

# TRUCK NEWS

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## Women wanted

The trucking industry in Atlantic Canada wants more female drivers and has the funding to go find them.

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Eaton has come out with the first medium-duty dual clutch transmission. We report on its performance.

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A first-hand report from Dale Amy on what it's like to travel in a truck platoon.

## Canada's top drivers compete

Manitoba earns bragging rights at National Truck Driving Championships

By Sonia Straface

ST-JEROME, QUEBEC

The lightning and thunder wasn't the only electrifying part of the weekend - if you were in St-Jerome, Quebec, that is, where the annual Truck Driving Championships took place Sept. 4-6.

The competition was flooded with enthusiasm, skills and of course, lots of rain. It was no secret that the best of the best in Canada came out to clobber their competition as all participants wanted to clutch a shiny trophy at the end of the night.

Much like the regional and provincial championships, the competition was comprised of three parts: a written test, a pre-trip inspection and an obstacle course. As well, no driver was allowed to drive his/her own truck on the course. Instead, competitors had to use the standardized truck provided for them on the course to ensure fairness. The first place winners in five classes from the seven provincial competitions (the Atlantic provinces pool their winners together to form one "province" for competition purposes)

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**Western Star is hoping to reach new heights with the introduction of its 5700 aerodynamic highway tractor. It's the first time the truck maker has pursued this market.**

## Shooting for the stars

**Western Star has come out with its first aerodynamic highway tractor, which looks unlike any other truck in the segment.**

By James Menzies

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

The trucking industry has gotten its first look at the Western Star 5700XE, the truck that inspired Hollywood.

The new aerodynamic highway tractor was used as inspiration for the Optimus Prime character in the popular Transformers movie that debuted this summer. Optimus Prime appeared at industry events and trade shows, attracting large crowds and probably leading many to believe that Western Star took its design cues from Hollywood. In fact, it was the other way around; the design of the 5700 was well underway when Hollywood came calling. So enamoured with the new model were the movie's producers that they retained much of the 5700's real-life design when bringing Optimus Prime to life.

The 5700XE is a gorgeous truck, that retains Western Star's distinctive look while improving fuel economy by as much as 15% compared to the 4900FE, which was until now the most fuel-efficient vehicle in Western Star's stable. It looks markedly different than currently available aerodynamic tractors, yet can compete with them head-to-head when it comes to fuel economy. About 7% of the fuel savings come from improved aerodynamics and further gains are possible by spec'ing an integrated Detroit powertrain, including the DD15 engine, DT12 automated manual transmission and Detroit axles with a ratio of 2.41 in a 6x4 configuration.

Mike Jackson, general manager of Western Star, said the

time is right to bring out an aerodynamic highway model, since even the most traditional-minded customers are indicating they plan to purchase more fuel-efficient trucks. The 'full-aero' segment makes up some 65% of the Class 8 tractor market and Western Star realized it needed to play in that sandbox if it was to gain share.

"Image is still important but at the end of the day, customers are saying 'I'm here to make money.' We looked at those trends and we're here today to step into that market for the first time," Jackson said. "With us having been a traditional model and having a partial-aero model, we were clearly self-imposing some limitations on our growth opportunities. We recognized that, and that's when we went to the drawing board."

The 5700 has been in development since 2009, in recent years running under disguise near Portland, where the truck has accumulated some 2.5 million customer equivalent durability miles. While sales of aerodynamically-designed highway tractors have been brisk over the past couple years, Jackson said those sales have mostly been driven by large fleets and leasing companies, which aren't the target market for the 5700.

"Now it's time for those smaller companies, the owner/operators, those that need a badge and image type purchase as well as the ability to make money, those are the guys step-

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# CLASS 8 TRUCK SALES TRENDS

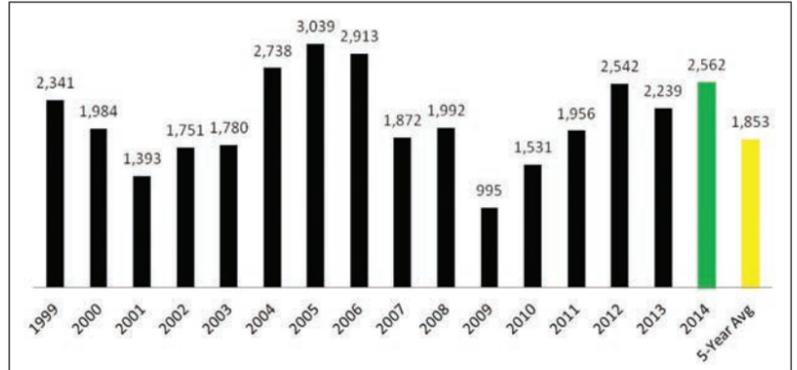
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The summer breathed new life into Class 8 truck sales for the Canadian market. June's sales totals soared above last year's after sales had dipped below last year's pace for four straight months. July's totals have continued the upsurge ending up more than 300 above last year's pace. In fact, this was the fourth best July since 1999, surpassed only by the July results posted during the industry growth years of 2004-2006.

## Monthly Class 8 Sales – July 14

OEM	This Month	Last Year
Freightliner	609	564
International	413	300
Kenworth	419	417
Mack	234	227
Peterbilt	344	256
Volvo	338	261
Western Star	205	214
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>2562</b>	<b>2239</b>

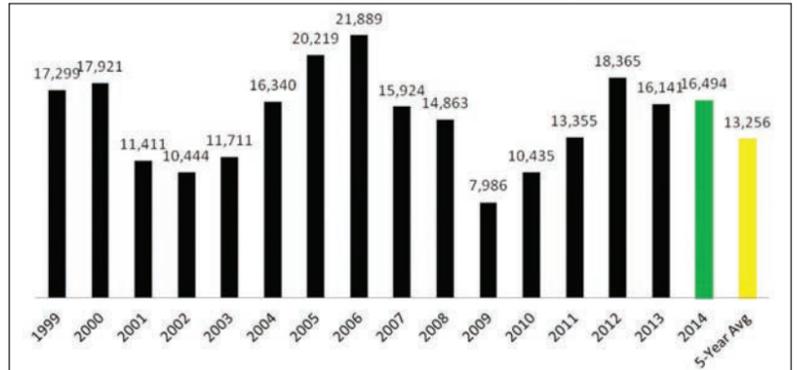
## Historical Comparison – July 14 Sales



## Class 8 Sales (YTD July 14) by Province and OEM

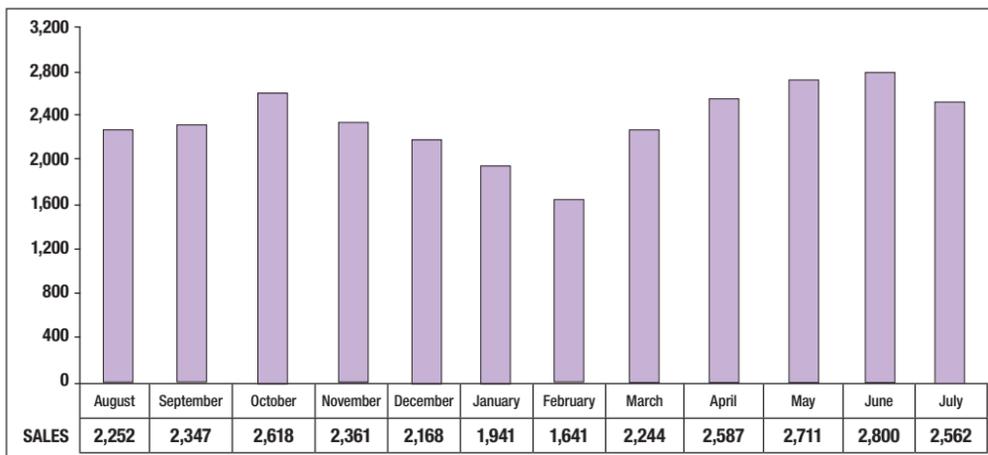
OEM	BC	ALTA	SASK	MAN	ONT	QUE	NB	NS	PEI	NF	CDA
Freightliner	352	590	147	184	1,732	594	182	76	1	23	3,881
Kenworth	368	1,095	258	1	431	474	49	0	0	0	2,676
Mack	87	237	107	71	693	160	19	40	5	16	1,435
International	91	354	50	90	1,149	389	93	37	8	25	2,286
Peterbilt	293	832	186	124	426	267	96	11	0	0	2,235
Volvo	317	362	76	182	1,153	379	114	59	0	2	2,644
Western Star	198	470	44	81	256	205	31	41	3	8	1,337
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>1,706</b>	<b>3,940</b>	<b>868</b>	<b>733</b>	<b>5,840</b>	<b>2,468</b>	<b>584</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>16,494</b>

## Historical Comparison – YTD July 14



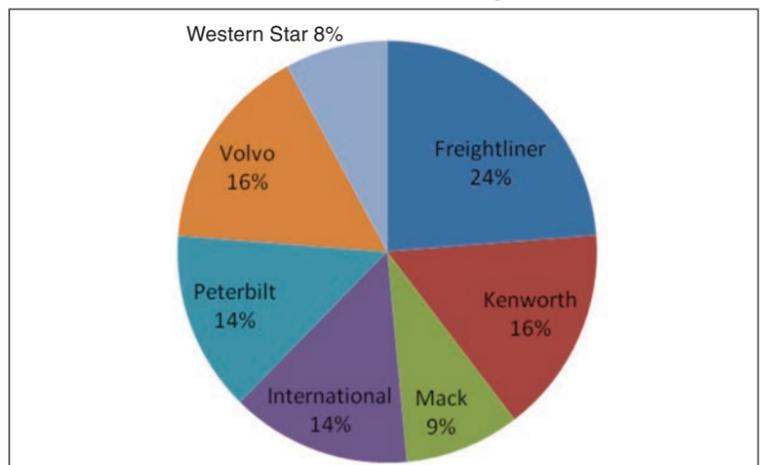
Optimism for an improvement in Class 8 truck sales this year after 2013 proved disappointing is gaining steam after two straight months of encouraging sales results. June's sales figures blew past last year's totals and now so have July's. YTD numbers are still nowhere close to those of 2012, the best year since the recession for Class 8 sales, but they are ahead of last year's results. With small carriers more willing to purchase new trucks than they have been in years, according to our latest research, and all carriers feeling more optimistic, could the second half of 2014 be a memorable one?

## 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 and considerably further in February. Good news is that they bounced back in March and April, topping the 2,000 mark both months. May showed further improvement and June was a welcomed surprise. Although July figures were below June's, they were still above 2,000 and better than last year's.

## Market Share Class 8 – July 14 YTD



Freightliner remains the market leader with a 24% share of the market but Volvo, which has shown the most growth this year after leapfrogging past Peterbilt, is tied with Kenworth for 16% market share. Peterbilt and Navistar are tied for third place with 14% shares. Mack remains slightly ahead of Western Star with a 9% share compared to 8% for Western Star.

Source: Canadian Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association

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## Editorial Comment

JAMES MENZIES



# It's a great time to be in trucking

In my 14 years covering the Canadian trucking industry, I can't ever remember being so busy. And trust me, after the dark months of 2009, when I experienced what not being busy felt like, I welcome the pace. These are really exciting times for the trucking industry, especially if, like me, you are a fan of equipment and technology. Has there ever been so much innovation? I recall the boom period of truck sales in 2006, when fleets were buying trucks like mad but then, it was out of fear as much as prosperity.

They were trying to get ahead of the great unknowns associated with the EPA07 emissions standards. There was a lot of new product to write about and report on during that time period, but again the OEMs were faced primarily with meeting the aggressive new emissions targets placed before them by the EPA.

This time it's different. With no looming emissions standard, OEMs finally have the time and the R&D resources to invest into improving their existing vehi-

cles or developing new ones rather than simply focusing all their capital and effort on reducing what comes out of the smokestack. Some would argue this is how it should have been all along, and that the improved fuel efficiency that would be achieved at the behest of customers would eventually result in the lower emissions the government was looking for. Well there's no going back now, so we should be looking ahead to the future and what it might bring. When I do so, I like what I see. I see continuous improvement, especially as it relates to fuel economy.

I've been logging some miles this summer in the newest trucks and they are fantastic vehicles, with ever-improving fuel economy. Truck makers that have built their most fuel-efficient trucks ever, have already found ways to improve upon them. I'm talking about the Peterbilt 579, which now with its EPIQ package is about 10% more fuel-efficient than last year's model, or the Kenworth T680,

which is now available in an Advantage configuration with similar fuel economy gains. The industry-leading Freightliner Cascadia gave way to the Cascadia Evolution, which offers significantly improved fuel mileage. Volvo is touting big gains with its 2016 model year VNs and Mack has come out with new engines and ratings that will reduce operating costs.

International has a bounce in its step having slashed its losses and with Cummins back in the fold, appears to be headed in the right direction.

The level of collaboration between OEMs and suppliers is unprecedented, with powertrains being optimized to deliver the best possible performance.

Reliability issues associated with previous EPA emissions standards seem to have been largely ironed out, and advances in remote diagnostics are reducing downtime when problems do occur.



Whether you're a driver, an owner/operator or a fleet owner, the trucks available to you today are the best they've ever been. Now if government would just stay out of our way, I see nothing but good things and continuous improvements ahead. ●

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## The view with Lou

LOU SMYRLIS



# A manufacturing revolution is coming

Everyone involved in the transport of freight should mark Sept. 13, 2014 as an important date on their calendar. Looking back on this date two decades from now we may identify it as a significant turning point in the freight patterns upon which our industry has been fashioned.

History was made September 13th when the world's first 3D-printed car was driven out of The International Manufacturing Technology Show at McCormick Place in Chicago, Ill. Called the Strati, the vehicle was 3D-printed over 45 hours by Local Motors in one piece, using direct digital manufacturing, (DDM), which is the first time this method has been used to make a car.

Local Motors plans to launch production-level 3D-printed vehicles that will be available to the general

public for purchase in the months following the show.

3D printing, or additive manufacturing as it is also called, has the potential to change the face of manufacturing and along with that the transportation and logistics practices of the future.

A recent Eye for Transport survey of manufacturers found that nearly 20% are already using 3D printing while more than 15% are currently evaluating it. A survey of logistics providers found that 37% now view it as a business opportunity while almost the same amount view it as both an opportunity and a threat.

More than 40% believed it would have a moderate to substantial impact on the logistics services they provide just in the next three years.

Using 3D printing technology,

along with a blueprint on a computer, a solid object can be built up gradually from a series of layers – each one printed directly on top of the previous one.

The raw material used is a powder, which can be a metal, plastic, aluminum, stainless steel, etc., or a combination of these.

The object – a spare part for a car, a hearing aid, a bicycle frame – is built by either depositing material from a nozzle or by selectively solidifying a thin layer of plastic or metal dust using tiny drops of glue or a tightly focused beam.

What's important for those of us concerned about supply chain practices is that it changes the parameters upon which those practices are set. The traditional supply chain is typically about warehousing mass pro-

duced products and shifting them outwards from the point of manufacture. What 3D printing does is make customization of (admittedly smaller products) feasible and economical on a local scale at microfactories.

As Ed Morris, director of the US-based National Additive Manufacturing Innovation Institute points out: "In terms of impact on inventory and logistics, you can print on demand. Meaning you don't have to have the finished product stacked on shelves or stacked in warehouses anymore. Whenever you need a product, you just make it. And that collapses the supply chain down to its simplest parts."

And although that doesn't mean that large-scale mass production will die out, it does mean there will be increasing amounts of localized production, leading to more local or regional deliveries. ●

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**(55) 2005/06/07 GREAT DANE 53' REEFERS**  
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**2012 WABASH 52'6" x 102" REEFER**  
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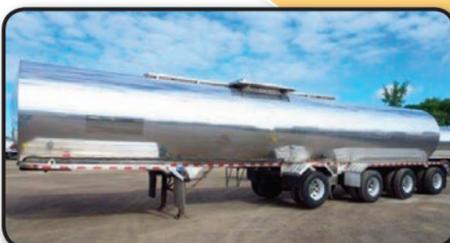
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# Are dash cams illegal at the border? It could depend on which way you're headed.

By James Menzies

DETROIT, MICHIGAN

Can your dash cam cost you your FAST card? That's the question professional driver Mark Roberts was left wondering, when on a recent trip across the Ambassador Bridge a US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officer threatened to seize his FAST card for having his dash cam recording at the port of entry.

Roberts, like many professional drivers, purchased a dash cam to protect himself from false claims from other motorists. He was involved in a crash in the US in which a motorist lost control of his car and slammed into Roberts' tandems. While the driver praised Roberts for his driving skill and for preventing a more serious outcome, Roberts realized he could've been found at fault if the car driver chose to pin the blame on him. Up went the dash cam.

Roberts never thought anything of keeping the dash cam rolling when crossing Customs until he had a run-in with a US Customs officer who seemed agitated by the presence of the camera in his truck.

"She said, 'You truckers just don't get it, do you?'" Roberts told *Truck News* when recalling the incident. She went on to tell him that it's ille-

gal to use a dash cam to record Customs officers or facilities. The fear is that the footage can be uploaded to YouTube, where it can be viewed by the criminal element while conducting reconnaissance on border-crossing facilities and protocols.

Roberts said the Customs officer threatened to revoke his FAST card and then referred him to secondary inspection, even after he apologized and offered to delete the camera's contents. At secondary, the Customs officer was less disturbed by the dash cam, but still asked that its contents be deleted. Roberts obliged, demonstrating to the officer how the camera works and then reformatting its hard drive and proving to him that it no longer contained any footage.

Roberts was delayed two hours over the incident. He told *Truck News* he's happy to comply with any rules against recording border crossings, but would appreciate it if the rules were clearer. He noted there are no signs at ports of entry asking drivers to turn off their dash cams.

And the irony of a ban on dash cams at border crossings was not lost on Roberts, who noted both Canada and US Customs agencies participate in reality TV shows,

which seem to reveal far more about border-crossing facilities and protocols than any dash cam could.

"Dash cams are a gray area," Roberts said. "It doesn't really matter to me (if they're allowed). I'm not doing anything illegal, so there's nothing I need to worry about. If they want me to turn it off, fine I'll turn it off."

Roberts' employer, Kriska Transportation, has since sent out a satellite message to drivers asking them to turn off dash cams at the border and the Canadian Trucking Alliance has issued a notice, indicating "photography and videography is prohibited without the authorization of CBP in all US CBP areas with accordance to 41 CFR 102-74.420."

However, *Truck News* asked CBP for its official position on dash cams and several weeks after our initial inquiry, the agency says it's still working on getting us an official response.

Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA), on the other hand, promptly confirmed with us that there is no prohibition on dash cams at Canadian border crossing facilities - provided they are not interfering with an officer's ability to do their job - and that there'd be no grounds for seizing a driver's FAST card.

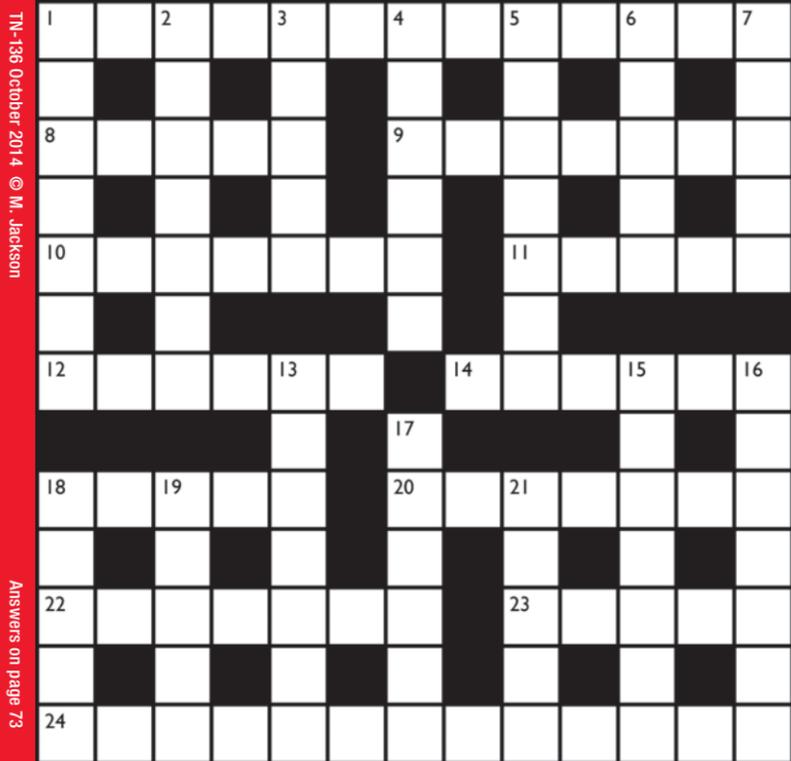
"The CBSA does not restrict the use of dash cameras at ports of entry. Dash cameras may be on and recording while waiting in line and they do not have to be turned off when speaking with an officer as long as it does not hinder or obstruct the officer's ability to carry out their duties," explained Esme Bailey, senior media spokesperson with CBSA.

She also noted, "The CBSA does not have the authority to delete files" on dash cams. However, they do have the right to inspect electronic storage devices, including dash cams. However, they'd be looking for more nefarious footage than that captured at a border crossing or on the highway.

"Our officers are trained to search electronic media for child pornography, obscene material and hate propaganda," Bailey said. "They receive training to familiarize themselves with computers and other devices and how to quickly identify potential files. In cases where a CBSA officer discovers suspected child pornography or suspect files, the goods are seized and the individual is arrested. Local law enforcement is contacted and they may lay charges under the Criminal Code. The CBSA may lay charges under the Customs Act."

Since his two-hour dash cam delay, Roberts said he's been playing it safe and turning the camera off when approaching the border. He has talked to other drivers who do the same, including some who place a sock over the camera to prove to Customs officers it is not recording any footage. ●

## THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD PUZZLE



### Across

- 1 Trucker type (5,8)
- 8 No-\_\_\_ vehicle insurance
- 9 Heavy-equipment trailers (3,4)
- 10 Chromed cab-top item (3,4)
- 11 Road-map's city-blowup section
- 12 Ubiquitous cargo platform
- 14 Winter dash control
- 18 Exhaust-driven power booster
- 20 Semi stacks' smoke
- 22 Oversize-rig companion vehicles
- 23 Local \_\_\_\_, slangy town cop
- 24 Pre-trip inspection items (4,9)

### Down

- 1 TCH exit, perhaps
- 2 Shifter knob's N
- 3 International LoneStar styling
- 4 Conical traffic diverters
- 5 Upscale Mack Pinnacle trim
- 6 Truck mechanic's investment
- 7 Trip-odometer button
- 13 New-truck ride, in a way (3,4)
- 15 Big-rig operator
- 16 Old-truck noises, often
- 17 Big name in rental rigs
- 18 Cargo \_\_\_\_, industry issue
- 19 NASCAR driver
- 21 BC-built '22-'75 heavy truck

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# Canada, US agree to work more closely on border programs

By Carolyn Gruske

OTTAWA, ONTARIO

Canada and the US have agreed to cooperate more closely on a number of transportation issues and harmonize more safety and security regulations.

The consensus to work together was formalized by the Canada-United States Regulatory Co-operation Council and given the name of the Joint Forward Plan August 2014. It is a follow-up to an earlier program begun in 2011 that saw the two nations join together on 29 cross-border initiatives.

Along with commitments to address concerns of the pharmaceutical and agri-food industries, the two governments have promised to make a number of changes that are said to benefit trucking, transportation and logis-

tics businesses. Chief among these are the promise to simplify the rules surrounding the use of natural gas as a fuel source for transportation. Natural Resources Canada and the US Department of Energy promise to develop "common codes and standards by industry organizations, and explore any opportunities for alignment among stakeholders. This includes a commitment to share information, identify emerging areas in natural gas deployment, and explore challenges in codes and standards harmonization."

In response to this part of the plan, the Canadian Gas Association and the Canadian Natural Gas Vehicle Alliance issued a statement of support of the venture.

"Natural gas can help reduce the operating costs of medium-and heavy-duty trucks, transit buses, rail, marine, and off-road fleets. This helps

keep the Canadian economy moving forward. Greater cooperation between the two countries will help ensure consumer choice, foster economic development, and keep Canada competitive, particularly with our biggest trading partner, the United States," said Timothy M. Egan, president of the Canadian Gas Association.

"North America has a tremendous natural gas resource advantage. Regulatory cooperation supporting greater use of natural gas in the transportation sector is a win-win for both Canada and the US," said Alicia Milner, president of the Canadian Natural Gas Vehicle Alliance. "Canada's natural gas vehicle industry looks forward to continued collaboration with Natural Resources Canada to address technical barriers and to provide outreach to fleets interested in natural gas vehicle deployment."

The Joint Forward Plan also promises work on technology specific to the trucking industry as Transport Canada and the US Department of Transportation have agreed to collaborate on collected vehicle technology. Specifically, they intend to develop vehicle-to-vehicle (V2V) and vehicle-to-infrastructure (V2I) communications technology and applications for light- and heavy-duty vehicles, including establishing the "architecture and standards to support interoperable deployment. This will include... joint planning and priority-setting, collaborative research projects, as well as information exchanges to support analyses as well as architecture and standards development."

The two countries also intend to come closer together in the name of truck safety with Transport Canada and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) making efforts to align new and updated light- and heavy-duty vehicle motor vehicle safety standards. The two organizations may "undertake joint testing and research, joint and collaborative risk assessments, and exchange technical data and information to support future aligned standards development decisions in both countries. They will also consider how single test methodologies could be implemented in both countries."

Canada and the US have also agreed to continue progress towards developing and adopting aligned vehicle and engine emission regulations. This work will be done by the US-Canada Air Quality Committee (AQC). According to the governments' plan "these cooperative efforts are expected to include information-sharing, technical work-sharing, scientific collaboration and testing related to vehicle and engine emissions."

The Canada-United States Regulatory Co-operation Council also promises to harmonize the way dangerous goods are transported and handled, and not just by the trucking industry. The Forward Plan states that its "objectives include: aligning Canadian and US placarding requirements; mutual recognition of United Nations (UN) standard pressure receptacles (UN cylinders); recognition of inspection under US requirements for highway; alignment and mutual recognition of tank truck (cargo tank) standards, including vehicles used to transport bulk explosives and repair facilities; mutual recognition of conditions for One Time Movement Approvals; and explosives approvals."

Some of the other transportation-related initiatives include the work on electronic certification and delivery systems to track the movement of animals and plants from country to country; marine safety and environmental stewardship programs to regulate coastal shipping in the Arctic, East and West coasts, and the Great Lakes; reduce greenhouse gas emissions from locomotives, and improving both rail and aviation safety.

This second round of collaborative efforts is scheduled to last between three and five years (depending on the requirements of the individual projects). According to the Joint Forward Plan's timeline, the next phase of the project should happen in six months when more details will be released for each initiative and regulatory partnership statements will be posted. ●

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## US truck tonnage snaps back in July

ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA

US for-hire truck tonnage rose 1.3% in July, coming within 0.6% of its all-time

high recorded in November 2013. The index, compiled by the American Trucking Associations (ATA), is up 3.6% from July 2013, marking the largest y-o-y gain

in three months. Year-to-date, tonnage is up 2.9%.

"After a surprising decrease in June, tonnage really snapped back in July," said ATA chief economist Bob Costello. "This gain fits more with the anecdotal reports we are hearing from motor car-

riers that freight volumes are good... The solid tonnage number in July fits with the strong factory output reading and a jump in housing starts for the same month. I continue to expect moderate, but good, tonnage growth for the rest of the year." ●



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# Trucking conditions are rosy, but there are some things to watch for: FTR

INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

The three most important things fleet executives should be monitoring are the economy, freight growth and the re-regulation of the trucking industry, FTR president Eric Starks explained during the industry forecaster's State of Freight Webinar in August.

The economy seems strong, with US GDP growing at a modest 2.3% but the goods-producing sector growing at nearly 6%, Starks pointed out. This contributes to strengthening freight volumes, which could place further pressure on capacity and an acceleration of rates.

"In the near-time, the risks continue to be on the upside," Starks said. "In general, things continue to be looking relatively healthy for the freight markets."

Spot market rates seem to be leveling after a period of sharp growth, which is usually followed by increases to contract rates, Starks noted.

"I think we're in that point right now. The spot market is settling down and contract rates are starting to move higher," he said.

