation, believed by many economists to be the one with the most growth potential over the next decade. Daimler Trucks Mexico is already the largest commercial vehicle manufacturer operating in Mexico, pumping out about 60,000 trucks per year.

"We are driving to become the undisputed market share leader in Mexico but that is easily said and you don't just decide to be the market leader; you earn it," said Stefan Kurschner, president and CEO of Daimler Trucks Mexico.

One of the ways to "earn it," according to Kurschner, is to concentrate on building a product portfolio that specifically addresses Mexican requirements rather than pushing products initially designed to serve American needs.

"We don't want to just copy American products. We want Mexican products for the Mexican market," he said.

Daimler Trucks Mexico currently covers the market with options from Classes 4 to 8, which Kurschner said was the widest product range for all applications. The Saltillo plant in the state of Coahuilla was built in 2009 with a gutsy \$300-million initial investment during the heart of the Great Recession and is one of the most modern in Daimler's worldwide line-up. It has produced more than 136,000 Cascadia trucks since its opening. The Santiago Tianguistenco plant in the state of Mexico had a \$45-million upgrade last year, aimed at process improvements. About 300,000 Freightliner models have been churned out at this plant.

But one of the challenges for Daimler, and any truck manufacturer trying to grow in the Mexican market, is Mexican fleet owners' penchant for hanging on to old iron. There are fewer than 150,000 commercial trucks less than 10 years old in the Mexican market. In contrast, there are almost 118,000 aged 11-20 years and almost 155,000 that are more than 21 years old.

"I don't have to tell you what that means from a safety and environmental perspective," Kurschner said, adding that's a problem that can best be solved by placing restrictions on the age of used trucks that can be imported into Mexico and/or incentives to purchase new. ●

Time to tune up your tarpaulin system

By Harry Rudolfs

Spring is a good time for fleet owners to take inventory of their equipment. Winter months can be especially hard on tarps and tie-downs. Salt and slush and ice can take their toll on latches, straps and accessories.

"The secret to making a tarp last longer is how you treat it every day," says Paul Vandenberg, owner of Trison Tarps of Brantford, Ont. "Tarping has gotten easier for the driver, but the systems are more complicated nowadays. It's important to make sure all the mechanical parts are in good order, and if the unit has electronics, make sure they are clean and well maintained."

Tarping a load can still be dirty, hard, physical work, but the technology has profoundly evolved in the last 10 years or so. A few loads still have to be tarped manually, but these are the exception rather than the rule. Almost all steel coils move in covered conveyances, for instance.

"We don't talk about tarps as much anymore, it's all about tarping systems, whether manual, electric or hydraulic," says Vandenberg. "Drivers no longer have to climb on top of the load and get dirty. We have a one-touch system that's available, which is remotely operated by the driver standing

on the ground, using a key fob."

Vandenberg points to the fact that truck tarpaulins are vinyl these days and no longer canvas, and as a result, sewers are becoming scarce.

"We've still got three or four people who sew out of 28 employees, that's the complete opposite from how it might have been 10 to 15 years ago. We can still sew, but more and more we are using heat-sealing technology for new tarps and repairs," he says.

Trison Tarps services and installs about six varieties of electric tarping systems and various hydraulic ones - what Vandenberg considers to be "state-of-the-art" technology. "We're a manufacturer and distributor for a wide range of tarp systems." On an interesting note, computer-operated vinyl cutters are used to create professional stencils and cuttings for company logos as required by customers.

Vandenberg sees more and more demand for automated tarp systems, from wood chip haulers to grain carriers. "A lot of drivers aren't allowed to go on top of their trailers now," he says. "Even flatbed trailers now have rolling tarp systems that are fully operated from the ground." ●

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SmartTruck offers look inside development process of aerodynamic devices

By Daniela Piteo

GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA

The end result of a new product seldom resembles the initial design; through trial and error, modifications are made until the best possible outcome is achieved. That process at SmartTruck Systems proved that a meticulous eye could uncover further advantages.

"Production designs are always going to be a little bit different," said Steve Wulff, the chief operations officer at SmartTruck.

After the initial production design had been completed, trial runs of the product began. It was imperative the team of engineers working on the components of the UnderTray system didn't damage the performance with the production model.

Tests revealed that performance went down.

"As it turned out, in order to get these parts out of the moulding, they need a draft angle. They needed a little bit of an angle so a part would pop out of the tool. So when the tool designer went ahead



A trailer equipped with the UnderTray system from SmartTruck is tested at the Laurens Proving Grounds in Greenville, S.C.

and did it, he put a little angle on it," Wulff explained.

He wasn't sure what his constraints were, so instead of widening the top, he narrowed the bottom. "We lost area

along the bottom of the UnderTray and we lost some performance."

The result was disappointing to the team, but they went back to the drawing board to iron out the kinks.

"We rattled it out with the group and we finally figured out we needed to poke it back out and make the thing wider, run it and see what happens. We re-ran it and the performance came back. Then we thought, 'How wide can we actually make it?' so we went a step further and put a little more width in it," said Wulff.

"The production, at the end of the day, had better performance than the prototype," Wulff determined.

The vehicle is more stable, it drives easier and there is less driver fatigue, according to drivers.

"It's more stable because the wake that is coming off the back of the trailer, which we don't eliminate but reduce, pulses from side to side," said Wulff. "The wake from behind the trailer is moving from right to left and when you reduce the wake, you reduce that pulse. It takes out some of the wag of the tail and it reduces some of the driver input and it drives more stable."

The team has established that optimal performance comes from looking at the system as a whole, and not just in terms of all the parts.

"In order to be consistent with what you're testing, you have to be at operating temperature for the units because everything in there grows and contracts with heat and cold and so bearing temperatures change, oil viscosity temperatures change - all these things stack up on top of each other and add to the overall drag on the vehicle - and not just from an aero perspective, but from a power perspective. It takes a lot more power to drive it when it's cold," Wulff said. "Temperature is a big variable. Fuel mileage deteriorates in the winter - everything gets cold, systems take a lot more power to operate, fuel blends change. We definitely learned more as we went along."

The group devoted a significant amount of time to component placement. A series of tests were conducted moving the axles back and forth. All the certification testing was done at 40-feet from the axle, according to the California standard rule.

"But we also wanted to know, what is the impact as you move the axles fore and aft and is there a better place to put our component to maximize its efficiency based on where it is relative to the axles?" said Wulff.

A specific series of testing was launched - with each run taking approximately 40 minutes to complete and every time a change occurred, a new run was made - even when it is something as simple as moving an axle one

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foot forward or backwards.

Each test was then backed with a secondary run.

"What we found was our UnderTray component actually worked a little better further forward than what we had tested at originally," Wulff said.

The rear bracket works optimally when mounted 23 feet from the back of the truck, but the first tests were done with the bracket at 19 feet.

The work atmosphere is very collaborative and the team welcome new ideas. But the primary idea was developing a technique to manipulate the flow of air in an effort to optimize fuel efficiency.

"Our methodology is to guide the air, not block it," said Wulff.

While the obvious tests would include monitoring airflow, the team also worked to test the system's impact on brake temperatures.

"We wanted to know, with a kit on the front, what happens to brake temperatures," Wulff said. "We did the tests with just a standard unit - no kits, no skirts, nothing. We drove it and collected all the data and then at a pit stop we popped a kit on it. We ran the brakes way up in temperature and got them real hot and then we let them coast at a constant 50-60 miles per hour and didn't touch the brake to see how quickly they cool. We found the brakes cooled better with this kit than with any other kind of treatment."

