

TRUCK NEWS

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This song's for you

The Road Hammers have achieved success with their unique collection of authentic truckin' tunes.

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Regulations frustrations

Fleets at PIT Conference voice frustrations over government rules

By James Menzies

TORONTO, ONTARIO

US and Canadian trucking companies have much in common, including their growing frustration over government interference in their businesses, with seemingly little thought given to the full implications of their decisions.

That was evidenced during a panel discussion on *The Impact of Rules and Legislations on Fleet Operating Costs*, hosted by Performance Innovation Transport at its second annual conference Feb. 26.

Providing a fleet perspective on the subject were Mike Kelley, vice-president, YRC Freight and Mark Irwin, director of maintenance, eastern region, Bison Transport. Among their shared frustrations was the idea that government does not hesitate to foist costly regulations on the industry, while it continues to prohibit the use of safe and proven systems such as larger pup trailers in the US and 6x2 axle configurations in Canada.

YRC's Kelley said the LTL trucking industry in the US would like to move from 28-ft. pup trailers to 33-footers, which would provide an 18% increase in capacity.

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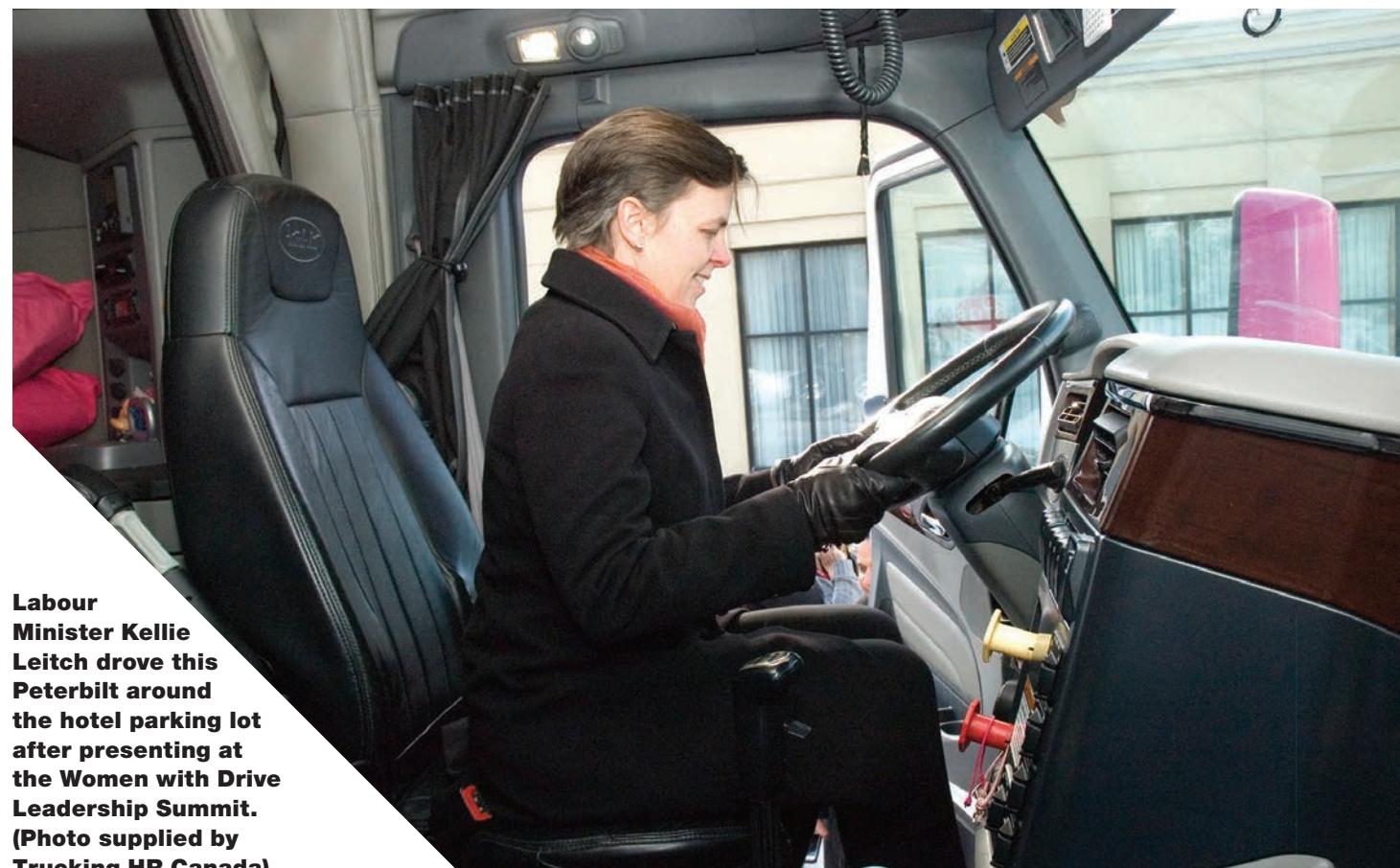
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Labour Minister Kellie Leitch drove this Peterbilt around the hotel parking lot after presenting at the Women with Drive Leadership Summit. (Photo supplied by Trucking HR Canada)



Feds dole out the dough

Federal Labour Minister Kellie Leitch arrived at the Women with Drive Leadership Summit bearing financial gifts, to help attract more women and other underrepresented groups to the trucking industry

By Julia Kuzeljevich

TORONTO, ONTARIO

The Government of Canada has committed \$421,720 to develop mentorship programs that will help further the careers of women in the nation's trucking industry, and identify best practices that can better support the hiring and retention of underrepresented demographic groups.

The funding was announced March 5 by Dr. Kellie Leitch, Minister of Labour and Minister of Status of Women, during Trucking HR Canada's inaugural Women with Drive Leadership Summit.

The financial support includes \$296,720 to develop mentorship programs that will advance the roles of women in Canada's trucking industry, and an additional \$125,000 to identify best practices for hiring members of underrepresented groups.

"Our government's number one priority is to create jobs and opportunities for all Canadians. One of the ways we do this is by supporting community-based projects that support economic security and prosperity for women. We know that when women succeed, our entire country prospers," Leitch said.

Addressing the conference, Leitch said that women enter roles they might not ordinarily be in because of someone showing them leadership.

After a funding announcement, Minister Leitch drove

Joanne Mackenzie's pink Peterbilt on a celebratory lap around the Sheraton parking lot.

"I have been spending a lot of time on boards and we published a report last June about mentorship. It's about championing, and about having someone in your own industry who understands your career path from beginning to end. If you don't have an advocate at the table with you talking about what you are qualified for it's all the more challenging," Leitch said, noting that she had two important mentors, (one of which was the late MP Jim Flaherty) champion her and assist her in developing her career as a pediatric orthopedic surgeon and as a politician.

Leitch noted that she expects to be launching a program focusing on "championing" later this month.

It's also about creating flexibility in the workforce, Leitch said.

There are career opportunities to be found. While the Conference Board of Canada has projected a shortage of 25,000 to 33,000 for-hire truck drivers as early as 2020, fleets and other industry employers have yet to effectively reach every demographic group of potential employees.

Women account for 48% of the workers in Canada's labour force, but just 3% of the nation's truck drivers, mechanics, technicians and cargo workers.

They are also underrepresented among industry man-

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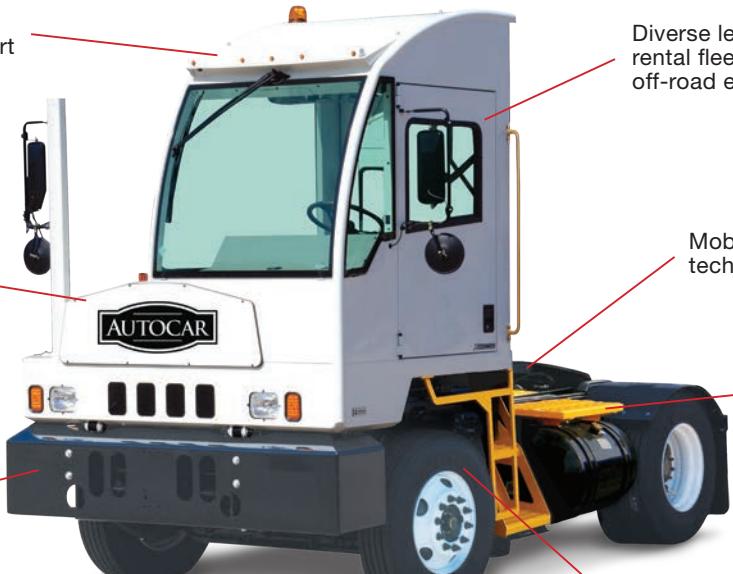
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Editorial Comment

JAMES MENZIES



Women with Drive and the missing men

We knew we had an issue. Anyone who has spent any time at all in the trucking business knows women are vastly underrepresented in all facets of the industry. Women make up half the Canadian workforce, yet represent only 3% of drivers and technicians. Only 11% of trucking managers are women and 18% of dispatchers. We wonder why we can't find enough good people yet we've been unable or unwilling to draw from the 48% of the Canadian workforce comprised of women.

The Women with Drive Leadership Summit, held March 5 and covered in this issue of *Truck News*, explored the problem in great detail.

Intelligent discussions were held throughout the day and from those, I've assembled a list of five ways we can do a better job at attracting women to the trucking industry:

Reach out to them: Are your recruiting ads and materials inviting to women, or at the very least gender-neutral? Many women, we learned at the Summit, don't even consider a career in trucking because they don't know these opportunities ex-

ist. Other industries facing the same challenges (ie., mining and electrical) have done a better job reaching out specifically to women and young ladies, through their local schools or family events that are inclusive of spouses, daughters, nieces, etc.

Accommodate them: Are your facilities female-friendly? We heard of a terminal built within the past few years that didn't have women's washrooms installed, because there were no women on staff. They had to be retrofit once the first female driver came on-board.

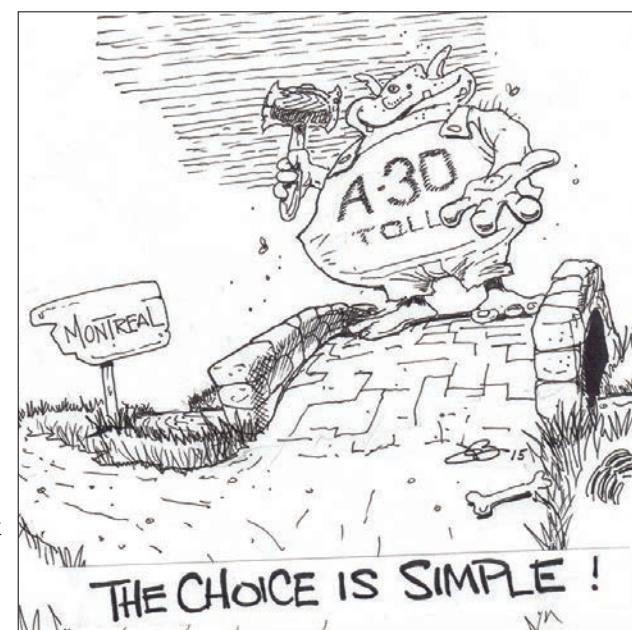
Mentor them: Once you've brought a female driver on-board, what steps have you taken to ensure their success? We heard at the Summit of the importance of mentorship programs and how effective they can be in ensuring women stay on board and on the path to success.

Celebrate their successes: We learned many women don't consider careers in industries such as trucking because they don't know others who've achieved success in those industries. Are we doing enough to celebrate and highlight the successes and achievements of women in

the industry? These accomplished women can serve as role models to others.

Create a workplace of equality: A survey by Trucking HR Canada indicated most women are satisfied with their careers in trucking, yet too many (nearly 10%) still felt they had to work harder than men to be respected. Some reported being harassed, especially by younger males in the workplace. Employers need to take a strong position in creating workplaces with zero-tolerance discrimination policies. Perhaps most interestingly, the Trucking HR Canada survey found men named 'physical limitations' as one of the greatest barriers to entry for women drivers. Women, on the other hand, felt this was a non-issue.

The industry has come a long way towards being more inclusive of women but they're not yet knocking down the doors. The Women with Drive Summit provid-



ed an illuminating overview of the issues and offered practical solutions to address them. The only thing that was missing from the Summit? More men! The women in the audience were all-too-familiar with the issues being discussed; where were the male employers? They could be counted on one hand. ☀

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The view with Lou



LOU SMYRLIS

Get real when it comes to RFQs

I was watching video of the Shipper Carrier Collaboration panel from our latest Surface Transportation Summit the other day – because that's what editors do on their time off. Collaboration with shippers – or lack of it – has been a growing issue with carrier executives, particularly since the increased use of RFQs in recent years.

Listening to the discussion, which I had moderated last fall in front of 400 shippers and carriers, I was struck, yet again, by the wisdom of Jacquie Meyers' comments. Jacquie of course is the president of Meyers Transportation Services and it was her observations from a previous Summit which prompted us to delve deeper into shipper-carrier collaboration. Jacquie, like many other trucking executives, had decried the lack of true partnerships between shippers and carriers and the

fact that too many shippers seem to be RFQ and price driven.

Jacquie explained that her definition of shipper-carrier collaboration is actually very simple, as most good working relationships are: It's a shipper and carrier working together to improve service levels and drive cost out of the system. That requires honest communication, trust between the partners, information sharing and joint problem solving, according to Jacquie. The emphasis is on working together. Yeah, it sounds like mom's apple pie type of talk, yet when you think about it, how many strong business relationships aren't based on exactly those characteristics?

Jacquie is not anti-RFQ. Instead she is pushing for a better thought out and run RFQ process, which includes reputable carriers and allows for legitimate

discussions on how best to provide transportation solutions. She is pushing for an RFQ process where price is not the main determinant of who gets the contract.

And Jacquie is pushing for a bit more. She is pushing shippers for a real commitment beyond the usual one year. Our research shows that about two-thirds of truck transportation contracts are for a year or less. Yet for carriers to be eager to invest management time and energy into projects that deliver tailored solutions – IT integration, specialized equipment, specialized customer service solutions, etc. – shippers have to be willing to invest in contracts that are two to five years in length.

I've heard many carrier executives cast the blame for the deterioration in shipper-carrier collaboration in recent years on the RFQ process. This is

usually followed by calls to do away with the process altogether and hopes that tighter capacity will force shippers away from the RFQ process. I don't think that's realistic.

Speak regularly to shippers and you quickly discover they have no plans to abandon the RFQ process for a variety of reasons – pressure from executive management, compatibility with the practices of their US parent company, greater documentation and visibility into the transportation purchasing decision, the belief the process helps reduce pricing, etc. Nor is the Canadian economy growing robustly enough to generate the freight volumes necessary to make capacity a significant pain point for shippers.

RFQs are not going away. So Jacquie's approach of working towards a better RFQ process is the more realistic approach. ☀

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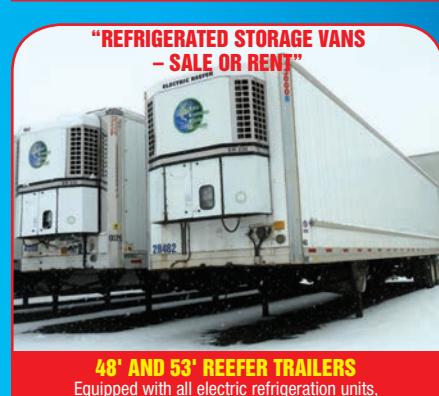
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The Last Word

This freshly knighted OTA Road Knight is also an owner/operator.

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Mark Dalton in...
Just one of the guys

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UNIT 9891 – TREMCAR 31,500L insulated, 2 compartment, s/s food grade, air ride tridem, wash balls, pump & hose in cabinet, alum Budds, overall excellent cond., new safety.

Hurry

What you can expect from Phase 2 of the US GHG regs

By James Menzies

TORONTO, ONTARIO

By the time Phase 2 of the joint US EPA/NHTSA fuel economy standards for heavy trucks is implemented, a typical tractor-trailer should be 40% more fuel efficient than a 2010 baseline model.

About half of this gain will have been achieved through the first phase, still underway through model year 2018 vehicles.

Getting there was relatively easy, since it involved the adoption of technologies already widely used in the industry, according to Glen Kedzie, vice-president, energy and environmental affairs counsel with the American Trucking Associations. He was speaking on the topic of rules and regulations and their effect on fleet operating costs at the second annual Performance Innovation Transport (PIT) Conference Feb. 26.

As Phase 2 is implemented, trailers will for the first time be regulated and some more advanced engine technologies such as waste heat recovery will need to be employed to meet the more aggressive targets, Kedzie explained. He added there is some urgency to rolling out the second phase, since the sun is setting on US President Barack Obama's second term and he wants these improvements to be counted among his environmental achievements.