However, FTR continues to sound alarms about the re-regulation of the trucking industry and the regulatory drag caused by an influx of new rules that are currently in the works. The impending legislation could make it more difficult for carriers to hire drivers while at the same time necessitating the hiring of more, because of productivity losses such regulations will incur.

"There are a large number of regulations coming into play that we anticipate to happen between 2016 and 2018,"

Starks said. "We're seeing a major run-up within this environment that would suggest it will be very difficult to hire drivers, or we'll see losses in productivity within the industry so they're going to have to hire new drivers. It's going to be a problem for some time."

Another trend FTR has noted is the increasing collaboration that is necessary between shippers and carriers, again in

**"Shippers are going to have to work with truck carriers to create more capacity, to free up drivers and equipment."**

Eric Starks, FTR

light of productivity-hindering regulations.

"Shippers are going to have to work with truck carriers to create more capacity, to free up drivers and equipment," Starks said. "That's the real area where we could see some productivity enhancements."

If shippers and carriers were hoping the arrival of a broader selection of natural gas trucks and a growing fuelling network would be their saviour, they better think again, Starks noted.

"There has been some increase in sales of natural gas trucks, but it's still less than 2% of all trucks sold within the US and Canada," Starks said. "So the market is not taking off like many people had hoped and at this point in time, the cost situation (of purchasing natural gas trucks) does not bear out the ability for

people to go out and buy this equipment - it's just too expensive."

Starks said fleet executives should be keeping a watchful eye on several key issues going forward. One is global markets, such as China, which has seen its GDP growth go from double digits to closer to 7%. GDP growth in China of 5% or less would reflect a worrying recession, he added.

"We have to pay attention to what happens within the global economy, because we're much more connected today than we ever were," he said.

Extreme weather, while it can't be controlled, is another area fleets need to do better at planning for, Starks said. "Our industry doesn't do a good job of planning for weather."

Fleet should also be aware of legislation being introduced in California by CARB, as it often has an impact beyond California's borders. "We have to pay attention to what California is doing because it tends to move its way through the broader market," he said.

In closing, Starks offered three tips on how fleets can improve their prospects for success:

*Measure:* "Measure everything you can.

Track and understand your internal data and external market data so you can identify trends and issues within your system you can correct and change quickly," he said.

*Communicate:* Fleets struggle to communicate within their organizations and with their customers, Starks said. "It's very difficult for us to communicate effectively...we have to figure out a way to communicate changes within the market."

*Be flexible:* "Have a plan in place, so if market conditions start to change, you have a clear direction of what you want to do to be able to move in that direction," Starks advised. ●

## ATA wants "unreliable" CSA scores withheld

ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA

The American Trucking Associations (ATA) and a coalition of other organizations wants the FMCSA to restrict access to carriers' CSA scores. The request was outlined in a letter to Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx. ATA says research proves CSA scores are unreliable.

"Given the results of this research we urge you to direct FMCSA to remove motor property and passenger carriers' CSA Safety Measurement System scores from public view," wrote ATA president Bill Graves and representatives of nine other industry groups. "Also, recognizing the merits of raising public awareness of fleets' true safety performance in the future, we also call on you to direct FMCSA to make CSA improvements a high priority."

The organizations say research from the Government Accountability Office found that, with respect to most carriers, "FMCSA lacks sufficient safety performance information to reliably compare them with other carriers." The report went on to say that the lack of data "creates the likelihood that many SMS scores do not represent an accurate or precise safety assessment for a carrier."

However, the letter appeared to have little impact. Soon after it was dropped in the mailbox, Transportation Secretary Foxx, responded with this statement:

"The Safety Measurement System has been a game changer in improving safety by making company violations and safety records publicly available to consumers, law enforcement and other businesses.

"The GAO's one-size-fits-all approach to analyzing inspection data would require the agency to triple the number of inspections we finance each year to exceed more than 10 million nationwide, which is simply unrealistic under our budget, and would fail to assess the behaviour of more than 90% of the entire motor carrier population." ●

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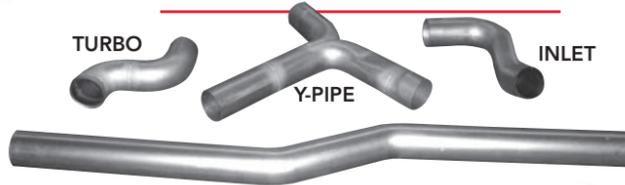


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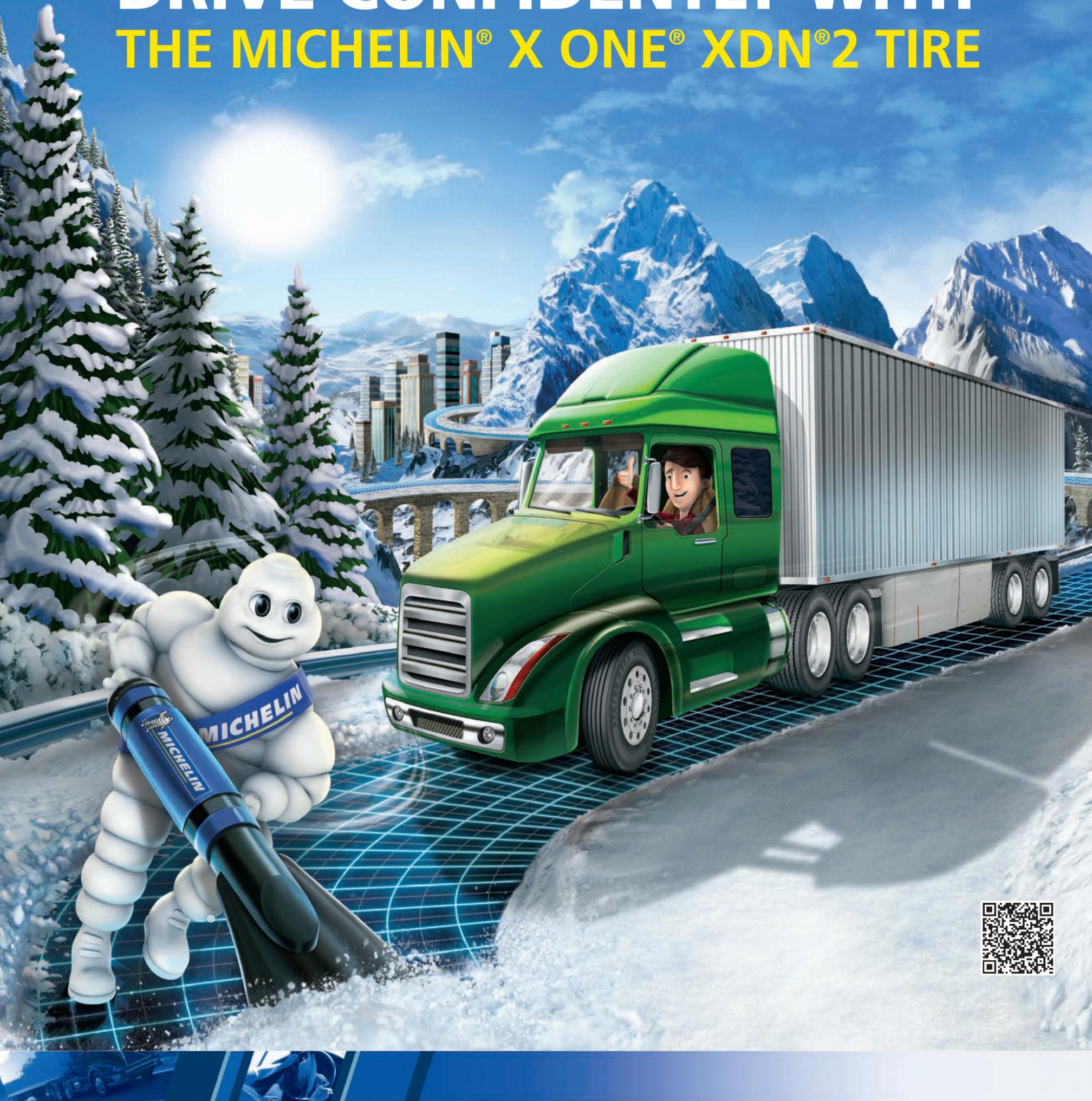
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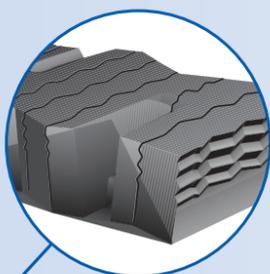
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# US fleets announce increases to driver pay packages

Several high-profile US carriers have made sizeable increases to driver pay in recent weeks.

Maybe the owners of these companies read a recent *New York Times* report entitled 'The trucking industry needs more drivers. Maybe it needs to pay more.'

The damning report indicated truck driver pay in the US has fallen over the past 10 years when adjusted for inflation. Whatever the reason, fleets seem ready to open their wallets for drivers in the US.

Transport America announced it is bringing in better pay packages for solo, team, regional and O/O divisions, effective Sept. 1.

"Not only have we increased entry-level pay, but we also enhanced the earnings experienced drivers can achieve within our organization," said Scott Arves, CEO of Transport America, which earlier this year was purchased by TransForce. "The new pay structure keeps Transport America as a leader among industry pay and one of the first to increase pay among the larger fleets."

At Transport America, O/Os will see their pay increase two cents per mile, while team drivers will get a cent per mile raise and HazMat pay will increase four cents a mile. Solo drivers' pay was bumped one cent per mile, allowing a driver with four years' experience to start at 43 cents per mile.

U.S. Xpress, meanwhile, announced its pay for over-the-road

drivers would increase an average of 13% effective Aug. 25.

"The trucking industry has and will always remain the lifeblood of the US economy. More important, our industry needs to celebrate professional, career drivers and better reward them for the hard work they do day in and day out to safely deliver freight on time and without incident," said Max Fuller, chief executive officer for U.S. Xpress. "Drivers are the ones who ensure that our store shelves are not empty, manufacturing does not grind to a halt and our economy does not stall."

U.S. Xpress has also eliminated its sliding pay scale for OTR drivers, so drivers have a better understanding of what their pay will be from week to week.

This change was made in response to driver requests.

Con-way Truckload also improved its pay package, effective Sept. 7. Among the changes are higher per-mile pay and increased layover pay and a new incentive that rewards loyalty and productivity.

"Our drivers are the company's most important asset. After listening to their feedback and evaluating cur-

rent market trends, this is the right time to increase our mileage rate and add new compensation programs which reward driver loyalty, productivity and safe driving performance," said Joseph M. Dagnese, president, Con-way Truckload. "We take pride in providing a competitive compensation package that reflects driver input and incents them to operate our equipment as safely and efficiently as possible."

Other US carriers followed suit as well, issuing press releases that heralded in new pay packages for drivers and owner/operators. ●

## FedEx contractors deemed employees

### OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

**M**ore than 2,000 FedEx drivers in California can now consider themselves employees and not contractors – at least for the time being.

The change in status comes about after a court ruling on a case known as *Alexander v. FedEx Ground*. This time, the judgment comes from the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, which reversed an earlier, lower court ruling on the same matter. The case hinged on whether drivers for the company were, in reality, independent contractors or whether they should be classified as employees.

In presenting their ruling, the three judges on the court determined that the drivers were, in fact, employees.

Judge Stephen S. Trott (who wrote the main decision) said, "FedEx's labeling of the drivers as 'independent contractors' in

its Operating Agreement did not conclusively make them so."

The ruling applies to 2,300 individuals who were full-time delivery drivers for FedEx in California between 2000 and 2007 and who worked for one of two divisions: FedEx Ground or FedEx Home Delivery.

According to the lawyers representing the plaintiffs, this decision is important for its clients as being contractors was costing them financial hardships. The counsel for the plaintiffs added this finding was important as it could influence other similar cases before the courts.

"The court's finding in *Alexander* that drivers in California are covered by California's workplace protection statutes not only impacts one of FedEx Ground's largest workforces but could influence the outcome in over two dozen cases nationwide in which FedEx Ground drivers are challenging the legality of their independent contractor classification." ●

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# Changes to Temporary Foreign Worker Program explained

By James Menzies

LANGLEY, B.C.

The B.C. Trucking Association held a free Webinar recently, to explain how changes to the Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP) will affect the province's carriers. The Webinar also looked at the B.C. Provincial Nominee Program (PNP), another method carriers can use to fast track the permanent residency of eligible long-haul truck drivers.

Michael Patterson of Pro-Hire Solutions tackled the TFWP changes – and there were many to discuss. The program has come under fire in recent months because of alleged abuse.

One of the biggest changes is the formerly required Labour Market Opinion (LMO) has been replaced with a Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA). The LMO took into account only the prevailing wage rate, however the LMIA also considers the provincial wage rate.

The number of temporary foreign workers a company can hire is capped unless they pay more than the prevailing and provincial wage rates. The provincial wage rate in Alberta is \$24.23 per hour and in B.C. it's \$21.69. The prevailing wage rate in B.C. is \$23 per hour and in Alberta it ranges from \$25/hour in Edmonton to \$22 in Calgary. Employers must pay more than both the provincial wage and the prevailing wage if they want to avoid the cap, which limits the number of TFWs they can employ. (The cap aims to limit the

percentage of workers employed under the TFWP to 10% by 2016). All provinces other than B.C. and Alberta are considered to pay truckers a low wage and so employers there will be subjected to the cap.

Another big change to the TFWP involves the cost, which has increased 360% to \$1,000 per applicant, even of the application is rejected. Drivers who are being paid wages that exceed the provincial and prevailing rates can stay in Canada for two years under the program, but low-wage earners can stay for only one year.

For high-wage earners, employers will have to complete an 11-page transition plan, which demonstrates the steps taken by a company to assist their TFWs in becoming permanent residents. The LMIA is also 11 pages in length, meaning some applicants must submit 22 pages of paperwork for each TFW.

"The transition plan is not as onerous as they make it out to be," Patterson said. "It's actually things good employers are already doing."

However, those transition plans will be subject to audits and carriers will have to prove they've followed through on everything they outlined in the plan.

"You will be audited on the promises you made in the transition plans," Patterson warned, noting auditors will want to see how many TFWs were successfully transitioned to permanent residents.

TFWP auditors will also be looking for proof employers have advertised

the positions through appropriate channels within Canada. Employers will have to show proof of their targeted recruitment advertising, including the number of Canadians who applied and why they weren't hired.

Canadian applicants from out of province will have to be extended the same courtesies as temporary foreign workers, Patterson warned. For example, if a Nova Scotia resident applies for a driving job in Alberta, the carrier must assist with housing and/or relocation costs if they offer such benefits to temporary foreign workers. Ignoring Canadian applicants from out of province could get a carrier in trouble under the program; auditors will want to see proof you've followed up with these applicants and didn't chuck their applications into the trash bin just because they lived in another province.

"They expect you to have on-hand resumes and you need to provide proof you did reach out to these people," Patterson explained.

On-site audits can be conducted with as little as 48 hours' notice, and all documentation must be ready for scrutiny.

And once temporary foreign workers have been brought in, auditors will also be looking to ensure they're not given preferential treatment over Canadian drivers. For example, if layoffs are necessary, Canadian drivers shouldn't be the first to go.

"If there is certain work that is available within your business and it pays more or has added benefits, you must have a policy as to how that work is

doled out," Patterson advised. "If Canadians are disenfranchised because you are giving more or better paid work to temporary foreign workers, those things will be looked at. They're looking also at how you are treating Canadians in your workplace. If there's a shortage of hours, who gets them first? If there's a layoff situation, who do you lay off first? If you keep the temporary foreign workers and lay off the Canadians, you're going to have a problem with your audit."

Another pitfall to avoid is the payment of cash advances to TFWs to help them get settled, without a written deduction agreement in place.

Without a deduction agreement, carriers may have to pay back the money they later deducted from the TFW's paycheck.

About one in four employers using temporary foreign workers can expect to be audited. Documents must be kept for at least six years.

David Chow of B.C.'s Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training, spoke of the B.C. PNP, another option for carriers looking to find long-haul truck drivers. This program is intended for foreign drivers already in the province on a work permit, who'd like to become permanent residents.

The employer and the driver jointly file an application and if eligible, the driver may then be able to fast-track – with the help of the federal government – their permanent residency status. The program applies only to long-haul truck drivers; local drivers need not apply. ●

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# Atlantic Canada wants more women in trucking

By Sonia Straface

TRURO, NOVA SCOTIA

The trucking industry in Atlantic Canada may be looking a little different in the near future.

Earlier this year, the Trucking Human Resources Sector Council (THRSC) Atlantic, a not-for-profit organization that helps the trucking industry through a variety of HR platforms, joined forces with Cumberland-Colchester-Musquodoboit Valley MP Scott Armstrong to discuss how the trucking industry needs more women.

As a result, THRSC Atlantic has launched a new campaign – called the Women's Project – that is geared toward attracting and maintaining more women

in the industry to not only balance the men-to-women ratio within trucking, but help women advance within the industry.

"In terms of the project itself," said Kelly Henderson, executive director of the THRSC, "the focus is to work with and get women in the trucking industry and to provide them with opportunities to advance their career and by doing that, we hope that they will become mentors or coaches to existing women."

It's no secret that there is an imbalance of women in the industry – according to Statistics Canada, women comprise only 3.5% of professional truck drivers in Canada, while at the same time, women represent more than 47% in all occupations. This, coupled with the driver shortage

problem, said Henderson, is another reason why the program needs to exist.

"There's a serious gap in terms of potential opportunity to access a resource that we haven't tapped into yet," she said. "So we recognize that and the reality is that we have a driver shortage, we need good people and we know that there are people that want to be a part of our industry, women included and so obviously we want to provide the same opportunity to everybody."

THRSC Atlantic has launched many campaigns similar to this in recent years, including the One Journey project that helped provide people who wanted to break into the industry with tuition and training to become a professional driver. The program focused on indentifying and breaking down social and economic barriers for eager entrants into the industry. Upon successfully completing the course, drivers were guaranteed employment.

"We have between 95 and 100% success rate in that project," Henderson said. A similar approach of looking at barriers

and restrictions will be applied to the Women's Project, according to THRSC.

Why more women haven't considered a job in the field is a head-scratcher to Henderson.

"We don't know why more women don't work in the industry," she said. "That's what we hope to find out and understand ourselves. There's a lot of us who have been in the industry and can't imagine being in any other industry because we enjoy it. But obviously there's a reason and it's up to us to provide the opportunity to understand what that challenge is."

The project will be doing lots of research on why women are hesitant to join the trucking workforce (not only as drivers but as those in safety, management and HR positions) whether it be the lifestyle adoption driving requires, the unfamiliarity to the industry, or the stigma of trucking itself.

Andrea Michaels, a long-haul company driver for Armour Transport based out of Moncton, New Brunswick, says truck driving is her dream job.

"I love getting up every morning and going to work, there's nothing better," she said. "The freedom of the road, and knowing that at the end of the day that what I've got at the back of the trailer is important to somebody, that's the best part. Whether its paper, or medical supplies, it's important to somebody that it gets delivered."

Michaels has only driven truck professionally for four years, but her start in trucking couldn't have happened at a better time for her.

Before driving truck, Michaels worked for a courier company for 15 years driving a cube van. But after her husband passed away in 2006, leaving her with two small children and a mortgage, and she got laid off suddenly, her best friend decided to get her out of the house. He took her on road trips to P.E.I. and Ontario when it clicked that she wanted to drive, too.

"I used to sit in the passenger seat and go with him," she recalled. "And I looked over at him one day and pointed to his seat and told him I was going to sit there. I just fell in love with trucking right then, and decided then and there that that's what I was going to do."

And she did. Michaels got her licence shortly after and hauled fish for three years before joining Armour this April.

The most challenging part of the job for Michaels is being away from home, but she said it is manageable now because her children are older (in grades nine and 12) and she has remarried.

"I do mind being away. Sometimes you miss birthdays and there are some things you just can't get home for, but when I am back, we make the most of every minute I am home," she said.

Besides being away from home, Michaels said she thinks women are intimidated by driving big trucks which is the reason why there is a shortage of women in the industry. She offered up some advice to those flirting with the idea of driving professionally though.

"Because I'm so negative about myself, I'd tell women that if I can do it, anyone can do it. If you have any driving skills at all, you can do it," she said.

Michaels said the Women's Project and focusing on getting women into the industry is "long overdue and is much needed."

The project will be ongoing for the next few years as the federal government has invested more than \$242,000 over a three-year period to fund the program. Henderson said the council is so grateful for the country's support and a tangible result of the project is hopefully to be seen in the next year or so. ●

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# Armour Transport was healthy before being healthy was trendy

By **Sonia Straface**

MONCTON, NEW BRUNSWICK

Though it seems like the trucking industry is just recently making strides towards promoting a healthy lifestyle to its staff and drivers, at Armour Transportation Systems, wellness programs are nothing new. In fact, Armour, located in Moncton, N.B., launched its impressive wellness program more than eight years ago, and so far has seen improvements in all facets of business.

"We call (the wellness program) Shift Gears, Live Well," said Alisha Armour, internal marketing and wellness manager at Armour. "And our vision is to enhance everyone's quality of life. We encourage and support an environment of wellness through opportunities that will promote healthy lifestyles in a healthy workplace."

The program started in 2006 when president and CEO Wesley Armour suggested a solution to the company's rising group insurance costs.

"Within our company it's a 50/50 cost share between the company and the employee," said Alisha. "So what we wanted to do was address that issue and show our people that we weren't only concerned about the bottom line, but that we wanted to do something to help improve their health and well-being."

Shortly after the launch, Armour joined forces with Medavie Blue Cross and conducted an optional health risk assessment for employees who wanted to know more about their health and well-being. The assessment identified four risk factors that were apparent across the company: weight control, physical inactivity, smoking and stress and coping ability. After learning this, Armour decided to base its wellness program and initiatives around these pillars to help their employees and staff better themselves.

"The goal is the program is to create opportunity and that's the key word that we emphasize when talking to employees about these initiatives," said Jane Graves, human resources supervisor and wellness representative at Armour. "The opportunities are there for people to participate so we can plan and promote and provide resources so they can decide if they want to participate."

And they aren't kidding. Currently, the program includes a multitude of things to help drivers and staff become healthy. The company offers driver health orientations and seminars, sleep

apnea testing, a corporate discount on gym memberships, a smoking cessation program, a stretch program, a yearly clinical assessment with a flu shot, and activity challenges (just to name a few).

In its driver orientation program, Armour makes a point to discuss the wellness program with its new recruits. Among other things, the wellness seminar allows new employees to think about what they eat on a daily basis, how much caffeine they consume a day, and if they exercise.

"We also present to them a meal plan that's been developed by a dietician," said Graves. "And we take a label of a food product and get them to look how much sodium and fibre and sugar are in the foods they eat."

As part of their initiative to get their staff active, the company also created activity challenges open to all employees.

"We had 52 teams from across Atlantic Canada in our Go Team challenge and 31 people participated in our President's Pace challenge where a grand to-

**"If it's something you are doing with your spouse... it will be more successful."**

Alisha Armour

tal of more than one million steps were accumulated over a four-week period," said Shanna Dryden, one of the more than 60 wellness representatives at Armour.

The company says participation in these activity challenges has seen a steady increase over the years as weekly prizes, grand prizes and friendly competition bring an element of fun to the contest. Every year, the wellness committee makes a bet with its various vice-presidents that they will exceed their participation goal. Last year, Dave Miller, the v.p. of human resources, loss prevention, safety and compliance had to wear a chicken suit at the annual company golf tournament. This year, for surpassing their participation goal, v.p. of operations, Don Rawle will have to run 18 holes before the golf tournament begins.

Alisha said the program wouldn't ex-

ist without the support and buy-in from the company's senior management team, something they do not take for granted.

"I think a lot of companies struggle out of the gate because they have to get that buy-in from their management team and that may be what prevents or delays some wellness programs from getting off the ground," she said. "We really do try to make it fun and it's been great having support from our management team in doing this."

Alisha Armour added that the wellness program did its job by curbing insurance costs for the company. It has been so successful, in fact, that the company hasn't seen a group insurance rate increase in seven years.

"In 2013 we actually had a very significant surplus, which we gave back some of that money in a premium holiday – a couple of pays where we didn't deduct group insurance from our participants," said Alisha. "We wanted to give that back as a way of demonstrating that we appreciate and thank our people and their families who are participating in the program."

The program allows staff and their spouses to participate because having a supportive family unit who is also learning about their health is important, according to the company's beliefs.

"I think that what we've concluded is that we needed to reach the home and the best way of doing that is including the spouse," Armour said. "If it's something that you're doing with your spouse and making it available, it will be more successful."

The company also believes the most successful part of the wellness program is the dual flu shot and annual clinic assessment that takes place in the fall.

"That's the most important thing that we offer because it could be the only time that someone sees a health care provider over the course of the year and they can conveniently do it during work hours," she said.

The clinical assessment, which only takes about 15 minutes to complete has seen many success stories and even helped one staff member immediately, who was unaware of the severity of their health problems.

"There was one person at the clinical, their blood pressure was so high that the nurse called immediately and they were taken to the hospital by ambulance and they had no idea they had high blood pressure," said Graves. "That person is now regulating their blood pressure and

trying to be more healthy."

In addition to the variety of wellness seminars and programs Armour offers, it also equips its new trucks with fridges and coolers that play a part in helping drivers make better food choices. Drivers are encouraged to bring meals with them on the road, ultimately helping them avoid fast food.

Armour was also aware of the large majority of drivers that smoke on the job. Its smoking cessation program, which covers half of the cost of quit smoking aids (like nicotine replacement gum and patches) has seen many drivers throw their cigarettes out the window.

One driver in particular, Alcide Cormier, a company driver with Armour for 16 years quit cold turkey after Armour brought in an expert to talk about the benefits of quitting smoking.

"Whatever I learned in that program, it really helped me quit," said Cormier who hasn't smoked a cigarette in almost six years. "Before the program I had tried to quite a few times, and I would stop for two or three weeks and then start again."

The tip that stuck with Cormier that he learned in the program was for him to change his routine – instead of smoking a couple of smokes first thing in the morning, he would get out of his truck after waking up and take a brisk 30-minute walk. Cormier says he is grateful for Armour's wellness programs and that quitting smoking hasn't only improved his health, but his the size of his wallet too.

"Back when I smoked I was spending \$75 a week on smokes," he said.

After he quit, Cormier decided to put \$150 a month (only half of what he was spending a month on cigarettes) in a separate account to pay for things he wouldn't normally buy himself back when he smoked.

"I love fishing and hunting, so anytime I need anything for that I go into that account," he said. "I always say now, I can buy this stuff now and before all that money would go towards smokes."

Armour says the success of the program is a combination of the management team, the fun staff and the tangible results.

"There's been so many success stories over the year and it really motivates us and inspires us to want to do more," she said. And with one of the most enviable wellness programs in the country, I'm sure she's right. ●

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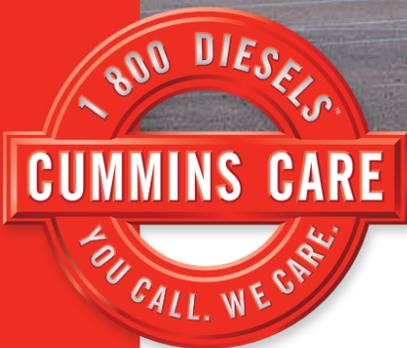
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# Beating the border clock

## Is Ogdensburg the fastest crossing between New York State and Canada?

By Carroll McCormick

PRESCOTT, ONTARIO

It is a hurry-up world and the lonely people running the Ogdensburg border crossing think they can offer truckers more speed getting across the St. Lawrence River.

There are three border crossings between Canada and New York State. From east to west they are in Cornwall, Ogdensburg and the Thousand Islands. They process around 2.4 million, 410,000 and two million vehicles a year, respectively.

"We are promoting the fact that we are not a congested bridge. We have the lowest traffic levels of the three crossings," says John Rishe, director of commercial and industrial development, Ogdensburg Bridge and Port Authority. "The other advantage is that our rates are considerably less. Pre-paid cards give an extra 10% discount, a rebate card is worth as much as 10% and we have also just started taking credit cards and debit cards."

Since this is a Quebec story, I will restrict my comparison to just the crossings that travellers would use for trips between Quebec and US points west of, say, Interstate 81, that is, Ogdensburg and Alexandria Bay/Thousand Islands.