The test results have been largely favourable and in the cases that revealed less-than-optimal outcomes, the team worked to restore the units to outcomes that met high quality standards. ●

Navistar to move mid-range engine production

LISLE, ILLINOIS

Navistar International announced it will move production of its mid-range engines from its Huntsville, Ala. plant to Melrose Park, Ill. It will continue building its 13-litre engine in Huntsville. The move is designed to consolidate mid-range engine production as part of its turnaround efforts.

"As we have stated previously, we have too much excess engine manufacturing capacity in North America and we must take action to reduce our costs and improve the business," said Jack Allen, Navistar's chief operating officer. "The consolidation will further lower the company's break-even point, strengthen our competitiveness in the marketplace and help position Navistar for a return to profitability."

The move is expected to save Navistar about \$22 million per year.

"Ending production at a facility is a difficult decision because of its impact on the many great people who've been part of our company," Allen said. "We understand that these decisions have an impact on our employees and the community and we will treat our people with dignity and respect throughout this process." ●

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APUs, reefers need year-round maintenance

By Harry Rudolfs

Auxiliary power units (APUs) and reefers require regular maintenance on an ongoing basis. Spring is a good time to check out the condition of these units since they've just come through a hard winter. This is especially important for APUs, since they ride only inches above the ground making them prime targets for corrosion and salt damage.

Tyler Hunter, operations manager for Reefer Sales and Service of Mississauga, Ont., thinks that washing the unit regularly can mitigate some of the potential problems.

"You've got to treat it like a vehicle," he says. "Some drivers wash their trucks after every run, some drivers never wash them. Even though the cover of the APU is corrosion-resistant, this is still important because sand, salt and soot from the exhaust can get in there."

Oil and coolant levels should be checked with every operation, but Hunter thinks that periodic visual inspections are a good idea, too.

"Check for corrosion or broken wires, freon leaks, any sign of oil around the compressor can indicate that a seal has gone, and see if the gauges are working," he says.

APUs are auxiliary generators that can power a truck cab's accessories using a fraction of the fuel that would be required to keep the engine idling. They can be powered by batteries, propane or diesel fuel, but the diesel

units are the most popular, putting out lots more BTUs than the electrical units which also require an additional bank of batteries. Another issue with battery-powered APUs is that they can only operate 10 hours without being recharged, which could be problematic to a driver undergoing a 36-hour rest in a distant truck stop.

Whatever your power source, it's also extremely important to follow the maintenance schedule. Newly installed units are usually checked after 50 hours of use, and are then subject to regular service intervals according to the manufacturer's spec's. Diesel-powered APUs and diesel-powered reefers have very similar maintenance schedules. According to Hunter, "For a preventive maintenance service we change the oils and filters, check and adjust the belts, hook up the computer and check the micro-brains of

the reefer which could indicate false alarms, check the heating and cooling cycle, check for leaks and bearing problems, etc."

Diesel-powered reefer units sit up high on the front of a trailer and are not as susceptible to salt damage. But problems can arise because the units stay dormant during the winter. In Canada, you may not need to fire up the reefer for months at a time, but all that dormant time can also contribute to possible problems.

"The best thing you can do is run it every couple of weeks in the wintertime," says Bob Causton, owner of XTCC, which specializes in transportation climate control. "Start it up, let the seals get lubricated, let the pressure build up and check for leaks."

Spring is also a good time to get A/C units serviced and replenished, and to clean or replace the cabin air filters.

"Most people take their A/C systems for granted," says Causton. "They come on automatically and people never think about it," he adds. "But even a small leak should be fixed as soon as possible in any A/C or reefer system. Moisture is the enemy of any refrigeration system. Once the gas gets out and the air gets in, problems that would have cost a couple of hundred dollars to fix can end up costing a couple of thousand."

This is a busy time of year for reefer and APU service providers. Some of them offer spring tune-up specials and their technicians are on the road doing service on maintenance contracts. And even though Canadians are still dealing with frigid temperatures, anyone running to California should encounter plus-20 Celsius conditions. So you better have your APUs and reefer units ready to go. ●

Trailcon Leasing buys Hubs Trailer

CALGARY, ALBERTA

Trailcon Leasing has announced the purchase of Hubs Trailer Service, significantly expanding its Western Canadian presence.

"Hubs is well known for its ability to serve customers quickly and with a ton of expertise," said Trailcon president Al Boughton. "They have an impressive shop for doing major repairs and safety inspections and they're open seven days a week. Add to that our own fleet maintenance services, plus our long-term leasing and local rental business, and you see how we can offer a whole new level of service."

Trailcon was founded in 1992 and now employs more than 100 people and owns about 6,500 trailers. Its maintenance division looks after an additional 8,500 or so units across Canada, according to the company. Boughton said customers of both Trailcon and Hubs will benefit from the acquisition.

"Our customers shipping across Canada used to have to find their own support in the various markets they travelled through," added Hubs owner Mitch Hancock. "Now they'll be able to access a much larger service and repair network when they need it. This is one of those 'one plus one equals three' kind of deals. Trailcon will benefit from the hard work Hubs employees have done in recent years to establish a great reputation for service, and Hubs will benefit from being part of a larger picture that includes fleet leasing and rental."

Boughton hinted further expansion could be in store.

"Trailcon is blazing a new trail – a trail of acquisitions," Boughton said. "We're in growth mode, with our sights set on further expansion across Canada." ●

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64 COMPANY PROFILE

New generation leads Meyers towards 100th year in business

By Daniela Piteo

PETERBOROUGH, ONTARIO

Groucho Marx once said he wouldn't want to be a part of a club that would accept him as a member, but Jacquie and Natalie Meyers may contend otherwise. At Meyers Transport, chairman Natalie Meyers, described the industry in no uncertain terms.

"It's like joining a really good club that you never want to leave," Natalie said.

Natalie has been a part of this club for 18 years; her cousin and president of

the company, Jacquie, has a tenure just shy of a decade.

"My theory is that you have six months - if you get out within the first six months, you can probably get out of trucking, if you stay longer than six months, you will always be somehow connected to trucking," Natalie said.

"And that is what my parents always said, if you want to do something else with your life, do it before you go into trucking because you will never leave. Once you get in, you are in for life," added Jacquie. Jacquie's parents, and Natalie's as well, definitely know first-hand the draw of the industry as Evan and Larry, their respective fathers, helmed the business for decades before both young women came into the fold.

Meyers Transport was well established when Natalie and Jacquie decided to jump into the company, with four generations of family involvement and nearly nine decades of business acumen guiding them.

"I swore I would never work for family," said Natalie, who grew tired of working for the government at the former public works department in property management. After Natalie's second child was born, she decided to extend her maternity leave and slowly transition into Meyers. The timing was opportune, as the company had just purchased Canada Transport.

"When Meyers purchased Canada Transport it was bigger than Meyers," said Natalie. "It was the largest growth Meyers went through."

"At the time when I joined the company, because I was new to trucking - I had done some summer work as a student - I started off doing billing, customer service, OS&D, which was probably some of the best places to start out in trucking to figure out how it all works," Natalie said.

Natalie, although not an expert in the industry, brought with her business savvy acquired from practical work experience in Ottawa and before that, a degree in economics that was obtained through her studies in university in Ottawa and Besancon, France.

Jacquie, unlike Natalie, was eager to join Meyers once she had entered McGill University to study commerce and entrepreneurship, in which she obtained her degree.

"When I first started (in trucking), I loved going to all the different factories. It was like the Discovery Channel - I got to see how all of these things that you never think about got made. I got the live, first-hand tour," Jacquie said.

There are many similarities between the two women - humour a definite standout - as the small boardroom they occupy quickly fills with laughter.