"He wants this regulation completed under his tenure," Kedzie said. "He wants this as part of his climate change legacy."

The Phase 2 changes were first announced in June 2013 as part of the president's Climate Action Plan. A proposed rule is due this month, with a final rule to come a year later.

The ATA has formed an advisory committee to put forth recommendations on what the new rules should look like. As in the previous round, there will be separate standards for

It's a done deal – trailers will be regulated for the first time."

Glen Kedzie, ATA

engines and vehicles, Kedzie said, but this time around trailers will also be affected.

"It's a done deal – trailers will be regulated for the first time," he confirmed.

New rules are expected to be implemented as early as on model year 2018 trailers, meaning the changes could be seen as soon as January 2017. Trailer side skirts and automatic tire inflation systems could eventually become requirements. On the vehicle side, ex-

pect to see technologies such as waste heat recovery, the electrification of underhood components, lightweighting, hybridization and further aerodynamics come into play.

The lawmakers and industry are both calling for the required changes to deliver an 18-month payback as a result of the improved fuel economy that should be achieved.

"That's what fleets are saying they want and what the agencies' messages are. We'll have to wait to see," Kedzie noted.

It remains to be seen how the new standards will be phased in. While the industry awaits a formal rule, the ATA has some suggestions on how it should be rolled out.

"We've been doing a lot of data-gathering," Kedzie said. "We want decisions to be based on industry data, not unverified data from industry groups."

The association has also been emphasizing the need for harmonization with the US and Canada, though Canada, with its broader array of acceptable configurations and heavier payloads, may find it trickier than in the past to rubberstamp whatever rule the US comes out with.

The new rules could see a greater emphasis from the OEMs on selling their most fuel-efficient vehicles, which will earn them credits that can be applied towards the sale of non-conforming models. So while that longnose cowboy truck may still be

on offer, the manufacturer will have to offset each one of those it sells by earning credits on the sale of its more efficient models.

"The manufacturers are going to try to get efficient equipment out there as early as they can, so they can stockpile these credits," Kedzie predicted.

The ATA has several concerns and messages it is pushing to lawmakers:

- That fleets can continue to specify the equipment they need to perform their work
- That frequent 'Lookbacks' on the early stages of implementation are conducted before the next stages are commenced. Is it working? What was the cost? What were the paybacks?
- That the technologies employed are market-ready
- That changes are implemented in a logical manner
- That trailer manufacturers – especially smaller ones – aren't crippled by costly testing requirements, the cost of which will be passed on to fleets.

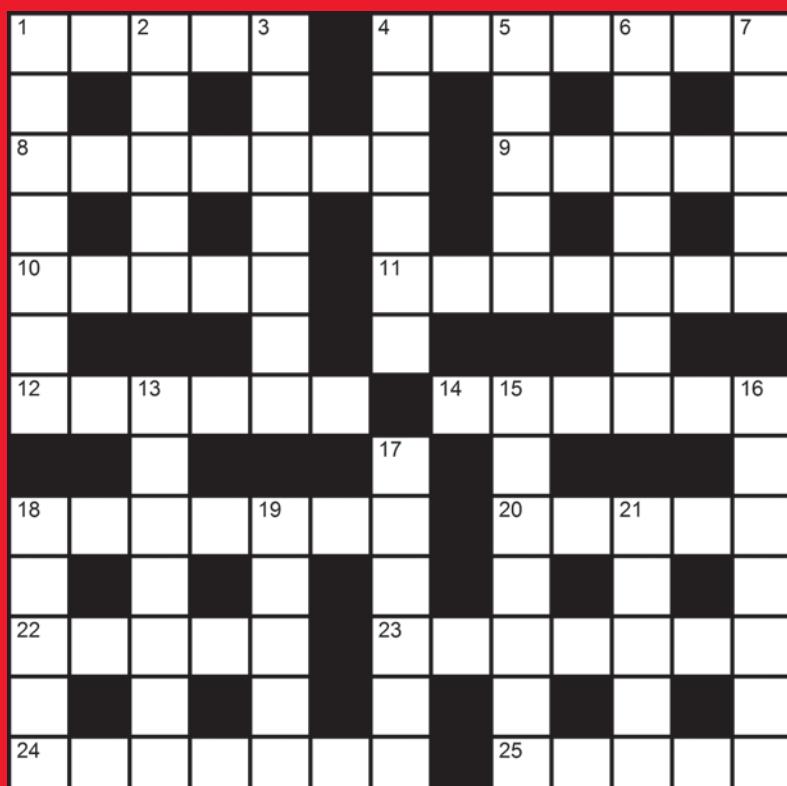
Kedzie concluded the ATA is also urging the rulemakers to take a measured approach and to not hastily foist unproven technologies onto the industry.

"We don't mind buying technologies that are proven," he said. "Not everything has to be captured under Phase 2. There will likely be more rounds in the future. The success of the rule can only go as far as proven technologies can take us." ●

THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD PUZZLE

TM-142 Apr. 2015 © M. Jackson

Answers on page 73



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- 4 Medium-duty Sterling model
- 8 Saskatchewan scenery
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- 12 Road ____, OTA ambassador
- 14 Welcome Canada Revenue Agency action
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- 20 Goodyear's airborne icon
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- 2 Truckers' cargoes
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- 4 Toronto's Eglinton or Sheppard
- 5 Diesel-engine power booster, briefly
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- 13 Truck-stop diesel-pump areas
- 15 Mack bulldog and International diamond
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- 17 Traffic tie-ups, informally
- 18 Above-cab van-body portion
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SEE OUR AD PAGE 72



Manufacturers voice concerns about next round of greenhouse gas regs

By James Menzies

INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

With a proposed rulemaking for the second phase of the joint EPA/NHTSA greenhouse gas/fuel economy standards for heavy trucks expected this month, some manufacturers are concerned about what's to come.

The new standards will take effect on post-2018 model year trucks and for the first time, will likely regulate trailers as well. They are a continuation of the Phase 1 GHG standards that covered model years 2014 to 2018 commercial vehicles.

While the first phase focused on promoting off-the-shelf technologies that were already widely used, the second

part of the program is likely to promote the use of more technologically advanced components and systems.

Michael Hayn, senior field engineer, central region with Bridgestone Americas, said his company is concerned about how the new rules will impact tires. Specifically, as more aerodynamic fairings are added to trucks and trailers, he worries that tire maintenance will suffer because they'll be less accessible for inflation pressure checks.

"We have concerns about how these aerodynamic technologies will impact tire inflation maintenance and accessibility for inspections," he said, when addressing the topic at the NTEA Green Truck Summit March 3. "The

tighter the cavity is around the tire, the more of an issue it becomes."

Hayn said there's also some concerns that the more confined space within which the tire resides could cause heat generated by the braking system to accumulate.

"Will it increase brake heat in the tire area?" he asked. "Right now there is no hard and fast engineering formula for that. We'll have to watch to ensure future technologies don't have a negative impact on tire performance."

While the burden of compliance with the new regulations will rest on the OEMs, Hayn said fleet managers must be aware of the tire replacement requirements on new vehicles. Hayn advised reading the fine print to determine if you're required to replace low rolling resistance tires with tires that are equal to or better than the OE tires.

This may mean having conversations with your tire supplier to find out which products qualify as being equal to or better than the ones they replace. In other cases, Hayne said the opera-

tor will only be required to replace tires with low rolling resistance tires. In that case, the SmartWay list of verified tires is the industry's only definitive list of such tires.

Another issue Hayn foresees is that the rules may continue to ignore the benefits of using retreads.

"Retreads are nearly half of all commercial tires sold last year," he pointed out, adding retreads are not addressed in Phase 1 of the regulations and may not be included in Phase 2 either. "Some people when they purchase new vehicles will supply tires for that vehicle and if you supply retreads for that vehicle, there is no provision on what tires you can and can't supply to that new vehicle purchase."

Amy Kopin, compliance and regulatory affairs with Daimler Trucks North America, shared some concerns of her own.

She said Daimler doesn't want to see separate categories for the engine and vehicle, as was the case in Phase 1.

"We want just one standard," she said. "Just tell us what the number is."

Providing separate categories for engine and vehicle means integration isn't fully rewarded, Kopin pointed out.

"As it stands, it doesn't credit powertrain integration," she said, noting Daimler should get credit for the improvements it can deliver by integrating its own engine with its DT12 automated manual transmission.

She also wants to see real-world data used to support the program.

"For the linehaul market, we've seen a divergence between engine test data improvements and the real-world," she said. "Some engines that get better CO₂ numbers on the dynamometer do worse in real-world fuel economy and that doesn't help the regulatory integrity of this program. We don't want to end up with fuel economy standards that don't result in real-world improvements for our customers."

Also, while the DOE-funded SuperTruck program has been a worthwhile learning exercise for the manufacturers that participated in it, Kopin said she hopes the new standards don't lean too heavily on the SuperTruck concept.

"SuperTruck is a great exercise for our engineers," she said. "It gave us an opportunity to look at what does work and what doesn't work for our customers, without consequences to our customers. We don't believe it's appropriate for the EPA to look at the SuperTruck as a guide when they set the standards for Phase 2."

The standards should reflect real-world conditions and not force technologies on the industry that don't reduce total cost of ownership, Kopin argued.

"We don't want to see complex, expensive technologies forced on the market, especially if it has a negative impact on vehicle weight or aerodynamic characteristics," she cautioned. "We want our customers to be able to choose what they want, what works for them and what gives them the real-world benefits they expect."

Brian Mormino, executive director, worldwide environmental strategy and compliance with Cummins, said the first phase of the standard was effective and hopes Phase 2 will be similarly executed, without major disruption to the industry.

"I think they got Phase 1 right, in terms of structure and other aspects, because frankly, most people didn't even know we had a new rule in 2014," he said.

"That's a pretty good sign." ●

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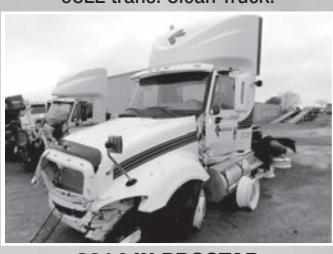
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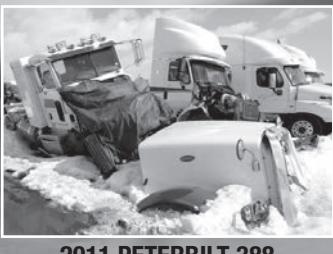
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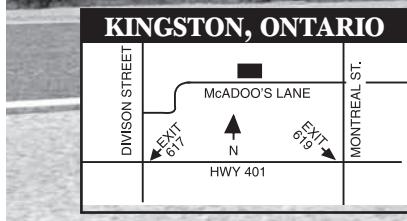
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ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA

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US for-hire truck tonnage rose 1.2% in January, posting a 6.6% year-over-

year gain, the largest year-over-year gain in more than a year, the ATA reported.

"Truck tonnage continued to improve in January, marking the fourth straight gain totaling 3.5%," said ATA chief economist Bob Costello.

"Last year was slightly better for truck tonnage than we originally thought and I am expecting that momentum to continue in 2015."

Costello added that since bottoming out in March 2014, for-hire truck tonnage is up 6.7% in the US. •



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Groupe Morneau opens new 82-door terminal

By Carroll McCormick

MONTREAL, QUEBEC

By the end of this March, trucks operating for the Quebec-based transportation company Groupe Morneau will begin pouring in and out of its new, 82-door LTL terminal, just 5.5 kilometres from its old dry goods terminal in Saint-Léonard, on the Island of Montreal.

The 105,000 sq.-ft. terminal will be able to handle 500 merchandise trips and more than 10,000 pallets a day.

There is room on the 525,000 sq.-ft. property to park 80 tractors and 220 trailers.

It is set up to handle long combination vehicles and, when the day comes, it will be able to accommodate 60-foot trailers. This \$25-million project brings the number of terminals in the Groupe Morneau network to 21.

Groupe Morneau's entire technology, sales, marketing and operations staff will move lock, stock and barrel into the new terminal from its current



The brand new 82-door LTL terminal has triple the amount of cross-dock space of the company's old terminal.

digs in a 50-year-old, 54-door building in Saint-Léonard.

The refrigerated division, Groupe Eskimo, will remain in the adjacent temperature controlled, 24-door terminal.

The company headquarters, its financial centre and administration building, is located in Saint-Arsène, eight kilometres east of Rivière du Loup.

"We can now establish our expertise on an even more solid foundation by offering our clients the most important LTL transport terminal in Quebec," says company president André Morneau, the third-generation Morneau to run the company, which was founded in 1942.

The company bills the terminal as one of the largest in the province.

The cross-dock design is in the

shape of a 120-foot-wide rectangle, with 41 doors on either side.

"We calculate that 120 feet wide is the most efficient for us. It maximizes lift truck operations," André Morneau says.

"With this operation it will be so fast, and respond to consumer need for deliveries," adds David Morneau, business development manager and one of the fourth-generation family members working for the company.

"Everyone wants to be picked up in the late afternoon and delivered to in the morning."

Its location near the junction of the A-40 and A-25 gives trucks arriving from all points of the compass easy Autoroute access inbound, and for fanning out to make local deliveries or trips to Groupe Morneau's other terminals.

With triple the amount of cross-dock

space of the old terminal, it will be much easier to strip trucks at night and prepare LTL loads for next-day delivery across the province and beyond.

The Morneau fleet consists of 400 tractors and 900 trailers. Across its network the trucks handle 2,200 deliveries a day, of which 800-1,000 are in the Montreal area.

The company has approximately 1,200 employees. About 220 employees will be working in the new terminal.

André Morneau expects this number will grow to around 350 within five years.

During the cook's tour at the grand opening, André highlighted some of the terminal's features. For example, a red light, green light system on every door reduces the likelihood of forklifts driving off the dock: Truck drivers are not allowed to drive ahead until the light is green. The light only turns green when the overhead door is closed and latched.

Beefy yellow-painted steel bumpers between each door prevent misaligned pallets or other cargo from damaging the overhead door guide rails and other hardware.

There is a three-bay repair shop, with heated floors for the comfort of the mechanics.

There will be four mechanics on the day shift and four on the night shift. Next to the shop is a wash bay for rigs.

We see a 16-seat training room and the IT and communications areas. Empty offices stand ready to receive their new occupants and furniture. The billing and operations area has a view of one side of the yard. In the entry by the gate where drivers do their business, there will be monitors displaying video feeds from cameras posted at the gates of every terminal in the Groupe Morneau network.

In the bowels of the building is a giant computer brain, a data centre infrastructure by Emerson Network Power called SmartRow. A set of cabinets, roughly eight feet high and 16 feet long, with built in refrigeration and fire suppression system, houses 18 terabytes worth of computer capacity.

There are only three such machines in Quebec, one of which is owned by Hydro Quebec. SmartRow centralizes every byte of information in the 21 Morneau terminals. It handles the phone traffic, billing – everything.

SmartRow drives home not only the massive complexity of running an operation as large that of Groupe Morneau, but the bringing of much of the company's activities under one new roof.