First, I compared distances and travel times, using Google Maps, between Montreal and Watertown, N.Y. Watertown is 40 kilometres south of the Thousand Islands on Interstate 81. Truckers taking either border crossing pass through Watertown on trips between Quebec and the US west of Interstate 81.

Motoring down the 401 and over the Thousand Islands crossing, it takes three hours and 11 minutes to do the 304-kilometre drive. Via Ogdensburg and Hwy. 37, which parallels the St. Lawrence on the US side before veering south toward Watertown, it takes three hours and 14 minutes and the distance is 286 kms.

Break the trip down a little more: Watertown to Ogdensburg via The Thousand Islands is 118.5 kms and takes one hour and 16 minutes. Watertown to Ogdensburg via Hwy. 37 is 100.3 kms and takes one hour and 10 minutes. An alternate route from Watertown to Ogdensburg, starting with Hwy. 37, then Hwy. 12, and then finishing the run to Ogdensburg on Hwy. 37, is 110.1 kms and takes an hour and 14 minutes.

Strictly by the map and however Google calculates travel times, the difference between the two crossings is trivial. Even those two two-lane roads, Highways 37 and 12, do not seem to be an impediment. Looking at them with Google Street View, Hwy. 37 looks a bit rough, but with paved shoulders. Hwy. 12 looks freshly paved, with generous paved shoulders. The little Google vehicle driver even passed a transport truck on its photo assignment.

Mark Seymour, president and CEO of Prescott, Ont.-based Kriska Transport, offers a carrier-level perspective on the crossings. Kriska does lots of runs out of Quebec. There is no company strategy for using one bridge or

the other, Seymour says.

"Our drivers have the option. It makes no difference to us. The fees are about the same. It really depends on what the traffic and congestion is like in Thousand Islands."

Seymour continues: "There are a couple of things in Ogdensburg's favour. It is definitely far less travelled. The volume that can lead to congestion and backups and extended delays at Thousand Islands are very unlikely to happen at Ogdensburg. You can easily waste an hour at Thousand Islands. That can create stress for a driver. If Thousand Islands is backed up, Og-

densburg is a very logical alternative."

Of those two-lane highways, Seymour says, "In a commercial vehicle, getting paid by the mile, you want to go as fast as you can. A problem is that you will run a two-lane road east or west for an hour (between Alexandria Bay and Ogdensburg)."

Bob Duncan, Kriska's compliance and training safety specialist, used to drive for the company. He sees little advantage to crossing at Ogdensburg.

"The only time I would take it is if we would go to customers in Ogdensburg. For other customers the Thousand Islands Bridge made more sense to me. At Ogdensburg, you have to take two-lane highways get to the 81. For us, as a company, it doesn't make sense to do that."

Duncan acknowledges that he never waited in a line-up at Ogdensburg, but no trucker could say the same of the

Thousand Islands. Depending on the day of the week, average wait times there can be as high as 30 minutes. On the two busiest days of the week, Friday and Saturday, daytime wait times can be as long as one hour to two-and-a-half hours.

It seems reasonable to conclude that, as far as distances and wait times go, truckers with access to current wait times at both crossings, and who are aware of the typical daily traffic surges, could frequently sooth their ulcers by using the Ogdensburg crossing. And its lower fees are on offer 24/7.

But there is another, Quebecer-centric consideration, according to Benoit Therrien, ex-trucker and now a producer for the radio talk show Truck Stop Quebec. "It is easier to talk to the officers at Ogdensburg. Small borders are easier for everybody, especially if you don't speak good English. They take their time and explain things slowly. It is really easy for a French trucker. They are in no rush, because it is not a big border." ●



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## Ontario first province to allow full-length trailer tails

TORONTO, ONTARIO

It's been a long time coming, but the province of Ontario has announced it will allow full-length trailer tails, making it the first province to do so.

The province announced it has begun a deferred enforcement program, allowing fleets to use full-length trailer tails in Ontario until legislation can be changed to permanently allow their use. The program went into effect Aug. 11 and covers trailer tails up to five feet in length.

"ATDynamics has worked with Canadian regulators since 2009 to amend the commercial vehicle weight and dimension regulations to allow maximum efficiency boat tail technologies



Canadian carriers can now use full-sized trailer tails in Ontario.

to operate in Canada," said Andrew Smith, CEO of ATDynamics. "We are thrilled that the regulatory hurdles have been overcome and that we can now provide fleets with the highest efficiency trailers in the industry."

In December 2013, Transport Canada amended the Motor Vehicle Safety Act to allow the use of boat tail devices up to five feet long on Canadian highways, but each province must then modify its own regulations to allow them.

Ontario's Ministry of Transportation told ATDynamics, "The fuel savings (estimated by the National Research Council as being up to 5%) and the associated reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are too significant to ignore or be postponed until there is an appropriate opportunity to amend the regulation."

In the US, more than 30,000 TrailerTails have been deployed, collectively running more than two billion miles, ATDynamics reports. The company estimates that if every Canadian truck pulled a trailer equipped with tails, the industry would reduce its fuel consumption by 63 million gallons each year and would save about \$3 billion over the next decade.

The company is now hoping other provinces will follow Ontario's lead.

"Until all the provinces adopt a similar program as Ontario, motor carriers hauling freight in those provinces will be operating at a 5% cost disadvantage as compared to fleets utilizing their TrailerTails in Ontario, not to mention the environmental and air quality benefits lost in each province," said Al Smith, director of North American sales and Canadian operations at ATDynamics. "TrailerTail installations will begin on Ontario-based trucking fleets immediately."

The company says its trailer tails can be installed on a semi-trailer in less than 45 minutes. It deploys automatically once highway speeds are reached.

The devices have continued to gain popularity in the US. ATDynamics recently reported it has sold the product to more than 150 fleets in the first half of 2014, bringing the total number of fleets now using the system to nearly 500. More than half of the trailer tails sold today are of the AutoDeploy variety, which extend on their own when the vehicle reaches 35 mph. An in-cab warning light notifies drivers if they are reversing with the tails extended. ●

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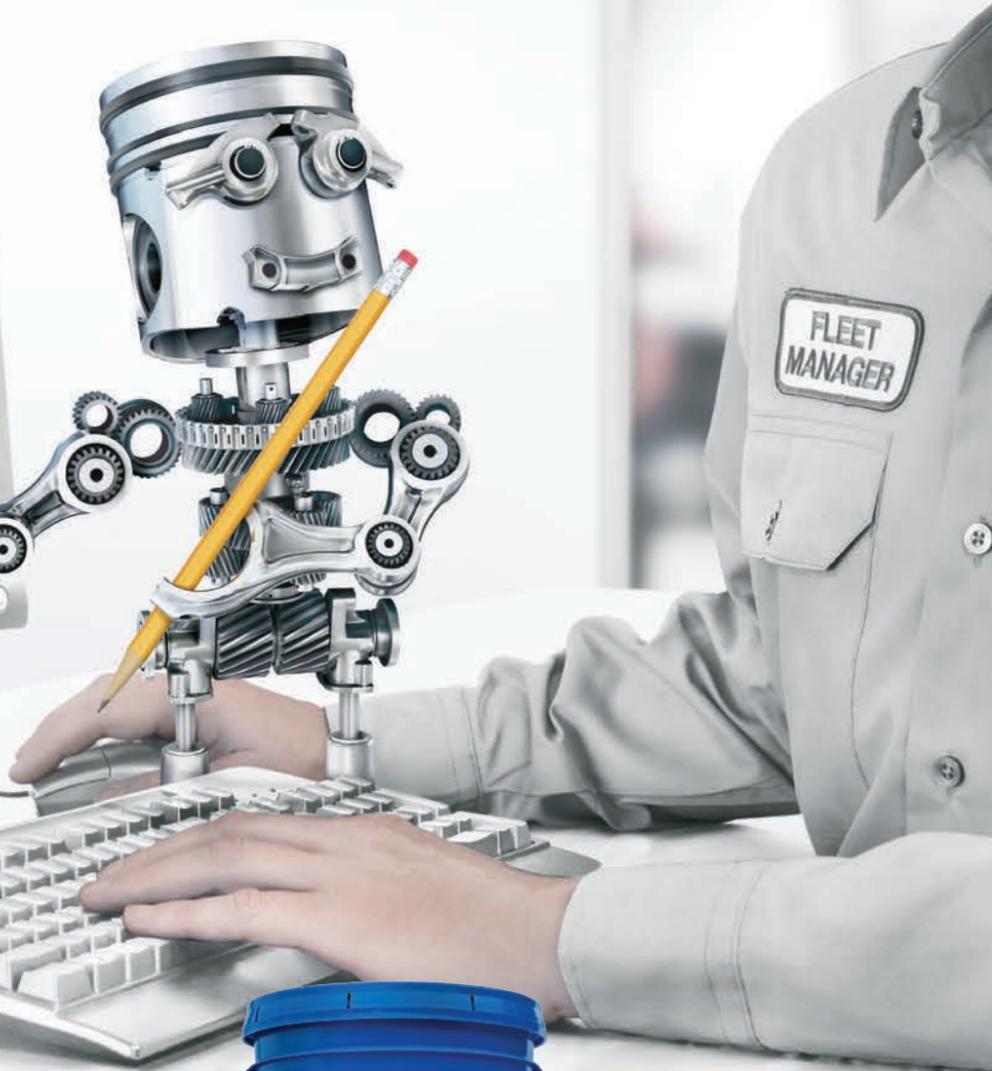
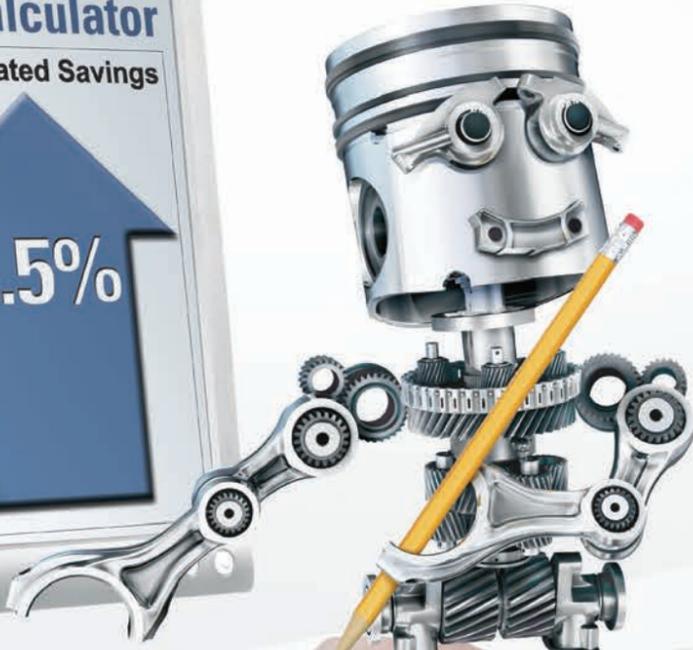
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# Ontario concrete truck drivers mix it up at annual rodeo

By Sonia Straface

PICKERING, ONTARIO

Aug. 17 was a fun day for certain Ready Mixed Concrete Association of Ontario (RMCAO) members.

Twenty-four members of the RMCAO competed in the Concrete Truck Rodeo at Miller Waste Systems in Pickering, Ont.

The day began early (registration opened at 7:30 a.m.) but luckily the weather stayed sunny for the heaps of family and friends that came out to show their favourite driver their support. The purpose of the rodeo is a no-brainer to John D. Hull, RMCAO president.

"We really want to recognize the drivers," he said. "These guys are the ambassadors of the industry and you have to come out here to see what kind of talent they have to do these courses. It's a great time and we always have people coming out with their families. It's really nice to be able to recognize the drivers for once."

The RMCAO rodeo is a classic – the first one dates back more than 40 years ago.

"The RMCAO used to have them years ago but for some reason they stopped," Hull said. "But we brought it back and this is our third year."

The rodeo is open to all active members across Ontario and Hull says it's exciting when people from out of town come to compete.



**Lots of family and friends of concrete truck drivers came out to support competitors during the Concrete Truck Rodeo on August 17.**

"We have some drivers in from Kitchener, we've had drivers in from Ottawa and Cambridge and two here today from Sudbury which is good," he said.

The competition consists of two parts: a pre-trip inspection and a driving course. The entire competition is scored out of a total of 500 possible points.

The pre-trip inspection tests a driver on his or her ability to locate five planted defects on a truck. Each

contestant is only allowed one loop around the vehicle and is given 10 minutes to complete their inspection.

The driving course part of the competition is composed of nine different stations to test drivers on their stopping, turning and weaving abilities. At each station a driver can earn a maximum of 50 points. Demerits are given out according to mistakes made on each obstacle.

Drivers went one after the other to complete the nine stations in one

swift, continuous motion.

Much like the Truck Driving Championships across the country, the RMCAO Concrete Truck Rodeo contestants are not allowed to drive their own vehicle for the test, to level the playing field.

At the end the day, the driver with the most points is declared the winner and receives a great prize for his or her dedication to safety, skill and precision.

"There are cash prizes for the top five," added Hull.

The first place winner takes home a cool \$1,500. From there, the cash prizes are \$750 for second place, \$500 for third and \$100 each for fourth and fifth.

The winners of the 2014 RMCAO truck rodeo were as follows:

- 1st: Bryan Houston Miller Concrete;
- 2nd: Mike Reitzel Hogg Fuel & Supply;
- 3rd: John Lefebvre Miller Concrete;
- 4th: David Benevides Innocon;
- 5th: Roy Needham Trivant Haulage. ●

## KRTS celebrates 25 years in business

CALEDONIA, ONTARIO

Kim Richardson Transportation Specialists is celebrating an impressive milestone this summer.

It's been 25 years since the company enrolled its first client in its A/Z driving program. Since August 1989, the company says it has had more than 9,000 customers receive their A/Z or D/Z licence.

"I have no idea where the time has gone," said the president of KRTS, Kim Richardson. "When I reflect on the history of our business and what our team has accomplished over the years I am very proud and thankful for their efforts. Good businesses are made up of great people and we certainly have some of the best in our sector of the business."

Over the many years in business the company expanded its suite of services and added car training, dispatch certification and heavy equipment certification.

"We probably deliver training to more corporate customers than anyone in Canada. For our sector of business, it is a major part of what we do. Our instructors deliver quality tailored programs to companies all over Canada and into the United States. To date we have over 400 corporate clients and we are the facility of choice for some strong, well-recognized brand names," added Richardson.

The company has seen many successes and accomplishments over the years, including a five-time winner of the Grand River Sachem Reader's Choice Award for Best Local Driving Institution, the winner of the 2002 and 2010 Chamber of Commerce Business Achievement Award and in 2012, Kim Richardson received the Queen's Jubilee Medal.

KRTS wanted to thank its suppliers and preferred partners Gordon Food Service, C.A.T. Transportation and Trimac for their support throughout the years.

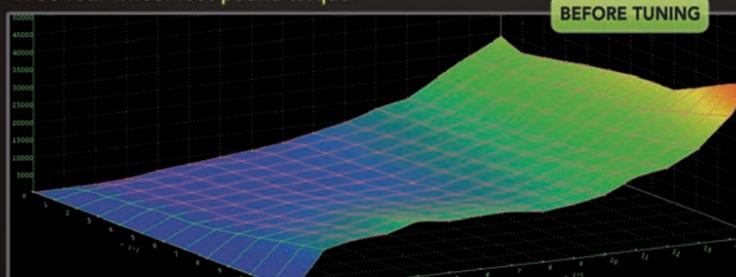
Richardson also thanked his wife and children. Instead of throwing a big bash as he did for the company's 20th anniversary, he chose to celebrate quietly up north. ●

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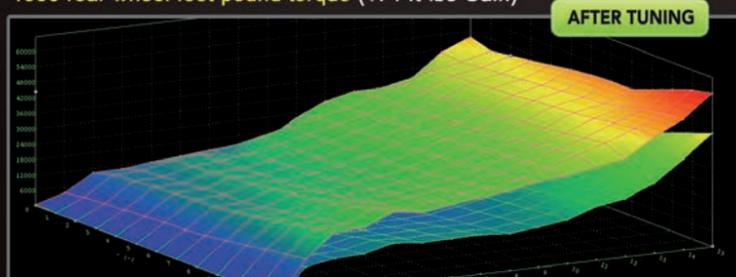
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# No small bump in the road

**A Mississauga businessman makes the case for building a viaduct over the Credit River Dip on Hwy. 401. And he wants the trucking industry to help his cause.**

By James Menzies

MISSISSAUGA, ONTARIO

**T**o some, it may just be another bump in the road. But to one Mississauga businessman, the Credit River 'dip' on Hwy. 401 is a costly mistake that will become even more costly once the province widens the highway there in the coming years.

Current plans are to expand Hwy. 401 to 12 lanes across the Credit River floodplain following the current contour of the road, which dips as much as 70 feet, causing traffic congestion and increasing emissions.

The Ministry of Transportation's policy is to follow the lay of the land when a grade of 3% or less is present, however Ernie Lynch, president of Lynch Group of Companies, is pushing hard to have the province reconsider. The Lynch Group, based on Argentia Road in Mississauga, Ont., manufactures hydraulic controls and systems for customers around the world, the largest being NASA. Its president and founder is frustrated by what he considers the needless use of excess fuel, consumed mostly by trucks as they gear down to climb out of the dip and get stuck in the stop-and-go bottleneck traffic that exists there.

Citing data from a 2005 study entitled *Environmental and Energy Impacts of Roadway Grades*, Lynch pointed out a high-emitter vehicle (such as a commercial truck) consumes 0.0802 litres of diesel per kilometre on a flat surface and 0.1552 litres per kilometre on a grade of 6% in a "stop sign environment," which is what is often encountered on the Credit River dip stretch of the 401. Carbon emissions from these same vehicles increase from 157.7 grams per kilometre to 306.41 grams per kilometre when a 3% grade is present. Even a 1% grade sees carbon emissions climb noticeably to 181.2 g/km.

It's this environmental impact that has prompted Lynch to push for a change to the design plans. Lynch is a

bona-fide environmentalist whose company does more than pay lip service to its environmental philosophies. Lynch's own home is largely solar-powered, and generates surplus electricity that he sells to the city. He is planning to install solar panels at the company's Mississauga manufacturing plant and will offer charging stations for employees who drive electric-powered vehicles.

Lynch Group funded the conversion of one employee's Toyota Prius to a full plug-in vehicle that now gets 180 mpg. It organically grows vegetables on-site and is seeking permission to build a greenhouse there. Sometimes, Lynch prepares lunch for employees using these same homegrown organic vegetables. And he even pays employees to move closer to the office to decrease their commuting time.

"We will continue to provide subsidies to employees for buying hybrid and electric vehicles and will supply them with charging systems and so on," Lynch told *Truck News* in a recent interview at Lynch Group headquarters. "We also have a subsidy if someone moves closer to the company and cuts their commute - say, from an hour to 20 minutes or five minutes - we're going to help them out financially because it's less strain on the environment."

Frustrated at regularly seeing the bottleneck effect caused by the Credit River dip, Lynch has made it a personal mission to change how the road is expanded. He would like to see a 2.5-km viaduct constructed, which would level off the road surface, similar to what exists further east where the 401 crosses over Yonge St.

"We do a certain amount of social corporate responsibility inside the company, but this is an effort I saw that needed some attention on the outside," he said. "It's a personal endeavour."

Lynch has invited MTO engineers into his office to hear his ideas, but says

Continued on page 28



Traffic is often backed up on a stretch of Hwy. 401 that crosses over the Credit River. A local businessman wants a viaduct built there.

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# EVEREST

# Pollution, congestion can be reduced by levelling Hwy. 401

Continued from page 26

they were dismissed, due to MTO's roadbuilding policies, which involve following the existing roadway where a grade of 3% or less exists. (This stretch is right around the 3% threshold, Lynch estimated). Undeterred, he took his message to the Peel Goods Movement Task Force, which was more receptive to the concept and later indicated it would pursue the issue with the MTO when it meets with them in October.

But Lynch would like to see the trucking industry, arguably the greatest stakeholders in the future of the road design, get on-board as well.

"I'd like to get the trucking industry in general interested in this, because they're the hardest hit," Lynch said.

He is reaching out to local shippers and trucking companies in hopes of gar-

nering their support. With construction set to get underway next year, Lynch realizes there's not much time to effect change, but he's still optimistic.

"If enough people speak up and there's a fuss raised over this, anything can be changed," Lynch contended. "They've changed the subway plan in Toronto I don't know how many times, and it has always been a 'done deal.' But it's not done until the shovels are in the ground."

However, one professional driver who travels this section of Hwy. 401 regularly, told *Truck News* alleviating congestion there may not be as simple as levelling the roadway.

"I spend plenty of time in this area so I know the grade," said professional driver Angelo Diplacido. "I have had to gear down for that hill coming up on Mavis Rd., but the loss of speed is not so much

because of the grade itself as it is that from Mississauga Rd. to Mavis, we are entering a zone of activity. Mavis Rd. is a popular exit for commuters, so there's also a jockeying for pole position going on. The trucks get on at the business junction (at Mississauga Rd.) and some trucks grab the centre lane immediately in an effort to avoid the exiting traffic at Mavis Rd. Some commuters take the left lane at Mississauga Rd. to get around the trucks that just got on, only to jockey themselves back to the right for Mavis Rd. It's the old game of 'Beat the Truck' to the exit that really causes the initial slowdown, but the grade is an insignificant feature in the road's design. Some signage to alert motorists of the Mavis exit might help."

Diplacido believes the above-mentioned traffic issues will remain, even if the roadway is leveled out. He noted it's similar to the Hwy. 401 eastbound exit to Hwy. 404/DVP, but interestingly, a significant grade exists there as well.

A simulation can be done to test these theories, and Lynch said he knows just the people at the University of Toronto

who can conduct it and provide a quick turnaround. However, he'd first like to get more companies on-board to either share the cost or just show their support of the need for further investigation. He's disappointed the province itself hasn't investigated the feasibility of constructing a viaduct across the Credit River in more detail. He is also calling for an Economic Impact Assessment to be conducted, which would examine the long-term costs and environmental impact of maintaining the current road profile. The Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) hasn't gotten involved, since the issue hasn't yet been brought forward by its members. But Lynch has taken note of the larger trucking companies that regularly pass through the area - SLH and Thomson Terminals, to name a couple - and he's hoping they can measure the time their trucks spend tied up in traffic between Mississauga and Mavis Roads. If so, he's hopeful they'll lend their support to the cause.

"I'm sure some of the (carriers) are pretty savvy and can see how much time a driver is spending on the road and how much fuel they are consuming and can see it takes more to get through there than it should," he said.

Lynch said he will continue to search for allies to help push for changes to the current design plans. You can view the presentation Lynch made to the Peel Goods Movement Task Force at <http://tinyurl.com/creditvalleydip>.

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## Four more ways to improve traffic

In addition to pushing for a viaduct to be built across the Credit River floodplain, Mississauga businessman Ernie Lynch has some other suggestions he says would ease traffic congestion along Hwy. 401 through Toronto...

**No separation of Express and Collector lanes:** "Collector lanes become saturated during rush hour and the express lanes become traps whenever an accident occurs," Lynch said. "Why not have them all open? If something drastic happens, at least there's some place for traffic to go."

**Enforce lane usage and limit trucks to the right-hand lane:** Knowing this suggestion won't sit well with commercial drivers, Lynch pointed out traffic is rarely traveling faster than 30-40 km/h anyways, so why is there a need for trucks to travel in the faster lanes? He suggested enforcing rules that would allow faster traffic to travel in the left-hand lane while trucks and other slower-moving vehicles would keep to the right.

**Build tiered roads:** In places where the 401 can't be widened, Lynch suggested building tiered roads to add capacity. For instance between Eglinton and Islington, where there's no room to widen the road, he said collector lanes could be built over top the express and then rejoin later at the same elevation.

**Highway reversals:** Hannover, Germany, which hosts many major trade shows, including trucking's IAA, employs full highway reversal each day when shows are opening or closing, so that more lanes can be allocated to the direction in which most vehicles are travelling. This would be especially effective for Hwy. 400 northbound on Friday afternoons, Lynch noted.

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## Over the Road

AL GOODHALL



# Coming to terms with depression

**D**river health issues now receive more attention and are given a higher priority than at any time in the past and that awareness continues to grow.

We tend to focus on the benefits of a healthy diet and regular exercise rather than on a driver's mental and emotional health. If that space between our ears is out of tune, then finding the motivation to maintain our bodies can be difficult and even seem impossible at times.

This is a Catch-22. We know that exercise and a healthy diet boost our mental health but feelings of unhappiness, stress, and unease can make a bag of potato chips and soda in front of the TV seem like the best option to quench those feelings.

It's also much easier to talk about physical health than mental health.

Our individual feelings of discomfort are generated by many sources, some of which are deeply personal and private.

This adds to the difficulty we find in starting a discussion or seeking help when it's needed. When you take all of that and add in the solitary lifestyle of the commercial driver, you provide fertile ground for unhappiness and depression to take root.

I've been battling feelings of de-

pression for the past year or two. It's hard for me to say that. In my own mind I've just been calling it "unease" because it sounds so much better.

Admitting to feeling depressed feels like you're admitting to a deep dark secret or some sort of major personality flaw.

In fact though, it is only when you face up to that depression and talk about it that you come to understand where it is coming from.

For me, depression is rooted in burnout and fatigue. I think that many professional drivers suffer from burnout and fatigue for varying periods of time. We just call it "the blues."

I'm not going to play the role of an armchair psychiatrist here. I don't possess the qualifications nor the training to offer sound mental health advice.

I can, however, present one driver's perspective on what I believe are some of the pervasive practices and cultural norms within the trucking industry that lead to burnout, stress, and depression.

#### The 60-70 hour work week

This is so obvious we don't recognize it as a major problem.

We compound the problem as drivers by pushing inefficiencies like dock delays into our "off-duty" time. This has become an accepted practice with-

in the industry.

#### Our classification

We are classed as unskilled workers but held to account for our actions like highly skilled, well trained professionals.

This is a paradox and leads to a good deal of anxiety, especially for new and novice drivers. Ongoing driver training is poor in this industry.

Initial training and accreditation is pathetic in comparison to the high level of enforcement and accountability drivers face from a multitude of enforcement agencies as well as internal industry policies and audits.

#### Salary and compensation

It's shrinking year by year as responsibility and accountability increases. Drivers have no option but to stay on the road longer adding to burnout and fatigue.

#### Mergers and acquisitions

Nothing adds to your stress level like not knowing if you're going to have a job next week.

If you do will you go from being a person to a number? Will you be expected to give up some of your compensation and benefits gained through hard work, dedication, and experience for the shareholder that

just funded the buyout?

#### Technology and big data

This should be making our jobs easier and more enjoyable but it's not.

It seems to be the basis for greater "safety through enforcement" which simply pisses drivers off rather engaging them in a safety culture.

I may be over the top with that statement. I enjoy the technological advances on many fronts but the enforcement culture is killing the benefits.

#### Hours of service

All that can be said here is that if you want to burn people out as quickly as you possibly can, simply force them to rest when they don't need to and make them work when they are ready to rest.

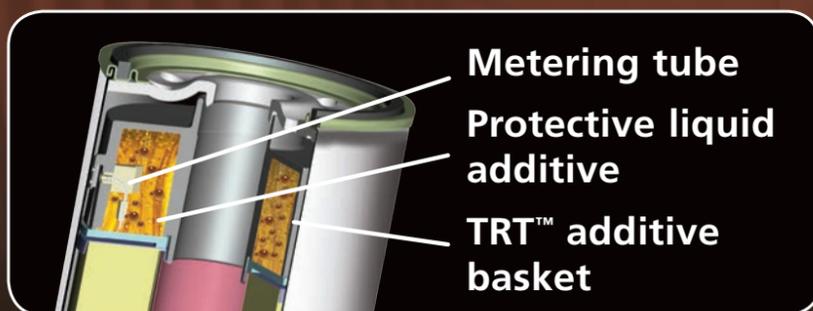
These are just some of the issues I think we all face as commercial drivers when it comes to dealing with burnout, fatigue, and depression. If they are not a direct cause of depression they will compound problems individuals are facing in their personal lives. This is especially true in the area of personal relationships and personal finance.

The bottom line for me is always the issue of time. Having enough of it available to care for myself and for my immediate family is a challenge to say the least. Maybe you're feeling the same way. ●

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

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Tax  
Talk

SCOTT TAYLOR



## Putting the truck in park for good

**I**t's never easy to shut down a business to which you've dedicated so much time, effort, and money. Some owner/operators have to stop working due to age, health, or finances.