Both women are also driven, but in decidedly different ways. Jacquie is the extrovert who thrives on leadership and standing out in a male-dominated industry, while Natalie is introverted, but still equally dedicated; she is the behind-the-scenes captain steering the ship safely while Jacquie dives in head-first - sink or swim. No matter how they are impelled, they are motivated to succeed. It's a family business that has been afloat just shy of nine decades and both women are determined to see

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the centenarian anniversary.

"We are always looking to do better," said Jacquie. "It's fun because there is so much we can do better. My biggest priority is improving profitability. Transportation has been a difficult industry to be in and I don't think we get the returns we could, given the enormous investments we have in our equipment. It is my goal to see a better return on our investments."

Her priority is a shared one.

"I would have to agree with Jacquie. It is the ultimate goal because none of the other priorities will happen without it. At the end of the day, we are here to *do* trucking, not *practice* trucking. That's kind of the expression we use," said Natalie. "The reason you get into business is to make money and with that money you can do other things."

At Meyers, there is an emphasis to stay current through innovation and new perspectives, through this, it is clear that both are passionate about a difficult industry.

"Trucking is going to have to do a better job of selling itself," Natalie said. "It's not perceived as an attractive industry. It's not a field people think about getting into. If you ask someone in Grade 12 what industry they are thinking of going into, I doubt anyone will say trucking."

It's also an industry plagued by bias – it's a man's job – an attitude that both women, through their own roles in the company, prove is shifting.

"There are more and more women involved in trucking – we have female terminal managers, dispatchers, truck drivers – they're still in the minority, but it's not unusual to see women in the field."

But still, female drivers are rare.

"Yet, we hire not only truck drivers, but we hire managers, IT personnel – we hire just about any position you can think of but still, no one thinks about getting into trucking. We are still seen as a dirty industry, an industry of last resort," Natalie said.

"At trucking companies, women are welcome in the executive, it's just not a lot of them are banging down the door to get to the table," said Jacquie.

It isn't just driver image that is an area of contention, but also the new demands of technology that have been rapidly changing in trucking.

"Technology is wonderful when it works – just this morning there were four of us sitting around in a meeting and three of us had to call and get help with our laptops," Natalie joked.

Natalie and Jacquie have reached the apex of the company ladder, but simply having the Meyers name didn't land them in the higher echelons. They both worked their way to upper management.

"When I first came in, and I know because this happened to me and I was told later, some people thought, 'Oh, the owner's daughter is coming in and I wonder if she is going to be a real snooty pain in the ass,' and I really had to prove myself," said Natalie.

"You have to work twice as hard to prove you deserve the job," Jacquie added.

"We've done the work and we're prepared to get our hands dirty," Natalie said. "As they get to know us, that makes a difference."

"If you are weak and you have the Meyers name, you get destroyed," said Jacquie. "If you are weak, after all the poking and prodding, you get weeded out pretty quick."

Externally, having the Meyers name was an asset because it was trusted and



Natalie Meyers (left) and Jacquie each bring a unique skill set to the family company, which is approaching 100 years in business.

had a good reputation, one that is continuously being upheld.

"It also helped having a direct phone line to a past-president," said Jacquie. "I just had to call dad to ask for advice."

But it isn't just the Meyers' that are family, it's an organization that prides itself on its tight-knit relationships.

"We want to make sure that our people are happy here. We want them to

thrive and be creative," said Jacquie.

And just like a family, it has ups and downs.

"There are good days and there are bad days," Jacquie said. "You just take it one day at a time and as long as the ups are worth the downs, you keep doing it."

They came into their current roles around 2010, one of the most trying times in the industry.

"We came into the industry at one of the worst times," Natalie said, and with a joke added, "It wouldn't have been challenging enough otherwise."

Their experiences in the industry, according to Jacquie, have been so condensed that it's an added challenge.

"My father recently told me that I am, at 32, where he was at 42," Jacquie said. "We have been forced to grow very quickly and progress very quickly."

"We are among the few women leading trucking companies so we have this additional responsibility on our shoulders," Natalie said. "It's not only the guys that can do it." ●

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Industry
Issues

DAVID BRADLEY



Trucks not immune from TDG review

Last summer's tragedy at Lac-Mégantic has added some urgency to the debate over which mode should be used to ship crude oil. How this plays into the decisions on the Keystone XL, Northern Gateway or Trans Mountain Expansion pipelines, remains to be seen. The safety performance of the railways has never been under greater scrutiny. But, the trucking industry is also not immune.

Trucks are major haulers of crude oil in Canada. In fact, during the mid-stream stage of product development - where crude oil emulsion is shipped over short distances from the wellhead to the battery where it is "cleaned" and/or "treated" - virtually all of it is handled by trucks.

At these distances the rates between

truck and rail are comparable. Trucks are more reliable in terms of delivery times. After being treated, if the battery is a pipe-connected facility, the crude is moved by pipeline to the refineries and trucks are no longer involved. However, if the battery does not have a connection to a pipeline, trucks are used to transport the crude (again over a relatively short distance) from the battery to a pipeline or to a trans-load facility where it is transferred to a rail car.

The long-distance transportation of crude oil to refineries is handled by one of two modes - pipeline or rail - primarily due to their ability to handle large volumes. Trucks are really not an economical option for such movements and will never displace pipelines or rail in that market. Even if truckers wanted to, there

are not enough roads, trucks or drivers to handle the traffic. As such, crude isn't viewed as a growth area for truckers the way it is by the railways.

Notwithstanding, it is also unlikely an incident of the magnitude of Lac-Mégantic could occur where trucks are involved. The amount of product being shipped by truck in a single shipment is small compared to a train of tank cars. A train of 80-120 rail cars would carry the equivalent of 160-240 truck tank trailers.

Using 2012 data, the frequency and severity of dangerous goods incidents involving trucks is extremely low - about 1.64 incidents per 10,000 shipments and 56.4% were minor (less than 500 litres). The frequency of incidents caused by accidents on the highway (where the public is most at risk) is also extremely low - 53

incidents (16.2% of total incidents) for a frequency of 0.27 per 10,000 shipments. Almost 68% of the accidents involved Class 3, flammable liquids (mainly crude oil), but 93.6% were minor incidents.

Overall, this suggests the trucking industry and the dangerous goods regulations are doing an effective job of incident prevention. Still, the trucking industry will come under scrutiny over the next few months during the House of Commons Standing Committee on Transport hearings into safe transportation of dangerous goods by all modes. CTA will be representing the industry's interests. The industry uses the country's roads and highways, and therefore shares its workplace with the public. With this comes a responsibility to ensure that our drivers and vehicles are operating safely - whether the trucks are hauling dangerous goods or not.

CTA will re-state its strong support for

Too often, carriers and drivers are getting nailed at roadside for violations that rest with shippers who do not provide proper documentation; or don't have the requisite knowledge of the regulations or sometimes even their own product.

a universal EOBR mandate; a manufacturing standard (in lock-step with the US) for roll stability; mandatory activation of truck speed limiters at no more than 105 km/h and mandatory entry-level training for truck drivers.

With regard to the TDG regulations, enforcement of shipper responsibilities is weak and needs to be beefed up. Too often, carriers and drivers are getting nailed at roadside for violations that rest with shippers who do not provide proper documentation; or don't have the requisite knowledge of the regulations or sometimes even their own product.

The regulations also compel carriers to certify drivers receive dangerous goods training. CTA believes consideration should be given to making sure those who provide training (whether in-house or third-party) are qualified to do so.