It will serve four Morneau divisions: Morneau Transport, Morneau Solution, Morneau Sego and Morneau Global. •

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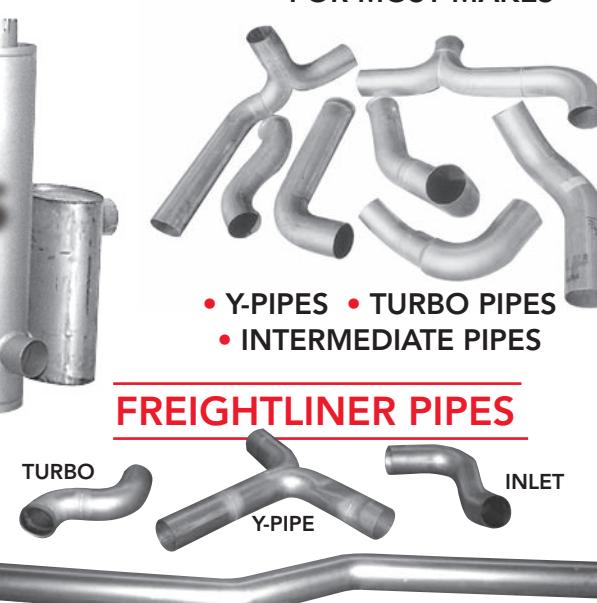


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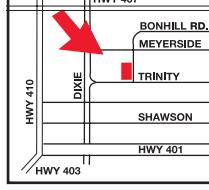
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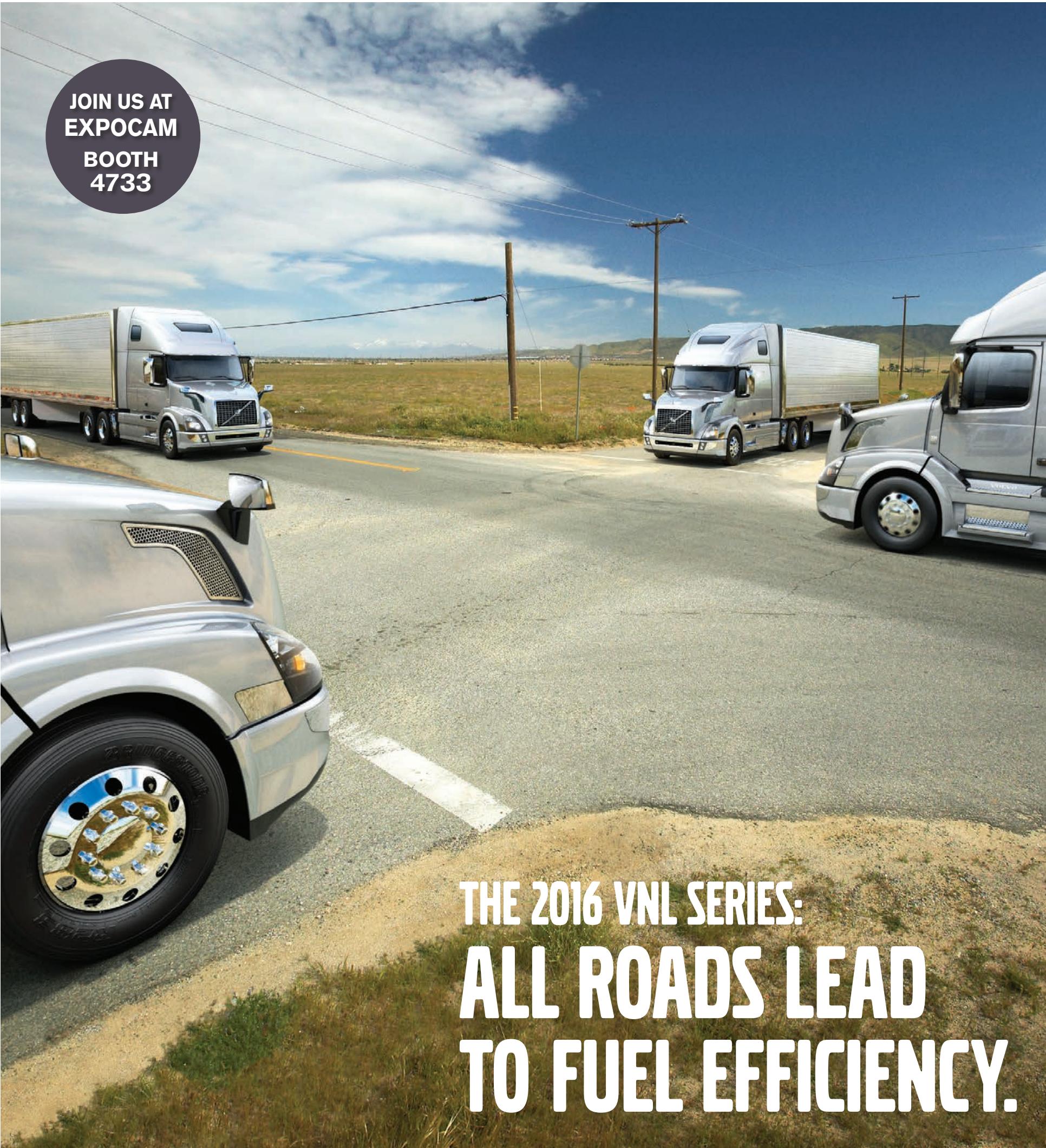


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MORE DRIVEN

Mandatory training edges closer to reality in Ontario

Minister Steven Del Duca attended a recent Truck Training Schools Association of Ontario roundtable to further discuss mandatory training for the province's entry-level drivers

By Sonia Straface

TORONTO, ONTARIO

Last fall, Ontario's provincial government announced its plans to consult the trucking industry on plans to introduce mandatory entry-level commercial driver training to improve safety across provincial roadways. And on Feb. 18, pending plans to introduce the new program took a major step forward.

At the Marriott Airport Hotel in Toronto, nearly 100 decision-makers gathered for the Truck Training Schools Association of Ontario's (TTSAO) roundtable where how to implement such training was discussed.

Among the attendees was Steven Del Duca, Ontario's Minister of Transportation, who confirmed that the industry and the ministry is working together to ensure that the driver training they roll out in conjunction is flawless.

"Today is another example of taking an additional step in the right direction," he said. "It's a chance for all of us, but for me in particular, to seize the opportunity to listen to you and to learn from you and to build consensus in order to make sure we get this right for everyone at the table."

He stressed the importance of the industry and the ministry to take their time developing the training program so it's not a process that has to be done again in the near future.

"We can make sure we get this right, which is so important not only to me and the team at MTO, and certainly not only to you as an industry, but it's important to every single man, woman and child who relies on Ontario's roads

know that you in this industry will help our government fulfill the expectations that we've created."

The minister also commended the work the industry has been doing so far. In particular, how quickly the industry banded together to get the final draft ready for the national occupational standard.

"What great news to hear from David (Bradley) today that the fifth and final draft has been developed," he said. "It's a standard that has been long overdue. It will certainly help the industry define the work with respect to what a commercial truck driver does."

He added that the occupational standard and the mandatory training is

of unnecessary delays and that sort of thing. It's doing it right, so we don't have to go back and do it again."

There is no time frame for when the mandatory training will be officially in effect. The minister said that together the industry is working hard to get it done, but that "we don't want to rush something. We want to get it right."

He added that he expects to provide an update to the industry on the issue in the fall. The media was not invited to the roundtable discussion, though according to TTSAO officials, a lot of important issues were discussed.

Following the roundtable, TTSAO released a new policy that requires training on manual transmissions to be part of its curriculum.

"With membership's unanimous vote to ensure all students receive a minimum number of hours on a non-synchronized transmission, they are sending the message that this is very important to our industry, for clients and for road safety in general," said TTSAO president, Yvette Lagrois.

Every client who attends a TTSAO/MTCU approved school will dedicate a minimum of 24 hours out of a 200-hour training program to education on manual transmissions.

"For us at TTSAO, it shows the industry, government and motoring public that the membered schools of TTSAO are committed to doing what is in the best interest of the public road safety. This decision was supported by 100% of the carrier membership of the TTSAO," Lagrois added. ◉

"We will deliver a robust program to measure competency and administer mandatory training for commercial truck drivers."

Steven Del Duca, Ontario Transport Minister

and highways," he said. "Together we will deliver a robust program to measure competency and administer mandatory training for commercial truck drivers. We'll find a standard that keeps us at the forefront of road and highway safety in North America, but also a standard that we can deliver effectively and this is extremely important to me - it is about setting expectations, the right kind of expectations and then meeting those expectations. And I

good news for carriers because it will help address the driver shortage crisis as well as provide security to those professional drivers in the province.

David Bradley, president of the Ontario Trucking Association and the Canadian Trucking Alliance echoed the minister's views saying: "We're very satisfied from an industry perspective in terms of the level of effort and the level of cooperation between the industry and the ministry. It's not a case

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BORN READY.

Trucking industry celebrates 50-year career of Gary Rodrigue

By James Menzies

MISSISSAUGA, ONTARIO

Gary Rodrigue arrived at his retirement party Feb. 26 blindfolded and wearing red underwear. The blindfold, of course, was intended to keep him from determining where he was being led by wife Marilyn. The red underwear? Well, you'll have to ask Marilyn about that. But it should be noted he was fully and appropriately clothed above said underwear.

About 125 people attended the dinner, which as emcee Mike McCarron noted is an impressive turnout for any function, let alone a surprise party that can't be publicized. It was hosted by the Delta Nu Alpha Transportation Network, which spent months working on the details. When the blindfold was removed, Rodrigue was genuinely moved by the turnout.

"What an amazing, amazing sight this is for me, to look out over this group of people who have been my friends, my mentors, my teachers and my cohorts," he would say later.

Bill Clark of Apex/Western Canada Express was the first of the formal speakers. He recounted Rodrigue's career in the trucking industry, which began in Montreal as a teenager. Rodrigue moved to Ontario and joined Kingsway Transport in 1967 and spent 26 years with the company before moving to Manitoulin Transport for a short time and then being lured back to Toronto by Thomson Terminals, where he spent 21 years



Gary Rodrigue (right) with emcee Mike McCarron.

and closed out his career. Jim Thomson, founder and president of Thomson Terminals remembers how the two met. It was at the Ontario Highway Transport Board, prior to deregulation.

"I was there applying for a Class D authority for Richards Delivery Service and Gary was working for Kingsway, opposing our application," Thomson recalled. He went on to thank Rodrigue for his enormous contributions to the company.

Other speakers included: Art Sills, McKevitt Trucking; Stacey Jenkins, Thomson Terminals; and Margaret Hogg, J.G. Drapeau.

"The reality of being in the business and chasing skids for 50 years is frankly, mind-boggling," McCarron said.

Rodrigue said he hopes to land a job with a local golf course and will spend some of his free time volunteering with the Humane Society. And with that revelation, he delivered the final zinger of the night. "I thought I'd like to give back to the animal community...since I've lived with the animal community for so long." ●



Back row: Justin Martin (International Truckload Services), Jim Pereira (Onfreight Logistics), Jerry Brown (Kiska Transportation), Mike Foster (Challenger Motor Freight). **Front:** Phil Blanchette (Bison Transport), Don Dunbar (Trimac Transportation Services), David Stocker (Erb Transport).

OTA names 2015-2016 Road Knights

TORONTO, ONTARIO

The Ontario Trucking Association has knighted seven new truck drivers into the 2015-2016 Road Knight Team.

Those selected as Road Knights travel the province over their term and share their experiences and knowledge of the trucking industry with students and community groups.

The 2015-2016 team is: Gerald Brown, Kiska Transportation; Phil Blanchette, Bison Transportation (O/O); Don Dunbar, Trimac Transportation Services; Mike Foster, Challenger Motor Freight; Justin Martin, International Truckload Services; Jimmy Pereira, Onfreight Logistics; and Da-

vid Stocker, Erb Transport.

"The professional transport drivers who make up the team are first-class drivers who represent their peers Ontario transport drivers who are dedicated to safety and professionalism in the industry," said OTA president David Bradley. "They are highly qualified to spread the message of road safety because they travel our roadways every day and have faced every type of traffic and weather condition imaginable."

In the next two years, the selected Road Knights will participate in media interviews, help improve road safety and increase awareness of the industry. They will also visit with schools to introduce young people to trucking. ●

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The Road Hammers' journey to the Junos

By Sonia Straface

BARRIE, ONTARIO

To most, the similarities between musicians and truckers are few and far between, but to The Road Hammers – a three-person country rock band – the two practically live the same life and share the same profession.

The band is comprised of three musicians from across Canada that share a love for country music and the sound of classic truck-driving tunes. They even cameoed in Paul Brandt's music video in which he covers the ultimate trucker song, *Convoy*.

This year marks the trio's tenth anniversary and with the release of their third album, *Wheels*, they received some high-level recognition, nominated for a Juno for Country Album of the Year. (They ultimately lost out to Dallas Smith at the Junos held March 15).

"It's a great way to bookmark 10 years and we were lucky enough to pick up the Juno in 2006, so to still be nominated for our music is sort of surreal," said Jason McCoy, the band's frontman. "They say lightning only strikes once but we've been lucky enough to have it strike a couple of times."

The band began back in 2005 and McCoy says the years have flown by from when he first started it as a side project.

"We got very lucky," he said. "The fans have been great, the radio's been great. It's been 10 short years, it's really been kind of a blink and now we're the highest-selling band in Canadian country music history so it's truly remarkable."

Another band member, Clayton Bellamy added: "It's hard enough to make a living in a band but the fans just stick with you for 10 years, it's amazing. To still be relevant and to impact people is a blessing. I feel like I won the lottery every day."

It wasn't easy breaking out into the North American country music scene because of the few major players that have been around for the last decade, but The Road Hammers drew from their diverse musical inspiration to differentiate themselves from the cowboys on



This year marks The Road Hammers' tenth year creating classic country and trucking tunes for its fans on the highway. The band's third album, *Wheels*, was nominated for Country Album of the Year at the Juno Awards.

stage.

Today, they are credited with making authentic trucker music.

"I think we drew from a number of places, one is Jason's love of old-school country music and those great trucking songs of the '70s," said Bellamy. "The other part was

is to make music for truckers," he said. "To make music for people who live their life on the highway. Without them, we wouldn't have anything. If you bought it, a truck brought it and we feel the same way about our record. We really appreciate their support because they're our people."

we put out there or perform is something we want to see."

The band says it feels a kinship with the industry, especially Bellamy whose father was a truck driver for the greater part of his life. He added that musicians and truckers are similar in that they live most of their lives on the highway.

"I grew up in a trucking family, my dad hauled heavy crude in northern Alberta so I grew up around that and I know exactly what it's like to live that kind of lifestyle. A musician is very much like being a trucker, the playing music part is the part you do for free, it's being on the road, eating in diners, living in hotel rooms night after night that you know, that's where the work comes in. We can relate to that lifestyle, we see a lot of those guys everyday at the truck stops. We're all the same."

With the Junos now in the books, the band will be on tour and visiting nearly all the summer festivals across the country. You can learn more about the band and check to see if they'll be playing a live show near you by visiting their Web site: www.theroadhammers.com.

"A musician is very much like being a trucker...it's being on the road, eating in diners and living in hotel rooms night after night."

Clayton Bellamy, The Road Hammers

classic rock and roll. So we kind of mashed those all together and tried to become the ultimate trucker rock band."

He went on to say the band wanted to give back to the industry that moves the country's economy, by providing truckers with a quintessential driving album they could listen to on the road.

"The main foundation of this band

McCoy added the trio tries its best to have a good time and make the shows worthwhile for fans.

"We don't take what we do for granted and it's a lot of fun and more importantly, we don't take the fans for granted," he said. "If someone is going to take their hard-earned money and buy a record or come out to a show, that's a big thing. We try to make sure anything

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Nearly \$500,000 was given to the industry by government to help attract women. (L-R): Joanne Mackenzie, pro driver; Kellie Leitch, federal Labour Minister; Angela Splinter, Trucking HR Canada CEO; and David Bradley, Canadian Trucking Alliance CEO. (Photo by Trucking HR Canada)

Federal funds to help find drivers

Continued from page 1

agers (11%), parts technicians (13%), dispatchers (18%), and freight claims/safety and loss prevention specialists (25%).

"The funding announced today will play a key role in an action plan we have developed to address many of the challenges faced by women in Canada's trucking industry," said Angela Splinter, CEO of Trucking HR Canada. "This, combined with the steps to reach out to other underrepresented demographic groups, will help industry employers recruit and retain the skilled workers they need."

In her speech opening the conference, Splinter said that it's not about affirmative action or employment equity audits, it's about "not overlooking" 50% of the potential workforce in Canada.

"CTA's Blue Ribbon Task Force on the Driver Shortage identified the need for carriers to look at ways to recruit prospective drivers from non-traditional domestic sources," said David Bradley, CEO of the Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA). "This work led by Trucking HR Canada will create practical tools that will assist fleets in their efforts to address future labour needs."

Bradley championed the partnership of Canadian Trucking Alliance and the Women with Drive project.

"It's about having skin in the game," he said. "The numbers don't lie. The struggle for equality continues in the trucking industry. We are still very much a male-dominated industry. We have a shortage of drivers, managers, senior executives. We have the oldest workforce in the country. Why wouldn't we look to fill those jobs with women?"

"On behalf of the association I represent we are committed to working with Trucking HR Canada and our governments," Bradley said.