Others decide to pursue some other opportunity or passion. The most fortunate exit on their own terms and retire.

No matter what the circumstances, or whether you're a sole proprietor, partnership, or corporation, there are deliberate steps you should take to properly close your trucking business when that day arrives.

Your accountant can guide you through the process but I'll list some

of the major points for you to consider.

### Contact the CRA

You need to tell Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) to close your Business Number and all related accounts for payroll, GST/HST, and corporate income tax. You can do this by completing Form RC145, "Request to close business number accounts." Send it to your local CRA tax services office or call the CRA Business Window at 800-959-5525.

### Payroll

If your company has employees (including yourself, if you're employed by your company), there are several obligations to wrap up:

1. Remit all CPP contributions, EI

premiums, and income tax withheld within seven days of the day your business ends.

2. Prepare and give a Record of Employment to each former employee.

3. Complete and file the necessary T4 slips and summaries within 30 days of the day your business ends. Distribute copies of the T4 or T4A slips to your former employees.

Also, you may want to confirm with your provincial labour standards agency that you have met their requirements for wrapping up your duties as an employer.

### GST/HST

When you decide to close your business, you no longer need to be

registered for GST/HST.

File all outstanding GST/HST returns and pay any amounts owing up to and including the day your business ends. The complicated part is the handling of your truck, trailer, or other equipment on these final returns. When you own capital property at the time of closing a GST/HST account, CRA deems you to have sold the equipment on your final return and expects you to pay the GST/HST.

Capital property includes land, buildings, vehicles, and computers. As a result, CRA has "change of use" rules that may apply.

For example, say you have a service vehicle on your books and claimed GST/HST refunds when you purchased it. When you close the business, you have to pay GST/HST on the fair market value of the vehicle because you're changing the use from commercial to non-commercial. You have to pay the GST/HST just as if you personally bought the vehicle from the company.

There is a way to manage at least part of this mess: CRA Form GST44, "Election concerning the acquisition of a business or part of a business."

You can use this form when you are selling your business assets to another person. To qualify, the buyer must purchase all or substantially all (at least 90% or more) ownership, possession, or use of the seller's property necessary to carry on the business. In a one-truck operation, selling the truck represents 100% of the property so this election is applicable.

File the election form together with the GST/HST return for the reporting period in which the sale was made. You should also keep a copy of this election form in your records.

### Corporate income tax

Send an application for dissolution to the provincial or federal government body that your corporation is chartered in. You should also file a final tax return and send CRA a copy of the articles of dissolution. Otherwise, CRA will consider that the company still exists and it will continue to expect tax filings each year.

Of course, if your corporation has some money in its bank accounts you may not want to do this last step right away. If over the years you have managed to save money in the corporation, or if selling your equipment has put money in there, it may be best to wait.

Remember that your corporation can live forever whether it's actively in business or not. Rather than pulling money out of the business now and having to add that income to your personal tax return, you can withdraw it over time.

You can in essence treat your corporate bank account like a pension fund and withdraw X-amount of money each month until it's gone and then dissolve the company. You may end up paying a lot less tax this way.

Over the years, I've written columns about how to start a business, how to build a business, and how to plan for retirement. Eventually every owner-operator will close the business.

When that time comes, a carefully planned exit that deals with taxes and your obligations as an employer is the best way to make sure you can move on to the next chapter in your life. ●

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## Ask the Expert

KEVIN COLE



# Asking all the right questions

**F**ew things predict future losses better than past performance. Citations for aggressive driving, tailgating or speeding often emerge before collisions. Close calls on a loading dock eventually lead to workplace injuries. A spike in customer complaints? That inevitably precedes lost business opportunities. But there is one thing that will always be better than predicting a future loss – a strategy to prevent the underlying incident in the first place.

The related countermeasures can come in several forms, including such things as tightened hiring practices, refocused training and orientation programs, refined yard procedures,

or upgraded equipment. Making the best choice, however, involves looking for a root cause to answer exactly why unwanted incidents occur, and this means exploring the related questions of who, what, when and where.

#### Who was involved?

The question of who was involved in an incident involves collecting more than a name alone. Was the person at the wheel a company driver, owner/operator, or someone contracted through a driving service? Each introduces a unique dynamic when it comes to the way someone is introduced to a fleet and informed about company policies and procedures.

Even the date a driver was hired can

help to identify a root cause. Did they join a fleet before hiring standards were tightened? If so, would they meet the stricter requirements which exist today?

Drivers are certainly more likely to face a crash in their first year working at a particular fleet, regardless of their overall experience, because they are less familiar with equipment, customer expectations and related routes alike. A company driver who was absorbed when another fleet was acquired may not have been exposed to the same training program as his peers. And the trusted owner/operator known to follow every policy and procedure may have hired someone who lacks the same commitment to safety.

#### What was involved?

As important as the focus on the person at the wheel will always be, equipment plays a role of its own.

Cargo damage, for example, has been traced to everything from suspension systems to the choice of material handling equipment. Other contributing factors can include everything from the number of load securement devices to predetermined reefer temperatures.

An increase in backing collisions, meanwhile, might be traced to specific fleet vehicles which lack tools such as fender mirrors.

#### Exactly where did the incident occur?

A thorough focus on where an incident occurs looks beyond a street address and explores the nature of a location. For example, did a collision happen at a job site, on a city street, in a truck stop, or on the highway? An unusually high number of backing accidents in a specific customer yard could identify an extremely tight layout, perhaps requiring a fleet to use pups rather than 53-ft. trailers when heading to that particular destination.

#### When did this happen?

Questions about the time of day inevitably lead to fatigue-related discussions about the number of hours a driver was on duty, the time that has passed since a reset, and whether an incident happened at the end of a driving cycle. But there are also other contributing environmental factors to consider, such as the bad weather which obscures visibility, or slick road surfaces which affect stopping distances.

#### The ultimate question of why

Each answer brings a fleet manager closer to understanding exactly why an incident occurred. And the emerging countermeasures are not always as obvious as they initially appeared.

A driver cited for speeding through a customer's yard may have been scrambling because of an overly aggressive delivery schedule. In a case like this, the best solution involves dispatchers and customers as well as any training in defensive driving. And a collision involving a driver with an otherwise spotless record might be traced to a new route that was selected without considering the access into a customer's yard. Trip plans in this case will need to be re-examined.

Managers who look beyond any single incident – to consider its place in broader trends – will also better identify the need to refine policies and procedures, see how to enhance on-boarding programs to prepare new drivers for future challenges, or even introduce the equipment choices which deliver a measurable return on investment.

The questions never actually end. Once strategies are adopted, fleet managers still need to ensure that desired outcomes are reached. Other incidents will continue to emerge.

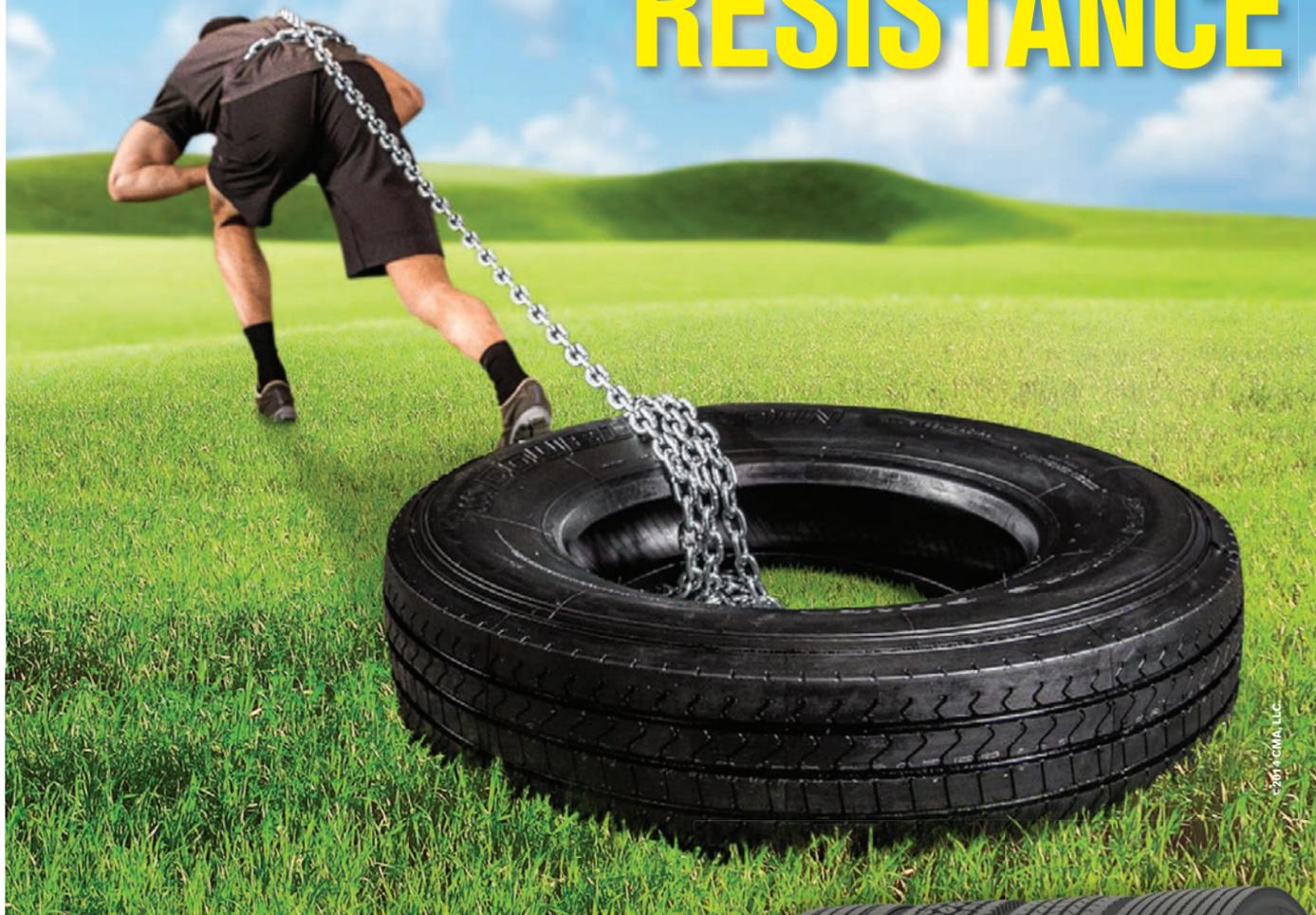
But those who ask all the right questions will always be equipped to make the decisions which lead to lasting improvements. ●

*This month's expert is Kevin Cole, risk services specialist. Kevin 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](http://www.nbins.com).*

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Voice of the O/O

JOANNE RITCHIE



# Technology: Scourge or saviour?

**W**e don't need to look too hard to find someone whose ability to earn a living has been temporarily suspended by a faulty sensor. Trucks, it seems, are regularly humbled by even the most innocuous parts, sometimes not even directly related to the operation of the vehicle. It's the price we pay for near-zero emissions engines.

But is it a fair price? Is all that technology really helping, or is it driving some truckers underground in search of solutions?

We know there's a thriving business in removing emissions hardware from recent-model trucks because of the cost and poor reliability of that technology. The constant breakdowns, missed earning opportunities, and poor fuel economy have hit some especially hard. More than a few have been driven right out of the industry by repeated failures and the lack of a proper repair solution. Putting the same bedeviled parts back on is begging for a repeat of the previous problem.

While I don't condone the "thwart the emissions system" approach, I'm entirely sympathetic to drivers desperately seeking solutions to very real problems. The problems affect fleets too. They have trucks regularly sidelined by failed bits of hardware, but having more than

one truck at their disposal puts them in a better position than the lowly owner/operator. It works the same way when it comes to getting dealers to address the problem. Fearful of losing a fleet sale, the dealers are apt to get big fleet customers up and running long before a single truck buyer. It doesn't seem fair, but that's just the way it is.

As trucks become ever more complex, their reliability seems to be suffering. We're told that today's newest trucks are in fact more reliable than those of just a few years ago, but I'd like to know what dealers and truck makers plan to do about those older ones, especially those with now-obsolete emissions systems.

Those things are now just about worthless on trade-in.

When I hear regulators and truck manufacturers talking about mandating even more technology for trucks like electronic logs, or collision avoidance and stability control systems, I, like many others, get a bit nervous. For Heaven's sake, we still have issues with ABS warning lights that result in tickets and citations! How excited should we be about the prospect of some new sensor throwing an obscure fault code that the engine perceives as a threat, thus leaving the truck de-rated and stranded at roadside?

Along with the reliability issues comes the cost of this technology. It has contributed to a dramatic increase

in the price of new trucks. One of our members recently bought a nice new on-highway truck and paid more than \$165,000 for it. When you're toting a note like that, you can't afford downtime.

From 2004 and onward, every new model-year has been more expensive than the previous version, largely because of the 'advances' in technology and mandates of one sort or another - from the Environmental Protection Agency's particulate matter and NOx reduction requirements in 2004, 2007 and 2010, to the on-board diagnostic (OBD) mandate in 2013, the fuel efficiency regulations in 2014 - and so on. But we're not done yet. There are more rules coming from the EPA and the US National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, which Canadian regulators will adopt too, pretty well at face value.

Have these mandates made our jobs any easier or safer, or our companies more profitable? That's a dubious proposition, but some will argue that they have. Unfortunately, I think this piling-on of one mandate after another, technology upon technology, has made more than a few of us leery of anything associated with the T-word.

And that may be an unfortunate and unintended consequence. The word technology, when used as a noun to describe a product or device, has become pervasive. For example, when we are talking about fuel-saving technologies,

is an APU a technology? How about a trailer side skirt? Tire pressure monitoring systems? Automated transmissions or downspeeding?

Technology of that sort *can* help improve fuel economy and cut costs. Then there's time-saving technology and a ton of other productivity software available for smartphones that drivers are embracing wholeheartedly. Those technologies are supposed to work for us, but when an app fails to deliver, we simply delete it and eat the 99 cents. Too bad we can't do the same with engine technology.

To be fair to the truck and engine people, advancing technology has improved fuel economy and that in itself saves money. I'm also led to believe reliability is improving as well, but not fast enough for some.

Personally, I'd be prepared to give up half a mile per gallon for some assurance that a bad sensor or bogus fault code wouldn't leave me stranded.

Looking ahead to vehicle-to-vehicle communication that's supposed to prevent collisions, and driverless trucks, I'm afraid that the current success rates with various forms of on-board technology do not inspire a lot of confidence in such advanced systems.

At the end of the day, it all comes down to the sensors and connectors. Until they come up with the technology to build a bullet-proof sensor, I'm staying on the sidelines. I'm not yet prepared to trust my life to a 39-cent part fabricated by the lowest bidder.

*Joanne Ritchie is executive director of OBAC. Trouble connecting with technology? E-mail her at [jritchie@obac.ca](mailto:jritchie@obac.ca) or call toll free 888-794-9990.*



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Industry Issues

DAVID BRADLEY



# Much to celebrate during NTW

One of the good things of sitting in my chair as long as I have is the benefit of seeing how far things have come.

When I came up with the idea of National Trucking Week (NTW) all those years ago, I had no idea how things would go. It is most gratifying to see how the industry has embraced the idea and made it their own.

What started as a simple idea in the late 1990s, NTW spotlights the contributions of the hundreds of thousands of men and women who keep the country's freight moving, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, such as drivers, mechanics, dispatchers and any-

one else who keeps our economy moving. Even in tough times NTW remained a fixture on the industry calendar and is still going strong. NTW 2014 ran from Sept. 7-13 and it is always worth celebrating.

They say hindsight is 20-20. I don't know about that, but I do know the past, even the recent past, wasn't always pretty and at times it seemed there may not have been much to celebrate.

Not too many years ago, for example, the industry was grappling with the advent of one of the worst recessions in Canadian history. Freight volumes dried up and a cloud of uncertainty hung overhead. To survive carriers had to respond accordingly.

It was not an easy time. Today, with that storm in the rearview mirror, the industry is for the most part leaner, smarter and more adaptable than ever before. It's been a long time coming, but with freight in both Canada and the US trending upwards and capacity tightening seemingly by the quarter, there is more equilibrium in the marketplace and the winds appear to be shifting - finally - to the truckers' advantage.

This is not only good for the companies but for the people who earn their living toiling every day to keep the freight moving.

The industry is more acutely aware of its human resources challenges than ever before and real efforts are

underway to recruit and retain the qualified workers - drivers and all occupations - the industry needs now and in the future.

Admittedly, change can be slow and choppy. It will be resisted by some and too eagerly embraced by others. Regardless, I am convinced the future of the trucking industry is bright. But, we should never be complacent.

The CTA Blue Ribbon Task Force (BRTF) on the Driver Shortage held a mirror up to the industry and highlighted the challenges the industry itself must rise to.

It prepared a list of core values designed to guide the development of human resources policies and practices of individual carriers. While focused on drivers, these are relevant to all the various occupations that exist in the industry.

The BRTF is not going to solve all the problems or find solutions to all the challenges. But it has built a freeway that the industry can catch a ride on.

There's still much work to be done

**The BRTF is not going to solve all the problems or find solutions to all the challenges. But it has built a freeway that the industry can catch a ride on.**

and it's not too late to get on-board. If your company has been considering making some changes that are consistent with the BRTF's core values, could there be a better time to implement them than now?

Various events across the country just brought the trucking community and others together to celebrate a job well done, to recognize those who make it happen, and to promote the industry's dedication to Canada's economy, to environmental enhancement and as always to the highest standards of safety. Every company had its own unique way to show drivers and their families how much they're appreciated.

This year, with the industry's pulse beating stronger, I hope the celebrations were bigger and better than ever. And you don't have to stop now that the week is over. Don't be afraid to show and tell everyone in your community how great our people are. Invite your mayor, local MP or provincial legislative representative to your company events, host ride'n'drives, or take out an ad and write a letter to the editor at your local newspaper.

By telling your story, you tell the story of the entire industry.

As I've said many times in the past, trucking is more than a job to most people in the industry. It is a way of life. It's what makes this industry so special. I would like to personally thank all the remarkable men and women in trucking for a job well done. Know that you make us all proud.

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

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R-E-S-P-E-C-T where  
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tract very little in the way of positive recognition – and a good deal of negative press whenever an opportunity arises.

Now, you might be wondering why I'm venting on this subject once again, so let me explain.

In the Aug. 27 issue of the *Toronto Star* newspaper, which claims a circulation of around two million (good for first place in Canada) there was a small piece with a headline that read "Trucker declared dangerous offender."

A quick read of the story revealed that an individual had indeed been declared a dangerous offender in a Toronto courtroom and will be jailed indefinitely due to a violent history that included attempted murder, choking, robbery, and forcible confinement.

Along with a listing of the crimes involved, the article's writer thought it necessary to report that the individual worked as a truck driver, although that same writer failed to offer any connection between his job as truck driver and the crimes committed by this person, or failed to describe how the job of driving a truck had or has anything whatsoever to do with such abhorrent behaviour.

It begs the question that had this criminal been a plumber, an electrician, a roofer, or a dentist, for example, would his choice of profession have been used so prominently in the headline? Would it have been seen by the newspaper's editor to be germane in any way to the story being reported?

The answer is pretty obvious. Of

course being a truck driver has no relationship to the charges faced by this particular individual, nor one assumes, did it have any bearing on the court's subsequent decision to declare him a dangerous offender.

But notwithstanding the fact that the job of truck driving has no relevance to the story being reported, someone felt it necessary to include the information.

It is just one more example of a lack of respect for the role of the truck driver and newspapers jumping on a tired bandwagon that continues the anti-truck driver theme so often found in the popular press.

This column isn't meant as a love-in piece for truck drivers. We've got our share of bad apples, but fortunately they are far outnumbered by the professionals. It's simply a plea for R-E-S-P-E-C-T where it's due. ●

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Respect for individuals in business is difficult to earn. Usually it develops over a long period of time and is most often the result of attributes such as consistent performance, exceeding expectations, demonstrating integrity, and the respect that is shown for others.

Of course, some people gain instant respect from one-off examples of bravery or selflessness, charitable activities, etc., but most respect is earned over the long haul.

This applies not only to the way people are viewed in their personal lives but, increasingly, in the way they are viewed in the workplace.

Once a person loses the respect of colleagues in the business community it is very difficult to regain it.

There have been many examples of individuals who, with one misstep, or with an ongoing series of missteps, have ruined their business as well as personal reputations. They usually disappear from the landscape, sometimes to spend some time at 'her Majesty's pleasure,' and sometimes just to simply live with the ignominy.

But how does it happen that respect is lost for almost an entire category of workers in a particular industry such as trucking? Even, as it is well known, when those workers are essential to the economy, and to helping to maintain the lifestyle that we all enjoy.

But that's the case for the position of truck driver and how it is often viewed by those outside of the industry. At least by those who give it any thought at all.

Despite remarkably excellent, consistent, and statistically proven safety performance, truck drivers generally garner little respect from the public. Perhaps the public takes their lead in this from a government that considers the position to be 'unskilled.'

Unless you are in this business in some capacity and have an inkling of the skill required to operate today's high-tech trucks through all of the on-road risks and demanding schedules encountered every day, it's far too easy to group truck drivers under a single heading and dismiss the job as one that individuals fall into by default.

Now, we're not suggesting that this is a new complaint. The trucking industry generally, and our drivers in particular, have lived on the edges of society's disapproval for as long as we've been around. Way back in the day when those running the Teamsters Union in the US were linked by the government and press to organized crime and pension fund issues, all members of that union were tainted. It wasn't fair, but it happened.

While it's unlikely that today's truck drivers are still tarred with that legacy, neither do they enjoy the respect of the general public for the job that they do, the respect they deserve.

And yet despite the view of the populace, people in the industry know how important these drivers are, and the industry as a whole takes pains to celebrate the best of the best through its many award programs. PMTC's Hall of Fame for Professional Drivers is but one example of the way in which the industry recognizes skill and professionalism in the world of commercial driving, and there are many other examples.

But outside of the industry drivers at-

# Champs from across Canada go head-to-head

Continued from page 1

es) all look forward to this day after they are named the best in their province.

On Sept. 5, all 34 competitors wrote their test, and on Sept. 6 they put their driving gloves on to tackle the pre-trip inspection and obstacle course, one by one, class by class.

"We have straight truck, single-single, single-tandem, tandem-tandem and train. So we put five defects on the truck they get five minutes for a straight truck and eight for the other classes, to do a circle check find they five defects," said Michel Beaulac, chair of the organizing committee and instructor at Centre de formation du transport routier Saint Jerome (CFTR), where the competition took place. "After that we take the participant to the start line so they can run the obstacle track. That's the way I planned it this year. It's just like when they do their usual day to day job, first they do a pre-trip then they go on the road."

There were seven obstacles on the course this year, all of which were in the driver's kit. Drivers had to go through a diminishing clearing set-up, back up on an alley dock, and weave carefully through the serpentine among other things to show off the safety and skills of the best in the nation.

If there was one buzzword of the weekend, it would have to be camaraderie.

Even in the heavy rainfall, family, friends and volunteers all showed their support for drivers from every province. If a driver knocked over a barrel or squashed some tennis balls on his/her way around the track, an overwhelming numbers of "ooohs!" was heard from the sidelines. Congratulations were offered after every run, whether or not a driver goofed up.

One of the strongest performances – that received multiple standing ovations, not to mention hoots and hollers from almost every person there after he mastered the serpentine – was put on by an Ontario-based Canada Cartage driver named Preetpal Nijjar. This was Nijjar's second time at Nationals and after his run, he looked and sounded excited about his performance.

"I think I did great," he told me mo-



Stormy skies and heavy rainfall didn't faze any of the contestants – especially those in the straight truck and single-single categories who had to show off their skills on the tight course in the pouring rain in the late morning.

ments after he got off the course. "I can't say I have any regrets at this point, but I guess I'll see once I get the results."

Nijjar said the course was very tough, but he's in the competition to learn and grow as a driver.

"I compete every year to learn more and improve my skills," he said. "I also like meeting and greeting the other professionals and sharing my safety tips with them."

Nijjar went on to win first place in the tandem-tandem class for his nearly perfect performance. His manager, Marc Moncion, the national director of safety and compliance for Canada Cartage was beaming when he watched Nijjar's run.

"I'm absolutely proud of him," said Moncion. "He did a fantastic job. He's just such a professional – everything he does, he tries his best and he's just geared to succeed and he's just exceptional."

Moncion said he believed the championships were positive for the industry and that he hopes more Canada Cartage drivers will compete next year.

"I think it's so important for the professional drivers to get involved so it raises the level of professionalism in the industry," he added. "As well as it provides incentives for other driv-

ers to achieve and to succeed and his is the forum for that to happen."

Beaulac added that the event is one of a kind.

"It's the only event focuses on the professionalism of the drivers," he said. "You've got a lot of other trucking events, like smoke shows, but that's not good for the industry. Here, we are all talking about safety, we are all talking about fuel consumption celebrate the drivers' safety and professionalism on the road."

To qualify for the championships, a competitor must be accident-free for 12 months. Beaulac said it's not uncommon for him to get a call or e-mail from a driver who had a fender-bender and they're upset because a small accident means no eligibility to compete.

"They're not proud of it," he said. "They're really disappointed they can't compete here. But some of them do come out and support the other drivers even though they themselves can't be behind the wheel in the competition."

Though many of the drivers I spoke with had been to Nationals multiple times and knew the ropes, there were some rookies who got to experience the whole thing for the first time. Like 19-year-old Justin Campagna from Quebec, who has only been driving professionally for a year-and-a-half (the crowd showed him a lot of love during his run) and Aaron Kershaw, a driver for Tim Hortons in Ontario.

Kershaw has been a professional driver for 13 years and had been to provincials four times. This was his first year at Nationals and he said he enjoyed the experience.

He was the first to drive the slightly altered track because he was in the B-train class. Instead of a three-barrel serpentine, drivers in this class had to weave through a four-barrel cloverleaf.

"I had an extra pull up in the alley dock and then on the clover leaf I hit a barrel so I'll lose a few points for that," he said after his run. "I could have done better but overall I think I did alright."

Kershaw won third place in the B-train class for his rookie run.

After a full day of outdoor competition, the Quebec Trucking Associa-

tion, which hosted this year's Nationals, led everyone to Esterel Resort where winners were formally announced after a dinner and dance. ●

## The winners

### Straight Truck

- 1st: Keith Franklin, Canadian Freightways, Alberta;
- 2nd: Dean Grant, Agrifoods Cooperative, British Columbia;
- 3rd: Matthias Pieper, Bison Transport, Manitoba.

### Single-Single

- 1st: Marc Leger, Robert Transport, Quebec;
- 2nd: Evan Hirst, Independent, British Columbia;
- 3rd: Brian Hrabarchuk, Canadian Freightways, Manitoba.

### Single-Tandem

- 1st: Ronald Poirier, TST Overland Express, Manitoba;
- 2nd: Dale Robert Scott, Fountain Tire, British Columbia;
- 3rd: Marcel Pena Gomez, FedEx Freight Canada, Quebec;

### Tandem-Tandem

- 1st: Preetpal Nijjar, Canada Cartage, Ontario;
- 2nd: Robert Richard, Midland Transport, Atlantic Provinces;
- 3rd: Denis Roberts, TST Overland Express, Manitoba;

### B-Train

- 1st: Keith Atherton, SLH Transport, Saskatchewan;
- 2nd: Robert Stevens, Home Hardware Stores, Atlantic Provinces;
- 3rd: Aaron Kershaw, Tim Hortons, Ontario.

**Rookie of the Year:** Robert Stevens, Home Hardware, Atlantic Provinces.

**Best Team:** Manitoba (Matthias Pieper, Brian Hrabarchuk, Denis Roberts, Ken Wiebe, Ronald Poirier).

**Grand Champion:** Ronald Poirier, TST Overland Express, Manitoba. ●



Managers, family members, friends, and participants from all provinces cheered on their favourite drivers in St-Jerome, Que.

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**LOOK AHEAD:** The economy in 2015 – what trends will impact your business. Expert analysis from an economist, a transportation market specialist and two transportation company CEOs.

**THE VIEW FROM THE TOP:** The transportation executive's perspective on the major trends driving truck and rail transportation.