Finally, CTA feels it is contrary to the public interest to allow clauses in freight contracts that exempt shippers from liability brought about by their own negligence. As witnessed in the Lac-Mégantic case, dangerous goods incidents can be particularly severe and the claims enormous. It is imperative that the negligent party or parties bear the liability for claims. Coordinated action is required by the federal and provincial governments to annul such clauses. ●

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



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Allison claims new transmission programming delivers 20% fuel savings

INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

Allison Transmission says it has developed a new fuel-efficiency package that can improve fuel mileage by 20%.

The FuelSense package will initially be offered in the Freightliner M2 106 medium-duty truck. The system automatically adapts shift schedules and torque based on load, grade and duty-cycle, according to the company.

"Fuel prices have nearly doubled since the mid-2000s, and fleet owners need solutions," said Michael Headly, senior vice-president, global marketing, sales and service for Allison Transmission. "They want straightforward fuel economy, without compromising overall fleet performance and productivity. With FuelSense, Allison delivers the best of both worlds."

Features include: fifth generation smart controls, acceleration management and a precision inclinometer; EcoCal shift technology that keeps engine speed at the most efficient level; dynamic shift sensing to automatically sense when low engine speed shifts can be made; and 'neutral-at-stop' to save fuel when the truck is stationary.

Allison says it achieved the 20% fuel savings during testing and in simulations. The features have already been incorporated into Allison's TC10 automatic transmission for heavy tractors. Freightliner will be the first OEM to offer the new package, beginning in late 2014 in M2 chassis equipped with Allison 2000 and 3000 series transmissions.

"We are proud to be the first to offer this innovative solution to custom-

ers," said Mary Aufdemberg, director of product marketing for Freightliner. "Our customers demand a lot from our trucks, so we set our standards high. We value our relationship with Allison and have a common commitment to maximizing the performance of work trucks and the profits of the businesses that depend on them."

Freightliner will pair the Allison FuelSense package with the Cummins ISB6.7 engine.

"When packaged together, our new options result in a smart business solution that contributes to fuel efficiency, as well as driver satisfaction," said Aufdemberg. "In addition to performance features, we've bundled some of our most popular exterior appearance, comfort and convenience options that drivers will appreciate during their long hours behind the wheel." ●



Allison and Freightliner jointly announced a fuel-saving transmission package touted to improve fuel economy by 20%.

Bridgestone comes out with severe-duty wide-base tire

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

Bridgestone has introduced a new rib-type all-position tire aimed at severe-service and on/off-highway applications. The M854 wide-base radial tire is ideal for construction, refuse, dump, mixer, bulk and logging applications, the company says.

"Construction, logging and refuse fleets travel on loose terrain and uneven surfaces, which requires a specially-designed tire to withstand these demands," said Matt Loos, director of truck and bus marketing, Bridgestone Commercial Solutions. "The M854 features advanced construction providing long mileage, aggressive traction and strong casing durability. A wide footprint maximizes tire grip, while cap/base compounding and optimized casing construction improve overall occurrence of irregular wear, extending original tread life."

The Bridgestone M854 comes in three sizes in the U.S. and Canada. The 425/65R22.5 is available now. The 385/65R22.5 and 445/65R22.5 will be available later this year.

More information is available at www.bridgestonetrucktires.com. ●

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Michelin introduces SmartWay-verified regional-haul steer tire

By James Menzies

GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA

Michelin has introduced its first SmartWay-verified steer tire for regional and super-regional applications. The company defines the growing super-regional application as a sort of hybrid between traditional regional-haul and line-haul, where more time is spent on-highway, increasing the need for fuel efficiency but at the same time requiring scrub resistance.

The new Michelin X Multi Energy Z steer tire will be well suited for parcel, dry van LTL, food and beverage and pick-up and delivery applications, the company announced in a conference call. However Paul Johnston, business segment manager, Michelin Americas Truck Tires, added "It's not limited to these segments."

Traditionally, the priority for regional-haul carriers has been for a steer tire that can withstand the abuse of city driving and provide a long service life. Michelin has adopted a dual compound to improve fuel economy without sacrificing wear: the top layer provides wear resistance, promoting mileage; and the bottom layer reduces rolling resistance for improved fuel-efficiency while also cooling the casing for longer life. A full-width protector ply also protects the casing to ensure long life and multiple retreads, Michelin says, and curb guards protect

against sidewall impact.

"Michelin is again excited to offer a no-compromise truck tire solution - this time for regional steer tires," said Ted Becker, vice-president of marketing for Michelin. "The new Michelin X Multi Energy Z offers the industry's best combination of fuel savings and mileage in a regional application."

Johnston explained that fuel mileage is becoming more important to regional-haul carriers, especially those serving customers who participate in the EPA's SmartWay program. With the widening of the Panama Canal and the increasing use of intermodal, Johnston said a super-regional application is quickly developing. Typically, this would involve running somewhere between 75,000 and 125,000 miles a year over a combination of city streets and highways, using a mix of day cabs and sleepers in various configurations.

Pure linehaul operators will continue to be best served by the XZA3+ steer tire, Johnston noted. A fuel-conscious regional fleet can optimize their performance by running the new X Multi Energy Z at the steer position and Michelin's X Multi Energy D on the drive axle(s), Johnston explained.

The X Multi Energy Z has been offered in the US and Canada as of March 1 in three sizes: 11R22.5 LRG; 11R22.5 LRH; and 275/80R22.5 LRH. The tire will be listed in OEM data-books beginning in May. ●

Ryder offers pay-as-you-go maintenance

MISSISSAUGA, ONTARIO

Ryder System has opened up its service network. With the launch of Ryder On-Demand, the company now allows

private fleet owners and for-hire carriers to obtain service from the Ryder service network on a "pay-as-you-go" basis.

Pre-determined labour rates and part pricing will be available on both preventive maintenance work and on repairs.

Pay-as-you-go customers will also be able to call on 24/7 roadside assistance, make use of extended repair hours and will have access to replacement vehicles. ●



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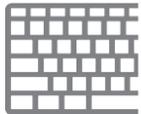
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Tires & Wheels

Alcoa has announced its Dura-Bright **wheels** are now available for medium-duty trucks. The no-polish aluminum wheels are easy to maintain and stay clean longer, Alcoa announced. They can be cleaned with just soap and water. More info can be found at www.alcoawheels.com.



Software

Shaw Tracking has introduced a **Vehicle Inspection Report app**, which it says provides a simple closed loop process for completing vehicle and trailer inspection reports. The new application is available through the Mobile Computing Platform, providing streamlined access to vehicle

inspection data and enhanced recording, allowing fleets to proactively manage truck and trailer maintenance and to reduce breakdowns. Completed inspection reports are submitted to the maintenance team and drivers are notified when the reports are updated and closed by the maintenance department, Shaw announced. The new feature also identifies units that have not recorded a vehicle inspection report and can provide a comprehensive remediation history. For info, visit www.shawtracking.com.

Arcline has announced the release of its **Mobile Customer Tracking Application** for all major mobile platforms. The company says its new app complements its ArcTrac Customer Tracking module, providing freight brokers and trucking companies with the ability to give their customers visibility into their freight movements. Displayed information includes destination, pick-up and de-

livery dates, present location, status and notes. For more, visit www.arcline2000.com.

Data mining company Vigillo has introduced a new **DataQs Success Report**, which allows carriers to determine which CSA-related challenges are most likely to succeed. FMCSA's DataQs allow carriers to request a review of federal and state inspection, violation and crash data they feel may be incomplete or inaccurate. Now carriers can devote their attention to challenging the types of incidents that are most likely to be overturned by the agency. For more, visit www.vigillo.com.