The Women with Drive action plan is guided by a national advisory committee that includes female managers, directors, presidents and C-level executives from across the trucking industry. In addition to promoting trucking as a career of choice for women, the plan will also educate employers about the steps that help to create an inclusive workplace. ●

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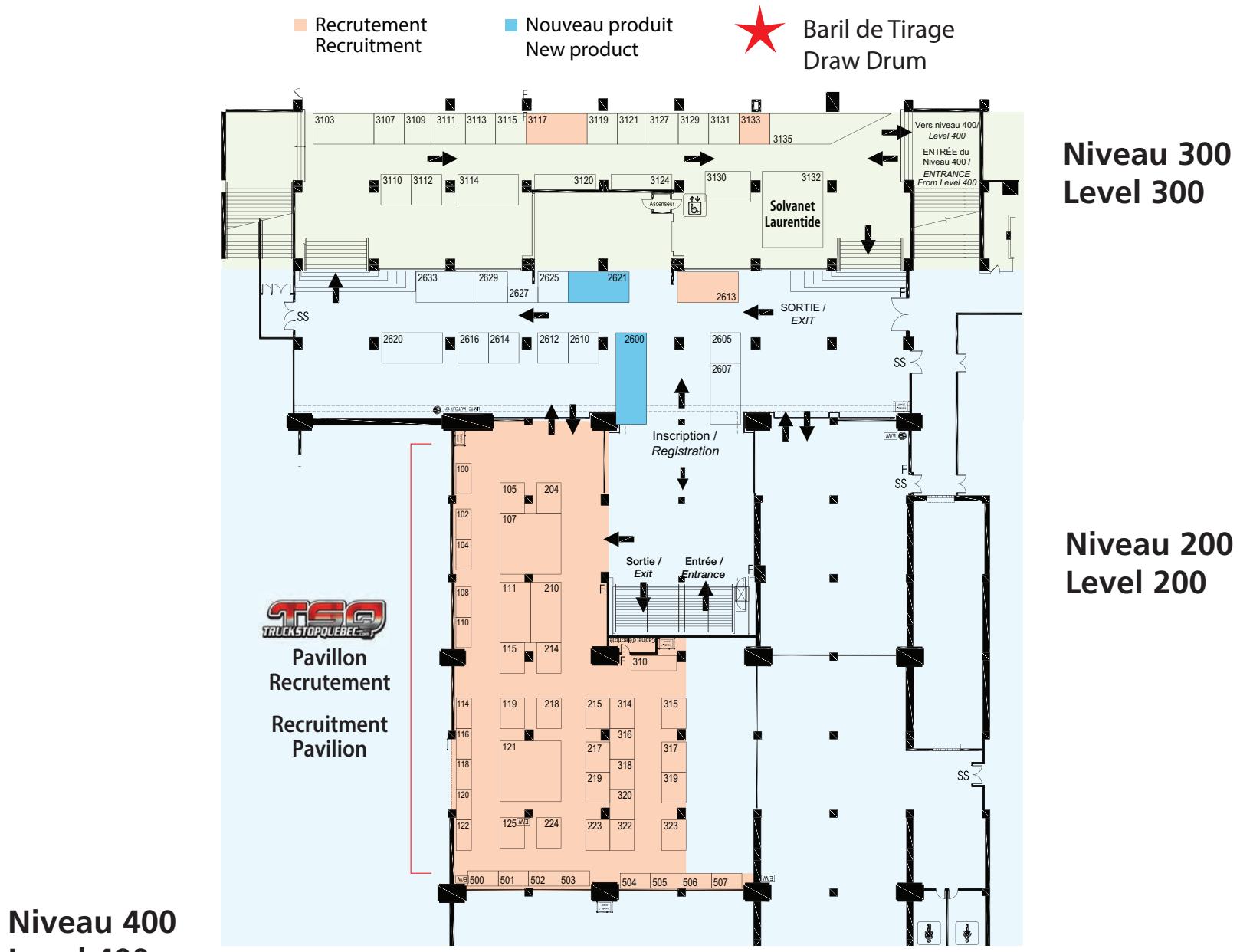


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Survey shows women mostly satisfied with trucking careers

By James Menzies

TORONTO, ONTARIO

A recent survey by Trucking HR Canada's Women with Drive initiative, shows there's still a clear disconnect between what women want from the industry and what male managers think they want.

The survey of 317 people, including 227 women working in the trucking industry and 81 male managers, found that many of the female respondents cited flexible work hours as one of the top three things the industry could do to become more attractive to women. Male managers, on the other, felt that was one of the least important benefits to women. Men cited physical limitations as a barrier to entry for female drivers, while most women who responded felt that was a non-issue.

The survey results were shared by Trucking HR Canada's Tamara Miller during the organization's inaugural Women With Drive Leadership Summit. Women with Drive is one of Trucking HR Canada's initiatives, designed to raise awareness among women of careers in trucking, to raise employer awareness of how they can support the integration of women into the industry and to develop practical tools that can aid with this mission. The survey results weren't all bad. Miller said of the 227 women surveyed, 110 said their experience in the industry has been positive, while 51 said theirs has been mostly positive, with some challenges. Still, 21, nearly 10%, said they felt they had to work harder than men to earn respect.

"On the whole, women like working in the trucking industry and that's something we should keep in mind," Miller pointed out.

Female drivers, however, were vastly underrepresented, with only about 20 drivers giving a perspective from behind the steering wheel. Miller acknowledged the sample size was too small to be statistically meaningful, but indicated those responses still provided some interesting insight and added Women with Drive will be working to solicit more opinions from female drivers in follow-up surveys.

An interesting revelation that arose from the survey was that there's a significant interest among drivers in mentoring programs, with 72% of responding drivers indicating they'd be interested in serving as mentors. Through its Top Fleet Employers program, Trucking HR Canada has already identified some effective mentoring programs that exist in the industry.

Linda Young, who handles human resources and people development at Bison Transport, shared details of Bison's formal "driver finishing program." Each new hire is paired with a suitable in-cab instructor for a period of about 13 weeks, depending on need. This year the company is looking to put 96 drivers through the program and thus far it has brought on 18, three of which are women.

"We're trying to specifically target women into that driver finishing program," Young said. "We feel we've got some traction."

Also there to provide a fleet perspective was Evan MacKinnon, CEO of MacKinnon Transport. He said he was surprised there were so many barriers to women entering the industry.

"I heard today only 3% of our driving force is female, which is a shame, when

50% of the workforce is female," he said. "I see a huge opportunity there."

MacKinnon said the company made the terminal it built in 1989 female-friendly, with shower facilities specifically for women drivers and technicians, even before it had one on staff. It hired its first female driver in 1990 and since then has employed between one and five at any given time. (But shortly thereafter, delegates heard of another fleet that put in a new terminal within the past few years that wasn't built with separate facilities for women; it had to be retrofitted when the company hired its first female driver).

As a flatdeck operator all MacKinnon drivers must meet certain reasonable strength requirements, MacKinnon said, but they don't discriminate against wom-

en. He said the bigger issue is not gender-based, but the inability of the trucking industry to attract new drivers of either sex.

"The issue is attracting people to the industry, not just female drivers," he said. "But the opportunity is obviously females."

Like Bison, MacKinnon has a mentoring program that pairs new hires with an experienced driver for their first 10-12 weeks on the road. While MacKinnon does not currently have any female driver-trainers, it will provide hotel rooms for the driver-trainer when training a female driver.

"At MacKinnon, we hire the very best," he said. "It doesn't matter to us whether they're male or female. We offer a gender-neutral driver education program. All of our promotional and marketing material is gender-neutral. Drivers are paid the same. Bonuses are the same. The worst thing we could do is to try to differentiate within our workforce."

MacKinnon suggested creating a more welcoming work environment for women would also help attract more male drivers, too.

"Much of what we do to attract women to the industry is what's going to attract men to the industry," he said. "I think it's up to the owners of trucking companies to make the change, to create environments where women are welcome and where women feel safe - where all employees feel safe and welcome."

Women with Drive is looking to build on its initial findings, and has developed a five-step action plan. While this plan is still a work in progress and will evolve as more data and insight are collected, Trucking HR Canada CEO Angela Splinter outlined these priorities: Developing mentoring, training and professional development opportunities for women in trucking; Developing a marketing and communications plan to promote career options and build awareness of workplace challenges for women; Developing workplace policies, procedures and best practices from the industry; Obtaining more insight from female drivers to get a better understanding of what they face on a daily basis; And to influence policy at multiple levels of government to affect systemic change. ■

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COMMIT WITH CONFIDENCE

Trucking looks to other industries for tips on attracting women

By James Menzies

TORONTO, ONTARIO

Trucking isn't the only industry looking for ways to attract women. Other professions are dealing with their own dearth of workers and are also looking to women to help fill the void.

That competition for the same pool of prospective employees makes it even trickier for trucking to draw women to the industry. However, there are lessons to be learned from examining the best practices of other industries and taking note of how they went about attracting women to the industry.

A panel at the first Women with Drive Leadership Summit in March examined best practices from other industries. It was moderated by Julia Kuzeljevich, editor of sister publication *Canadian Shipper*.

Her first guest was JudyLynn Archer, president and CEO of Women Building Futures, a strategic workforce development partner for the construction industry.

"Underemployed women are Canada's largest untapped labour market," she said. "What we need to do collectively and better is to raise awareness in women about these opportunities and also the realities."

Women Building Futures helps match trained and certified women with appropriate employers in the construction industry.

"It's so important to match the right person to the right employer," she pointed out. "A lot of employers require fly-in/fly-out. This is not going to work if you're a single parent. It's not our job at Women Building Futures to figure out if that's right or fair, it is what it is, and it isn't going to work for you. But we have companies in every city and town in Canada that need good people, so there is plenty of work in those communities, we just need to make that match."

Archer shared several success stories, including that of a woman who now earns 160% more than she did eight months ago. She said it's incumbent on industries that haven't traditionally targeted women to do a better job of reaching out.

"Women out there just don't wake up in the morning and think 'I think I'll be a boilermaker' or 'I'll go drive one of those semis,'" she said. "It's just not in their frame of reference. We need to get that out there, that these are fantastic opportunities."

Michelle Branigan, chief executive director of Electricity Human Resources Canada, said the same is true in the electrical industry. Only a quarter of the electrical industry workforce is female, and when you drill down into the trades it's less than 5%, Branigan said, "which is absolutely woeful in this age, given how long we've been talking about this problem."

The organization's research indicated women and girls need to see more female role models in the workplace. Otherwise, they have difficulty understanding the duties, roles and responsibilities those careers entail.

"I personally don't know women who drive trucks," Branigan said. "I would never have thought of it as a career and I collected Hot Wheels as a kid, I never played with dolls. It's very challenging for a woman to develop an interest or curiosity in a career that they simply do not know exists."

There are also misperceptions of these

industries that need to be overcome. Branigan also said her organization's research has found young males are more resistant to females in male-dominated workplaces than older male workers are.

"Society still programs young males to

ture where there's no such thing as a non-traditional role for women in their company," she said.

Denise McLean, senior associate with Graybridge Malkam, a workplace diversity specialist, said the mining indus-

plied for positions by 30% in 18 months.

Mining companies did community outreach, with one company holding orientation events specifically for Grades 11-12 girls, educating them on careers available in the industry.

Another company held a family appreciation day and encouraged employees to invite their wife, daughters, nieces – any family members who may benefit from a first-hand look at mining operations and the career options that exist.

"They had 25-30 women sign up for more information," McLean said. "That's a start."

Once women have been hired, it's just as important to ensure they have the opportunity to advance through the ranks, McLean added. "A lot of organizations are shifting their focus, so it's not just about attracting women into the occupations, but retaining them and advancing them up the pipeline into more senior-level careers," she said. ◉

I personally don't know women who drive trucks. I would never have thought of it as a career."

Michelle Branigan, Electricity Human Resources Canada

think there's nothing worse than being bested by a girl," she said. "That kind of belief makes it challenging for some men to understand women can do the job as well as they can."

Branigan called on senior leadership to send a message that sexism will not be tolerated. "They need to develop a cul-

try has recently enjoyed some success in attracting women. The companies that have been most successful in this regard have been those that set firm targets and objectives and where there was strong a commitment from senior management to follow through. One mining company increased the number of women who ap-

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The importance of mentors in the trucking industry

Formal mentorship programs help new drivers, other employees chart a path to success

By James Menzies

TORONTO, ONTARIO

Joanne Mackenzie still remembers her first long-haul trip as a professional driver. Sent to New Jersey with a newly-minted licence and practically no on-the-job experience, and told to follow another driver who'd been on the job just a week longer than she herself had been, it culminated with time spent in the back of separate cop cars upon their arrival back into Ontario, their logbooks a mess.

"That trip took us almost two days to do," Mackenzie recalled, when speaking about mentoring programs at the Women with Drive Leadership Summit March 5. "We were totally lost. They had to come save us and guide us into the port. We got to the border and we were never so glad to see Canada once again."

That was until the OPP examined their logbooks and sat both drivers in the backs of separate cop cars, before finally releasing them with a warning.

"We both said, we're not doing this anymore," Mackenzie recalled.

However, Mackenzie persevered and went to work with a carrier that would invest the training needed to prepare her for a career as a professional driver. It has been a rewarding career since and she now spends part of her time mentoring new drivers for Highland Transport.

Mackenzie gave a stirring first-hand account of what it was like to learn the ropes in a male-dominated industry many years ago. She recalled her driver-trainer rapping her knuckles every time she grinded a gear. Still, she remembers him with fondness, if not his methods.

"He taught me the basics of what I needed to know to learn to survive in this industry," she said. "Not a day goes by where I don't remember something he taught me."

Mackenzie painted a realistic picture of what it's like to share a cab with a complete stranger 24 hours a day for weeks on end.

"You need to match yourself with proper mentors and make sure you're able to function together in that small surroundings," she said. "Respect each other, show patience and be kind to each other."

Cristina Falcone of UPS was also on the panel to share details of that company's extensive, formal mentoring program, which was initially established to help female employees reach their full potential. She said an effective mentoring program requires a lot of pre-work, to ensure prospective mentees will benefit from the experience and to ensure they're paired with a suitable mentor.

Potential mentees are surveyed to determine the areas in which they could benefit from some further skills development and then matched up with mentors who excel in those areas.

"We pair them with a mentor who has strengths in that area where we find gaps," Falcone explained. "It's leveraging the strengths of senior people in our organization to fill in those gaps in those we want to see move up within the company."

The meetings between mentor and mentee are structured, with specific

assignments or challenges attached to them.

"When they meet, it has to have purpose," Falcone said. The program culminates in a graduation for the mentee.

Ellen Voie, president and CEO of Women in Trucking, said there are clear benefits to mentoring programs. She cited research that indicated mentors and mentees get promoted faster and enjoy more salary increases than others.

To become a mentor, Voie said it's first important to "determine if you're ready to set aside the time. It takes time. Make sure you're prepared."

Each of the panelists agreed the suc-



Joanne Mackenzie (left) pictured with federal Minister of Labour Kellie Leitch at the Women with Drive Summit. (Photo by Trucking HR Canada)

cess of any mentoring program hinges on the compatibility of the mentor and mentee. "Make sure that pairing is right," said Falcone. "Do that work up front to find the right matches. That's the magic ingredient to make things work."

Mackenzie added it's just as impor-

tant to train the mentor as it is to train the mentee.

"They need to know the role they're playing and the importance of that role, and I think we need to train our mentors just as much as we train our trainees to handle those situations," she said. ☀



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

Government regs choking productivity, fleets argue

Continued from page 1

"The last time we've had any significant productivity increase was in 1982," he complained. "We can save four billion tonnes of CO₂ annually. But this will be anything but an engineering decision, it's going to be a political decision and we're in for a dogfight."

Closer to home, Irwin would like to see the latest generation 6x2 axles allowed in Canada, pointing to weight savings of several hundred pounds.

"We need to get into this," Irwin said. "This is something where we're seeing significant fuel savings. It has been tested by PIT and we have confidence in PIT and what they do. The restrictions or the limitations of operating in Ontario as a result of this actually impacts our ability to perform business in Ontario."

He noted US carriers are coming into Canada using 6x2s and gaining a competitive advantage and that some Canadian fleets are also using the system, despite it being illegal. Geoff Wood, vice-president of operations and safety with the Ontario Trucking Association and Canadian Trucking Alliance warned they do so at their own peril.

"If you have technology that is not allowed and doesn't fit within the provincial framework and something happens, you might have a problem on your hands legally and civilly," he suggested. He noted the associations are

discussing the issues related to 6x2s with government, but added a formal position has not yet been taken.

While governments in both countries seem bound on limiting productivity in some ways, they are also not afraid to introduce new legislation that brings tremendous cost to the industry, Kelley pointed out, citing electronic logging devices as a timely example.

pointed out.

He would prefer the government shift its attention to helping the industry, through the elimination of barriers, including traffic congestion. He cited a stat that suggested traffic congestion at freight chokepoints in the US each year produce an outcome equivalent to 51,000 trucks and drivers sitting idle for an entire year.

"We should be able to align indus-

try that we serve now and if we're late by three hours, they don't have product on their shelves and they get really upset with us and then they don't pay us."

Bison's Irwin agreed that customer expectations are constantly rising and that regulations that curtail productivity are a hindrance. He'd like to see Ontario's long combination vehicle (LCV) program expanded more rapidly, as one example.

The company has been running LCVs for 11 years and they now account for 26% of all its miles travelled, or 2.8 million miles per month. They average about 5.5 mpg compared to the single-trailer fleet's average of 6.5 mpg, but looked at another way, they nearly double trailer productivity to 11 mpg per trailer.