**SHIPPER – CARRIER COLLABORATION 2.0:** What does the new face of collaboration really entail?

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# FAMILY-OWNED, FAMILY-DRIVEN

*Canada's multi-generational  
trucking companies keep on trucking*

BY HARRY RUDOLFS

**M**ulti-generational transport companies represent the backbone of the Canadian trucking industry. While sprawling international and corporate conglomerates continue to acquire domestic motor carriers, the family-owned trucking company remains a sustainable and thriving 21<sup>st</sup> century business model. "I have a board meeting every morning when I'm shaving and looking in the mirror," George Tackaberry once told me, and Tackaberry's "the buck stops here" attitude is shared by many family-owned trucking concerns.

For this feature we chose trucking companies whose ownership goes back three generations or more and there are many of these. Limited space allows us to profile only a few, so unfortunately we've had to leave out important pioneer families like Paddock, Verspeeten, Meyers and Robert – names associated with the best aspects of the industry. And there are probably dozens of others.

A company's historical roots are part of a package that includes integrity, longevity, and impeccable service expectations. So important that when

Leslie MacKinnon discovered that his ancestors in Scotland had dropped the "a" from their name centuries ago, he went through considerable expense to have the family name, business, signage and operating authorities changed to the correct spelling of MacKinnon, sometime in the 1960s.

But the concept of family goes far beyond genetics. New hires are welcomed into an extended clan that may include generations of employees who share great loyalty and affection for the family business. Conversely all the CEOs interviewed in this feature drove truck at one time or other and learned about trucking from ground up.

So how do we explain the success of the family trucking business in this era of mega-mergers, consolidations and leveraged buyouts? Certainly the companies profiled are doing something right, and it's not just finding the right niche or specialization. Deep down these are hardworking family truckers who truly love the business; trucking is in the soul and bones of these people. They've been trucking for a long time and they're very good at it.

## Armour Transportation Systems

Today Armour Transportation Systems based in Moncton, New Brunswick, is one of the leading logistics and transportation specialists in Canada with over 4,000 pieces of equipment, 26 terminal networks and 1,900 employees. But the story begins in the early 1930's in the sleepy hamlet of Taylor Village, a small farming community near Moncton, where the founder Gordon Armour started hauling hay and gravel to points around New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

Gordon supplemented the outbound loads by soliciting return loads of chocolate and soap from points as far away as St. Stephen and apples from the Annapolis Valley. In the 1950s he added general freight and Christmas trees bound for the US to his company's repertoire. The trucking business was now called GM Armour & Son Ltd and

had operating authorities for most points in New Brunswick.

Present-day CEO and president Wes Armour fondly recalled those days in his wife Patricia's book *Beside The Chestnut Tree – Memories of Gordon and Iris Armour*. "Although they didn't have titles my father would have been owner, manager, mechanic, sales manager, traffic manager, truck driver and president. My mother was office manager, accountant, accounts manager, payroll clerk, IT manager, receptionist and mother of my four sisters and myself. Our home telephone was the business phone and our living room was the office with its 1 piece of office furniture, a large oak roll-top desk."

Wes, himself, started driving truck when he was 12, learning the business from the inside out. "Some of my favourite times in my youth were the days and nights I accompanied my father on trips, got to shift the stick shift for him and slept on a cot in the box of the truck."

Business began to pick up significantly in 1954 when Gordon bought a 3 ton truck with a freight box from Kraft Foods and began to haul Kraft products. "This was the beginning of a general freight business in a

more official sense," says Wes. Two other big accounts were also added soon after that included Robin Hood and Maritime Beverages (now known as the Pepsi Bottling Group). "We are proud to say that all these accounts are still major accounts with us today – and growing," he adds.

Wes joined the company in 1966 and within a year was responsible for day-to-day operations. The increase in business volume forced the firm to relocate several times until the head office settled in its present location in the Moncton Industrial Park.

Armour Transportation Systems is now in its third generation of leadership succession. Victoria Armour, Wes' youngest daughter, joined the group this year as director of communications and market development, and her brother Ralston holds several executive positions overseeing the operation of Armour's courier and logistics divisions.

Armour is poised for more future growth drawing on its rich history and loyal and dedicated employee and customer base. Wes Armour summarizes: "Our family ties and history are very important to our business and our customers. The fact that we are now a third generation family-owned and operated business sends an important signal to our customers that we have a long-term vision for our company."



Victoria, Wes, Patricia, Alisha, Ralston



## MacKinnon Transport Inc.

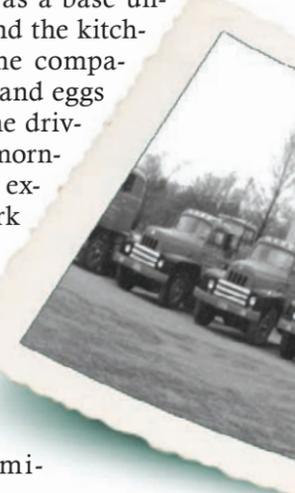
MacKinnon Transport Inc. is a premier flat deck logistics carrier with a rich corporate and family history that extends over more than eight decades. The story begins in 1929 in Caledon, Ont., when the founder Leslie MacKinnon purchased a 1928 Chevrolet straight truck. He started out hauling livestock to the Toronto Stockyards for local area farmers and returned with back hauls of coal, fertilizer and farm supplies. Leslie's expenses in those days amounted to \$2.00 per day which paid for the fuel and his meals on the road.

Leslie's son Bill had been driving truck since he was 15. He joined the family business in 1943 after graduating Grade 8 and getting his driver's licence. A second truck was added and the business began growing rapidly. Within a few years, MacKinnon Transport was servicing 125 customers with strong business relationships based on firm handshakes.

In 1946, the company landed some work with Armco Canada, located in Guelph, Ont. Armco's products included large culverts that had to be delivered to new roads in isolated areas. The over-size culverts required special attention and MacKinnon Transport's expertise in hauling deck loads was the basis for a flourishing relationship with the manufacturer. Armco quickly became MacKinnon's biggest customer and more trucks and drivers were added to handle the additional work load.

Like other family-run trucking companies, the MacKinnons used their farmhouse as a base until the mid-50s and the kitchen doubled as the company office. Bacon and eggs were served to the drivers on Saturday mornings. Each driver explained the work they had done that week and Leslie would pay the drivers in cash.

Les and Bill purchased their first termi-



# McKevitt Trucking

John McKevitt started trucking behind a team of horses when he was just a kid in Schreiber, Ont. A young man could make some good money during the war years and John got some work delivering bread in town with a cart and horse, and helping the baker haul wood out of the bush with his team of Belgians. The transition to trucks came a few years later when he was 15 and started driving for local gravel hauler. In those days they loaded the gravel by hand with a shovel.

John jumped at the opportunity to acquire his first truck – a 1946 Chevy 2 ton straight truck – “It seemed like the way to go,” he says. The year was 1948 and he paid \$1,800 for the truck. Eight hundred dollars came from his savings, and his dad, a CPR worker, lent him the other \$1,000.

In the 1950s, John relocated his business to Port Arthur (now Thunder Bay) and began supplying trucks for

Northern Wood Preservers, a business relationship that was to last for 50 years. The expansion in business required John to buy more trucks and put more drivers to work. By 1951 he had four trucks and in 1954 he started hauling lumber into the States.

McKevitt Trucking Ltd. incorporated in 1961 and a terminal was added in Sault Ste. Marie (and eventually Sudbury and Mississauga). About the same time, McKevitt started hauling steel out of the Soo. This necessitated the purchase of a Metro Class C license for \$125,000 and a Toronto terminal in order to get backloads. “With each additional segment of work we’d have to go out and find more work. Some of the work was seasonal so we’d go looking for something else that would fill in the gaps,” says John.

The family connection in the

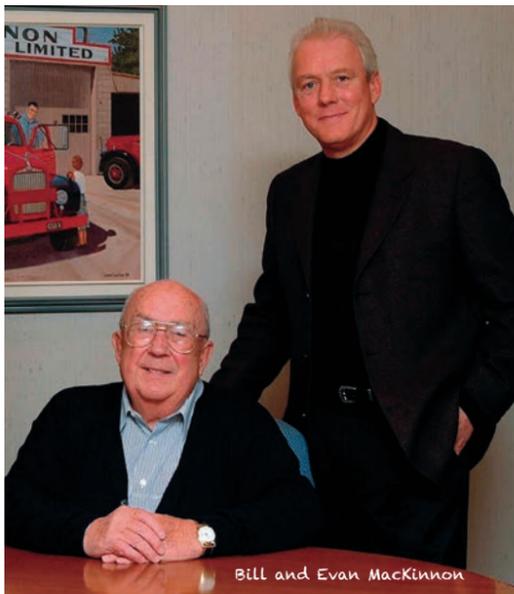
McKevitt clan has always been strong. Although the company had long since moved into modern facilities in Thunder Bay, the administrative office remained at the family home up until the mid-1990s, with John’s wife Shirley handling much of the billing and office duties.

These days, at 82 years of age, John remains president of the corporation and shows up for work every day. His son John Jr. is vice-president and looks after the overall business in Thunder Bay, while grandson Michael manages the Mississauga terminal.



Today McKevitt Trucking has about 150 trucks, both company and owner operator, and remains among the largest players on the Thunder Bay to Toronto corridor, as well as providing service to points throughout most of North America. But all the decisions are still a family affair.

“Most of our customers appreciate that we are a reliable, family-oriented company with a long history,” he adds. “Although my grandson Michael isn’t married we hope to keep going as a family business for a long time yet.”



Bill and Evan MacKinnon

nal in Guelph in 1959, closer to their main customer Armco. Grandson Evan, the present-day CEO and president joined the company in 1970. MacKinnon’s state-of-the-art terminal in Guelph was acquired in 1989, almost 60 years to the day after Leslie bought his first truck.

In the mid-1990s Evan’s children began entering the family business while Bill was still active. Today Evan’s son Alex has a senior management role as the company prepares its succession plan for the fourth generation’s leadership.

According to Evan, the founder’s community roots and entrepreneurial spirit were a natural fit for the family-run trucking enterprise that continues to this day. “This is the same entrepreneurial spirit and passion for trucking, along with the commitment to both business and family that has been handed down through the MacKinnon generations. We believe that no job is beneath the abilities of a family member, and take pride in knowing that we wouldn’t ask an employee to do any job we wouldn’t do ourselves.”



## Mackie Moving Systems

The Mackie story begins on a farm on Harmony Road in Oshawa, Ont., with Ross Mackie’s grandfather Charlie who bought the family’s first truck in 1928. “My grandpa was a bit of a drover,” explains Ross. “And he wanted to take his cattle and produce to market himself.”

Trucking was in the family genes from that time forward. Ross recalls playing around with farm trucks at about 12 years of age. “I was too small to reach the pedals and one time I must have popped the clutch and sent half a load of tomatoes rolling on these ladies who were doing the picking. I took off running with my dad right behind me. Another time I got one of the trucks stuck in a field and my mother used her baby bonus money to call a tow truck so I wouldn’t get whipped when my dad got home.”

At first, Merle and Amanda Marie ran the family business out of Charlie’s farm, and later moved to a building in Oshawa where Ross and his younger sister Marilyn lived, above the truck yard. “We struggled in those days,” Ross remembers. “During the war my dad had some trucks on with a munitions plant in Ajax, but there wasn’t a lot of money.”

In 1951, at the tender age of 16, Ross made his first trip for the family business to Whitehorse, Yukon, and even managed to find a back load to Edmonton. A year later, Mackie the Mover became one of the founding Canadian agents for North American Van Lines, and so began a long association with the moving business.

Mackie Automotive was born in 1984 after General Motors Oshawa asked Ross to do some value-added work to the fascia of the Chevy Lumina. This even-



Ross Mackie

tually grew into 16 plants around the world servicing GM and PACCAR. Mackie Automotive has long since been sold off and the name has been changed, but the initiative spurred the Mackies in even more directions.

“We’re very diverse now,” says Ross. Mackie Moving Systems now has many divisions including electronics, high-value shipments, car hauling, and a trade show division, not to mention the Harley Davidson dealership across the road.

With Ross’ four sons, Norm, Paul, Dean, Scott, and a whole satchel of grandkids now involved in various aspects of the business, Mackie Moving Systems goes back five generations from the time Charlie Mackie brought home his first truck. But Ross considers the employees to be the heart of the company. “They are our biggest asset. And I can honestly say that my sister Marilyn and I look forward to coming to work every day. It hasn’t always been easy, but it’s been one hell of a ride.”

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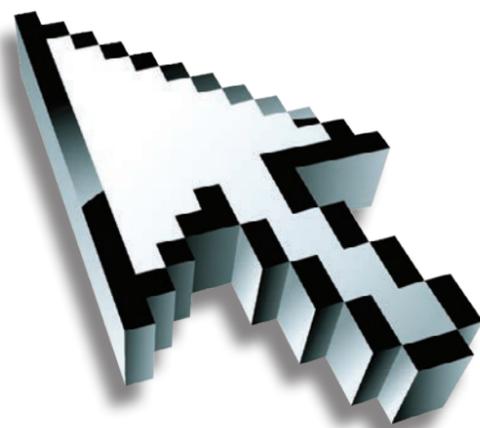
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**You say tomato I say tomahto**

MARK LEE



# Why I decided to run Canada only

**I**t's all downhill from now on; I've had the best time of year for fuel mileage, nice sunny days, light winds and summer blend fuels. From now on I can expect to see my numbers drop significantly.

They say that winter weather and fuels can bring a drop of up to two miles per gallon, so that's what I've got to look forward to. Although with the numbers I've been getting, that will still see me hovering around the 8 mpg (imperial) mark, which is just a distant dream for some trucks in ideal conditions, so it isn't all bad.

Except that I'm going to be lucky to get anywhere near 8 mpg and it isn't only weather and fuel blends that will see my figures plummet, I'm about to start another new chapter in my trucking life. An opportunity has presented itself and I intend to take full advantage of it.

On the surface it seems as though it would be every owner/operator's worst nightmare; I'm going to be down on miles, my mpg is going to take a huge hit, the loads are heavier and there is a lot of extra work involved, not just picks and drops in a city environment, but it also requires actual physical labour from me and I did not become a truck driver to work up a sweat, believe me!

The one plus factor in the equation is really the only thing that matters, my revenue and more importantly, my profits will rise significantly and that is the most important thing for any owner/operator.

My whole perspective has changed since I took the plunge into truck ownership again. I was lucky enough to have many years of truck ownership back in England to help me make the right decisions this time around. Many of those decisions have been made from learning from mistakes I made in the past and the biggest mistake any owner/operator can make is to think like a truck driver.

If I made my business decisions whilst wearing my truck driver's hat I would be driving a custom large car down the road at the speed limit, my destinations would likely be similar to those I used to run before buying the truck, like Florida, California and NYC for example.

Getting laid over down on either coast wouldn't bother me too much (obviously I'd be getting layover pay) especially as winter is approaching, a day or two at the beach and a spot of polishing wouldn't be a bad way to spend some time.

This is in direct contrast to what I do now. I have an aerodynamic truck almost completely devoid of any bling, in fact the only aftermarket stuff I've fitted has been practical things like a moose bumper and extra lights so the bumper can just be a plain old bumper, rather than an actual moose bumper.

I stay north of the border too as I believe it is more productive. Seventy in seven, 13 hours driving and being able to reset my book whenever I want allows me to get more done in less time, so I get my miles and also get time at home with the family. Although I do question this logic on a daily basis from mid-November through to

the end of March, especially when one of my so-called friends calls me from Florida when I'm approaching the dreaded flashing amber lights at a chain-up area.

then my decision is made. I based the decision on which truck to buy, which carrier to lease on with and where I wanted to run all on that simple question: which is going to earn me the

## I was dispatched to run Canada only and I found my wage packet got bigger and I saw my home a lot more.

Now I don't just make those decisions on a whim, those decisions are made for me as it happens, my personal views don't come into the equation, but an equation is all it is really. If the numbers (profits) add up to more,

most money?

My staying north of the border came about by accident, really. First I wanted to quit smoking, so I went on a prescription medication that was allowed up here, but forbidden in the land of

the free (go figure)!

It never worked anyway, but during the time I was on it, I was dispatched to run Canada only and I found my wage packet got bigger and I saw my home a lot more. If it worked as a company driver, it was bound to work as an owner/operator too. Right now there is another factor.

I'm in the process of applying for citizenship in my adopted country and part of the criteria is that I am in the country for a specified time period, which is three years.

My new deal is going to help me achieve that too as once again, I will not be allowed in the land of the free. In fact there are quite a lot of places I will not be able to go from now on, my 41-metre long, nine axle, 63,500-kg wiggle wagon will make sure of that. ●

*A fourth generation trucker and trucking journalist, Mark Lee uses his 25 years of transcontinental trucking in Europe, Asia, North Africa and now North America to provide an alternative view of life on the road.*



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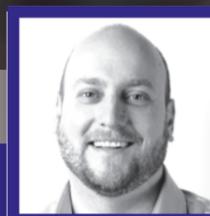


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## Small Fleet, Big Attitude

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# A silent response speaks volumes

**R**odney Dangerfield must have owned a small trucking company. It would sure explain his famous phrase, "I don't get no respect."

If you're as naive as I once was, you might assume that the fact that you are an employer, signing paycheques and paying taxes, should make suppliers and employees willing to at least respect the contribution you make to the economy, and the sacrifices it entails. That foolish notion is usually not only naive, but just wrong.

As somebody who started a trucking business relatively young, I grew accustomed to drivers and owner/operators joining the company, and immediately start telling us how the company should be run.

Their view usually was the opposite of the way we operated, and a carbon copy of the operation of their previous employer.

The irony of the fact that they wanted us to be more like a company they no longer wished to work for was usually lost on them. Occasionally, if I was being "taught" by an employee when I was in a bad mood, I asked the obvious question: "If you're

so damned smart why are you working for me instead of your own company?"

Besides the employee relations, you'll be amazed at the lack of importance your business and opinions matter to anybody. I'd like to share some samples of phone calls and e-mails I've made over the last couple years.

You'll be surprised at how these examples connect.

- I phoned one of Southern Ontario's largest trailer dealers, inquiring about used trailers.

- I e-mailed a large trailer manufacturer regarding B-trains, via their Web site, which forwards your trailer request to your closest dealer.

- I e-mailed one of Southern Ontario's largest tarp and load securement suppliers, requesting availability of \$500 worth of equipment.

- I e-mailed two different material handling sales facilities, asking to consign a scissorlift, and put the sales price towards a forklift.

- I e-mailed a small, used truck sales facility, informing them of some commonly requested, but not readily available, equipment for sale.

- I e-mailed a driver representative association, politely requesting clarification of a statement that had been

made in a magazine column.

- I e-mailed a popular industry spokesman (former trucking company owner) agreeing with a statement he had made, and asking him a related hypothetical question.

So, what's the commonality of these events? None of them responded. I bet that had I signed off my e-mails or phone calls giving a fictitious name and title (purchaser or manager of one of Canada's top 10 carriers), I'd have got responses from every inquiry.

Especially in this era of e-mails, with everyone close to their computer, or glued to their smartphones, how much effort does it take to send a quick, brief response? Try a little refreshing honesty like, "I just don't want your business."

I think I'd respect that more than being ignored. At least I'd know where I stand, even if I don't understand why.

In the case of samples one through five, rest assured they will never sell me anything.

I can go through the Internet yellow pages and find other companies providing the same service. They haven't yet figured out that \$500 to \$80,000 deposits in their bank account is the same, whether it came

from me, or a larger company.

Examples six and seven possibly ignored me because I've been critical of the driver association, and, obviously, large trucking companies. Sounds kind of spineless doesn't it? As much as I appreciate the favourable e-mails I get regarding this column, I enjoy the disagreeable ones more.

I respond to all of them. Maybe by disagreeing with me, you'll make a point I hadn't thought of. Maybe a couple e-mails back and forth will explain my point further, in a way that typical print space restrictions don't allow.

Either way, nothing will change in this, or any other industry, without healthy debate, which requires differing opinions.

The driver association doesn't really serve fleets, but owner/operators

**Especially in this era of e-mails, with everyone close to their computer, or glued to their smartphones, how much effort does it take to send a quick, brief response? Try a little refreshing honesty like, "I just don't want your business."**



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and drivers.

I think it would be a huge benefit to them to consider the opinion of people like me, owners of small trucking companies.

A simple question answered might change whether or not I encourage employees to join. Respect our input, and see what happens to your enrollment numbers.

The industry spokesman was asked a simple, somewhat hypothetical question, after I respectfully agreed with his published statement, thanked him for his time, and apologized for the intrusion if he was busy.

My low respect level for many large carriers is legendary, due to my ongoing disagreement with typical hiring and maintenance practices, driver pay, freight rates, etc.

This gentleman had the opportunity, with a simple e-mail, to possibly soften my opinion.

Unfortunately, he didn't think I was worth the time. To those who really dislike my outspoken style, remember, someone had the chance to pacify me, but didn't bother.

Remember that fact the next time you disagree with me, and, hey, e-mail me to let me know you disagree. I'll respond, because even when I disagree, I'll respect your opinion, and the time it took to contact me. ●

*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](mailto:williamcameron.bc@gmail.com).*

Preventive  
Maintenance

KAREN BOWEN



## Go Greek this fall for your health

If you are looking for a convenient, healthy snack to tide you over until your next stop, consider including yogurt as a staple for your lunch pail. You've probably enjoyed a few spoonfuls of regular, American yogurt at your kitchen table over the years.

Today's convenient single-serving containers now make yogurt an ideal option for the road. Easy to carry, open and dispose of, these packages are easy to find in grocery and convenience stores.

Regular, American yogurt has many health benefits. A rich source of minerals, because it is made from milk, yogurt contains large amounts of calcium, potassium and magnesium. Yogurt has vitamins, too, particularly, Vitamins B2 and B12, and Vitamins D and E and is also a good source of protein.

Eating yogurt with probiotics is good for your overall health. According to the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, it can boost your immune system to help fight infection, reduce inflammatory diseases and relieve allergies. Eating yogurt every day has been seen to lower LDL cholesterol levels and improve the cardiovascular system.

Tests have shown that eating probiotic yogurt boosts gastrointestinal health by increasing the proportion of good bacteria in the bowel. Improving digestive function, yogurt has been seen to decrease flatulence, diarrhea, and constipation; to reduce colon cancer, Crohn's disease and irritable bowel syndrome; and to reduce the bacteria that cause bad breath and peptic ulcers.

Since regular American yogurt is so good for you, why switch to Greek yogurt instead? Both build bones. Both promote intestinal health. Both improve the immune system. Both are low in calories. So, what's makes them different?

To many people, Greek yogurt tastes better. It is thicker and creamier and has a richer flavour. Greek yogurt may also be considered healthier because it has lower quantities of sugar and salt. The straining process used to produce Greek yogurt by removing the whey also removes about 40% of the sugar (lactose) and more than 35% of the sodium.

Because this straining process lowers the lactose as well, Greek yogurt may be better tolerated by people with lactose sensitivity. A six-ounce container of regular, American yogurt has nine grams of lactose, while Greek yogurt has only four grams, making it a low lactose dairy product.

Greek yogurt's straining process also concentrates its protein ratio. A six-ounce serving of Greek yogurt has 15-20 grams of protein (about the amount of protein found in three ounces of lean meat). A six-ounce serving of regular, American yogurt has only nine grams of protein.

If you watch your weight by counting carbohydrates, go Greek, since Greek yogurt contains only about half the carbs of regular yogurt. Be sure to read the labels, though.

Steer clear of yogurts with the hidden carbs of added sugars, possibly

listed as sucrose, grape juice concentrate, and/or evaporated cane juice.

For the best quality product, the listed ingredients should follow this order: milk, live and active cultures, and fruit (with no fillers of gelatin, guar gum, or cornstarch).

Some Greek yogurts have a very high fat content, so read the labels for fat content, too. Ideally, choose a low-fat or fat-free variety.

Greek yogurt is quite versatile and can easily replace less healthy ingredients in popular foods you regularly enjoy. For example, instead of using sour cream to top up a taco, try Greek yogurt. Or, make a dip by stirring your favourite seasonings into a container of Greek yogurt instead of

cream cheese or sour cream. Use it as a partial substitute in recipes calling for mayonnaise, or butter in foods like egg salad, pasta salad, potato salad and/or coleslaw.

Greek yogurt can even be added to partially thicken frosting. When baking, substitute Greek yogurt for eggs and oil because unlike regular yogurt, Greek yogurt won't curdle when heated.

Greek yogurt offers a higher portion of most nutrients, than regular yogurt; however, not for calcium.

Due to the straining process mentioned above, a 6 ounce serving of Greek yogurt supplies only 20% of the recommended daily requirement, while regular yogurt offers 30%. Yet,

this is not a big issue. It can be easily compensated for by stirring in some complementary calcium rich food, such as seeds and/or almonds.

Considering all its advantages, no wonder Greek yogurt is currently one of the fastest growing foods on the market.

If you decide to pick some up for your next trip, look for a low-fat brand that contains probiotics.

Look on the label for "contains active cultures," or for specific probiotic names, such as: Lactobacillus acidophilus or Lactobacillus casei. If you find more than one probiotic strain, you've selected a high quality product, which offers the best digestive support.

When it comes to choosing the best yogurt this fall, someone may prefer regular, American, but it's all Greek to me. ●

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



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# Western Star gets serious about fuel economy

Continued from page 1

ping up and getting back in the game after being on the sidelines for a while," Jackson said.

Ann Demitruk, director of marketing for Western Star, said the 5700 is aimed not at the large fleets and leasing companies, or those customers concerned mostly with acquisition cost, but at the owner/operators and small- to medium-sized fleets looking to differentiate themselves. But of course the large fleets won't be turned away, and Demitruk said the 5700 makes a great reward truck for those larger trucking companies who want to give their top-performing drivers something special to drive.

As well, Demitruk said Western Star will be looking to get the 5700 into fleets that operate primarily Freightliner trucks with Detroit powertrains, where it could potentially displace the secondary brand within the fleet.

## About the truck

The 5700 features the same steel cab used on its existing models, but it's surprisingly lightweight. The day cab weighs just 15,300 lbs without fuel, and a 5700 with a 72-inch sleeper weighs just 17,500 lbs – and that's with disc brakes. Don Vena, senior designer of the 5700, said there was no temptation to slap a Western Star badge on the front of a repurposed Cascadia, despite that model's sales success.

"First and foremost, we wanted to maintain the iconic look of this vehicle," he said. "Western Star has always been unique and we never wanted to deviate from that in any way, shape or form."

Certain signatures from Western Star's past were retained, including the rectangular headlights and the 'mohawk'-style raised section that runs down the middle of the hood. This characteristic was actually extended down the centre of the grille, giving the 5700 an even bolder look.

"We still have that signature bump, but now it's on the face of the truck," Vena explained.

**"We wanted to maintain the iconic look of this vehicle."**

Don Vena, Western Star

And while Western Star keeps its rectangular headlights, their performance has been improved by moving to a projector beam design. They look sharper too, thanks to an LED outline around the top and outer edges.

The grille features vertical stainless steel bars, which gives it a recognizable face. An aggressive bumper with end caps on both sides gives the truck improved aerodynamics. The end caps on the bumper were among the most controversial design elements but Vena said they were absolutely necessary to divert air away from the wheels. They were styled in such a way to add to the design rather than to detract from it; engineers refer to these sections as 'fangs.'

Western Stars have always had a steep windshield, which posed some design challenges, however this was



Western Star's new aerodynamic 5700 features a distinct face, accented by a raised stripe down the centre of the grille and rectangular headlights.

retained and a combination of a kick panel on the hood, just before the windshield, and a drag-neutral sun visor improve the way air flows over top of the vehicle.

The 5700XE is "comparable" in fuel economy to the Freightliner Cascadia Evolution, Jackson said, without sharing any hard numbers. It's fuel-efficient enough to fit within the EPA's bin of the industry's most fuel-efficient Class 8 vehicles under its greenhouse gas emissions program.

## Detroit integration

The 5700XE is a truck that Western Star could not have made without its belonging to the Daimler family. Even the redesigned steering wheel, with controls placed at the driver's fingertips, seems to borrow from the European Mercedes Actros. However, it's still pure Western Star, with a faux wood finish inside and a panel in front of the passenger seat, which provides easy access to fuses, making the truck easy to service.

The new model can be had with the DD13, DD15 or DD16 engines – no Cummins power will be offered – and as far as transmissions go, you can get an Eaton manual but the DT12 will be the only automated transmission on offer.