Components

Meritor has introduced two new **planetary axles**, designed for heavy-haul, oilfield, logging and mining applications. The P610 and P614 axles, available in tandem and tridem configurations, use similar parts as other Meritor axles, leading to reduced delivery times, the company says. The tandem axle is rated to 84,000 lbs, while the tridem axle can gross 126,000 lbs.

Dana has introduced a new generation of Victocor 500 **cylinder head gaskets**, which the company says features multi-layer steel inserts to improve sealing. The new line helps heavy-duty engines achieve improved durability and handle high-stress and high-pressure requirements for over-the-road trucking. The gaskets use high-grade rubber-coated stainless steel in place of traditional rubber inserts.

Realizing that some buyers face budget restrictions when purchasing replacement parts, Goodyear Engineered Products has launched a line of more competitively priced **springs**. Veyance Technologies, the company that manufactures the Goodyear Super Cushion air springs, is now offering the Springride air springs line. The company suggests they are suitable for "second- and third-time commercial vehicle owners" (i.e. those who purchase trucks on the used market) and who would otherwise be considering the use of offshore brands. They come with a two-year warranty, and are built to meet OEM standards. According to Veyance, they have been tested to one million cycles (compared to two million cycles for the Superior Cushion springs). For more, visit www.goodyearep.com.

Eaton has expanded its **Flex Reman** offerings. Eaton now offers 50 standard models, covering what it claims is 82% of the market, up from 75% before the product line update. The expanded line-up also works with most of Eaton's other products, including the FR 10-speed and RTLO 13- and 18-speed models. As well, Eaton has changed the way its parts are named. Rather than using just part numbers, the new nomenclature will be based on the model number. Other changes include an updated pricing structure and shipping options. Now, logistic centre, direct-ship and truck-down orders are all priced identically. Flex units now are eligible to ship the same day or next day for truck-down situations.

Meritor has launched an **aftermarket educational campaign** that explains how the company's aftermarket brake products and automatic tire inflation parts enhance safety and an operator's ability to comply with federal regulations. A free informational kit has been developed and is available to truck fleets and owner/operators. Among the tips, Meritor explains RSD-compliant friction material must be replaced with similar friction in the aftermarket. Canadian operators can access a free information kit by calling 800-387-3889.



Trailers



Leading Edge Industries has come out with a new **Load Judge** product, which it says improves the efficiency of loading grain trailers. The system uses six proximity sensors and one moisture sensor installed in a hopper bottom trailer. The sensors send a wireless signal to the truck cab, where the operator can view a graphical illustration of the grain loading as well as bushel and weight estimates, on a smartphone or tablet. For details, go to www.loadjudge.com.

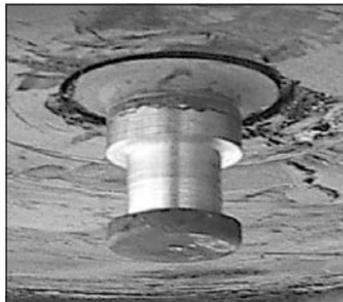
Carrier Transicold has updated the line of **applications** used to monitor refrigerated trucks, trailers and containers. The company has released TRU-Tech and TRU-View, two computer programs designed to replace its ReeferManager software. TRU-Tech is refrigeration management software which allows the user to set operational parameters, and conduct diagnostic functions. It uses TRU-View refrigeration data analysis software, which gives the user information about system performance. For organizations that only want TRU-View, it is available as a stand-alone application. TRU-Tech software can also be used by technicians to monitor system parameters, such as sensor inputs and other vital data that may be downloaded for tracking, performance evaluation, record keeping, or analytics. The TRU-View component can generate graphic reports, showing specific TRU system performance over time, and data can be exported into Excel spreadsheets or PDFs.



Circle R Side Dump Trailers has a new SuperCube **high-capacity trailer** that comes with an Air-Weigh on-board load monitoring system. The weigh system is standard on the 37-ft. side dump trailer. Circle R officials said the Air-Weigh system was chosen as standard equipment because it features an accurate dual-point calibration system at a reasonable price. Operators will be able to monitor trailer weights via an LED display.



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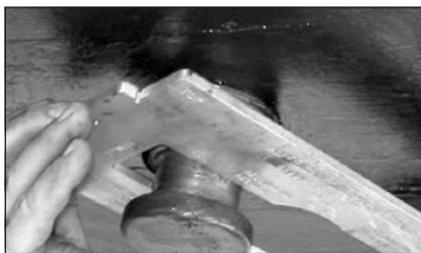
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MTO should've added radar long ago

Dear Editor:

In Sept. 2009, I wrote a letter to then Ontario Minister of Transportation Jim Bradley, expressing my concern with the speed limiter law that the government had passed requiring trucks to be governed at 105 km/h. As a long-distance truck driver, I explained that having Ontario trucks governed at a speed of 105 km/h put the driver at a disadvantage when they travelled in jurisdictions with speed limits greater than 105 km/h.

In a letter from Mr. Bradley dated Oct. 7 2009, responding to my concern, he stated a 2005 traffic survey showed that 30-60% of large trucks were exceeding 105 km/h on our 400-series highways. The mandatory speed limiter program was brought in to help address this concern.

In a telephone conversation with the enforcement program advisor in Mr. Bradley's office, I suggested if there is a problem with speeding trucks, instead of passing the speed limiter law we should adopt a policy like the state of Michigan and have strict enforcement of the speed limit towards large trucks.

I was advised this was not possible because there are not enough law enforcement personnel to do this. My response was if there not enough people to enforce the speed limit - a law that already exists - who is going to enforce the new speed limiter law?

I suggested instead of spending money on electronic readers to check

if the truck is properly governed, the money should be spent on installing radar units in MTO enforcement vehicles and have them enforce the speed limit on the 400-series highways. The government with its great wisdom spent thousands of dollars on these electronic readers to determine if the truck was in compliance with the speed limiter law.

Fast forward to 2014, an article in the February issue of *Truck News* states the Ontario Ministry of Transportation is equipping its vehicles with radar to help officers better enforce the province's speed limiter legislation. The law allows for charges to be laid against truckers driving faster than 115 km/h as it's presumed at that speed that a functioning speed limiter is absent.

Once MTO cars are equipped with radar, they will be able to officially clock commercial vehicles and better support fines against drivers travelling over 115 km/h.

The speed limit is 100 km/h, trucks are to be governed at 105 km/h, and Mr. Bradley stated the speed limiter law was passed because 30-60% of large trucks were travelling greater than 105 km/h, but now officers are not going to lay charges unless the truck is exceeding 115 km/h?

It makes one wonder what goes on in the Ontario Liberal Government's Ministry of Transportation office. 🚫

Ron Gunson
Tara, Ont.

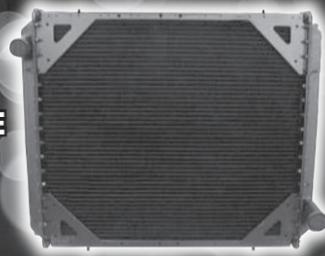
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Canada Cartage turns 100

BRAMPTON, ONTARIO

With the cut of a knife, executives sliced into a ceremonial cake to cap off an event celebrating Canada Cartage's 100th anniversary. The open house and lunch included presentations by local politicians, including Brampton mayor Susan Fennell and Mississauga mayor Hazel McCallion. (The company has facilities in both Ontario cities.)

Also on hand were former members of the Canada Cartage team, including Fred Leslie. For 30 years beginning in 1974, Leslie was co-owner of the company, along with partner Bill Lindsay, but his connection to the company stretches back even longer than his stint in upper management. His grandfather Robert Leslie founded the company with a single horse and cart. As Canada Cartage expanded, it added teams of horses and starting in 1917, trucks. Today there are over 4,300 trucks in the dedicated fleet.