"That's pretty efficient and that's the world we want to live in," Irwin said.

He also has an issue with roadside enforcement being overly aggressive when inspecting LCV equipment. An ABS light out results in the loss of a permit for three to four months, even though the braking system is still functional.

Irwin would like to see government trust the research done by organizations such as PIT and the OEMs and more quickly approve new technologies that can improve freight efficiency. He suggested conducting "rapid testing" on promising new technologies so that they can be put into service more quickly. ◉

"We have some of the biggest retailers in North America that we serve and if we're late by three hours, they don't have product on their shelves."

Mike Kelley, YRC Freight

"We'll have two years to put ELDs in 8,000 trucks. This is ironic, because we've been talking about this since 1997 and we'll have a two-year implementation window and we can't act on it now because we don't know what the standards will be," Kelley said.

He is also worried about talk a Pigovian tax could be applied to the trucking industry as punishment for the carbon emissions it produces. Kelley would prefer to see a modest increase in fuel taxes, since only 2-4% of the money collected in this manner goes towards administrative costs.

A Pigovian tax, which is an extreme tax intended to change behaviour, won't work in trucking, because the deliveries must still be made, Kelley

try, environmentalists and the Administration to get a long-term comprehensive plan to address freight chokepoints," he said.

Kelley also had concerns with how the latest emissions standards for heavy trucks have been implemented, driving up costs of new trucks by 45% while at the same time, cars have increased in price just 15%. While Kelley said he agrees with the importance of cleaning the air, the new standards have resulted in less reliable equipment that has been especially troubling in an LTL environment with ever-tightening delivery windows.

"The nation's commerce is on wheels," he said. "We have some of the biggest retailers in North Ameri-



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ALBERT ZIMBALATTI



How to avoid a 'lot' of collisions

Parking lots are supposed to provide a sanctuary. It's where drivers find the all-important spaces to stretch legs, inspect equipment, and log valuable downtime.

But these settings also introduce a common source of collisions.

Most of the crunching fibreglass and metal can be traced to two situations: trucks that are hit while parked, or vehicles which run into stationary objects. The majority of the crashes that remain involve drivers who sideswipe each other as they head in and out of travel plazas or fuel islands.

Every parked vehicle in a parking area introduces what amounts to an intersection and the threat of a T-bone collision. To compound matters, the surrounding trucks are often moving in every direction and don't remain inside marked lanes. Vehicles cut across spaces at an angle and travel at unsafe speeds.

But each of these threats can be minimized by following a few key practices.

The first practice involves looking for a parking space in the middle of a row rather than stopping at the end. This will ensure that a truck is not exposed to careless drivers who

clip vehicles on the outer edge. The best spaces of all will line up on an angle and allow trucks to pull straight through, giving drivers the opportunity to continue their journeys without having to reverse. At the very least, a good spot will eliminate the need for backing manoeuvres.

Vehicles can be further protected by parking clearly inside any available markings. Those who are centred between the lines will send a clear message to fellow drivers. Stray over top of a line and other motorists might begin to question where their own spots begin and end. Valuable buffers will be eroded.

Some of the most dangerous areas of all will be along the shoulders of lanes which reach into parking areas. When the sun sets and lights are turned off, many motorists can be surprised by trucks in these impromptu locations. When a spot like this can't be avoided, visibility will offer the most effective defence. It's yet another reason why conspicuity tape and other reflective markings need to be regularly maintained and cleaned.

Of course, the importance of visibility is not limited to the trucks alone.

Many fleets require drivers to wear reflective vests when walking

through terminal yards. The same personal protective apparel can be used to enhance visibility when walking through parking areas of every sort. Those drivers who do not have the purpose-made vests can opt for lighter clothing or jackets with other reflective markings.

The strategies to remain visible do not end there. Like every other workplace, safety in a parking lot begins by assessing all potential hazards.

Another way for a driver to ensure they are seen is to maintain eye contact with all surrounding motorists, especially if wheels are turning or smoke is blowing out of an exhaust.

When such visibility is questionable, a friendly tap of the horn can offer a gentle reminder that someone is nearby.

Of course, the threats are not limited to motorists. This is where drivers are also exposed to the unpredictable actions of pedestrians who could step into a vehicle's path without looking.

The focus on safe procedures does not end there.

Parking involves a step-by-step process. Once in position, drivers apply the parking brake, shift into the lowest forward gear, or Park with automatic transmissions, shut down the engine and remove the keys from the ignition. Only after checking the mir-

rors for approaching hazards should someone step down from the cab. Using three points of contact will avoid a common source of slips and falls, and a securely locked door will reduce the potential for any thefts.

Once it is time to depart, after your circle check, looking into properly adjusted mirrors will offer a view of clearances available on both sides of the vehicle. All of the steps originally used to shut down are followed in reverse. The parking brake is the last thing to be released before the wheels begin to roll. And a careful eye on the mirrors will help to track the rear of a trailer as it pulls through a space.

The best speed will not be expressed as a number, either. The driver of a moving vehicle needs to ensure that they can see and assess every parked vehicle and hazard around them as they move through the parking area.

Anyone unable to do that is travelling too fast for conditions.

But those who respect the conditions will be able to avoid a "lot" of problems. ☐

This month's expert is Albert Zimbalatti. Albert is an executive risk services consultant for Northbridge Insurance, and has more than 35 years providing loss control and risk management services to the trucking industry. Northbridge Insurance is a leading Canadian commercial insurer built on the strength of four companies with a long standing history in the marketplace and has been serving the trucking industry for more than 60 years. You can visit them at www.nbins.com.

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Over the Road

AL GOODHALL

Attracting more women to trucking

Recently, I started exchanging e-mails with a driver who is in the process of establishing a non-profit organization targeting women entering our industry as drivers.

She is an experienced long-haul driver and spoke of her love and passion for the industry.

She wants to promote accomplishments and minimize obstacles faced by women working in the industry. She feels that if she stays silent on the issues women are facing then there is no room for her to complain.

The first question I asked myself was, how will this organization stand out from others with similar goals and

objectives? So I started doing a little research and began chatting online in a couple of different forums.

I was surprised when I learned that only 3% of commercial driving jobs are held by women.

I thought that number was significantly higher. I did not contact our human resources department to gather any firm numbers but I am quite certain that here at J&R Hall Transport you would find a higher percentage of women behind the wheel than 3%.

I have run down the road with many women drivers over the years and never had reason to question their skills or abilities.

In fact, I have observed that many women perform at a higher level than

their male counterparts in general.

Women seem to have a much calmer 'steady as she goes' approach to the workload that we face along with a stronger sensibility when it comes to planning and organizing.

That has been my experience. I am discovering that my employer appears to be considerably more progressive on women's issues than many in our industry.

I won't pretend that I have conducted some sort of scientific study, but from the few women drivers I have been able to talk to, the general feeling is that breaking into the trucking industry as a driver is difficult and it takes some time to earn the respect of fellow drivers.

Let's be clear, we're talking about fellow male drivers. But here is my take on the age old "respect is earned, not given" credo.

When I obtained my commercial driver's licence I was accepted into the industry with open arms. I still had to earn the respect of my peers but I was given that opportunity to prove myself.

But it seems to me that for women, that scenario is turned on its head. When a woman obtains her commercial driver's licence she has to prove herself simply to gain the opportunity for employment. Only then can she start to work at gaining the respect of her peers. The bar seems to be set so much higher.

Then I read about a survey conducted by Trucking HR Canada's Women with Drive initiative that found male managers cited physical limitations as a barrier to entry into the industry for women.

I was taken aback by this paternalistic attitude from our leadership. The majority of women that responded to

It's time that men started opening doors for women in this industry, listening to what they have to say, and accepting what they have to offer.

the survey did not find this to be an issue.

These findings were presented at the inaugural Women with Drive Leadership Summit held on March 5.

I believe men and women are different but equal in their potential to perform in any field. We are different biologically, physically, and yes, emotionally. We tackle problems and challenges in different ways. The trucking industry is lacking the perspective that women bring to the table.

We are in a time of great change on many fronts and we are lacking the diversity to face those challenges.

Men and women possess an incredible synergy when they work together. That's exactly what is needed right now, an effect that is greater than the sum of the individual parts.

It's time that men started opening doors for women in this industry, listening to what they have to say, and accepting what they have to offer.

So, what of the driver that is starting the non-profit organization for women drivers? She asked me to think about joining her as a board member to work with our fellow drivers.

At first I resisted, citing availability of time.

But that's an excuse.

Many of the obstacles women are facing as drivers today are not solely women's issues – they are also driver issues. Especially when we are talking about training and mentorship.

I think I can help, so I will. More to follow. ☺

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 @AI_Goodhall.



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You say tomato
I say tomahto

MARK LEE

I mentioned some time ago that I felt an auxiliary power unit (APU) would be a wise investment that would hopefully save some money by reducing idling.

My problem is that I could not find any definitive data to help my decision.

I'm sure it makes financial sense, but a five-figure purchase really needs a bit of evidence to support it, and I cannot find anything anywhere from a trusted source.

Internet trucking forums would seem to be a good place to ask questions, but that didn't help me at all. I received opinions, but I wanted cold hard facts, yet I got none.

So I decided it was about time that somebody did a definitive test and got some numbers down for comparison. Does an APU make financial sense or is it just a luxury?

To do this I needed a whole year of running without one. Comparing January figures alone would surely skew the results in favour of an APU and the same applies to August.

But what about the milder months? There is no need for heating or cooling all year-round, even in Canada, so is the APU just an extravagance for half the year?

And will the savings from the times when it is more cost-effective than idling outweigh the times when it just sits there hanging on the frame rails serving no purpose whatsoever?

My first anniversary of truck ownership in Canada coincides with this issue of the magazine and I'm finally getting an APU fitted.

I now have a full year of data without one, which I can compare to the results I get over the next year.

I am getting a full ECM download, which will tell me idle times, the number of diesel particulate filter (DPF) re-gens that have occurred while idling overnight and the fuel used while idling. I have idled when I've needed heating or cooling and I have idled when temperatures dip-ped below -15 C (to ensure my truck would start in the morning) and I have idled when I've used my microwave.

For the next year I will do the same, but instead of using the 13-litre engine, I will use the little one on the frame rails. My new cut-off point for idling will be determined by an experiment in the yard. I was thinking -25 C, but I'm sure that -30 C will be okay.

However I don't want to take that chance out on the road, so doing it in the safety of the yard where I can plug in the block heater and warm it up a bit if it doesn't work at lower temperatures is the safest method.

I know that using an APU will cut down on diesel particulate filter DPF re-gens as my truck does one every night it idles in winter.

In summer it's different, but with colder temperatures or winter blend fuels it needs to re-gen after idling all night.

This is a real pain as it usually occurs just as I'm getting out of bed in the morning. I then have to let it do its thing for up to 40 minutes.

This increases the amount of fuel

APUs: Money-saver or pricey indulgence?

burned from idling significantly and the fact that a re-gen is required at all is confirmation that idling is not good for my engine and all the stuff that's attached to it to save the world.

As this experiment is going to be conducted over a full year, the results are not going to be available until the end of the test. However I'm planning to get a monthly download of the ECM data to compare things on a like-for-like basis.

I'm pretty much convinced that the APU makes absolute sense during the winter months, the re-gens alone confirm that. The milder months and the summer will be the deciding factor in terms of whether there's an overall economic advantage.

Of course there is more to it than just money – convenience is another bonus. At present, when I get back to the yard and park the truck, I have to take out everything that will freeze or spoil.

It may not seem like a big deal, but emptying the fridge and cupboards is an inconvenience.

I also get into a cold or hot cab when I return to work. It's not the end of the world, but with an APU I can leave everything where it is and let the APU take care of maintaining a comfortable temperature inside the cab while I'm at home.

There are downsides, of course. The APU itself has a running cost and needs servicing.

It also takes up space on the frame and adds weight. I want mine mounted just in front of the drive axle on the passenger side, but this will require the fuel tank to be cut down.

It will also mean the mounting brackets for my side skirts and my fuel tank straps will need modification.

I have determined that by moving things around a little I won't lose any fuel capacity and I will have the extra weight of the APU going on my drives, not my steer axle, which is already close to the legal limit.

The whole process is quite complicated – certainly a lot more than it appears on the surface – and hopefully my efforts will be of use to anyone thinking about fitting an APU. ●

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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Preventive Maintenance
KAREN BOWEN



Springing into allergy season

What a winter we've had this year! I am sure looking forward to spring. Unfortunately, spring warmth also brings seasonal allergies.

Every spring, more than 40 million North Americans begin sniffling and sneezing, triggered by pollen grains being released by blooming trees, grasses, and weeds.

If you have allergies, breathing in this pollen makes your immune system overreact and release antibodies to fight this 'foreign invader,' releasing histamines into your blood, causing watery eyes, runny nose, sneezing, coughing, itchy eyes and nose, and/or dark circles under your eyes. As the pollen count

rises, your allergy symptoms become more severe.

To keep your allergic symptoms as mild as possible, plan to limit your exposure to pollen. Track the current local pollen count through an online search or local weather forecasts. These official sites usually categorize pollen counts as 'low,' 'medium,' or 'high,' based on the ratio of allergen grains/cubic meter in the air.

When pollen counts are high, consider taking some proactive measures. Start taking allergy medications immediately, before feeling allergy symptoms. Keep pollen out of your living space; close the doors and windows until the count drops.

Avoid early morning outdoor activities when the pollen count is highest.

Maintain low humidity with a dehumidifier. Keep indoor air cleaner by using air-conditioning, and high efficiency filters in your furnace, and air conditioner. Use a HEPA (high efficiency particulate air) filter in your bedroom. Vacuum your floors often, using a vacuum outfitted with a HEPA filter. Vacuum the cab of your rig, too, including the seats.

When possible, adapt outdoor activities according to the weather forecast. Enjoy rainy days - they tend to reduce pollen counts, since rain pushes pollen out of the air to the ground. Avoid extended time outside on breezy days, which typically have a higher pollen count as the wind lifts and carries more pollen through the air.

On your days off, avoid gardening tasks that stir up allergens, like lawn

mowing and weeding. (Wear a dust mask, if necessary). When your gardening is done, quickly remove your outside clothes and shower the pollen off your skin and hair. Avoid hanging laundry outside to dry, since material acts as a pollen trap.

When allergy symptoms appear, doctors often recommend a variety of over-the-counter and prescription drugs. Antihistamines reduce sniffing, sneezing, and itching by lowering the amount of histamine produced by the body. Decongestants relieve congestion and swelling by clearing mucus out of the nasal passages. A combination antihistamine/decongestant delivers both benefits.

Nasal spray decongestants offer faster relief in clearing clogged nasal passages than oral decongestants because the spray is absorbed directly into the swollen nasal tissues. Steroid nasal sprays reduce inflammation as well. Cromolyn sodium nasal spray, used before allergy symptoms appear, may help prevent hay fever by stopping the initial release of histamine. Eye drops can effectively relieve itchy, watery eyes.

Although these over-the-counter allergy drugs are available without a prescription, it's best to talk to your doctor to choose the best one for you. Read the label carefully before making your selection since some antihistamines make you drowsy.

On the road, using a non-drowsy formula is vital. If you need an over-the-counter antihistamine and/or decongestant for more than a few days in a row, see if your doctor will recommend a better treatment option.

Some treatment options include a prescription medication or nasal spray, allergy shots, and/or even under-the-tongue immunotherapy tablets. Allergy shots and immunotherapy tablets allow you to develop a tolerance for the allergen by exposing your body to gradually increasing doses of that allergen. These may relieve your symptoms for a longer period of time than traditional oral and nasal allergy medications. Allergy shots may even reduce your symptoms for a few years.

Occasionally, airborne allergens trigger asthma, a condition that causes the airways to constrict, making breathing difficult, often leading to wheezing, coughing, and shortness of breath. If these symptoms appear, seek medical attention immediately.

If you are looking for a more natural therapy, you might consider butterbur - an herb from a European shrub. Some studies have shown that the butterbur extract Ze 399 may reduce allergy symptoms as effectively as Allegra, Claritin, and Zyrtec. Or, try quercetin - a flavonoid with anti-inflammatory properties that appears to block histamines.

Quercetin is found in onions, apples, and black tea.

Or, try nasal irrigation - a combination of warm, distilled or sterile water, about a quarter teaspoon of salt, and a quarter teaspoon of baking soda used to flush out mucus and open sinus passages.

Be aware that any spring allergy treatment labeled "natural" may require monitoring, since some herbal remedies can cause side effects and may react with medications you're currently taking. It's best to consult your doctor before taking natural remedies.