Brad Williamson, manager of powertrain marketing with Daimler Trucks North America, said customers will maximize their efficiency by sticking with a purely Detroit powertrain. A DD15 rated at 400 hp/1,760 lb.-ft., with the Detroit DT12 transmission and Detroit axles with a 2.41 ratio will be about 5.2% more fuel-efficient than the same baseline truck spec'd with the DD15 TC with 455 hp/1,550 lb.-ft. and a 10-speed manual transmission, Williamson said.

Some of the improvements built into the new DD15 include an asymmetric turbocharger with fewer moving parts, a new amplified common rail fuel system that builds pressure up to 38,000 psi for better atomization of fuel, and a variable speed water pump that results in less parasitic losses than its predecessors.

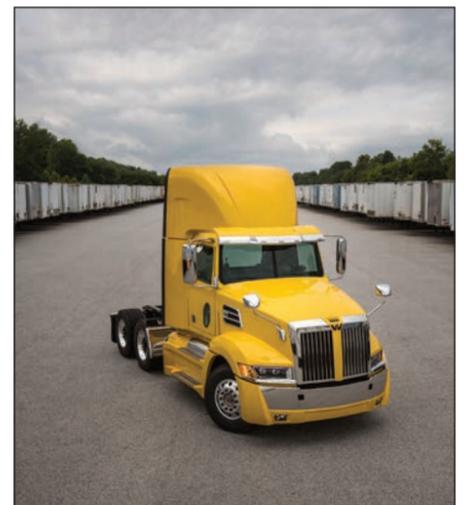
## Coming in April

At the launch of the 5700, the enthusi-

asm about the new model among Western Star people was palpable. The truck will enter full production next April and will ramp up over the summer. It will be built in Daimler's Cleveland, N.C. plant. Demitruk said she expects Western Star's dealer network to benefit from the new model.

"Western star's historical opportunity was only 30% of the market," she said. "The 5700 will further strengthen our dealer network and brand."

After showing the new truck off to industry journalists, Western Star was planning to bring in dealers and to get them up to speed on how to sell and service the new truck. ●



## Western Star seeing growth, thanks in part to introduction of 4700

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

Western Star may control just 2.6% of the North American Class 8 market, but it's feeling pretty good about itself these days.

The truck maker has seen its net orders increase by about 50% year-to-date in 2014, which represents stronger growth than any other OEM has experienced over the same period. But there's still work to be done.

Mike Jackson, general manager of Western Star, said he'd like the company to represent 3% of the Canada/US market this year, which means it has to strengthen its presence in the US. About 45% of the trucks Western Star builds come to Canada, where its market share is about 9%. In the US it sits at about 1.5%, and for the company to achieve its goal of 3% by year-end, it will need to bring its US market share to 2.5%. In Canada, Jackson said he'd like to see Western Star's share increase to 10-12%.

Western Star has Canadian roots, having been designed and built in Kelowna, B.C. before Daimler acquired the company in 2000. It languished somewhat at first under the Daimler umbrella but received a boost in about 2009 when the company restructured and was granted more autonomy.

Since 2009 there have been about eight new product launches or updates for the Western Star line. The most significant of these was the introduction of the 4700 'Baby' 8, which Jackson said was pivotal in expanding the brand's reach.

"It has been a big hit among the vocational markets and has propped us up in those construction and government markets, which was exactly what it was geared for," Jackson said of the 4700.

Western Star has nearly doubled its share of the vocational market since 2010, from 2.1% to 4%, when Navistar and Freightliner are removed (the truck maker doesn't consider those brands its chief competitors). At the same time, its on-highway share has improved from 1.4% to 2.4%, again, excluding Freightliner and Navistar.

Already, the 4700 represents about 39% of Western Star's sales (the 4800 and 4900 account for about 60% of production).

Ann Demitruk, head of marketing for Western Star, said the 4700 gave the truck maker an in with the government/municipality, wholesale/retail, mixer, food and beverage, crane and utility segments. ●



Truck News editor James Menzies was among the first to drive the Western Star 5700 in the Nevada desert.

## On the road: Driving the new Western Star 5700XE

By James Menzies

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

The only thing more exhilarating than the view of the Nevada desert over the hood of my Western Star 5700, was the view of another Western Star 5700 in my West Coast mirrors.

This is a truck that when seen from the exterior will steal your attention for more than a moment. And yet it's also a truck you can feel good about owning and operating, because it's a Western Star that can finally compete with other aerodynamic models in terms of fuel efficiency. Still, Western Star designers stayed true to the brand's heritage by creating a truck that looks nothing like the others that comprise this segment.

If you were to trace the outline of the various fuel-efficient models on the market today and leave the insides blank, it would take a discerning eye to differentiate them. The same cannot be said of the 5700XE, which somehow manages to eschew the rounded, jelly bean-styled design of other leading models while attaining fuel economy that the EPA considers good enough to place within the same bin as the others under its greenhouse gas emissions program.

T-shirts worn by Western Star people at the truck's launch declared the 5700 brought an edge to aero, which is an appropriate tagline for this truck.

After a high-profile launch before more than a dozen trucking industry journalists in Sin City, I was fortunate to have the opportunity to stay behind and put the truck through its paces over a two-hour journey in and around Las Vegas. The 5700 I drove had a 72-inch sleeper, an EPA13 Detroit Diesel DD13 engine rated at 455 hp/1,550 lb.-ft. and the DT12, 12-speed direct drive automated manual transmission.

This is the integrated Detroit powertrain that the company says will provide a significant portion of the fuel savings customers will see from this truck, compared to previous Western Star vehicles. They've opted to make the truck available only with Detroit power and no other automated manual will be offered. Yes, there's a risk some Cummins loyalists may be

unhappy with this decision, but Western Star officials are confident enough in the product that they feel demand for the new truck will be such that customers will accept the Detroit powertrain and then become converted, once they experience its efficiency and performance.

Aside from the Detroit powertrain, further gains come from the redesigned front end, which better directs airflow over and around the cab. Interestingly, this is the same cab you'll find on traditional Western Star models, including its vocational offerings. The Western Star cab is known for its steep windshield, which is not exactly conducive to aerodynamics. However, engineers discovered ways to help assist the air up over that windshield. The most visible of these enhancements is a kick panel on the hood, just before the windshield, that directs air up and over the cab. This air ramp, if you will, doesn't impact visibility over the hood as long as your seat is properly positioned.

The front bumper has been redesigned to keep air from getting caught up in the wheel wells. Two end sections dubbed 'fangs' (yes, even the bumper end caps on this truck have attitude) reduce wind resistance without detracting from the truck's unique look. The Western Star 5700 has a distinctive face that's unlike any other truck in the marketplace.

The raised center section of the hood has been carried over and this section on the truck I drove was painted matte black, reducing glare off the hood. The sun visor has also been kept, which helps direct air over top the roof cap. Other aerodynamic improvements come in the form of fairings and flares that encourage air to flow to where it will provide minimal disruption to the vehicle's forward progress.

Inside, this truck is unmistakably a Western Star. The most notable upgrade is a redesigned wood and leather steering wheel with controls placed at the driver's fingertips, which allow the driver to scroll through the information on the driver display, flash the marker lights or to control the cruise, Bluetooth, radio, etc.

However, while other models have transitioned to a more automotive-

Continued on page 70



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**48 HEALTH**

**Back behind the wheel**

DR. CHRIS SINGH



quickly and eating fatty or spicy foods. Caffeine, alcohol and nicotine may also cause indigestion. In addition, certain medications such as antibiotics and pain relievers have been shown to cause indigestion in certain patients.

In most cases, mild indigestion is nothing to worry about. However, it is important to consult with a doctor if your symptoms last more than a few weeks or if your indigestion is accompanied by unintentional weight loss or loss of appetite, black stools, vomiting blood, or difficulty swallowing.

All of these symptoms may indicate a more serious condition that needs immediate medical attention.

If you have been diagnosed with mild indigestion, your doctor may recommend lifestyle changes to help ease the symptoms. Avoiding food triggers is usually a good place to start. Maintaining a healthy weight and regular exercise also promotes better digestion. New evidence is showing that reducing stress and anxiety may also help with indigestion.

If your indigestion persists after making lifestyle changes, your doctor may suggest medications such as antacids or other prescription medications that will reduce the production of stomach acids.

Most cases of indigestion do not cause any serious complications. However, it can significantly affect the quality of your life. Next time you feel a bit of indigestion, keep in mind the simple lifestyle tips that were mentioned above.

Until next month, drive safely. 🚗

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

**I**ndigestion is not a disease or illness but rather a collection of symptoms that may be experienced by an individual.

The medical term for indigestion is dyspepsia which is a general term that is used to describe discomfort in the upper abdomen.

Although indigestion is very common, the type and severity of the symptoms vary from person to person. One of the most common symptoms of indigestion is early fullness during a meal. Some individuals may only be able to eat a few spoonfuls of their meal before feeling full.

Other people complain of discomfort or burning in the upper abdomen after eating a meal. Other possible symptoms of indigestion include nausea, vomiting and belching.

There are many possible causes of indigestion. Often, indigestion is caused by lifestyle choices and may be triggered by food, drink or medication. Common causes include overeating or eating too

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# Muir's forces owner/ops to incorporate

By Carolyn Gruske

CONCORD, ONTARIO

Good-bye sole proprietors. Hello incorporated businesses.

As of Sept. 1, the Muir's Cartage division of Calyx Transportation Group has refused to assign a load to owner/operators running their businesses as sole proprietors. The company called a short-notice, attendance-mandatory meeting for Aug. 9, where officials told the approximately 90-100 assembled owner/operators that if they wish to continue doing business with Muir's they must incorporate their businesses.

The dictum was issued at the same time Muir's announced another change to its business practices. The company is dispensing with its outside payroll services, which had been provided by Behind the Wheel Services (BTW) in Mississauga, Ont., and is bringing that function back to Muir's.

"The way it was structured was that all owner/operators were with Muir's Cartage through an agency that was acting as a payroll administrator for them. What we are doing is we are bringing all owner/operators inside to Muir's and we will be administering everything in house," explained Eugenia Churilov, fleet safety and compliance manager for Calyx, during an exclusive interview with *Truck News*.

"It is absolutely a positive change and beneficial to all our owner/operators."

Changing the way owner/operators are compensated, however, means more than just new people processing the paperwork. It also means significant changes to how owner/operators will have to handle their disability coverage. Until now, owner/operators weren't responsible for their Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) fees. Now they will be.

"BTW was covering them under their own WSIB account. Now that BTW is going to be out of the picture, they have to have their own coverage. The exciting part of it is National Truck League came with a very good package that is absolutely beneficial

to all owner/operators if they choose to go it and not with WSIB," said Churilov.

Muir's invited National Truck League to the owners/operators meeting and presented the company and its services as an alternative to the WSIB. Muir's also brought in an accountant.

"If they don't have anyone, we are willing to provide them help by giving them contact information of an accountant who can assist them with incorporating. If they don't have any of their own accountants - which they should if they are running their own businesses, but some of them don't have people who are able to help them out with incorporation - that's what we're providing. I think this is really a nice gesture from the company to try to assist them with anything we can."

As with the disability insurance,

owner/operators will be responsible for paying the recommended accountant (should they choose to employ his services) out of their own pockets.

According to Churilov, all of the company's proposed changes were well accepted by the owner/operators.

"Most of them were excited about the changes. At the meeting there were standing ovations when we announced they will be with Muir's now and there will be some changes internally about how everything will be processed. They were very happy about that," she said adding that even the prospect of having to pay for their own WSIB premiums were taken positively.

As for incorporating, Churilov said it's just the way things are going in the business world, and that Muir's is trying to help the drivers become better managers and owners.

Although *Truck News* wasn't in at-

tendance at the meeting, one owner/operator who was, told a different story about how well the news was received. He asked that his name not be used in this article, as he was still on the fence about whether he would be willing to change his business structure and incorporate, just so he could continue driving for Muir's.

"The room was a little stunned," he said. "There was no real explanation. All they said was this is what we are going to do from now on and anybody who does not comply will not be dispatched after Aug. 31. That was said numerous times. But in terms of an explanation as to why they went this way, I don't recall one."

He said he believes the majority of driver will likely comply, but speculates that many will do so because they come from cultures outside of Canada and may not be completely comfortable standing up to an employer, questioning authority or having to look for new business and com-

Continued on page 51



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## There are benefits to incorporating

Continued from page 49

panies.

He also said at least one driver stood up and questioned the Muir's executives about how much all of these changes are going to cost owner/operators. He said a question was posed in the lines of "We are losing \$2,400 worth of Workman's Comp. We have to pay \$1,300 to cover ourselves. Then we have to pay \$400 for incorporation. That's approximately \$4,100 you're asking us to take out of our pocket, what are you offering us?"

While the owner/operator is currently less than happy with the situation as it was presented, he says Muir's has - at least until now - been a fair company, and described its treatment of owner/operators as very good.

From a business standpoint, Marvin Huberman a Toronto-based lawyer and mediator who works with transportation and supply chain clients, said Calyx could be demanding incorporation due to liability issues.

"It's really for the protection of the employer. The issue really pertains to vicarious liability of the company that is - loosely we'll call it - 'employing' these people," he said, adding in case of an accident resulting in a lawsuit by a victim, it would be harder to attach liability to the trucking company if there is a clear indication that the owner/operator driving is not a company employee. Having the owner/operator incorporate helps delineate the difference between an employee and an independent contractor.

Regular *Truck News* columnist Scott Taylor, who is vice-president of operations at TFS Group in Waterloo, Ont., which provides accounting and book-keeping services for transportation companies, said he normally recommends owner/operators incorporate.

"As an overall statement, it's my opinion that most, although not by a big margin, owner/operators are incorporated - about 60% of them are. But that still means 40% aren't," he said.

"If I were going to be an owner/operator, I would be incorporated. I've said that for years. I understand why people don't choose it: everybody has their own pros and cons and value list, but if I were one, I would be incorporated."

According to Taylor, those who don't incorporate usually say the process is too expensive and too complicated, but he said while there is a bit more to do in terms of paperwork it's not too hard to manage. As for the advantages, he explained there could be tax savings, it could help protect personal assets, and it may even kick-start a real strategy for managing and growing the business.

So for owner/operators who want to continue working for Muir's but who still have concerns about incorporating, they shouldn't worry.

"It's certainly not a horrible thing. Muir's isn't forcing them down a drowning path, but something has happened. Muir's is doing this to save a cost or create more separation between them and their owner/operators. They feel that dealing with Smith's Family Trucking Inc. versus John Smith is better for them for some reason." ●

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To throw your company's name into the pot, you have to visit the Web site between Sept. 2 and Oct. 31 and make your nomination.

The contest and survey is open to all for-hire trucking companies in US and Canada with 10 or more trucks. Companies do not have to be a member of the TCA. Those companies nominated have to answer questions surrounding their HR best practices both online and over the phone. Once all interviews have been conducted, 20 finalists are selected as the Best Fleets to Drive For. Overall finalists

and winners are chosen at the Annual TCA Convention in March in Florida. This year, finalists will be chosen a little differently. In previous years, finalists were picked from a company-driver category and an owner/operator company category. This year, one company categorized as a small company and one recognized as a large company will earn top honours.

The change is to ensure fairness for all involved said Mark Murrell, president of CarriersEdge (the company that conducts all surveys for the TCA) of Markham, Ont.

"Best Fleets is good for everybody: the carriers, the staff, the drivers and it's even good for the image of trucking to show off the best of what our industry can offer," said Deborah Sparks, v.p. of development, TCA.

To see previous winners and learn more about the contest, visit the official Web page at [www.BestFleetsToDriveFor.com](http://www.BestFleetsToDriveFor.com).

## Bison sponsors Princess Patricia

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA

Bison Transport announced that it's a sponsor of the Princess Patricia Canadian Light Infantry's Memorial Baton Relay. The Memorial Baton Relay, which travels across Canada, marks 100 years of service for the Princess Patricia Canadian Light Infantry (PPCLI). Bison supplied a tractor and driver to drive a trailer complete with a commemorative design to travel with the relay.

"Bison Transport is proud to be a part of this historical event and honour PPCLI's 100 years of service," said Don Streuber, president of Bison Transport. "As the decade Bison trailer travels across Canada, we hope it helped Canadians recognize the commitment and contributions the PPCLI soldiers have made over the past century."

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## Technology slashing fleet fuel costs

Fleets are finding that technology purchases pay dividends in fuel savings.

That realization has been proved again and again, according to the findings of the North American Council for Freight Efficiency's (NACFE) 2014 Fleet Fuel Efficiency Benchmark Study.

The study, which has followed 10 major North American fleets - CR England, Challenger Motor Freight, Con-way Truckload, Frito Lay, Paper Transport, Ryder, Schneider, Werner, Bison Transport and United Parcel Service - found that not only have the participants been buying more fuel-savings solutions, they are being rewarded for their shopping. Noting it as the "primary finding" the study's authors write: "The average purchased adoption rate of these products increased from 31% to 50% over the period of 2003 through 2013, and the average fuel economy performance of the trucks improved 0.64 mpg" to 6.77 mpg.

That works out to a US\$7,200 in savings per year per truck, or a total of US\$36,000 for each truck over the course of five years. It also represents a significant improvement over the results of the 2011 report, which found that fleets saved US\$4,400 in fuel costs through the use of technological upgrades. On average, trucks operated by these fleets travelled 119,700 miles in 2013, and had an average age of 3.1 years. The trailers were older, coming it at six years, and typically there were 3.1 trailers for every tractor. A total of 15% of the tractors pulled referees during the study period.

The fleets studied adopted 66 separate fuel-saving technologies, that fell

into one of six categories: anti-idling, chassis, practices, tires/wheels, tractor aerodynamics and trailer aerodynamics. Fleets are almost universally specifying aerodynamic tractors, bumpers and mirrors as well as setting engine parameters for fuel efficiency. Other widely adopted options were:

- Tractor chassis skirts (partial) 40%, up from 27% in 2012
- Fixed fifth wheel with minimum gap 51%, up from 38% in 2012
- Specified weight reduction on tractors 54%, up from 44% in 2012
- Specified weight reduction on trailers 60%, up from 50% in 2012
- Spec'ing dead axles 14% up from 10%, in 2012
- Automated transmissions 20%, up from 0% in 2012

"Real-world data shows that fleets are increasing their adoption rates of these technologies and seeing measurable improvements in fuel economy," said NACFE executive director Mike Roeth. ●

## Manitoulin buys Westcan's LTL, van divisions

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

Manitoulin Transport has announced its purchase of Westcan Group's van freight and less-than-truckload (LTL) divisions. Westcan last year sold its bulk division to US-based Kenan Advantage Group. Purchasing its van and LTL assets provides Manitoulin with broader coverage of the Western Canadian market, including the Northwest Territories.

"We continue to expand in Canada's west due to its buoyant economy and our desire to round out our offerings in the region for the convenience of our customers," said Don Goodwill, president, Manitoulin Transport. "This acquisition enables Manitoulin to provide customers needing LTL, flatdeck and temperature-controlled services with greater choice through increased trip frequency to the north."

"We made a strategic business decision to focus on our bulk transportation and construction business moving forward," said Grant Mitchell, president and CEO of RTL-Westcan Bulk. "We are delighted with this agreement, believing our loyal LTL customers are in good hands, given Manitoulin's reputation and the breadth of local, national and global service they are able to provide."

"Manitoulin and Westcan Bulk Transport share a similar heritage of modest beginnings in the 1960s and steady growth," added Gord Smith, CEO, Manitoulin Group. "We also share the same corporate values of exemplary service, environmental stewardship, a commitment to safety, and the desire to be a true customer partner - ensuring a seamless transition for Westcan Freight Systems LTL customers." ●

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# Volvo promises fuel savings on 2016 model year VNs

GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

Volvo is promising a more fuel-efficient VN series with its 2016 model year. Improvements in aerodynamics and powertrain enhancements are expected to improve fuel economy up to 3.5% and 2.5%, respectively, the company announced.

Aerodynamics have been improved to better reflect how air flows, not just around the tractor, but also the trailer, the company explained.

"In real-world operations, an aerodynamic tractor doesn't guarantee optimal aerodynamics for the tractor-trailer combination," said Jason Spence, Volvo Trucks product marketing manager. "Through our holistic design approach, we've made further enhancements at key exterior and interior locations of our model year 2016 vehicles to greatly improve the transfer of air from the tractor to the trailer, ultimately improving the total aerodynamic performance of the complete vehicle."

Improvements have been made to the bumper, chassis and roof fairings of model year 2016 VN highway tractors. They improve airflow under the truck, around the tires and trailer gap, reducing turbulence.

Also new is XE Adaptive Gearing and Torque Management, which builds on Volvo's popular XE Exceptional Efficiency powertrain package. The new options are designed for trucks that go out loaded and return empty or lightly loaded, as is often the case among bulk haulers, liquid tankers and flatbed carriers.

The system is both a direct drive and overdrive driveline, depending on the rear axle load, which is automatically determined by the system. When loaded, the transmission locks out the 12th gear and provides the benefits of a direct drive, but while empty or lightly loaded, the driveline operates in an overdrive configuration.

Customers can also set road speed limits for both loaded and unloaded conditions. XE-Adaptive Gearing ratings will initially be offered on Volvo's D11 and D13 engines mated to an I-Shift transmission, Volvo announced.

It's also offering three new torque control features, which Volvo says will improve fuel mileage, extend tire life and reduce driveline stress.

"XE-Adaptive Gearing and Torque Management powertrain options provide unprecedented customization for customers looking for an optimized solution to fit their specific needs," said John Moore, Volvo Trucks product marketing manager, powertrain. "Our wide selection of torque management software allows motor carriers to break free from traditional driveline options and choose a spec that's been tailored to terrain, load type, delivery and performance requirements."

"With Volvo's model year 2016 vehicles come an even greater value of ownership as we continue to refine the aerodynamic profile of our VN series tractors and redefine traditional expectations of powertrain performance through our integrated Volvo engines and I-Shift transmission," added Goran Nyberg, president, Volvo Trucks North American Sales & Marketing. "Our latest enhancements provide a strong complement to the fuel efficient-



**Volvo says its 2016 model year VN tractors will be more fuel-efficient than previous versions.**

cy improvements of up to 3% provided through last year's introduction of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) 2014-certified engines." ●

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# Eaton launches dual clutch transmission

**Company claims the Procision will get 8-10% better fuel economy than a torque converter automatic. We put it through its paces at Eaton's Marshall Proving Grounds.**

By James Menzies  
MARSHALL, MICHIGAN

Eaton has introduced North America's first dual clutch automated transmission for medium-duty trucks, claiming it can net 8-10% better fuel economy than torque converter-style automatics. They call it the Procision. It could be called the Allison Assassin.

The dual clutch transmission replicates the strongest attributes of a torque converter-style automatic – notably its smooth shifting and robustness – yet still offers the relative sim-

ilarity of an automated manual design.

#### How it works

As the name implies, a dual clutch transmission incorporates two clutches and actuators, which alternate shifting responsibilities so that one of the two clutches is always engaged. This allows for "powershifting," which eliminates the power interruption that traditionally occurs when a non-torque converter transmission shifts gears.

While the transmission is in third gear, for example, the second clutch pre-selects fourth and then the trans-

mission seamlessly changes gears when an upshift is required. The other clutch will then pre-select fifth gear so it's ready to complete the next upshift.

"This allows for the smooth, continuous delivery of torque to the wheels under all shift conditions," explained Jeff Carpenter, engineering manager, Procision.

Powershifting also occurs with downshifts.

The seven-speed transmission is comparable in weight to a fully-automatic, yet Eaton claims it's more serviceable. The transmission control module has been mounted onto the transmission itself and three PTO apertures are offered: one on each side and another at the rear.

On-road and dynamometer testing has indicated medium-duty applications using the Procision will yield an 8-10% fuel savings compared to torque



converter automatics, and there's potential for even greater savings in duty-cycles with frequent starts and stops or plenty of grades, officials said.

"A dual clutch transmission is more efficient than a torque converter and the more you have that torque converter out of lockup, the greater the benefits of the dual clutch," Carpenter explained.

In developing the Procision, Eaton consulted with its customers to find out what they liked and disliked about currently available medium-duty transmissions. Many indicated they found the Allison to be a robust product, but costly and difficult to repair when necessary. Eaton felt it had to make the Procision more serviceable and reliable than existing products and so it was designed for a 10-year, 400,000-mile life. Even the clutches are expected to last that long. The Procision was built with all-aluminum enclosures, clutch housing, main case and rear case. It can go 150,000 miles between service intervals, meaning many medium-duty operators will be able to run three or four years before servicing their transmission.

#### How it performed

A number of trucks equipped with the Procision, and some fitted with competitive products, were made available for a full afternoon of driving activities at Eaton's Marshall Proving Grounds. This is where the advantages of the dual clutch design became obvious.

Two Freightliner M2 extended cab chassis with identical Cummins ISB 6.7 engines were made available. One was equipped with the Procision and the other with a Gen 5 Allison 2000-series automatic with FuelSense features enabled, including load-based shift scheduling and vehicle acceleration controls. This was the baseline vehicle against which Eaton conducted its fuel economy testing. Both trucks were loaded up to 26,000 lbs.

The Procision outshone the Allison in several areas, most notably its performance on the grades, which ranged from 3-20%. A Hill Helper feature will hold the Procision-equipped truck in position on a grade of up to 8% with no rollback, allowing the driver sufficient time to apply the throttle.

Whether on flat ground or steep grades, the Creep Mode feature will move the truck forward or in reverse at a slow, steady speed, allowing the driver to feel in control of the vehicle at all times. The Allison-equipped truck freewheeled down the larger grades while the Procision descended in a more controlled manner.

Low-speed maneuvers such as backing were also easier to perform with the Procision.

The Procision also shines during acceleration, charging quickly through the seven gears without the momentary power loss normally felt between shift-points. Fuel no longer has to be spent

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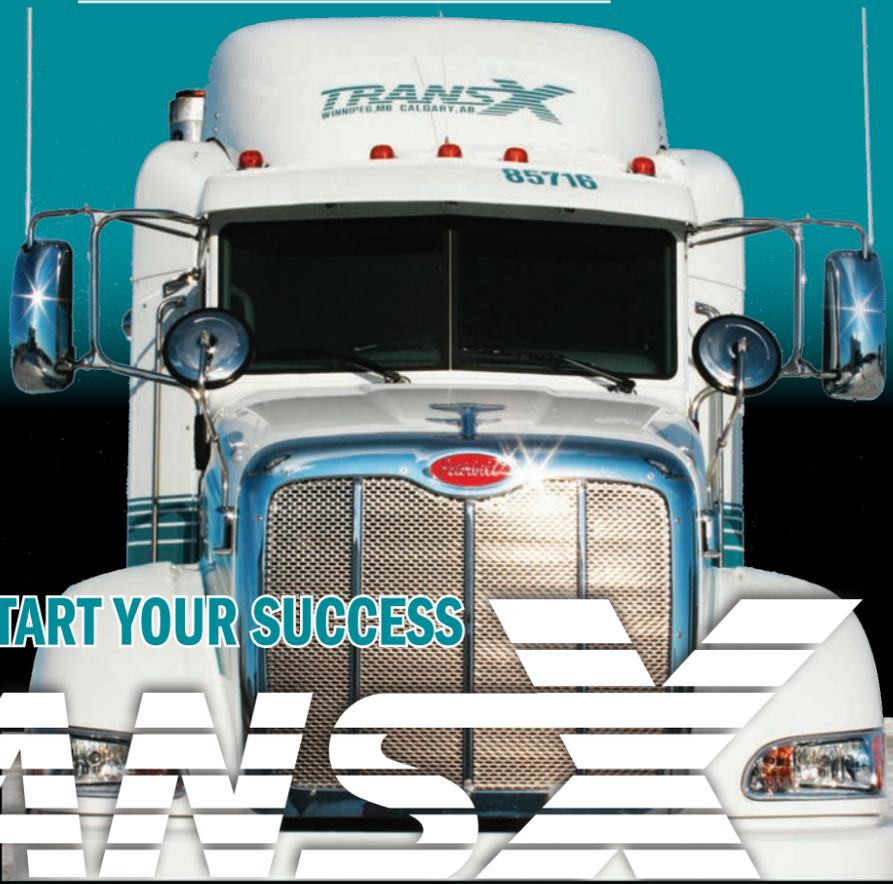
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Eaton's John Beering introduces trucking journalists to the new Procision dual clutch transmission for Classes 6-7 vehicles.

to recover the momentum that was lost during gear changes and in this respect, the performance between the Procision and a torque converter automatic, or for that matter your passenger car, is very similar.