To watch an exclusive TMTV interview with Fred Leslie as he reminisces about the company's history, and recalls a train derailment Canada Cartage was involved in, visit Trucknews.com/videos. ●

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ITS buys David Cordingley Transport

BELLEVILLE, ONTARIO

International Truckload Services (ITS) has purchased Brantford, Ont.-based David Cordingley Transport (DCT).

DCT operates van and flatbed divisions consisting of 26 tractors and 60 trailers. Ten of the trailers are curtainside flatbeds, which will complement the roll-tite division ITS has operated since 2006, according to Rob Haggarty, president and chief operating officer of ITS.

He told *Truck News* that DCT was identified as a good fit, due to its geographic location and business model that was similar to that of ITS.

Haggarty said ITS will maintain DCT's Brantford terminal and staff,

while upgrading its systems and equipment.

This marks ITS's second major acquisition. The company in 2011 bought Cornwall, Ont.-based CSI Logistics.

Asked what lessons, if any, were learned through that process and applied to its second purchase, Haggarty said to "Take your time and do a full due diligence. We have a team of experienced staff here now from the CSI acquisition that we are plugging into DCT."

Looking ahead, Haggarty hinted ITS may not yet be done shopping. "We're still interested in other opportunities in late 2014 or early 2015," he said. ●

Bison wins Purolator award

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA

Bison Transport has won the title of Purolator's Long Haul Carrier of the Year for 2013. The Winnipeg, Man.-based company earned the honours based on the results of the Purolator Scorecard, which rates carriers on their on-time performance, capacity to assist during their peak periods, reporting, communication, invoicing, TMS compliance, and overall professionalism in dealing with the Purolator group.

According to Bison's records, it moved 3,164 loads for Purolator in 2013.

"This is a significant achievement for us, given Purolator's high standards and expectations," said Norm Sneyd, vice-president of business development. "Winning this award is a combination of hard work involving a wide range of individuals at Bison." ●

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All four SuperTruck projects on pace to reach objectives

By James Menzies

INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

The Green Truck Summit overcame some adversity March 4, when its keynote speaker was unable to attend due to a snowstorm in D.C. Not to be deterred, organizers piped in Patrick Davis, director of the Department of Energy's Vehicle Technologies Office by video and his address went off without a hitch - and with a smaller carbon footprint, to boot.

Davis provided an update on the DoE's SuperTruck program, noting each of the four projects is on pace to achieve its goal of increasing efficiency by 50%. The Peterbilt/Cummins project has received the lion's share of the attention of late, even earning the companies a recent commendation from US President Barack Obama, because it's the first of four projects to be completed, Davis said. The Class 8 tractor-trailer has achieved 10.7 mpg.

But Davis said similar projects spearheaded by Daimler, Navistar and Volvo are also on pace to hit their objectives. The SuperTruck program looks at Class 8 trucks grossing 65,000 lbs and challenges them to improve their efficiency by 50%.

"If you were to take a Class 8 vehicle that currently gets 6.5 mpg, a SuperTruck would be approaching 10 mpg," Davis said.

Some of the technologies being employed include: improved aerodynamics, reduced rolling resistance, waste heat recovery, hybridization of auxiliary components and engine downsizing.

Davis also said the green truck industry is benefiting from advancements in battery technology. He noted the cost of batteries has come down by more than 50% over the past five years, to a rate of about \$325 per kWh (kilowatt/hour). Davis said a cost of \$200-\$250 is achievable in the short-term, and the DoE has set a long-term target of \$125 per kWh.

The trucking industry must continue to develop green technologies, to lessen its dependence on foreign oil, Davis noted. Transportation continues to account for two-thirds of US petroleum usage, and over 80% of that is consumed by on-road vehicles. Heavy-duty trucks alone account for 18% of US oil consumption.

"This is an issue of economic security, environmental stewardship as well as national security," he said.

The fact that fleets now have more vehicles to choose from presents both opportunities and challenges, Davis said.

"It's a challenge because of infrastructure and the availability of those fuels, making sure we have the fuels where they need to be to service our fleets," he said.

Davis said there are presently 25 heavy-duty tractor models available, powered by alternative fuels. "Frankly, it's hard to keep up," he said.

Today, more than half of all new refuse trucks being sold are fuelled by



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natural gas.

The fuelling infrastructure in the US is rapidly expanding as well. Davis noted there are now 1,334 CNG stations in the US and 90 LNG stations. Of the alternative fuel vehicles on the market, 61% are driven by natural gas.

Davis lauded the fleet industry for advancing the use of alternative fuels. He noted the National Clean Fleets Partnership in the US now includes 23 fleet members, representing more than a million vehicles. He singled out UPS, which has invested \$50 million to build nine LNG fuelling stations to support 1,000 LNG tractors and AT&T, which is in the midst of deploying 15,000 alternative fuel-powered vehicles between 2008 and 2018. ●

Telematics provide cheap way to go green

By James Menzies

Alternative fuels have commanded most of the attention in recent years at the Green Truck Summit, but a panel discussion held here reminded fleet managers that there are lower-cost and simpler ways to go green.

"Before you even begin on an alternative fuels endeavour, you need to look at telematics first," said Anthony Foster, fleet manager with Pioneer Natural Resources. He said fleets that use telematics to improve driving behaviour will see a correlation between safe driving and reduced fuel consumption. Pioneer deployed telematics to measure several key performance indicators and achieved: a 22% reduction in speeding events; a 28% increase in seatbelt usage; a 74% decrease in hard braking; and an 83% decrease in harsh acceleration.

The company expanded its telematics program to monitor: tire pressures; oil life; fuel economy; engine fault codes; engine hours; and odometer readings. It is using that information to coach drivers and to evaluate its asset utilization.

Bruce Ottogalli, transportation manager with United Water NJ, shared a similar success story. His company used telematics to measure and reduce idle time. It installed GPS units into its vehicles in 2012 and implemented a plan to limit idling time. Two systems were used: IdleRight and Eco-Star. IdleRight requires the driver to shut down the truck manually while EcoStar shuts the truck down on its own. The IdleRight system must be coupled with a remote starter. Both systems monitor battery power and restart the truck to charge the system when it reaches a pre-determined level.

Ottogalli said the systems cost about \$500-\$600 per vehicle to install. However, the savings have provided a quick payback. In 2013, Ottogalli said the company had the system deployed in 59 vehicles and reduced its idle time by 5,765 hours. At an average cost of \$2.91 per gallon, the company saved \$43,731 in fuel costs and reduced its carbon output by 300,000 lbs. Ottogalli admitted drivers were not initially fans of the system, but came around when they were assured it wouldn't be used for disciplinary purposes. Tim Taylor, client success officer with Telogis, said it's not uncommon for fleets to save enough in idle reduction alone to pay for a telematics system.

"The biggest low-hanging fruit is idle time, that is how you pay for telematics," he said. ●

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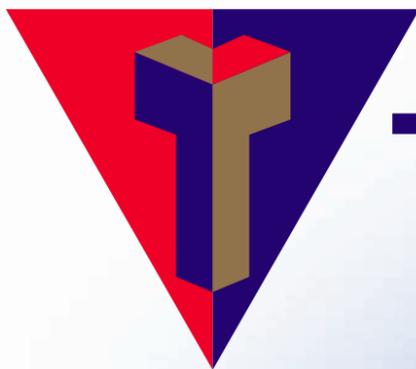
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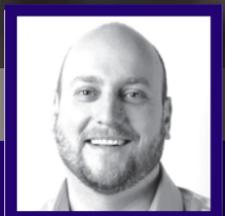
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By Edo Van Belkom

THE STORY SO FAR...