Now is the best time to take steps to avoid seasonal allergies reactions - before they spring upon you. ☺

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

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Back behind the wheel

DR. CHRIS SINGH



The mumps are back

In the past few months the mumps have been a hot topic in mainstream media, mostly because of small outbreaks of cases that affected several NHL players. I am sure most of you saw the images of Sidney Crosby's swollen face either in the newspapers or on television.

The mumps is simply a viral infection that most often affects the parotid glands in the face. The parotid glands are salivary glands that are located just below and in front of the ears. One or both parotid glands can be affected.

Until modern vaccinations, the mumps was a common condition in North America. However, since the introduction of routine vaccinations, the number of cases has significantly dropped. Thus, the probability of catching the mumps is very low.

The mumps virus is usually spread from person to person through infected saliva. Therefore, it is important that you let your doctor's office know that you suspect the mumps before going to the clinic so they can take the necessary precautions.

Also, cover your mouth when coughing or sneezing and avoid sharing eating utensils and the like.

The symptoms associated with the mumps can vary from person to person.

Some individuals that are infected with the mumps may not exhibit any signs or symptoms at all. Others may develop mild to severe symptoms.

In most cases the symptoms develop about two to three weeks after exposure to the virus.

Symptoms may include swollen parotid glands, fever, headache, weakness and fatigue. The most common and well-known symptom is swollen salivary glands, which cause the cheeks to puff out giving the characteristic swollen face associated with the mumps.

Other less common symptoms include severe weakness, fatigue and loss of appetite.

In rare cases, the mumps may cause inflammation in other parts of the body such as the testicles in males and ovaries and breasts in females. Swelling of the brain and spinal cord have also been documented.

It is important for pregnant women to avoid contact with a person infected with the mumps. Although the scientific evidence is not conclusive, there is an association between the mumps and miscarriages.

If you suspect that you have contracted the mumps, it is important to consult with a doctor.

It is important to rule out any other condition that could be causing similar symptoms.

For example, inflamed tonsils or a blocked salivary gland may produce symptoms that may be mistaken for the mumps.

There is no specific treatment for the mumps. Just like other viral infections, antibiotics are not effective. The virus must naturally just run its course.

In most cases, patients recover fully with in two weeks. Most experts agree you are no longer contagious one week after being diagnosed with the mumps.

Over-the-counter medications such as ibuprofen and acetaminophen may be used to help ease the pain and symptoms. However, it is best to consult with physician before taking any medications.

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.

NOTICE TO TRUCKERS 2015 SPRING LOAD RESTRICTIONS

Under the *Highway Traffic Act*, the province enforces reduced load restrictions on trucks to protect Ontario's highways during spring thaw, when road damage is most likely to occur.

RESTRICTION ON PERMITS ISSUED UNDER THE HIGHWAY TRAFFIC ACT:

All annual and project permits for moving of heavy vehicle loads, objects or structures, in excess of limits set out in the Act, unless otherwise specified are not valid on any highways during the months of March and April, in the southern portion of Ontario, and March, April and May in the northern portion.

For this restriction, the province is divided, west to east, by a line formed by the Severn River to Regional Rd. 169; Regional Rd. 169 from Washago to Hwy. 12; Hwy. 12, from Regional Rd. 169 to Hwy. 7, north of Sunderland; Hwy. 7, from Hwy. 12 to Regional Rd. 7B at Carleton Place; Regional Rd. 7B to Hwy. 15; and Regional Rd. 29 to Arnprior.

Single trip permits, for moving of overloads on highways not designated in Schedules 1, 2 and 3, may be issued, but are subject to axle controls established by the Ministry of Transportation.

Reduced load limits will be in effect where and when signs are posted depending on road and weather conditions.

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**Industry
Issues**

DAVID BRADLEY



Take advantage of the Canada Job Grant

For as long as I have been around, the trucking industry has rightly complained about the lack of funding available to employers and employees in our industry for training. Usually this is focused on driver training.

While there are exceptions (the Ontario truck driver apprenticeship program being an example), for the most part the major source of funds has been through the EI program, which is of no assistance to existing employees or most prospective employees, such as young people looking to get into the workforce for the first time.

That has changed.

At least for the time being a window of opportunity has opened that carriers

should take note of.

Last year, former federal Minister of Employment and Social Development (ESDC), Jason Kenney, announced a new program – the Canada Job Grant (CJG) – for helping employers train new or existing employees for any jobs that need to be filled within their companies.

At first, a number of the provinces balked at the program as it changed the way training funds were transferred to them from the feds.

However, since then agreements have been negotiated with all the provinces (except Quebec, which has its own program) and the provinces are responsible for the design and delivery of the CJG in their jurisdictions.

It is expected the program will

make about \$300 million per year available while it is in existence.

The program is available to all types of businesses and any kind of job. In our sector that means drivers, mechanics, dispatchers, office staff – anyone really.

The Canada Job Grant provides up to \$15,000 per person for training costs, including such things as tuition and training materials.

Basically, the way the program works is government (federal/provincial) is prepared to contribute two-thirds of the training costs, up to a maximum of \$10,000, per current or future employee.

The employer has to contribute a minimum of one-third of the training costs. Depending on the region, small

businesses may be able to make a portion of their contribution through paid wages.

While the program includes current or future employees, there are some provisos that carriers should be aware of.

For example, the training for which funding is being sought can't replace mandatory training.

It has to be provided by a third-party trainer (ie. community or career colleges, training union centers, private trainers, etc.) in a variety of settings (classrooms, online, workplace, etc.). Unfortunately, in-house training does not qualify. (The governments' thinking is they shouldn't pay for training you are, or should be, doing yourself already).

Of course, there is an application process to access the funding and you have to have a plan. And, while completing the application does not appear to be overly arduous, this is often a stumbling block for many carriers who feel they don't have the time

**The Canada Job
Grant provides
up to \$15,000 per
person including
such things
as tuition and
training materials.**

or resources for any more government paperwork.

While it's unrealistic to expect the government to fork over taxpayer dollars without some form of application, there is a solution to that too.

Our partner, Trucking HR Canada, is prepared to assist you for a small fee. For a handy *Funds for Fleets* guide or to find out how to contact Trucking HR Canada for more information, to determine your eligibility or support and liaison with your provincial government, go to <http://bit.do/funds4fleets>.

Applications for CJG funding are currently being accepted on an ongoing basis.

While there is currently no specific deadline to apply, there is a limit on the total funds available. Once it's gone it's gone and we do not know at this time whether additional funds would be made available and/or for what time period.

Companies from other industries are already moving on this. So if motor carriers want to access the funds while they are available, my suggestion would be to act soon and get your applications in.

By seeking to have the driving occupation classified as a skilled occupation, it is our hope that one day the funds made available for training in other "trades" will also be made available for truck driver training.

There is work underway on this at the federal level and in many provinces through CTA and the provincial associations but we are not there yet.

In the meantime, the Canada Job Grant appears to provide an opportunity that may be of interest to carriers.

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**Private
Matters**

MIKE MILLIAN



It's time to warm up to the idea of MELT

Mandatory Entry-Level Training (MELT) has been a hot topic ever since Ontario Transportation Minister Steven Del Duca announced that his province was planning to introduce minimum training standards for commercial vehicle operators.

It was hardly the first call of its kind. In the US, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration has established the Entry-Level Driver Training Advisory Committee to conduct a negotiated rulemaking on the same issue.

The plan there is to develop a process based on the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act. In the midst of it all, Trucking HR Canada has been consulting with industry representatives such as the Private Motor Truck Council of Canada to update our country's National Occupational Standards, which promise to define the job of a truck driver – and effectively chart learning outcomes – better than ever before.

But it was Del Duca's announcement which led to a firestorm of opinions expressed everywhere from columns to articles and press releases.

Most of the comments have been positive. With the exception of a few dissenting voices the vast majority of our industry has come out in favour of MELT. There is a willingness to improve the existing situation and set a path for the future.

Of course, there is still much to be done. For example, we still need to decide who will oversee the standard. Without a proper governing body the regulations will be meaningless.

But with the extensive collaboration now underway, I'm confident that such barriers can be overcome.

The process even promises to help us resolve the challenges around an intensifying driver shortage.

On the surface, raising the standards would seem to create a bigger barrier to young people who are thinking about exploring a career behind the wheel. But we need to remember that the challenge has never been a shortage of people with a commercial driver's licence.

The issue is a shortage of candidates who are qualified to work as a commercial vehicle driver. The licence itself will never be enough.

A mandatory level of training will help to ensure that we establish the skills needed to acquire an entry-level standard prior to entering the industry as a CMV operator.

The other side of the equation is that the industry has an image problem.

Despite advances in job requirements and technology, trucking is still seen by some people to be a career of last resort. (Can't find anything else? Then take a job behind the wheel).

We are not on the radar of young people. Parents and guidance councillors may not even look at opportunities in what they consider to be a low-skilled career.

To compound matters, even the federal government does not consider operating a commercial motor vehicle as a skilled occupation. This makes it

tougher to attract training funds and find other support.

Recognizing trucking as a skilled trade will help to bridge these gaps.

The Conference Board of Canada predicts we will be short 30,000 for-hire drivers by 2020.

The needs of private fleets will be on top of that. And we will all face evermore competition from other industries that are looking for skilled workers of their own.

We need to begin working on solutions today if we have any hope of answering the challenges of tomorrow. We need to get our industry back in the conversation at the dinner table of the houses in our country, and at the offices of our guidance coun-

sellers at our schools.

To do this, we must improve our image, and make ourselves a trade of choice.

We must make sure everyone is aware that we are a reputable industry, that we have well-paying jobs, and career paths available beyond the driver's seat for those that want to advance into other areas.

In order to be able to begin this conversation, in my view, we must be able to access the same advantages as other skilled trades.

With Minister Del Duca and the FMCSA asking for MELT standards, and the NOS standard being updated, which identifies the many different skills that are required to be a CMV operator, it is hard for anyone to ar-

gue that this is not a skilled trade.

A real opportunity is being presented to the industry, and it is one we must ensure we do not let slip by. Will MELT and the revised NOS standard solve all our driver shortage problems? No.

Will being declared a skilled trade fix everything? No.

As an industry we still must be proactive and advertise our field, but it sure would help change the conversation.

It is also possible, by raising the bar and standards required to become an entry level CMV driver, that we will in fact make the job more attractive.

These realities should lead anyone to warm up to the idea of MELT. ●

Mike Millian is president of the Private Motor Truck Council of Canada, the only national association that represents the views and interests of the private fleet industry. He can be reached at trucks@pmtc.ca.



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Thinking outside the box

Bolt-on devices have improved trailer aerodynamics. But is it time for some more radical thinking, including the reshaping of the box itself?

By Carroll McCormick

It seems like putting lipstick on a pig, taking that old-as-the-hills, brick-shaped dry van and bolting on aerodynamic devices like side skirts, boat tails and scoops to reduce aerodynamic drag and fuel consumption. They are effective, but are such disguises the only way forward? Can or should the shape of the trailer be improved?

The short answers are "yes," and "over my dead body."

Tapering the rear of the trailer reduces drag; airflow management at the rear of the trailer is one of four critical areas of a tractor-trailer identified for aerodynamic improvements. Users, however, are wary of reduced cargo capacity, smaller or inconveniently positioned rear doors or complicated trailer loading that might result from changing the shape of the box.

The long answer is "yes, but it will likely take regulatory changes." Changes to trailer design are, in fact, predicted in the new US Environmental Protection Agency's Phase 2 greenhouse gas and fuel efficiency standards, which will be finalized in 2016.

"I suspect that the EPA change will



Will Phase 2 greenhouse gas and fuel efficiency standards inspire trailer designs like this?

result in changes to trailer shapes," predicts Brian McAuliffe, a research officer in the aerodynamics laboratory, at the National Research Council Canada (NRC). He is also the thrust lead for the Enhanced Aerodynamics Performance thrust of the Fleet Forward 2020 program, which brings together experts and facilities from

across NRC to offer technical R&D solutions to the transportation industry.

Under Fleet Forward 2020, NRC does aerodynamic testing and evaluations for OEMs and government regulators, and supports Canadian companies in the development of their technologies.

Currently, marketed trailer aero-

dynamic improvements fit into two main categories: bold shape changes like those seen in England, and North American successes in doling up the pig without altering cubic volume or the rear doors. Possibly the most advanced expression of the technologies in the latter category is a Cummins-Peterbilt demonstration tractor-trailer, developed with support from the SuperTruck program, initiated by the U.S. Department of Energy.

In early 2014 Peterbilt Motors Company and Cummins announced that their SuperTruck managed 10.7 mpg in real-world driving conditions. Although they made many changes from tip to tail, including a lot of engine and transmission doctoring, Cummins and Peterbilt did not change the basic trailer shape. It did, however, push the designs of aerodynamic add-ons, big achievers and small, to wring more mileage out of the demonstration rig.

"A key goal of the project was to have no negative ripple-effects on a shipper's operations. We set out to design a vehicle that can be seamlessly introduced into (fleets) without disrupting other areas of operations. Our research indicated that retaining the traditional box-van style of the trailer was essential to real-world adoption of the technologies we needed to develop," explains Ken Damon, Peterbilt manager, vehicle performance group.

The real world has a way of putting a choke chain on innovation, although it can be persuaded to change.

Take two companies in Britain, the Cartwright Group and Don-Bur. They manufacture curvaceous trailers with rounded edges and sloping roofs that reduce drag and fuel consumption.

A sloping rear roof modifies the air wake, reducing suction at the rear of the trailer that causes aerodynamic drag.

Cartwright's Cheetah has a conventional, straight-line roof at the front, but the rear half slopes down several inches.

Another of its designs slopes down at the front for smooth airflow from the cab roof and over the trailer. Cartwright reports fuel savings of up to 12% over a regular dry van.

Don-Bur's Teardrop 2.0 trailer is tapered both in the front and at the rear. The company reports an 11.3% fuel saving and no loss – in fact, an increase – in cubic capacity.

Despite the acceptance of the Teardrop and Cheetah in the U.K., no such trailers grace our highways. The closest thing to them, and by close, I mean far, is the second version of a 2011 design collaboration among paper and packaging giant Cascades, trailer manufacturer Manac, FPI Innovations and the University of Laval. This modified trailer sported a high-radius curve in the horizontal top front edge of the roof, rounded side edges up front, and a six-inch drop in the rear 10 feet of the roof. It failed to yield any fuel savings. Subsequently, however, Manac and Cascades built a second trailer, this time from scratch, that it has been road-testing since 2014 between Quebec and Ontario. Fuel records suggest a 3% fuel saving.

Those rounded front edges help reduce aerodynamic drag.

"Rounded corners in the front go a long ways. The wind is smoothly guided around the corner and stays attached to the vehicle," McAuliffe says.

While not really changing the trailer shape, smoothing the trailer underbody may hold promise in reduc-



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ing aerodynamic drag.

"My suspicion is that the biggest gains with current modern aero tractors are the underbody and base (back of the vehicle)," McAuliffe says.

A more radical idea is a variable-size trailer. A 2012 NRC technical report prepared for Transport Canada makes brief mention of a retractable trailer concept. Fully loaded, the trailer is a regular-sized dry van. But when it is less than full, the trailer can be partially collapsed to make it shorter.

Attributed to a British Columbia designer by the name of Brad Bennett, the upper walls and roof would winch up and down on an electric gear track assembly. Bennett reportedly claims that trucks, especially short-haul trucks, often travel from 15-50% empty over the distance of their trips.

This raises a tough question about trailer design.

"The challenging bit is how do you modify a box to be more aerodynamic but not to lose space and stay within the dimensions you are allowed," asks Don Moore, executive director, Canadian Transportation Equip-

How do you modify a box to be more aerodynamic but not lose space and stay within the dimensions you are allowed?"

Don Moore, CTEA

ment Association. "Do we really know whether we are using all this space?"

Do carriers really need the full trailer volume? Is there an acceptable trade-off between volume, revenue and fuel cost?

"I would hope carriers have a pretty good grip on this," Moore adds.

It is revealing that whenever designers are asked to sketch an aerodynamic trailer, they obligingly dash off a piece of truck porn straight from the pages of a 1960s *Popular Mechanics* magazine. Daimler, another SuperTruck program participant, did just that in a press release about its SuperTruck plans. Its concept drawing features a tractor shaped like a bottle-nose dolphin's head, and a smartly tapered trailer.

The overall effect is reminiscent of the Art Deco-style locomotive experiments of the 1930s.

In North America, however, these beauties have never been driven off the pages and into regular service. Daimler declined to discuss its trailer modifications for this article. The industry will have to wait till mid-2015 to hear the results of its testing, and whether its SuperTruck trailer deviates from that brick shape.