The Procision and its Dynamic Shifting features can be synched up with Cummins Vehicle Acceleration Management, to ensure drivers aren't wasting fuel while accelerating, by providing them only the power they truly need.

The tall first gear ratio of 6.50:1 allows the truck to get up to speed in a hurry and yet, Eaton officials claim it's also consuming less fuel while doing so than the Allison. Eaton engineer Ed Magner said the Allison uses about twice as much fuel as the Procision when accelerating up to 30 mph. The Procision also saves fuel while idling in gear, by reducing the torque applied at idle, Magner explained.

Another nice feature is the Tap Down shifting, which allows the driver to downshift with a tap of the brake pedal, assuming conditions are right for a downshift. A Manual mode is still available, allowing drivers to shift gears themselves, but protection characteristics have been built into the transmission, which won't allow the driver to cause damage. In fact, you can even shift from Reverse to Drive without coming to a complete stop without damaging the transmission.

Drivers of medium-duty trucks are often not professional drivers. Their truck is a tool that's required to conduct their primary business. The Procision will be a great fit for these drivers as it's easier to operate than existing products, giving the driver a greater level of comfort and confidence when operating the vehicle.

**When it will be available**

The Procision will be launched with an unnamed OEM next July, initially targeting the pickup and delivery, towing and recovery, beverage and school bus segments, which collectively comprise about 70% of the medium-duty market, according to John Beering, senior vice-president and general manager, commercial vehicle transmissions with Eaton. However, there are 200-plus other medium-duty applications that could eventually see the Procision. There's also the potential to scale the technology up to Class 8, or down to Classes 4/5 vehicles, though Eaton officials said at the product launch they're initially focused on the medium-duty segment identified above.

"We have a lot of customers coming to us from a variety of segments, both in North America and other regions, that are asking for this product," Beering said. "We have constrained the team initially to stay focused on launching the core product, but there's

a growing list of folks lining up to talk. I'm quite bullish that following this, there will be much more to come."

The Procision will come in two models, with or without Park Pawl. A new synthetic transmission fluid will be required. ●

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## Volvo opens new test track

DUBLIN, VIRGINIA

Buyers who want to test drive trucks conditions that mimic working environments now have a place to go.

As originally reported by *Truck News* last year, Volvo Trucks North America decided to build a combination road course and vocational track at its New River truck plant in Dublin, Virginia. Begun as a bit of an under-the-radar skunkworks project, the 1.1-mile customer experience track quickly gained approval and the official go-ahead from Olof Persson, Volvo's global president and CEO.

Goran Nyberg, president of Volvo Trucks North American sales and marketing understands why, and feels the track will become a valuable tool for fleet managers looking to evaluate equipment.

"The customer experience track is built to simulate real-world driving conditions and provide our visitors with the opportunity to experience first-hand the quality and performance of Volvo trucks," he said.

Now, potential Volvo buyers are able to experience the paved road course and off-highway area themselves, as the manufacturer has officially opened the track to the public.

The road portion of the track has been designed with banked corners, allowing drivers to achieve highway speeds. Inside of the road course, the off-highway area has been built with varying grades and surfaces.

Since the customer experience track is a closed road (on private property), a CDL is not required to get behind the wheel. According to the man in charge of the project, Lars Blomberg, vice-president and general manager of the New River plant, Volvo factory employees were entirely responsible for designing and building the track.

"The employees who built the track are both dedicated and passionate about the work they do, which is evident by their commitment to quality and their desire to develop this track. I commend all of our employees for the work that they do." ●

## Eaton authorizes Canadian rebuilder

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

Eaton has expanded its Authorized Rebuilder Program onto Canadian soil.

The Authorized Rebuilder Program, which gives fleets and drivers the option of purchasing rebuilt transmissions with 100% Eaton components, now includes Truck Pacific, a division of Crane Carrier in Edmonton, Alberta.

Truck Pacific has 65 employees, and its warehouse and shop facility will nearly double its space when it expands to 81,500 sq.-ft. by the end of 2014.

"In business since 1947, Pacific Truck has established itself as one of western Canada's foremost suppliers of truck parts and equipment," said Bill Fouch, Eaton's NAFTA aftermarket marketing manager.

To become an Eaton Authorized Rebuilder, your company must complete Eaton's technical and sales training, meet Eaton's re-use and re-build criteria and must use all Eaton content to the transmissions rebuilt as part of the program. ●

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**Bruce R. Smith is refreshing its fleet with the purchase of 42 International trucks from Tallman Truck Centre.**

## Bruce R. Smith purchases 42 trucks from Tallman Truck Centre

### MISSISSAUGA, ONTARIO

Bruce R. Smith has signed a deal for 42 International ProStars from Tallman Truck Centre. The new 2015 units have automated transmissions and Cummins ISX15 engines.

"Our customers rely on us for premium service and we are committed to providing them just that," Sandro Caccaro, president of Bruce R. Smith said. "We saw the need to invest in a new fleet of fuel-efficient trucks that would better meet customers' demands and environmental concerns. We chose Tallman for their ability to enhance our fleet maintenance requirements on a 24/7 basis across their extensive dealer network in Ontario."

Kevin Tallman, president of Tallman Truck Centre added, "This deal is a win-win for both Bruce R. Smith and Tallman Truck Centre. Bruce R. Smith gets the fuel-efficient equipment they need to service the growing needs of their customers and we get the opportunity to create a long-term partnership...We look forward to being part of Bruce R. Smith's future." ●

## Meritor promotes 6x2 axles

### TROY, MICHIGAN

With Canadian policymakers set to discuss regulations that prohibit advanced 6x2s axle configurations later this year, manufacturers and fleets have stepped up their efforts to raise awareness of the technology's benefits. Meritor has produced a nine-minute video, including appearances from fleets in the US and Canada and even competitor Bendix, which explains how 6x2 axles work and why they don't pose a threat to Canada's roadways.

The video details the benefits of 6x2s and highlights why demand for this configuration is expected to rapidly increase. Canada doesn't allow 6x2 axles because a Memorandum of Understanding signed onto by the provinces requires tandem axles to be within 1,000 kgs of each other at all times. Meritor and its partners have also created a new Web site at 6x2Facts.com to raise awareness of the issue. The video can be found there. ●



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# Platooning for safety and efficiency

By Dale Amy

DETROIT, MICHIGAN

**O**kay, it was a bit unnerving. Riding shotgun at 100 km/h in a tractor-trailer a mere 13 metres behind a similar rig went against deeply ingrained highway survival instincts and simple common sense.

The looming doors of the van in front just seemed too close for reac-

tion comfort. And this was no test track; we were on I-75, winding our way through metro Detroit in mid-morning traffic.

Sure, our driver was manning the steering wheel and fully focused on situational awareness, but his feet were essentially unemployed, as our Volvo VN's throttle and braking were being remotely commanded from the Freightliner cab in front.

We were "platooning," our two rigs slipstreaming in close tandem like drafting NASCAR racers, a formation that has been shown to increase fuel efficiency of both the lead and follow-



Trucks travelled Detroit area highways just 13 metres apart during a recent platooning demonstration.

ing vehicle.

More formally known as Driver-Assistive Truck Platooning (DATP), this

system is in final stages of development by Peloton Technology and is meant to synchronize the acceleration and braking of pairs of tractor-trailers to maintain a safe and steady following distance between them. The twin goals of platooning are to improve both the fuel efficiency and safety of on-highway heavy trucks.

How can 13 metres or less separation at freeway speeds be safe? Thanks to the lightning-quick reflexes of technology.

More specifically, platooning builds on existing automated- and connected-vehicle technologies to take relatively slow human perception and reaction times out of the trailing vehicle's braking equation, thereby eliminating roughly 30 metres of stopping distance at highway speeds.

Peloton's major project partners are Meritor Wabco and Denso. Meritor Wabco is well known for its OnGuard collision mitigation systems that use forward-looking radar and assistive braking technologies to detect and react to imminent collision situations.

Each vehicle in a platoon must be equipped with such a system. From Denso comes its DSRC radio system – dedicated short-range communications – that links the on-board processors in the two cabs via a 5.9GHz radio band allocated by the FCC specifically for use by connected vehicles.

When the DATP system is engaged, throttle and braking input data from the lead tractor's processor are transmitted to the trailing vehicle's processor by DSRC, allowing it to react almost instantaneously to match the lead truck's throttle application or braking.

This throttle/braking data can either come from the lead truck's driver input, or from its collision mitigation system's de-throttling or active braking.

This dedicated radio link means that the rear truck doesn't even have to wait for, or rely on, its own radar to detect that the truck in front is slowing or speeding up; its throttle and brakes simply receive those same accelerate/decelerate commands simultaneously.

We got a feel for how the system operates during a ride-along demo at the ITS World Conference in Detroit. Our two demo drivers were in two-way radio communication and once up to speed on sections of divided highway (the system in its current form won't engage at speeds under about 60 km/h) simply each engaged

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a switch in their cabs while separated at normal safe distances.

In-cab displays then notified both drivers that the DATP system was active, while a second screen gave each driver a camera view forward from the other truck's perspective.

With the system engaged, we watched as our now-semi-automated truck slowly eased itself up on its platoon partner and locked in at around 13 metres of separation.

That separation was maintained faithfully as the lead tractor driver responded to the ebb and flow of traffic and road conditions.

Our driver's feet remained flat on the floor (our own might have twitched a little.)

When traffic conditions safely permitted, the lead driver even demonstrated an energetic stomp on his brakes - slowing briskly enough that his ABS and stability-control systems likely became interested - and our rig dutifully responded without decreasing the desired gap, and then powered itself on to accelerate away like a happy puppy on an electronic leash.

During platooning operations, trucks are monitored continuously by Peloton's cloud-based Network Operations Center (NOC).

In fact, the NOC must be consulted by drivers before a platoon link can be established.

To form a platooning link, a driver sends a request to the NOC to pair with a potential partner. Once the other driver agrees, the drivers bring their trucks within linking range. The NOC will then confirm that location, road and weather conditions are appropriate for platooning, and will assign the heavier of the two trucks as the lead vehicle. In other words, the truck with the ability to brake in the shortest distance will always be assigned as the follower in the platoon. The drivers then simply engage a switch in their respective cabs. Trucks and drivers connect to the cloud-based NOC via cellular networks, and fleet managers will be able to access data on their trucks via the NOC.

Drivers can disengage the platoon and separate trucks at their discretion, no differently than they would disengage normal cruise control. Increased separation is automatic should the following truck's radar detect another vehicle cutting in between the platoon, and once the risk has passed, the system will then draw the trucks together again. And the NOC will automatically disengage the link when conditions dictate, such as when a platoon exits a multi-lane divided highway system.

Peloton has conducted industry-standard SAE J1321 fuel economy testing in partnership with the North American Council for Freight Efficiency and the C.R. England trucking fleet.

According to company releases, this testing has reduced fuel use (and related emissions) for the trailing vehicle by an average of 7-10%, while even the lead vehicle typically sees about half this much savings. In these days of volatile fuel pricing, such savings can have an obvious and beneficial effect on a balance sheet.

However, with pricing yet to be announced, it's premature to make any projections regarding return on investment. When Peloton brings the system to market, platoon size will be limited to two vehicles, but testing will continue to evaluate potential for larger formations. ●



In current prototype form, each platooning demo tractor had two system-related screens above the windshield. One showed the system status (showing orange, for disconnected here) while the second showed the view ahead from the other tractor. In final form, these displays may be merged onto a single screen.

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# Tallman Truck Centre hosts grand opening for new location in Oshawa

By Sonia Straface

OSHAWA, ONTARIO

**T**he intoxicating “new building” and BBQ smell was in the air at the Tallman Truck Centre grand opening in Oshawa, Ont. Sept. 10.

After three years of planning, the

new Tallman Truck Centre finally opened its doors to the public and the centre of the company’s focus was its supportive customers.

“I want to thank all our customers, vendors and the heart of the whole group, my employees,” said Andy Gaber, the general manager for the location. “Tallman truly believes in customer support and we truly believe that if we look after our customers they will come and that’s the Tallman motto – if it wasn’t for them I wouldn’t be here.”

The grand opening included a free



During its grand opening on September 10, Tallman Truck Centre had a ribbon cutting ceremony with John Henry (centre), Mayor of Oshawa.

BBQ lunch for attendees and was marked with the traditional ribbon cutting ceremony at the front entrance of the shiny new 20,000 sq.-ft. dealership visible from Hwy. 401. The Mayor of Oshawa, John Henry, was there

to cut the ribbon in front of nearly 75 customers, staff, family and friends. He discussed the importance of the centre’s location and how joining Oshawa’s booming community will surely affect sales.

“When you see a building being re-invented in a city, it shows the city is alive,” said the Mayor. “You’ll now realize that if you’re in business in this community, that we are the second fastest growing economy in the province of Ontario next to Toronto.”

The construction of the building didn’t come easy. In fact it underwent multiple blueprint changes over three years before staff was able to work comfortably in the new place. Construction of the new building took just over one year to complete.

“What you see here today, is really from the ground-up, entirely new construction,” said president Kevin Tallman. “We had an existing building that we completely bulldozed. We had

**“My greatest hope for this building is that we didn’t add enough square footage.”**

Kevin Tallman, president

to build it in two phases so we could remain open but built a brand new shop in the back, and once that was done we put everyone in office trailers and bulldozed the front.”

The new building has a driver lounge and 15 service bays. Tallman invested more than \$4.5 million into the construction and purchase of the land because of their growing customer base.

“We expect this company in Oshawa to continue to be the industry leader,” Tallman said. “Our general manager Andy Gaber has done an exceptional job right out of the gate of getting Tallman recognized as a premier service provider and we want to just continue our leadership position in the market.”

Even though the fresh coats of paint have just finished drying on the new building, Tallman is hoping that construction for this location isn’t over just yet.

“My greatest hope for this building is that we didn’t add enough square footage and that we’ll need to add on in the coming years with how well we’ve been received and the service volumes that we have,” he said. “I don’t think that will be too far away. I’m pretty excited about growing and further expanding the business.”



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## Goodyear's emergency road service celebrates milestone

AKRON, OHIO

Goodyear's Emergency Roadside Service program reached a milestone recently, servicing its one millionth customer. The roadside service program has been offered since late 2007 and is part of Goodyear's FleetHQ suite of business services.

The millionth service call took place in August when a driver from Schneider National experienced a tire failure near Floresville, Texas after running over a piece of debris. The driver notified Schneider, which then submitted a request for assistance using the FleetHQ Web site.

"The data was then sent to our 24/7 Goodyear-FleetHQ Solution Center,"

said Jose Martinez, business solutions manager, Goodyear Commercial Tire Systems. "A trained tire professional at the center dispatched a tire service technician from a San Antonio-based Goodyear Commercial Tire & Service Center, who drove out to the downed truck."

The truck was back on the road in an hour and 45 minutes from when the driver reported the problem to his carrier, Goodyear claims. The average roll-time provided by FleetHQ Emergency Roadside Service is two hours and 11 minutes, the company says.

Fleets and drivers can request help using the Goodyear Web site, by calling a dedicated number or using the Goodyear Road Service app. ●

## Tallman Truck Centre buys Woodbine

MISSISSAUGA, ONTARIO

Tallman Truck Centre just got a little bigger. The company has acquired Woodbine Truck Centre, which has been an International truck dealership since 1969. Woodbine is also the Kalmar Ottawa Shunt Tractor distributor for the province.

"This acquisition is consistent with our strategy to grow and expand our dealership service capability throughout the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). We now have nine full service dealerships in Ontario, three of which are located in the GTA," said Kevin Tallman, president of Tallman Truck Centre.

Woodbine Truck Centre will be re-branded as Tallman Truck Centre – Markham. The company also named William Galante as the new GM of the centre in Markham. He has more than 30 years of experience in the fleet management industry and held management positions with Ryder and PHH Arval. ●

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# ABAJAM Chronicles

## Trucker's first book is otherworldly

By Sonia Straface

**A**liens, spaceships and telepathy...oh my! When a trucker sets out to write a novel, one expects an autobiography, a travelogue, or an exciting tale that closely resembles the adventures of Sal Paradise. But for Alfy R.E. Meyer, a veteran truck driver, none of these sorts of stories were on his mind when he sat down to write his debut novel.

Meyer's ABAJAM Chronicles: Two Families Lost in Time is not a story about trucks or truckers or a journey along a road. It's a science-fiction tale about two families who are mysteriously sent to an alternate universe. They have no idea why they were sent there and if they can ever return to life as they remember it.

Like a classic whodunit, you are quickly pulled into a world where not every thing makes sense and uncertainty is the only constant.

Drinking Johnnie Walker whiskey, a cloudy Albert Meisner, the main character, explains the circumstances in which his family got to where they are now. It looks as though the characters are in their southern Ontario home, however there are no buildings and roads or houses around them - another universe, not unlike the world they're used to, but not like it, either.

They seem to be in a completely different time (no TV, no Internet and no phone lines), only they don't know when and how they got there. Things for Albert and crew get worse when he begins to figure out that perhaps they were sent to this time and place because of some curious alien artifacts he found a dozen years ago. These same artifacts have given him super-

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The Western Star 5700XE brings an edge to aero, according to a tagline from its marketing folks. It's hard to argue with a face like this. Note the bumper end caps, dubbed fangs, which direct air away from the wheel well while also adding to the truck's distinct look.

## Western Star 5700 provides a stable, comfortable ride

Continued from page 47

styled driver environment, the 5700 is pure truck. The signal light stalk is heavy, the gauges large and the dash has a classic, driver-friendly layout. The driver display area is small compared to other models, which limits the likelihood of distraction and also helps retain the classic look of the interior.

Western Star has brought over from the vocational segment some serviceability features, including easy access to the fuse panels and power distribution module, which can be accessed from the passenger seat by simply removing four bolts. The entire panel can be pulled out from its home here for easy serviceability - a vocational feature that technicians will appreciate just as much on an on-highway tractor.

The 5700 uses the same honeycomb-style sleeper cab that's offered on its previous models. Its lightweight construction means the 5700's total weight compares more favorably to other aero models as the sleeper size increases. There has always been a perception that the Western Star is a heavy truck due to its steel cab, however the truck I drove weighed in at a very respectable 17,500 lbs and that was with disc brakes and that 72-inch sleeper.

The Western Star 5700 provided an exceptionally steady ride, particularly while cornering, an attribute that stems in part from its wide cab mounts.

It was comfortable to drive, particularly with the DT12 automated transmission. There are some surprisingly steep grades outside Vegas, including a long 6% climb near Summerlin, which tested the DD13. It was up to the challenge, though I bet many Canadian customers will opt for the DD15, which will net better fuel economy when you're running the hills. Climbing that long 6 percent, I was able to employ the kick-down feature available on the DD13/DT12 combo, which when the pedal was depressed to the floor dropped a gear and provided a little extra torque to manage the climb.

The DT12's paddle shifter allowed me to drop a gear or activate the engine brake without reaching to the dash.

Another nice feature available on the Western Star 5700 is Meritor Wabco's OnGuard collision mitigation system. I've experienced it before, but not in heavy traffic such as that I encountered returning to the city. When in cruise control OnGuard measures the distance to other vehicles in front of the truck and applies the engine and service brakes as necessary to maintain a safe following distance. It took some getting used to before I was willing to really trust the system but after a few miles of interacting with heavy traffic I found I was able to place my trust in the system and let it do its thing.

OnGuard seems to have been dialed in; it didn't overreact to vehicles that momentarily cut into my personal space, as long as those vehicles were moving faster than I was and quickly got out of my way. When cruise isn't set, audible warnings will alert you to potential danger but it's up to the driver to adjust his or her speed as necessary. OnGuard is a really nice option to have, especially in traffic.

My daytime drive didn't give me the opportunity to check out the improved lighting system offered on the 5700 but officials claim a new projector beam headlight design provides much better nighttime visibility. I know they look good from outside; we got a sneak peek at the 5700 after dark and the headlights ensure you can identify this truck even when it's dark out. A thin LED accent strip along the top and outside edges of the lamp give it a distinctive appearance.

Only a handful of 5700s have been built and it was exciting to be among the first to drive one. Now the race is one to see who'll be the first to own them. This is a truck that will stand out on the highway and separate its owners from the herd. Production is scheduled to begin next April and will ramp up over the summer. When it comes to design and drivability, the Western Star 5700 hit not just home runs, but grand slams. If its fuel-efficiency comes in on target and it's priced right, this truck may finally allow the brand to break through into the on-highway tractor segment in a big way. ●

  
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Truck Tech Talk

KEN BASTIEN



# Good maintenance saves time and money

Obviously as a technician and business owner my perspective will be different from that of O/Os, drivers, and that of the many businesses that use trucks in their operations. From where I sit, the things that make trucks reliable are the same things that reduce operating costs; good decisions, attention to detail, and preventive (truly) maintenance and inspection.

Inspecting vehicles is really everyone's job. Drivers, techs, managers, etc. Obviously, when problems are found and reported, this must be followed up by whomever is responsible for maintenance. It doesn't take people long to figure out if problems are being addressed or they are wasting pen and ink filling out trip inspection forms and maintenance requests.

Finding problems before the failure is probably the easiest way to save money (lots of it); the size of the fleet is irrelevant. That would be all fleets with more than zero pieces of equipment.

The squeaking and then clunking noises you've been hearing was your truck, first asking for grease and then asking you to schedule repairs. Finally the poor, abused, neglected, and generally lonely truck decided it would schedule a day in the shop with other trucks that were also taking a break.

If you don't schedule and plan for repairs/maintenance the truck will arrange it for you, usually at the worst possible moment. You can add in all the other possible costs including downtime, towing, second truck, etc.

Good decisions include spec'ing the right equipment for the job, timely servicing and corrosion protection. Rust is often the determining factor where longevity is concerned.

If you can slow the corrosion process, quite a few years will be added to the service life of your equipment. Start with training for all of those involved in vehicle ops: drivers, techs, managers, etc. Of course this is all very easy to say.

The one 'solution' that doesn't work is saying "We need to save money, stretch out the maintenance and don't repair anything unless it won't move."

Repairs cost more that way. Funny thing is, if you run equipment to breakdown, your equipment is always breaking down. It's easier to accept maintenance as an operating cost rather than using luck and wishful thinking and hoping nothing goes wrong.

I can't remember a day where *nothing* went wrong.

Good relationships between all the people involved goes a long way to solving problems and saving money (and time). I have experienced places that seem to be a battleground with people actively sabotaging the efforts

of others. Drivers, techs, office staff, dispatchers, managers - can't we be friends, or at least civil to each other?

Friction makes for a very unpleasant environment that tends to be wasteful. Simple things like making sure all the radios work, or having the maintenance department install driver-supplied stereo equipment (allowing drivers to install radios leads to disastrous wiring and electronics issues) goes a long way to improving the atmosphere.

When drivers and operators know you will repair things just to make their day more pleasant, they'll start reporting problems and you'll be able to address them before the truck stops at the side of the road have to.

Hey, you fixed the radio, can you fix the door latch and the air leak on the suspension as well? Then both problems don't get you held up at the scales, ticketed or worse. Operators are happier and the day goes by with less frustration, so more loads are picked up and delivered on time. Everybody is happier and pulling (hopefully) in the same direction. Oh yeah, there are two air lines rubbing on the torque rod, can you secure those for me, too? When problems get addressed, operators will report them and then there will be fewer and fewer problems.

What about checklists? Some work, some don't - period. If you give a driver an inspection checklist that has items

that require technical training and equipment to inspect properly, you'll get a lot of useless info (check marks) and checklists that, once filled out, do not reflect reality.

The same applies to technicians given lists that include load binders and safety flares. You'll get great paperwork. Technicians will not count or care about load binders or safety flares, that's the driver's responsibility. People know when they're wasting their time.

Well-designed checklists save effort and improve accuracy. Of course if there is no follow-up, the program will fail. Repairs actually need to be performed. Maintenance is more than check marks and neat files.

When they are performed in a timely fashion with efforts aimed at preventing failures before they occur, the results are fewer breakdowns, greater reliability, happier operators, more reliable everything, and obviously, much better customer service.

Good maintenance saves time and money (and more money). Even without all the added incidentals, good maintenance costs less.

We've all seen/heard the expression "If you think safety is expensive, try an accident."

Well, if you think good maintenance is expensive, try a few breakdowns far from home - just to make it even more fun. ●

*Ken Bastien holds a 310T and 310S and inter-provincial standards on both and has been licensed since 1982. He currently owns and operates Simcoe Truck and Trailer and Canadatruckwash.com in Barrie, Ont. You can reach him at ken@simcoetruck.com.*

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2008 WESTERN STAR c/w 20,000 litre 5 compartment aluminum tank, dual pumping and metering equipment, Midcom, bottom loading, vapour recovery. Stock 2008 WS



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# Keeping your tire budget in the black

By John G. Smith

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

Randy Obermeyer's work at Batesville Logistics involves life spans in more ways than one. He certainly tracks every tire from the moment it's mounted to the day the retreaded casing is finally scrapped. But even the fleet's cargo plays a unique

role in final days.

Batesville ships caskets to markets in Canada and the US.

Obermeyer is hardly the only fleet manager to realize that a tire's life plays a key role in today's operating budgets. Premature failures increase expenses for replacements and roadside service calls; extra rolling resistance reduces fuel economy; damaged casings limit cost-

saving retreading opportunities. The only operating costs to outpace tires are wages and fuel.

It's why the Technology & Maintenance Council (TMC) invited Obermeyer and other maintenance managers to share lessons gleaned from their respective tire benchmarking programs.

A careful study of everything from purchase histories to maintenance activities can guide the choices which maximize tire life and performance alike. Kirk Altrichter, maintenance vice-president at Crete Carrier Corporation, referred to another benefit. "The other thing is making sure we're running the right tire to begin with," he told the crowd of fellow maintenance managers in Nashville.

The "right" tire choice can be dictated by everything from budgets to applications and axle weights. Consider Kevin Tomlinson, who oversees 200 power units and 450 trailers at South Shore Transportation, which delivers building products. The flatbed trailers head out with 54,000-lb loads but return empty, radically changing the tire's footprint along the way. This is why he focuses on choices which promise to reduce shoulder wear.

Obermeyer looks to find a balance between a low cost per kilometre and better fuel economy when choosing tires for his 82 tractors, 119 trailers and 311 pups. But the complete cost needs to consider a number of factors. In addition to the price of a virgin tire, there are costs for ongoing maintenance and retreading. Then there are the values of casings, used tires, and warranties. Even the price of shocks would need to be included if a fleet proactively replaces the components to extend tire life, he said.

The tire-related maintenance costs do not end there. Jim Ricapito, tire maintenance specialist with FedEx Ground, referred to the way flying shreds can also tear apart wiring and air lines. When that happens, a two-hour roadside service call can stretch to four hours, increasing labour costs and downtime alike.

The cost of purchasing and maintaining components designed to extend tire life will play a role as well. Tomlinson offered the example of a liftable forward axle which could help to reduce the uneven wear he sees on trailer tires. This might reduce tire costs but would have to be compared to the cost of installing and maintaining the lift axle itself.

Each speaker on the panel also controls tire costs through retreading, although their individual benchmarks have led to different approaches. Tomlinson retreads casings from the tractors but scraps those used on the trailer.

"When the tire gets off the trailer it's pretty well junk," he said. Obermeyer retreads casings that have been in service for up to 60 months with a maximum of two repairs, none of which can be on the shoulder or include a section repair. Trailer tires are the exception to this rule. Those casings can be retreaded within 72 months and with a maximum of two repairs, one of which can be on the shoulder and one of which can include a section repair up to 33 mm in size. FedEx Ground, which buys three times as many retreads as virgin tires, tried to retread trailer casings up to seven years old, but discovered an associated increase in roadside breakdowns.

"We lose a lot of casings through over-the-road repairs," Altrichter added. "Getting casings back is huge. It drives down your costs tremendously."

It isn't the only way to recover value from a worn tire and reduce the overall cost per kilometre.

"Maybe we even want to run the drive tire down to a certain point and sell them as used tires," Obermeyer said.