Mark comes down with a virus and is too sick to drive. Bud arranges for a replacement driver to take over for a week while Mark spends some time at his parent's home getting better...

"That must be her," the kid said after they'd been stopped in front of Mark's parents house in Oakville for a couple of minutes. "And your dad."

Mark didn't bother getting up to look. He could already imagine what it looked like...his mother coming down the driveway with a bowl of chicken soup in her hand and his father following behind with his cane in one hand and a bucketful of advice about how Mark should be running his business in the other. Garth opened the door and hopped out of the cab. He could hear the kid say hello to his parents, then feel his father climbing up the side of the truck. "Why the hell did you get a kid like that to drive your truck for ya?" was the first thing he said.

"Hi dad."

"I could've driven for you for a week. I was a driver for 40 years, you know."

"But you don't have your licence anymore," Mark said.

"So, you're shutting me out on a technicality?"

"Leave the boy alone," said the voice of his mother. His father disappeared from view and his mother appeared inside the cab.

"Sick as a dog and you're hounding him for work." She turned to face Mark, a broad smile on her face and a travel mug in her hand.

"Are you strong enough to get into the house? If not, there's some broth for you that'll give you strength."

"I can make it mom."

"Good, then let's get you out of the cold and into your bed."

Mark rose up and pulled the blankets off his body. A sudden chill washed over him and the inside of Mother Load seemed to spin clockwise. A few deep breaths and he was able to slip on his coat and shoes. Meanwhile, his mother pulled a toque tightly over his head.

"Drink this," she said, handing Mark the travel mug. Mark didn't feel like having any soup, but he had to admit it tasted pretty good going down. As he crawled out of the truck, he could hear his father giving Garth the third degree. "How many years you been drivin'? You got your FleetSmart certification? What about SmartWay? Ever drive a Peterbilt?..." The questions rattled off his father's tongue like bullets out of a machine gun, but Garth had the right answer for every one.

"C'mon, son," his mother said, wrapping him in a blanket. "I'll get you feeling better."

Mark trudged up the driveway, wondering what the scene must look like to the neighbours. Probably like Mark was knocking on death's door and had come home to die. 'Let'em think that,' thought Mark, 'because that's just how I feel.'

"Take these," mom said, putting a cold hand across his forehead. "They'll take the edge off your fever and allow you to get some sleep."

Mark took the two pain relievers and washed them down with some water.

"Get some sleep. I'll be around in a couple of hours to check up on you, and I'll have some fresh broth for you at suppertime."

"Thanks, Mom."



Mark gets well soon

"You're not getting enough mileage out of your fuel," his father said as he entered the room. "I checked your truck and you're only getting..."

"Hush now and leave the boy alone," his mother said, blocking out his father before he could reach the bed.

"The last thing he needs is you harping on him. How many years does he have to drive a truck before you can acknowledge that he does it as well as you ever did?"

His father considered the question, then lifted his cane. "When he's driven 45 years, then we'll talk."

"You'll be dead by then," his mother said, pushing his father out of the room. "Now give the boy some peace. There'll be plenty of time to talk later."

His father gave a 'harumpf!' and exited the room. His mother turned at the door and said, "It's good to have you home. Even if it's for just a little while."

"It's good to be home, mom."

She shut the light and closed the door and Mark took a moment to let his eyes wander around the room. It was his old room, just as it was when he'd first left home. There was a Wendell Clark poster on the wall and a Bachman-Turner Overdrive album cover hanging over his bed. There were a few minor hockey trophies on the dresser and a high school graduation photo on the desk. There were even a few truck models scattered around the room, including one of a Peterbilt rig just like the one he ended up driving for a living.

He took a deep breath and let out a sigh. It was great to be able to come home again, and it was wonderful that he had two loving parents who would always take care of him no matter what, but he couldn't help feeling he was of an age where he should be able to take care of himself.

And that's when he got to thinking that perhaps he should have a home of his own, where he could be sick...or just unwind on his days off.

"How are you doing?" his mother said, barging into

the room. "Comfortable?"

"Yes, very."

"How can you be when your head's not even on a pillow?"

She put a hand on his head and lifted it so she could slide a pillow beneath it. "There! Better?" It wasn't really, but he said yes, anyway.

"Good. Now get some rest."

Mark closed his eyes. 'Yeah,' he thought. 'A place of my own. That would be good.'

He awoke later thinking he'd slept a couple of hours, but a glance at the Blue Jays clock on the wall told him he'd been sleeping for almost 10 hours. It was dark outside and the room was lit only by the night light that he'd had since he was in grade school.

And although he didn't move, his mother somehow knew he'd awakened.

"There's my sleepyhead," she said, fluffing his pillow and straightening the bed covers. "Your father wanted to talk to you when you came around, but you outlasted him and he fell asleep on you."

Mark could hear his father snoring out in the living room and it reminded him of years

gone by. "Nothing's changed."

"Not much. If you're hungry I've got soup for you in the kitchen."

Mark nodded. "I'll be down in a minute. I just want to check in with Bud."

"Don't be too long. My soups are full to the brim with love, but they still get cold."

When she was gone he grabbed his cell phone off the nightstand and dialed Bud's number.

"Hello?"

"Bud, this is Mark Dalton," Mark said, not giving Bud the chance to play any games.

"You still sick?"

"I'm feeling a bit better."

"Why you calling?"

"I just want to know what's going on with Garth and my truck. Everything okay?"

"Excellent. He's delivered his load on time and undamaged, and he was early picking up his next load so he's already a couple hours ahead of schedule."

Mark sighed. "That's great."

"Yeah, so don't you worry about a thing. Your truck's in good hands and you can take a week or two off without anyone even knowing you're gone."

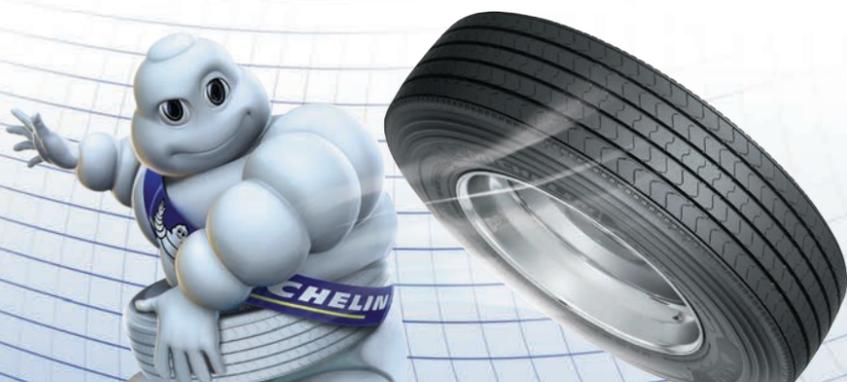
"Terrific," Mark said, the word sounding three times as long as it really was.

"Get well soon," Bud said. "I got to go." 📞

Mark Dalton returns next month in the conclusion of *Mark Gets Well Soon*.

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

Illustration by Glenn McEvoy



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Training helps maximize tech potential

There was a time, not too many years ago, when trucks essentially vanished from view after pulling out of a fleet yard. Updates about an ongoing trip were limited to calls from payphones in truck stops, or maybe the reports from passing motorists who responded to a sticker which asked, "How's my driving?"