The early aerodynamic devices of the 1970s and 1980s met with resistance and the industry might not yet be willing to entertain changes in the dry box trailer shape. But GHG Phase 2 will include trailers. "There are a lot of discussions in the US between EPA and trailer manufacturers. From our perspective," Moore says, "depending on what comes out of the GHG requirements, we are going to start seeing some changes."

A promising aero trailer experiment

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

The square back of a dry van causes serious aerodynamic drag. Solutions of varying effectiveness include tapered trailers, boat tails, slotted pipes and fins. Working the problem from a different angle, researchers at the Georgia Tech Research Institute (GTRI) in Atlanta, Ga. worked from 2000 to 2005 to develop and test for trailers a method of aerodynamic control originally designed for aircraft.

Called pneumatic aerodynamic control, it uses forced air to help air follow rounded corners at the rear of a trailer, thus reducing turbulence, drag and fuel burn. It can also help stabilize trucks in crosswinds and assist braking.

How does this work? Imagine first an aircraft wing with a curved trailing edge, like those flaps that emerge from wings for take-off and landing. When air moving over the top of a wing surface reaches the trailing edge, the boundary layer – the air close to the surface – follows it around the curve and down. That creates lift. Lift can be greatly increased if air is blown through little slots on the wing, flowing over the wing surface and around the trailing edge. This is pneumatic aerodynamic control.

Now imagine a tractor-trailer at highway speed. Air rushes along its sides, like it does over wing surfaces. But unlike wings' rounded trailing edges, trailers are squared off at the back. When airflow reaches those squared-off edges it separates from the trailer, creating turbulence, a low-pressure area and fuel-sucking drag.

GTRI installed rounded corners on the sides, top and bottom edges at the back of a trailer. The side corners had a radius of about six inches, with a 90-degree arc, the top and bottom corners a little less. The airflow follows the rounded corners and turns toward the centre of the rear doors, instead of breaking off.

Just ahead of these four curved corners, GTRI built in a continuous blowing slot just 0.15 inches wide. An air blower forced air through the slot, increasing the speed of the air

going around the curved corners.

"This does neat things for drag. It entrains (keeps) the boundary layer near the surface. We are trying to make the boundary layer stay attached and reduce door suction and drag," says Bob Englar, the lead engineer on the GTRI project.

(GTRI conducted the project, called Development and Improvement of Pneumatic Heavy Vehicles, for the US Department of Energy.)

Wind tunnel tests measured drag reductions of 32%, indicating about a 15-16% reduction in highway fuel burn. (Without blowing, the rounded corners alone give a 5% fuel saving, according to Englar). Various road tests at Volvo Truck's Greensboro, N.C. facility and at Transportation Research Center's test track in Ohio yielded fuel economy improvements ranging from around 11% to just over 20%.

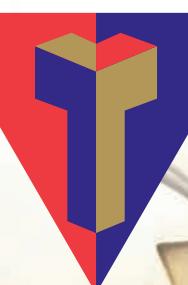
These results did not take into account the fuel used to power the blower, but Englar has an idea for a proprietary device that will provide the blowing without using a drive motor or fuel.

The GTRI tests also showed that selective blowing through the side slots could counteract the destabilizing effects of side winds. For example, a side gust coming from the right can be neutralized by blowing only through the right-hand slot. The sideways "lift" pulls the trailer back on course.

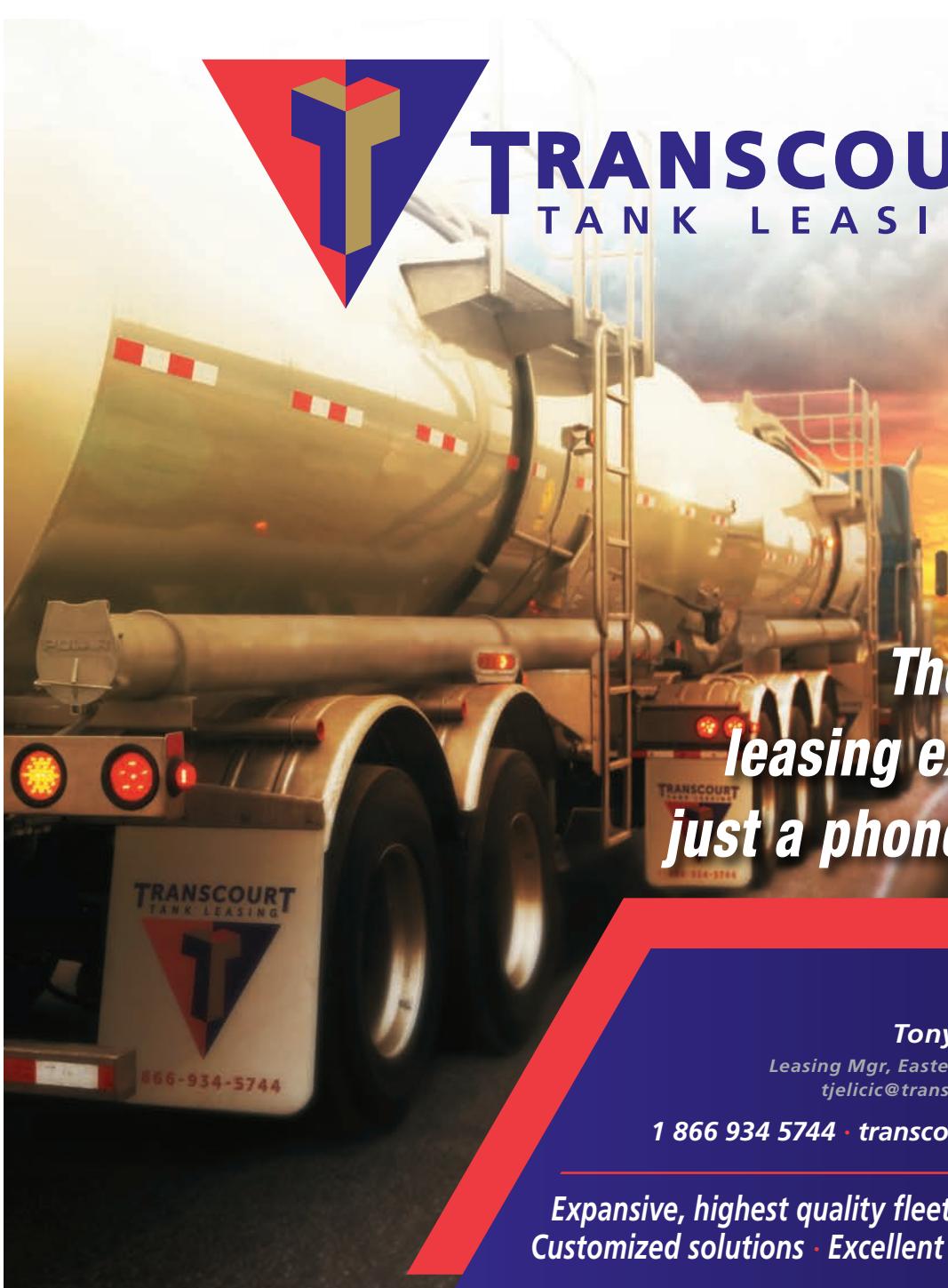
The side slots function like an aerodynamic rudder. "The blowing system can be made to correct sudden yaw movements without the driver even thinking about it," Englar says.

Blowing through the top slot increases lift, reducing rolling resistance and fuel consumption. "You could turn off the top slot and turn on the bottom to load the tires and increase traction," Englar points out. Blowing can also be used to instantly create aerodynamic braking.

Pneumatic aerodynamic control attracted some interest from fleets, but did not make it into production vehicles. The concept has its critics, but the book is not closed on its viability, according to Englar. Now retired from GTRI, Englar is willing to continue this research. ◉



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A smarter spec'

Kriska's SmartAdvantage powertrain has brought fuel economy parity to the fleet and delivered an impressive mpg boost

By James Menzies

MISSISSAUGA, ONTARIO

He used to spec' all the trucks himself. One truck for every job. But Marcel Boisvenue, fleet maintenance manager with Kriska Transportation, has recently changed all that. He now leans more heavily on the expertise of the OEMs – their wind tunnels, their laboratories, their engineers – to design the best truck for each specific route and application.

"Years ago when we spec'd a truck, one truck did everything," Boisvenue explained. "It did this job, did that job. Did the hills, did the flats. It hauled 30,000-lb payloads and it hauled 110,000-lb payloads. We realized this last few years that we can't do that anymore."

This year, when it came time to replace several units hauling glass on an Indiana-Ontario/Quebec route, Boisvenue had just one request: 10 mpg.

"I said if I can't get 10 miles to the gallon (Imperial) then we're going to be talking," Boisvenue said.

No pressure.

This request landed five new International ProStars with Cummins-Eaton SmartAdvantage powertrains in Kriska's yard. They're rated at 450 hp and 1,550/1,750 lb.-ft. of torque. They are among the first SmartAdvantage-powered trucks to be deployed in Ontario.

The trucks are being used to serve a customer whose payloads rarely exceed 30,000 lbs, delivering glass from a factory in Indiana to manufacturers in Ontario and Quebec.

The trucks head back to Indiana even lighter, with empty racks going back to the glass plant.

The trucks are getting a full 3 mpg better fuel mileage than the ones they replaced – International ProStars with EGR-only MaxxForce engines.

It's easy to dismiss the SmartAdvantage as an American spec'. After all, it's limited to a GVW of 80,000 lbs. It's not the truck you bring into your fleet to do everything, but it has its place. The SmartAdvantage powertrain is a result of a heightened level of collaboration between Eaton and Cummins.

As independent component manufacturers, the two companies are kindred spirits of sorts, facing the same daunting challenges in an industry whose suppliers are regularly espousing the benefits of vertical integration. The hyper-collaboration between the two companies now even includes the exchange of trade secrets to better optimize their respective components for the greater collective good. It seems to be working out.

These ProStars are getting just shy of 10 mpg (Imperial). But how do they drive? I wanted to find out and with the help of Cummins and Kriska, I had the opportunity to take Unit 1500 for a four-hour drive the week before Christmas. Yep, Christmas came early this year.

This being a slip-seat truck running 20 hours a day, I wanted to get some drive time with the SmartAdvantage

without disrupting Kriska's busy delivery schedules in any way. So I met up with driver Norm Conant around noon on Dec. 17 and we headed over to All Weather Windows to pick up a few dozen racks for delivery to Sarnia, where we'd pass it off to another driver who'd take the load down to Indiana overnight and return early the next morning with another load of glass.

It was 3 p.m. by the time we got loaded and onto Hwy. 401, which was surprisingly fluid, given the time of day.

On the drive to Sarnia, the SmartAdvantage did everything I was told it would do. Prior to my drive, Christoph Horn, Ontario territory manager with Cummins, explained the downsped engine would cruise at about 1,259 rpm at 62 mph (100 km/h). This is slightly higher than Cummins wanted but at the time the trucks were ordered, Meritor's 2.79:1 rear axle ratio wasn't an option, so they opted for the 3.08.

"When we were spec'ing this, we wanted this to run between 1,150 and 1,240 rpm, so we're on the high side of where we want it to run – we're about 19 rpm over where we'd like it to be," Horn acknowledged.

It's okay to drop a gear

Horn cautioned the transmission would readily downshift to ninth gear, but this was no cause for concern because the ISX15's broad sweet spot means the engine is still operating within that range – even in ninth. While engineers used to emphasize the importance of getting into top gear and staying there as long as possible, the focus has since shifted to getting into the sweet spot and remaining there – even if that entails dropping a gear.

For the first time, we're really okay with downshifting because we're still in the sweet spot when we downshift."

Christoph Horn, Cummins

"For the first time, we're really okay with downshifting because we're still in the sweet spot when we downshift," Horn said. "And when we downshift, we have the advantage of being in direct drive and there's a 3% fuel economy benefit to be picked up on the transmission side when we're in direct drive as opposed to overdrive."

But this never happened on my drive, with just 16,000 lbs of racks in the wagon. It didn't happen on the return trip either, with 36,000 lbs of glass in the back. We held tenth gear the entire time, but the steepest grade we encountered was approaching Hwy. 8 eastbound on the 401 – not exactly the Roger's Pass. Normally an engine evaluation calls for some hill hunting and the pursuit of challenging terrains with heavy loads, but there was little reason to do so with this truck. This truck was never built to haul heavy payloads over big hills. You wouldn't spec' the SmartAdvantage to run the West Coast with a 110,000-lb payload; it wouldn't be smart and there'd be no advantage.



Kriska's five new International ProStars with Cummins-Eaton SmartAdvantage powertrain are consistently within 0.1 mpg of each other.

This spec' is intended for gross loads of no more than 80,000 lbs and that's exactly what Kriska was looking for when it placed the order. That, and 10 mpg.

They're nearly there. By fall, the five SmartAdvantage-powered ProStars were averaging 9.42 mpg (Imperial) with about 43,000 miles of pavement having passed underneath their tires.

But it's the consistency that really impresses Boisvenue.

"These things come in and every time I check them, there is less than a 0.1 mpg spread between the worst and the best (SmartAdvantage units)," he told me.

Where do the savings come from?

The work Cummins and Eaton have done to better integrate the engine and transmission are yielding real improvements when it comes to fuel economy. One example of this is that the engine can now access the transmission's level sensor, allowing it to more quickly and accurately adjust torque based on the actual road grade rather than an estimate derived from a complex calculation.

Better integration contributes about

they'll see a 10% increase in fuel economy – and that's not with the SmartAdvantage, that's just the standard powertrain," Horn explained.

There are many reasons for this but one of the most impressive may be the reduction in diesel particulate filter (DPF) regenerations required today. The ISX15 typically requires a DPF re-gen once every 96 hours of operation – down from about once per eight hours in 2007 and every 20 hours in 2010. When you consider that every re-gen burns about 1.5 gallons of diesel, you don't need a calculator to realize there's a lot of money to be saved simply through optimization of the after-treatment system.

If you like the Cummins-Eaton pairing but require a heavier GVWR, you can get an ISX15 with 16-speed Eaton UltraShift Plus, which provides greater flexibility for a wider range of payloads. This combination works well, as you can read here, but the engine and transmission are not yet as fully integrated as they are with the SmartAdvantage. The 16-speed still requires an oil cooler and the engine doesn't yet tap into the transmission's level sensor.

How it drove

The SmartAdvantage is a powertrain that doesn't have to be spectacular – it just has to be efficient. Several hours on Hwys. 401 and 402 at 100 km/h and mixing it up with a little bit of traffic was enough to experience the transmission's smooth shifting and the responsiveness you'd expect from an ISX15 engine.

Vehicle Acceleration Management (VAM) is a key ingredient to the SmartAdvantage recipe, and it effectively limits the power available upon acceleration when lightly loaded. This, in turn, limits the fuel economy carnage a lead-footed driver can incur by treating every green light as though it's a green flag.

The end result is that even when you're lightly loaded, you'll feel like you're grossing 70,000 lbs.

Drivers won't like this, but some may need it. The logic behind it is sound – there's significant fuel economy to be gained by forcing a more gradual acceleration when lightly loaded. But there were a couple instances where I felt we missed an advanced green because of VAM. Did any fuel we saved go out the stack while we sat there waiting for the traffic lights to cycle through?

Horn acknowledged VAM is still being fine-tuned in an attempt to strike the perfect balance between efficiency and performance. Even though VAM encourages more gradual acceleration,

one third of the 3% fuel economy gain Cummins and Eaton say the SmartAdvantage can deliver over a non-optimized, but similar, engine/transmission combo. Another 1% is derived from improvements to the design of the 10-speed Fuller Advantage Series automated manual transmission – the first to employ a precision lubrication system that eliminated the need for an oil cooler and shaved about 80 lbs from the transmission's weight.

The final piece of the puzzle is downspeeding, where another percentage point is gained by running the engine at lower rpm.

But in addition to all this, both Cummins and Eaton have made significant improvements to their own respective products in recent years. The Fuller Advantage Series employs small step gearing for better shifting performance and Cummins has continuously improved the fuel economy of its ISX15 as far back as 2007.

"If a customer is coming out of a 2007 product into a 2014 product,

a truck with VAM enabled and one without, will both reach the same speed within 33 seconds.

Yet VAM provides a fuel savings of 1-2%, Horn claims, adding the fuel savings are greatest in regional haul applications. Aside from its controlled acceleration at launch, the SmartAdvantage never felt underpowered in any way.

SmartAdvantage engines also come with SmartTorque2, which provides a dual torque rating (1,550/1,750 lb.-ft. on the truck I drove) depending on how much is required at any given time. It seamlessly switches between the two torque ratings based on the gear the transmission is in, the weight of the load and the road grade, as dictated by the transmission's level sensor.

The ProStar itself provided a comfortable ride. I was surprised there were no chassis fairings on this truck, but Boisvenue told me they're not offered on this configuration, probably due to the short wheelbase.