Of course, a tire needs to survive daily demands before there are any discussions about a new life as a retread. Few factors will have a bigger influence on this than inflation pressures.

These fleet managers selected different pressures to reflect their operations and weights. Batesville keeps tires on steer axles, trailers and dollies at 100 psi, with drive tires at 95 psi.

South Shore maintains most of its tires at 100 psi as well, with the exception of the wide-base tires that are inflated to 125 psi. Crete, meanwhile, inflates its steer tires to 110 psi, with the trailers at 95 psi. FedEx Ground maintains more than 256,000 wheel positions at 85 psi, largely because the trailers cube out long before reaching maximum weights, Ricapito said, noting that lower pressures ensure a better footprint against the road. But lower pressures should only be used after matching the figures in tire load inflation tables to the heaviest-possible loads, he stressed.

Each fleet manager on the panel recognized the value of a calibrated tire gauge. Obermeyer wants to see the pressures checked each time a truck crosses a fuel island, arrives in a shop, or when his local tire supplier visits once a month. Drivers are expected to check the pressures during pre- and post-trip inspections, too. But he doesn't think drivers always follow the rule.

"If you just stick a pressure gauge in the truck and hope they use it, you're kidding yourself," he said.

Tomlinson offered a similar observation. Are pre-trip tire inspections happening? "Possibly," he said. "I'm sure that the post-trip never happens."

The maintenance managers are clearly more focused on the job, carefully tracking pressures at each opportunity. In one audit, Obermeyer discovered 19 "flat" tires that were still pressurized above 50 psi. Only a tire gauge would identify a problem like that.

"Our challenge is to go in with our garage managers and also the tire companies we're working with to inspect as many tires on a daily basis as possible," Ricapito added.

There are technical solutions to under-inflated tires, of course. Responding to the data in its tire program, Batesville Logistics is now testing automatic tire inflation systems on 24 pup trailers. Half of Tomlinson's trailers already have the devices. Data can also identify other ways that drivers are shortening tire life. Tomlinson refers to curb-related damage on sidewalls as just one example.

"I put that all on the driver," he said. His fleet has responded with extra lessons about how to use mirrors, but has admittedly been fighting a losing battle.

Tomlinson, meanwhile, watches for the signs of uneven tread wear which could indicate alignment problems. "Pay attention to the steers and drives," he said.

The more detailed the tire program's data, the better. Ricapito tracks dispatched miles as well as the distances recorded by the electronic control modules for anti-lock brakes.

Altrichter stresses the value of using vehicle maintenance reporting standards (VMRS) codes, making it possible to accurately cross-reference maintenance activities. Ricapito uses documents from his tire dealers to conduct monthly audits, asking them to show him specific tires in the reports. If the tire can't be located, the supplier has seven days to match the records. "Hold them accountable," he said. "We won't accept mediocrity."

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## New remote panels for reefers

ATHENS, GEORGIA

Carrier Transicold has introduced new APX remote panels, which allow operators to control reefer temperatures from more convenient locations. The remote panels are available in two configurations: the flush-mount design can be mounted inside the trailer, near the rear doors. The surface-mount option is installed on trailer exteriors. Flush-mount panels are especially useful at distribution centres, where personnel can configure the reefer by walking into the trailer from a loading dock, the company says. The surface-mount panels are usually mounted near the front of the trailer, opposite the main unit control, providing safer curbside access when the vehicle is parked along a traffic corridor.

"Remote panels provide the ability to control the refrigeration system from secondary locations that are more convenient for drivers and distribution operations," said Mark Fragnito, product manager, Carrier Transicold. "The new APX remote panels provide the same control functionality as the main APX control display common to Carrier Transicold's current X4 and Vector series trailer refrigeration units." For more info, visit [www.trucktrailer.carrier.com](http://www.trucktrailer.carrier.com).

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## SmartTruck comes out with new trailer aero system

GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA

SmartTruck has come out with a new TopKit fairing system for dry van and reefer trailers, which mounts to the back of the trailer and provides fuel savings of 5.5% according to SmartWay evaluations.

The company said the new system was designed to be a cost-competitive and nearly invisible alternative to trailer skirts and tails. The TopKit consists of an Aero Rain Guard component that runs along the trailer's top rear edge, and features two side fairing components on the side rear edges. It weighs just 72 lbs.

"Over the past few years, trailer aerodynamic systems have required fleets and owner/operators to add products that extend far beyond their trailer's original dimensions, effectively forcing trailer owners to install aerodynamic equipment that can become obstructive and can create unwanted issues," said Steve Ingham, chief executive officer for SmartTruck. "Our challenge with the TopKit system was to design a supremely effective aerodynamic package that would eliminate the previous issues fleets

and owner/operators encountered when applying aerodynamics to their equipment."

The TopKit has no moving parts and doesn't require driver interaction. It also eliminates concerns about overheating tires and brakes, associated with trailer underside devices.

"Through the SmartTruck team's research, design work and our extensive testing, which involved cutting-edge computational engineering simulations, we believe TopKit offers the industry a revolutionary option in aerodynamic design," said Mike Henderson, chief scientist for SmartTruck. "While TopKit broadens our suite of advanced aerodynamic systems, it follows in the SmartTruck tradition and legacy of developing groundbreaking aerodynamic designs which provide maximum fuel savings and durability while remaining protected by staying inside the footprint of the trailer."

SmartTruck bills the TopKit system as a standalone SmartWay-verified solution, but it can also be used in combination with other systems such as SmartTruck's undertray system.

More info can be found at [www.smarttruckaero.com](http://www.smarttruckaero.com).

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

The OTA's Education Foundation has announced **Scott Tilley**, co-president of Tandet Logistics in Oakville, Ont., is the new vice-chair of the foundation.

"The Foundation's directors felt that Scott's willingness to participate in several industry boards and committees is a testament to his enthusiasm and energy, which will continue to be an asset to the Foundation," said Scott Smith, chair of the OTA Education Foundation.

Tilley replaces Ellen Poll of Drumbo Transport who was vice-chair since 2005.

Trailer Wizards has announced two new managers for its Mississauga service centre. **Joe Pannella** and **Michael Dann** have been appointed as senior service manager and parts manager, respectively. Pannella will be responsible for the service team and customer care centres in the GTA. He has many years of experience while running Alba Trailers' service operation.

Dann will be in charge of supporting the company's the service and parts team. He worked for Kenworth and also has many years of experience in managing and coordinating large parts operations.

"I am very excited to have Joe Pannella and Michael Dann join our service and parts departments in our Ontario Region," Arthur Christakos, vice-president of Trailer Wizards' Ontario Region, explained. "Joe believes in team success and his hands-on approach, analytical skills and focus on safety will make a valuable contribution to the Ontario team." Christakos continued "Michael's also a great team player and his positive attitude and experience will elevate our parts department to new heights."

Ryder System announced the winner of its 2014 Top Technicians Recognition Program, including a Canadian.

The program was made to identify and reward Ryder's best technicians. Winners are selected annually from the company's team of nearly 5,000 technicians based out of the US and Canada. There is a competition which consists of 10 hands-on skills tests that include things like vehicle electronics and preventive maintenance.

The winner of the award for 2014 was **Frederick Morra**. He walked away with the keys to a brand new GMC Sierra Denali pick-up truck and a cash prize. The top Canadian was **Darek Mowinski** of Windsor, Ont.

Carrier Centers has announced the return of **Phil Aitken** after many years selling trucks and trailers in Toronto. Aitken has taken on the job of trailer sales manager, and will expand Carrier's trailer sales presence. "We look forward to further development of the Doepker franchise, and other developments which will be announced soon," the company announced.

The Manitoba Trucking Association gave nine scholarships to hopeful students with funds it raised from its two annual golf tournaments. Scholarships are given to employees or dependents to the company's members. Three of the scholarships awarded were based on academics.

The winners were: **Julie DePauw**, **Adrianna Racano** and **Edmund-Sean Viagedor**.

Four scholarships were given to apprentices who are currently working for an MTA member company. Winners of the apprenticeship scholarships were: **Kerry Bezemer**, **Christian Lewis**, **Jesse Reinsch**, and **Coleman Regula**.

The Edward M. Ewanochko award was given to **Edmund-Sean Viagedor** and the Winnipeg Transportation Scholarship award was given to **Lucas Bock**.

## Atlantis Radiator TRUCK AUTO SERVICE INC.

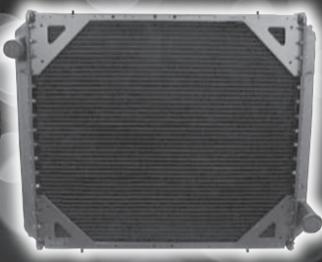
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# Chevron coming out with more advanced heavy-duty engine oil

By Carolyn Gruske

**C**hevron has announced it's introducing Delo 400 SD SAE 15W-30, a new oil it has positioned as a fuel-efficient and cheaper alternative to synthetic, severe-duty products promising excellent deposit control. According to the company, it shows "comparable fuel economy to SAE 10W-30 in (Class 6) stop-and-go applications and up to 0.7 % fuel economy improvement with long-haul trucks (Class 8) when compared to a SAE 15W-40 oil."

Chevron also claims that depending on the application and engine, the drain interval is between 30-50% better than the recommended drain in-

terval during over-the-road use.

The Delo 15W-30 is designed for on- and off-highway applications, including 2010 and Tier 4 compliant low emission diesel engines with selective catalytic reduction (SCR), diesel particulate filters (DPF) and exhaust gas recirculation (EGR).

Knowing that 15W-30 is an unusual viscosity rating, Chevron is adding a bonus for its American clients: after purchasing 10 US gallons of the oil, customers qualify for five free engine oil analyses. The thinking behind the offer is that that first one will be used as a comparison baseline of their original oil, and the next four will be tests of the Delo 15W-30. That way they can see how well the oil is – or isn't – hold-

ing up under their specific working conditions.

One working condition Chevron seems a bit leery about is extreme cold weather temperatures, noting that it should perform in a similar manner to a 15W-40 in those conditions. (The company recommends using 5W oils for low temperature performance). It's precisely because of this that the Canadian launch is being held back until sometime next spring, after the weather warms up. As to whether Canadian customers will be presented with the same offer for free engine analyses, Chevron can't confirm that at this point.

"Upon launch we will certainly consider that. We will use the learning here. We think it's going to be really effective. Assuming we get positive feedback from our customers, and we certainly expect to, that would cer-



tainly be our expectation. We have the ability to execute there and we hope to target late spring when it makes sense – when things start to thaw out a bit," said Jim Gambill, manager Americas marketing with Chevron.

Chevron says buyers should expect to see the oil priced somewhere between what similar-sized bottles of 15W-40 and 10W-30 would cost. ●

## Mack announces new engine, SuperEconodyne offering

GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

**M**ack has announced availability of a new 505-hp 505C+ engine based on its MP8. The new offering is intended for customers looking for big power from a 13-litre engine, the company announced.

The MP8 505C+ offers 505 hp and 1,860 lb.-ft. of torque, delivering the maximum torque output in all gears to maximize fuel efficiency. It's intended for linehaul applications requiring extra power for mountainous terrain.

"This engine is all about power and performance," said Roy Horton, Mack director of product marketing. "The MP8 505C+ is an excellent option for customers seeking a lower-displacement engine, which saves weight and improves fuel economy, but one that can also readily manage heavy loads across rigorous terrain."

The new offering is available in the Mack Pinnacle axle-forward and axle-back models. It is available now for order and delivery.

Mack also introduced a new powertrain suited for regional and bulk haul runs. The MP7 Super Econodyne (SE) puts out 405 hp and 1,560 lb.-ft. of torque. When mated with a Mack mDrive automated manual transmission (AMT) and the company's proprietary C125/126 drive axles and software in a Mack Pedigree Powertrain package, it offers up to a 4% fuel efficiency gain over the standard MP7 and AMT package.

Mack describes the engine as lightweight, and says it is Greenhouse Gas 2014-certified.

The MP7SE can be used to haul up to 80,000 lbs over predominantly flat terrain and up to 70,000 lbs on rolling hills, the company announced.

"The MP7 405SE delivers the legendary Mack power and performance our customers have come to expect from an integrated Mack Pedigree Powertrain, but with even greater fuel efficiency," Horton said. "It allows our customers to maximize payloads, save on fuel and increase their return on investment – all without compromising power." ●

## Bridgestone offers new Firestone steer tire, Bandag retread

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

Bridgestone Commercial Solutions has introduced a new Firestone steer tire and Bandag retread. The Firestone FS561 is suitable for on-highway use in high-scrub environments. It's an all-position radial recommended for regional and P&D applications.

"The new FS561 is built for demanding environments, with features such as a tough tread cap compound and solid shoulder ribs that help resist maneuvering scrub leading to increased tread life," said Matt Loos, director of truck and bus marketing, Bridgestone Commercial Solutions. "The FS561 delivers the trusted, quality performance of the Firestone brand."

It's available in sizes 295/75R22.5 and 11R22.5 in the US and Canada, with more sizes scheduled for release later this year.

The Bandag B799 retread is available for mild mixed service and P&D environments, the company announced. It is designed to compliment the M799. The new tread design is aimed at offering solid traction and a deep tread depth to promote long wear life.

"The B799 meets the needs of fleets that operate in mixed service environments where they need on-road performance, as well as off-road capability where traction and durability are important," said Matt Schnedler, retread product marketing manager, Bridgestone Commercial Solutions. "Additionally, the tread features proven Bandag tread compounding in an updated, optimized pattern for maximum performance."

The Bandag B799 is available in four tread sizes in the US and Canada: 210 mm through 240 mm. ●

## Looking for smarter maintenance strategies?

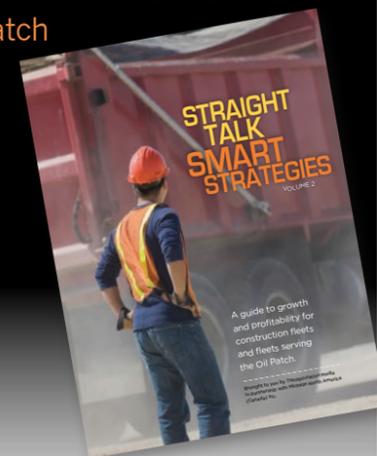
It's a cruel world when your rig gets dragged through the mud every day. But sinking in past the wheel hubs is a fact of life for the fleets we spoke to for our Straight Talk Smart Strategies guide to growth and profitability for construction fleets and fleets serving the Oil Patch. Learn their secrets to survival.

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By Edo Van Belkom

Mark was glad to be finished with the United States for the time being. Obviously the SmartWay rules had been phased in over time, but if you didn't drive the US on a regular basis a lot could change in a few short years.

It had been a learning process however, and he'd made up his mind never to take a load into an area he was uncertain about unless he'd done some research beforehand. These days, with the help of the Internet there was really no excuse for not knowing what the rules are. And even though he now knew the rules about driving into the US, he was looking forward to taking a few loads on his home turf. So with that in mind, he gave his dispatcher, Bud a call.

When Bud answered, Mark decided to head him off at the pass. "Bud, this is Mark Dalton calling. I'm looking for my next load."

"Dalton?"

"That's what I said. Mark Dalton."

"That's not how you do it."

"Do what?"

"Ask for a load."

Mark didn't understand. He'd called up, said who he was and asked for a load. How could he have done anything wrong in such a short amount of time. "What was wrong with it?"

"You're supposed to say Mark.

Then I say, Mark who? Then you get upset with me and give me a smartmouth answer like...oh, I dunno...None of your Markin business.' And then I have a laugh and say, 'Oh, that Dalton.' And then we get on with it."

"I thought you might be getting tired of that."

"Next to trying to figure out how you're going to get into trouble next, it's the most fun I have in this job."

"Oh," Mark was unsure what to say. Bud had always sounded annoyed whenever he called. "I'll try to come up with something good for next time then."

"I'm looking forward to it already," Bud said.

"Now you want some loads."

"That's right."

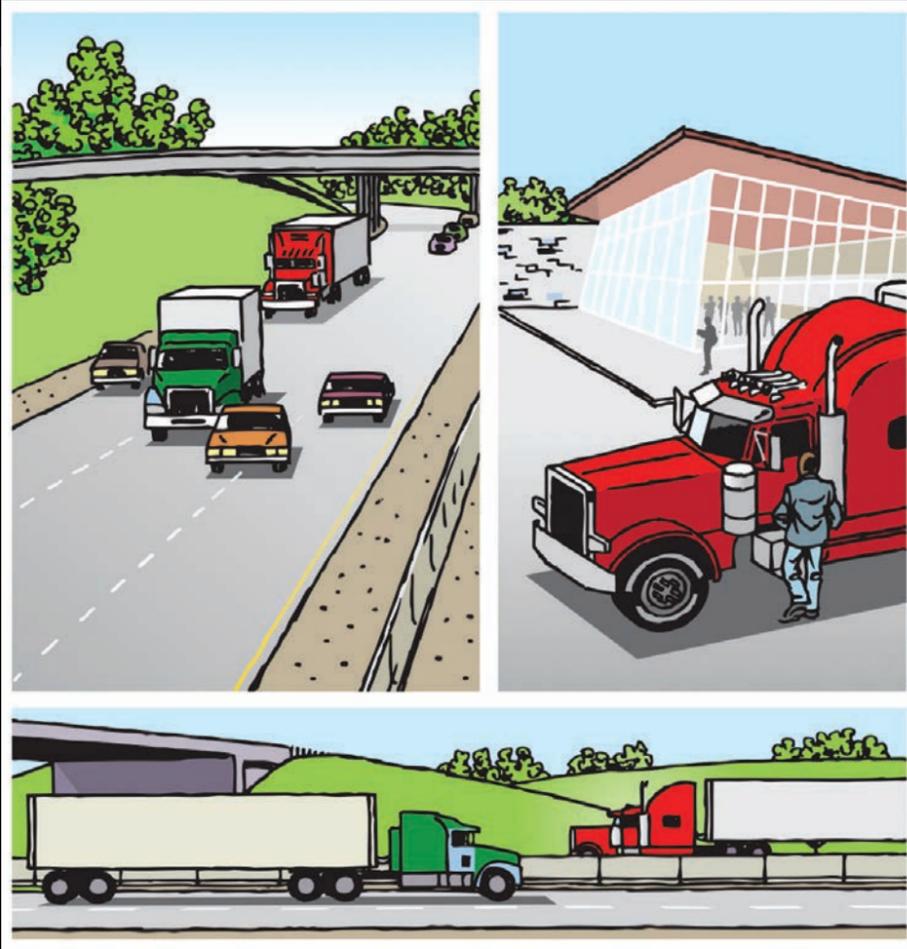
"How about three weeks of nothing but Montreal to Toronto."

"Sounds great."

"It is. They're closing a factory and warehouse down in Montreal and the goods and machinery were bought by a company in Toronto. They're moving everything they want to an empty building in Scarborough and the whole gig should last two, maybe three weeks."

"What about Toronto to Montreal? You have any loads."

"A couple, but you'll have to bobtail it to Montreal for your first load. They only need about 10 trucks



## Puttin' on the blitz

and they're handing them out on a first come first serve basis, so it's best to get their first, then worry about the return trips."

"Sounds like a plan."

Mark got the particulars from Bud and headed east across the 401.

When Mark reached the warehouse near the Montreal loading docks, there were already six trucks in the yard ahead of him. Hopefully he wasn't too late to the party.

For the most part all the trucks were late-models, newer than Mother Load by a few years. But just when Mark thought he had the most senior rig in the line, a green International pulled into the yard. It was an older model that had clearly given its owners many years of service.

And although the truck's cab was green, it had a blue left-front fender and a matching blue door. Those were the only two things that matched on the truck as the rest of it looked scratched, bent and broken.

The tires looked worn, and one of the driver side rear tires had a noticeable wobble to it as the truck slowly crept through the lot.

The truck's driver would be lucky to make it to the scrap yard, thought Mark, never mind Toronto and back.

Just as the thought crossed his mind, the passenger door of the green International opened and a young man jumped out. His clothes were as disheveled as the truck he'd come out of and it looked as if he hadn't had a shower in several days, or a shave in a couple of weeks. Obviously, this guy, and the other one currently behind the wheel, spent as much time as they could driving with everything else taking a back-seat to earning a living.

Okay, so they're a team and the whole point of having a team is keeping the truck on the road with as little downtime as possible.

Nothing wrong with that, thought Mark, since everyone had a right to make a living, and in this country the harder you worked the more money you made, and the more money you made the better life you could provide for your family. There were no laws against making sacrifices to get ahead.

Mark could only hope that these guys' truck only looked like a train wreck and that it was actually mechanically as tight as a drum.

Later, as Mark was securing the gladhands to the trailer he'd be taking to Toronto, he watched the green International scoop up a load that was waiting for them in the middle of the yard.

Smooth, thought Mark.

They'd come in well after him and were leaving minutes before him. Obviously this wasn't their first pick-up.

Later that day, Mark stopped outside of Belleville to fill his tanks, take an extended bathroom break and have a bite to eat. To be honest, he'd spent more time than he'd wanted at the truck stop, but sometimes nature took its time answering its call.

Back on the road and an hour outside of Toronto, Mark was surprised to see the green International on the other side of the highway pulling a trailer back to Montreal.

"Wow," Mark said aloud. "Somebody's making good time...not to mention money."

But as he continued down the road, he got to thinking about how far it was between pick-up and delivery points, the time it took to drop-off and hook-up a load, and then a stop here or there for coffee and bathroom breaks.

And even if it was possible for a team to do the Montreal to Toronto run without a single stop, it was still impressive that they were that far ahead in such a short period of time.

They were either doing something right, or something really wrong. ●

**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](http://fleetsmart.gc.ca).**

Illustration by Glenn McEvoy



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If you have a criminal record in Canada and roll up to the US border without all the paperwork you need, you could be in some major trouble.

## Understanding the differences between pardons and waivers

If you are travelling into the US, make sure you have the right to legally do so.

By Sonia Straface

Having a criminal record is hard. But having a criminal record when you drive trucks professionally is even harder. If you're a driver, or if a driver in your fleet has a criminal record, it is important that they have all the necessary documentation and paperwork before they reach the US border with a trailer full of cargo.

"Most carriers want their truckers to be able to go to the States," said Andrew Tanenbaum, program director at Pardons Canada. "If you have a criminal record in Canada, the Americans have a right to deny you entry. It's that simple."

In order to gain entry into the US again, those with a criminal record have to obtain either a pardon (also called a record suspension) or a US waiver.

"The difference between the two is, a pardon removes your criminal record from the Canadian Police Information Centre and a US waiver grants you entry into the United States," said Azmairin Jadavji, president and CEO of Pardon Services Canada. "It's definitely not uncommon to have a criminal record - one in eight people in Canada have one."

"You only need a waiver if the Americans already stopped you and turned you away because you are now in their system," added Tanenbaum. "In addition, a US waiver is more expensive than a pardon and you need a waiver for the rest of your life. It has to be renewed at least every five years."

Companies like Pardons Canada and Pardon Services Canada specialize in getting those with criminal records out of trouble and across the border by helping them gather paperwork and apply for a pardon and/or a waiver.

"We get calls from truckers all the time because everyone's done something stupid in their life," said Tanenbaum. "The way a record affects truckers the most is that most carriers want their people to get down to the United States. If a driver has a criminal record, and they bring a load down to the border, they not only can't get into the States, but they also can't bring the load down."

In some cases, the cargo could even

be seized.

It should be noted that even though Americans do random criminal checks, if you have a criminal record, you shouldn't go anywhere near the border because it is illegal to try and enter the US when you don't have a waiver. It's also an offence to lie to an officer about your past record.

"You could have gone back and forth a few times without any trouble, but it takes one Customs officer to press the criminal check button and see that you've been in trouble," said Tanenbaum.

As well, if you want a FAST card, your record must be completely clean when you apply. So if you did have a criminal record, you should obtain a record suspension before applying so officials can't view your criminal history.

The process of applying for a pardon or waiver is not an easy one. Specialized companies like Pardons Canada and Pardon Services Canada help ensure that your application is completed correctly, but it still takes some time before you receive your pardon because of the amount of people that apply for pardons every day.

"The process all together can take from 10-24 months," said Jadavji, whose company offers three different services: basic, standard and expedited that vary in price and turnaround time.

Tanenbaum said that at Pardons Canada it costs around \$600 to get a pardon and around \$700 to obtain a waiver, and can take from anywhere 12 to 20 months before a pardon or waiver is granted.

It is possible for people to apply for a pardon on their own in order to save money.

"It's like taxes," Tanenbaum said. "But it's a lot of running around and people can often make mistakes on their application."

Though these companies can't say for sure what the Americans can see when they do a criminal record check at the border, the proof of their work is in the pudding.

"We've been doing this a long time and we get almost no calls from people who get a pardon who have then been denied entry after our services," said Tanenbaum. ●

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# From registered nurse to trucking professional

**It's not uncommon for someone to change occupations dozens of times before finding something they truly enjoy. Louisa McAlpine however, changed gears drastically when she gave up being a nurse to help out her father's trucking business. Sonia Straface spoke with McAlpine recently to hear how she went from RN to president of Snowbird Transportation Systems.**

"This was in late '89," she said. "And quite honestly, I didn't know anything about computers, I couldn't even make a photocopy."

At the time, her father ran several of the day-to-day operations, but she eventually figured out the accounting and dispatch all while she was still working part-time locally as a nurse.

When asked why she got into the trucking industry on a whim, McAlpine credits her father.

"He loved trains, trucks, ships and aircrafts, so I kind of got the transportation bug from him," she said.

She adjusted easily to the environment because of her love for trucks and her managing skills came out when she convinced her father that he should pull out of the recycling business and focus on trucking.

He did, and it quite obviously paid off.

Today, even though the company is still quite successful, it is relatively small, and has a combination of straight trucks and tractor-trailers. Cross-border deliveries are a thing of the past for Snowbird, too. They stick to local deliveries and have since 2001.

McAlpine took over the day-to-day operations in 2000 when her father retired. She was named president af-

**"At the end of the day, you're still looking after people."**

Louisa McAlpine

ter he died in 2007.

She isn't just a president though. She's a mother of two young boys (13 and five years of age) and is a member of countless boards and associations including the Ontario Trucking Association, the Hamilton Transportation Club and the Freight Carriers Association of Canada.

Today, president encompasses a slew of responsibilities including being a customer service representative, overseeing the safety and compliance of the company, purchasing equipment, and being unofficial salesperson.

It goes without saying she does ev-



Louisa McAlpine

everything else in between.

"I do a bit of everything, really," she told me with a laugh when I asked what a typical day looked like for her. "My job title is too broad sometimes."

As a woman in a presidential position in the trucking industry she knows she is unique and that there aren't many other women who can relate because she says she's conscious of how other women are treated in the industry.

The comments she used to receive and her atypical lifestyle weren't enough to get her out the game, though. Even when salespeople would wander into the facility asking to speak to her husband for a sales pitch, she remained cool and collected.

"I have been involved with it for quite some time," she said. "Sometimes it can still be an old boys' club and it's very hard to break into it as far as networking and events goes."

McAlpine says she hasn't received any of the "where's your husband?" comments or the like in years though she said trucking has a long way to go before there is any sort of gender equality.

"For example, Truck World," she said. "It's a great show and then you see those women walking around in short shorts at the driver recruitment table. Some people that are running trucking are perpetuating this negative image and women get sidelined. I've mentioned it to a few of the organizers, and told them about my ob-

ervation."

Nothing came out of her comments, but McAlpine wishes that focus on driver recruitment wasn't gender-based. And it's not far-fetched to say her Truck World observation could be part of the reason only 3.5% of professional drivers in Canada are female - as it's not the only trucking event where women are paid to walk scantily clad.

"People should be treated as people, not just based on how they look. They should be hired based on their skill set and knowledge," she said.

Despite that, McAlpine says she tries her best to emanate her father's management style and his wish to be an asset to his community by providing fair employment to others.

Though it's been a journey, McAlpine says she loves her job because of the challenges and rewards it gives her on a daily basis.

"It's a bit of an addiction," she said. "I love the trucks, I love solving problems and dealing with the drivers and dealing with the customers. That's my shtick. That's where I shine - I think anyway. I like dealing with customers who have unique situations so I can figure that out for them."

To many the jump from nursing to trucking is a drastic one, but to McAlpine the two go hand-in-hand.

"At the end of the day, you're still looking after people, there's a need and you help them with it. It's the people I help and the people I work with that make it all worth it." ●



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