An ever-growing list of available technology has changed this forever, offering fleet managers insight that once would have been the exclusive domain of those sitting in the cab. Cell phones, satellite tracking and Global Positioning Systems can certainly help to locate a load at any moment in time. And reports about fuel economy and idling are regularly downloaded from engine electronics to support commitments to fuel-efficiency.

As valuable as this information is, many fleets have yet to scratch the surface of what available data can accomplish - proving that even the most advanced technology still needs to be supported by related training in how to use it.

It's in the data

Those who recognize the need to monitor a truck's number of hard-braking events or hard lateral moves can spot high-risk drivers who are too aggressive behind the wheel and might benefit from some added guidance to help prevent collisions.

And the reports which match vehicle speeds and selected gears tell another story.

A driver who regularly allows engine speeds to run up to the governor could be shortening equipment life; someone who travels at highway speeds while in neutral is likely missing gears when heading down large hills.

Sometimes the added insight comes from knowing how to look at the same data in a different way.

For example, the same system which tracks a shipment can be used to sound an alarm when a vehicle strays too far from its scheduled route.

This "geofencing" has been used to track stolen equipment, but one Customs officer also showed me how a driver who repeatedly strays into a crime-ridden neighbourhood might actually be involved in an illegal activity. Matching the vehicle location

to police data about known sources of drugs could certainly raise a few questions.

Drivers who see such technology as an invasion of privacy - complaining that Big Brother is watching them - would benefit from training that shows how the data protects their interests, too.

The electronic on-board recorders (EOBRs) which track compliance with hours-of-service rules will certainly discourage operations teams who always offer a dismissive "see what you can do" while available hours tick away.

And dash-mounted cameras can prove a driver was right as easily as it can spot a mistake.

The view through the windshield will prove without a doubt that someone cut in front of the truck just seconds before a crash, or even give insurers the information they need to settle claims more quickly and cheaply than ever before.

Like every other piece of technology, however, the quality of the tool can make a difference.

High-definition cameras are needed to catch the letters and numbers on licence plates, which will be crucial when investigating a collision. The systems equipped with two-way cameras - filming drivers and roadways alike - also give safety teams a way to prove someone was focused on the road rather than dozing behind the wheel.

Benefits of automation

But the need for technology-related training hardly ends with data-storing devices.

An automatic transmission offers a good example of how vehicle technology can be maximized by a skilled user. These transmissions allow a driver to keep both hands on the wheel whenever a gear needs to be changed in the middle of an intersection.

But the equipment has also been known to change gears when a truck is heading down a hill.

Drivers who are trained in the related features will know how to select a manual mode that will hold a gear while maintaining control down a long grade.

Adaptive cruise controls, which automatically maintain specific following distances, could also give under-trained drivers a false sense of confidence when they should be reducing speeds in bad weather.

And as helpful as blind spot detectors may be, the drivers who have them will be safest when they realize the blind spots that still remain and use the detectors as simply another tool at their disposal.

Fleets that embrace emerging technologies will always have the chance to enhance operations and build a competitive edge.

But the gains will always be maximized when those technologies are put in the hands of trained professionals. 

This month's expert is David Goruk. David is a risk services specialist and has served the trucking industry for more than 25 years providing loss control and risk management services to the trucking industry. Northbridge Insurance is a leading Canadian commercial insurer built on the strength of four companies with a long standing history in the marketplace and has been serving the trucking industry for more than 60 years. You can visit them at www.nbins.com.

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Like many professional drivers, Murray Hebblethwaite learned how to drive from his father. He also learned a lot about the industry from his dad. However, the one piece of advice he didn't heed was to not become a truck driver. Now retired, Murray shares with *Truck News* a story about two generations of trucking which spanned nearly a century.

There is no shortage of father-son stories in trucking. Many of today's professional drivers followed their fathers' footsteps into the industry and learned how to shift and back up from their dads.

For Murray Hebblethwaite, trucking stories from his late father Charles F. Hebblethwaite (also known as Chas) date back to the late 1800s, and a time when his father had to literally build the roads before he could drive on them.

"He told stories about these old corduroy roads," Murray recalled. "They would help build these corduroy roads through the bogs. They'd have to put these logs in and then put gravel over top of them."

Living on the north shore of Lake Erie, Murray's father would deliver gravel from the various gravel pits for



Charles Hebblethwaite

use in roadbuilding. These early deliveries were done by horse-drawn wagon and later by truck.

"They'd have to load these wagons by hand," Murray recalls. "When the pit got to be deep in the ground, one farmer would bring a team in and help pull the other team out of the pit and then at the end of the day, he was expected to get his own load out of the pit."

While the work was backbreaking, these early transporters had some fun as well. Murray recounts one story his father told him about a farmer who wanted to show off the swimming ability of his team of horses.

When the horses waded out into the water with the wagon still in tow, the wagon's floorboards lifted off the frame and floated away.

"They had to wait until they floated back in to get them," Murray says with a laugh.

The sand along the Lake Erie shores was a magnet to truck drivers and construction workers. They'd haul it out by the truckload and use it for mixing cement.

Murray's dad became a fertilizer distributor and got to know all the local farmers. Murray rode with his father whenever he could.

"I used to ride with him and just watched him," he says. "That was the extent of my lessons. Once I became 16, I got my own driver's licence and chauffeur's licence."

Sadly, Chas died in 1965 when Murray was only 15 years old and never got to see him earn his trucking licence.

In fact, after a life of hard work, Murray's father told him before he died not to become a trucker. Of course, Murray couldn't resist the urge to acquire his licence and drive professionally, whether it be tractor-trailer or dump truck, he often had a heavy truck at his disposal.

"I've been around these trucks all my life and just can't get it out of my system," Murray says. At the age of 63, he's also a farmer.

Today, Murray has mixed feelings about the industry he and his father spent so many years working in. He still winces at the memory of his father getting fined for running overweight due to no fault of his own.

"It was one of his last loads and he was coming back from the Niagara area with a load of fertilizer, licensed for 18 tonnes," Murray remembers. "It was the winter time and he scaled it and he'd picked up all this ice and he scaled over. We were on the verge of losing everything and he didn't have the money to pay for the fine, so they dropped his licence down to carry 17.5 tonnes. When you load up your truck legally at your point of pickup and then you take off and go down the road and you gather all this salt and snow and ice and there is no allowance for it - come on, cut the guy a break."

Murray says his father left an impression on many of the enforcement officers, local farmers and other drivers. A few years back when he pulled through a scale, an MTO officer looked at Murray's licence and asked if his father used to drive truck.

"This scale master knew my father and this was just east of London. Here I am, 80 miles away from home and as soon as he sees my last name, he says 'Was your dad a truck driver?'"

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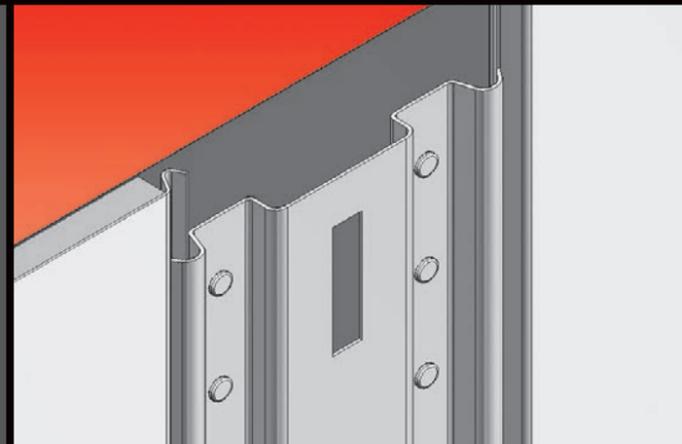
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