My only complaint, and it's a small one, is with the design of the hood-mounted mirrors. I found them to be a touch large and I don't love the tripod-style mount. Sure they provide great visibility down the side of the truck but they also obstruct what's ahead and they can't be good for aerodynamics.

For a fleet spec' day cab, this ProStar was very nice to drive. Visibility over the short, sloped hood was excellent, the heater kept the cab toasty and buttons and switches were logically arranged on the dash and the steering wheel.

Light loads. So what's with the 15L power?

Because these trucks rarely haul payloads greater than 30,000 lbs, I wondered if the trucks were overspec'd with 15-litre power. Cummins and Eaton do offer a SmartAdvantage package with the ISX12, which I thought might be sufficient in this application. When I posed that question to Cummins people it lead to a long discussion that circled back to this one conclusion: the 15L is simply more fuel-efficient.

It's more fuel-efficient than the ISX12 and beyond that, it's more fuel-efficient than any 13-litre engine out there, according to Cummins. But this is counterintuitive and contradicts the messaging you will have heard from other OEMs about the benefits of 13-litre engines.

An unabashed proponent of the "there's no replacement for displacement" theory, Horn offered credible explanations as to why a 15L engine can still be the best option - even in lightweight applications, or perhaps especially in lightweight applications.

He conceded there's a weight penalty to be considered - about 300 lbs - meaning a 13L engine could be the right choice in weight-sensitive applications. And he also admitted the 15L is less efficient within the cylinder than a smaller-displacement engine, simply due to the greater surface area within the cylinder and the resulting friction that occurs against the larger liner.

But downspeeding helps mitigate this, because fewer strokes equal less parasitic losses.

On the flip side, the 15L engine offers a greater compression ratio (19.1:1 vs about 17:1), resulting in better-optimized cylinder pressures and improved smoke control. There's also less parasitic loss within the air handling system, according to Horn. And he added a 15-litre will also provide better startability and gradeability.

The 15L, generally speaking, is more durable and in Canada it commands greater value at resale, Horn mentioned. And regardless of the power rating, the full 600 hp of engine braking is always available on an ISX15, providing greater engine braking capabilities.

A like-to-like comparison of Cummins 12- and 15-litre engines showed the 15L got 4% better fuel economy than its smaller sibling in a mainstream application grossing 80,000 lbs.

When comparing torque curves and sweet spots, Horn said the 15-litre comes out ahead. Recent enhancements to the ISX15 have given it a broader sweet spot with peak torque available starting at 1,000 rpm.

"Our point is that with a larger displacement engine - whether it's ours, or any engine - the torque curve is probably going to be stronger throughout the operating range," he said.

The ISX15 has also been enhanced to sip less fuel at idle and when lightly loaded. And in lightweight applications, a naturally aspirated air compressor is now available, delivering a further 1-2% fuel savings.

You could debate the merits of 13L vs 15L power all day, but there's no arguing with the fuel mileage data. At Kriska, which operates a pretty diverse fleet of trucks, the SmartAdvantage with ISX15 is currently the second best mpg performer out of 28 existing spec's - albeit, hauling modest payloads.

Conclusion

Evaluating the Cummins-Eaton SmartAdvantage is a tricky proposition. We don't expect it to be racy upon acceleration or to charge up steep grades or to make six-figure payloads feel like nothing at all.

The benefits of this powertrain will be seen on the ECM read-outs and the financial statements and all we ask as a driver is that performance isn't painfully compromised for the sake of improved fuel efficiency. It easily passes this test.

I still had all the power and performance I'd expect from a 15-litre Cummins engine, even if the vehicle acceleration management (VAM) was a touch aggressive for my liking. More importantly, Kriska, whose evaluation is worth more than mine, couldn't be happier with the truck.

"We went from 6.5 miles to the gallon to 9.5 miles to the gallon, just by handing (drivers) the keys to a new truck," Boisvenue told me. "At 1,000 miles a day, that's a lot of money."

It should be noted, Cummins and Eaton aren't promising a 3 mpg improvement, they're touting a gain of 3-6% over your base ISX15 and Eaton UltraShift Plus without all the extra integration work that's been built into the SmartAdvantage.

Even a 3% gain is a lot of money, but you must also consider the residual value of the trucks, which will always be handicapped by the 80,000-lb GVWR. Kriska avoided this potential fly in the ointment by leasing the trucks on a 36-month term, so it will be up to the dealer to find a secondary buyer.

Leasing the trucks also ensures Kriska is able to respond quickly when an even better specification comes along.

"Who's to say in two years the trucks won't be getting 11 miles to the gallon?" Boisvenue said. "Then you're really hurting yourself in the fuel economy that you missed out on if you buy a truck and you have to keep it for five years."

Did he just say 11 mpg? Looks like the bar's about to be raised again. ☀



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Why hourly pay is a pipe dream

Awhile ago, I wrote a column on driver and owner/operator pay. You may remember that I only covered the two most common methods: mileage and percentage. I purposely didn't touch the subject of hourly pay for highway drivers at the time, for a simple reason; I'm convinced it won't work. Not now, not ever.

Periodically, a representative of a large trucking company will raise the issue as something the industry may need to investigate, in the interest of improving the way drivers are paid. They often refer to hourly pay as something they wish will become reality eventually. My cynical mind will suggest to you that nothing could be further from their wish list.

But if the spokesperson comes from a large enough carrier to be considered an industry leader, I'd like to issue a challenge: If you really wish to see divers paid hourly, then do it. Somebody needs to take the first step, to get that proverbial ball rolling. I'm not holding my breath.

I've argued long and loud for driver pay to increase. I believe in a minimum immediate base pay of 50 cents per mile plus extras, on its way to 60 cents. With few exceptions, you don't see that pay level, so really, how serious is this industry about increasing pay levels?

I have a few reasons – based on real experience – to believe hourly pay, especially with the increasingly lax work ethic of today's society, won't work. It's a shame, because so many of you would do well for yourselves – and your employer. As usual, some apples will spoil the whole basket.

I'm a flatbed hauler and I hate sitting still, so I make sure every move counts. Straps are stowed the same way every trip, and tarps are rolled up tightly. I tarp a 48-ft. load of lumber in about 35 minutes, B-trains in about 70 minutes, then I'm moving again. A friend of mine, a highly experienced and safe operator, undeniably among the best, takes two hours to tarp a 48-ft. trailer.

As he is his own company owner, he can take as long as he pleases. It affects nobody but him, so I'm not criticizing his style; I'm just raising an obvious point. Assuming we tarp a couple loads per week, who'd you rather pay hourly, him or me?

We once had an owner/operator who could barely squeak out 2,000 miles per week, while his co-workers ran 20-25% more – to the same destinations – in the same time. Imagine him as an hourly paid driver. No trucking company could exist with a workforce like that. Your labour costs varying 25% between the most and least efficient drivers would create an unprofitable, unworkable situation.

We once had a driver who was quite proud of his self-proclaimed "perfect" pre-trips.

Every day, he would spend 45 minutes pre-tripping a tandem tractor and tandem trailer, and still drive away with a paper cup I had placed over a trailer hub cap marked "Report this item."

The customers loved him, because of his cheery disposition and ability

to chat at length with perfect strangers as easily as old acquaintances. Can you imagine what his time card would look like?

Possibly the most glaring fly in the ointment of hourly pay is honesty and integrity; rather, its unfortunate rarity in recent years.

Even with electronic logs, a dishonest driver could improperly register several hours per week. Imagine the truck that goes to a very large distribution centre. Did the driver really require four hours to load and unload, or did it happen quickly, with the balance of that time spent sleeping? Good luck always being able to track down the proper representative to verify your driver's claims, or uti-

lizing time stamps.

We all grumble about being stuck in Toronto rush hour traffic, but sometimes, you'll find that no thought was put into time management and the driver stopped just short of Toronto for a lengthy meal.

If they had grabbed a sandwich to go, they'd have missed rush hour, saved at least an hour's driving, and stopped outside the city for a relaxing dinner. The carrier would pay for this lack of planning with an hourly system.

With every example, you can see the possible lost revenue from an hourly pay scenario. Multiply these losses by a few hundred drivers at a large company, and the potential loss

will be crippling.

I know of one carrier using a fair pay system that I really like. They pay by mileage, which includes a pre-determined allotted time for loading, unloading, fuelling and crossing the border.

Any extra delays are paid hourly. This only works because the carrier is relatively small, with a long-serving, well-trusted staff. They have a reasonably small customer base, making the verification of delays easier. This system wouldn't work, however, for a large carrier or one with frequent driver turnover.

I haven't done an about-face. Most drivers and owner/operators deserve a pay increase, but we need to stop researching the dead ends and find workable solutions, soon. Hourly pay isn't that silver bullet. •

Bill Cameron and his wife Nancy own and operate Parks Transportation. Bill can be reached at williamcameron.bc@gmail.com.

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Tax Talk

SCOTT TAYLOR

It's now been 15 years since Don Wilkinson, a truck driver from Winnipeg, won his meal-expense case in tax court. You don't remember Don Wilkinson? Well, you should, every time you order food at a truck stop.

On his 1997 tax return, Wilkinson claimed meal expenses using a "simplified" federal flat-rate calculation of \$40 a day instead of the customary \$33 a day at the time. He got audited, penalized, and went to court arguing that \$33 didn't reflect the real cost of three square meals on the road.

In August 2000, a judge agreed. The ruling didn't establish what was "reasonable" for a truck driver to claim, it only meant that in Wilkinson's case,

A truck driver can claim his actual meal costs provided that each expense is reasonable and verified by a receipt.

\$33 was not.

The decision opened the door for drivers to challenge the per diem amount on their tax returns and for the CRA to revise its standards on meal deductions, including raising the rate to \$17 a meal.

It also got owner/operators thinking about incorporating and drawing a reasonable meal allowance per diem and ditching the TL2 simplified method altogether. Fifteen years later, I'm still answering questions about meal expenses. Here are a few facts you should know:

Do I need receipts?

Like anyone else who works away from his employer's place of business and who does not receive an allowance for meals, a truck driver can claim his actual meal costs provided that each expense is reasonable, itemized, and verified by a receipt. Most truck drivers use the simplified method, which requires them to keep a travel record but not receipts for each meal.

How much can I claim?

Meals claimed using the simplified method are calculated at \$17 per meal. You can deduct 50% of that expense unless you qualify as a "long-haul truck driver," in which case you can claim 80%.

Am I a long-haul truck driver?

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

If you're back home within 24 hours

Tips about meal tax deductions

of your departure, your meal expense deduction is 50%. And CRA expects you to eat at least breakfast and perhaps supper at home.

What if I eat more than three meals a day?

The old "every four hours is a meal" rule doesn't apply. If you're away for 12 hours you qualify for three meals; for less than 12, zero meals.

What about food from the grocery store?

This deduction is supposed to compensate for the extra cost of having a restaurant prepare your meal.

Groceries bought on the road are treated no differently than groceries

you would have paid for and eaten at home.

Can I claim GST/HST on meals?

Great question. Here's a test to see if your tax-return preparer knows his stuff. If you're an employee or incorporated owner/operator with a T4 from your company and claiming a meal deduction using a TL2 form, your claim is an employment expense.

Therefore you can be refunded the GST/HST part of your meal deduction that represents meals in Canada.

If you paid GST/HST and don't see anything on line 457 of your tax return, call me.

I don't have paper logs. Now what?

Canadian and US laws require truck drivers to keep their logbooks for six months. It's a safety record.

If you claim meals as a deduction on your tax return, your logbook is also a tax document that you have to keep for seven years like any other tax slip or receipt. There's an obvious conflict.

Talk to your EOBR supplier or your carrier and find out if you can indeed download your logbook data.

If you haven't been downloading or printing your logs regularly, your information may be gone. The best you can do is to download as much of your logbook data as you can right away and then set up reminders to start yet another routine and do it each month on a go-forward basis. ☀

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



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Fleets urged to 'stay the course' with alternative fuels strategies

By James Menzies

INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

Attendees at the NTEA Green Truck Summit March 3-4 were urged to "stay the course" and to remain committed to greening their fleets through the use of alternative fuels and other technologies, despite lower diesel prices.

Stephe Yborra, director of market development, NGVAmerica, noted today's oil prices are not sustainable and that diesel will once again climb. But for now falling diesel prices are "the elephant in the room" he said, noting it has "affected everybody." Yborra said there's a game of political chicken taking place among oil-producing nations, with many continuing to produce oil even with the price per barrel at unsustainable levels.

The average peak cost of diesel in the US in 2014 was \$4.02 per gallon, which dropped to \$2.83 where it's expected to remain for most of this year before climbing to about \$3.24 per gallon in 2016, Yborra said.

"We know it's going to go back up, we just don't know how quickly or how far it's going to go back up," he added.

He urged fleet managers to continue transitioning their fleets to cleaner-burning fuels. Natural gas production has increased and now averages 35 cents per gallon (before it's compressed and delivered), meaning there is still a significant savings compared to diesel, Yborra said.

"There's still a lot of room to build and to still give you great value as a fleet manager," he said, noting natural gas offers a three-to-one price advantage today as a raw commodity, but far from the six-to-one ratio it enjoyed about a year ago.

Even if the price spread has narrowed, Yborra said natural gas offers more stable, predictable pricing and the fuelling infrastructure continues to be developed. In 2014, 18,000 new natural gas vehicles were deployed in the US, with 8,700 of them of the Class 7/8 variety. Yborra said the ISX12 G enjoyed its first full year of availability in 2014 but he admitted sales of that engine were somewhat disappointing. Since business has been so brisk for trucking companies, Yborra said many deferred their natural gas vehicle purchases in the interest of getting trucks onto the road more quickly.

"We're going to see the trajectory take back off like a hockey stick," he said of natural gas vehicle sales. "The savings differential will come back."

Representing the Electric Drive Transportation Association, vice-president Genevieve Cullen said there has also been growth in electric-drive vehicles. Battery costs have been halved in the past seven years, she noted, providing a stronger business case for electric-drive commercial vehicles. She pointed to UPS and Coca-Cola as private sector leaders in the segment.

"We're a small part of the medium-duty and heavy-duty market, but the technology is advancing," she said. "The market is growing because purchasers are understanding the benefits of electric-drive and there is a policy push for cleaner, more efficient technologies. This is a segment of the market that's poised to grow."

Jennifer Weaver, OEM outreach and education specialist with the National Biodiesel Board, said there has also been an increase in biodiesel uptake. The organization is projecting a market of four

billion gallons per year by 2022, up from about 1.75 billion gallons today. That would replace 10% of the on-road diesel that's consumed today, she noted. More than 90% of medium- and heavy-duty truck models now support the use of B20 biodiesel.

Tucker Perkins, chief business development officer with the Propane Education and Research Council said about 12,000 propane-powered vehicles were sold last year, down from 14,000 in 2013.

"The economic equation is still intact but fleet managers have less pressure on them to show (fuel) savings," Perkins said of the impact of lower diesel prices.

Propane has seen growth in the medium- and heavy-duty vehicle segments. A propane/diesel dual-fuel solution is now available in Class 8 trucks that has shown fuel savings of 15-20 cents per mile, Tucker said. ●

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Living with alternative fuels

TMC panel discussion explores practicalities of working with natural gas, including required shop modifications and technician training

By Steve Sturgess

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

The two natural gas proponents at the Technology & Maintenance Council (of the American Trucking Associations) spring meeting focused on the practicalities of living with natural gas alternative-fuelled vehicles rather than the technologies and vehicle modifications that are usually the topic at these meetings.

Scott Barraclough, project manager, product segmentation at Mack Trucks talked about the vocational fit for natural gas in different operations. Analloyd Thomason, co-founder of the Natural Gas Vehicle Institute (NGVi) addressed the upgrading of shop practices and facilities to accommodate the maintenance of the vehicles.

Barraclough's presentation started out with the comment that natural gas' competitive advantage over clean diesel has been eroded by recent moves in the petroleum market. Now its advantage has shrunk to 15-20% from the 20-30% advantage at the height of diesel prices.

However, this likely will not slow by much the interest in natural gas as a preferred alternative. Important in the business decisions for those making the switch are gas pricing stability and the fact that it is domestically available. And as more filling stations for both liquid and compressed natural gas are coming on-line, the day-to-day availability is also improving.

CNG infrastructure outpacing LNG

In fact, said Barraclough, across the US more than 1,500 compressed natural gas (CNG) stations are open, two-thirds of which can accommodate heavy vehicles.

By contrast, there are a scant 100 liquefied natural gas (LNG) public fuelling facilities, he said.

Even with better public availability of natural gas, the vehicles today still only account for 3% of the truck market. But, said Barraclough, it is a segment that garners a wide and growing attention.

Obvious vocations for natural gas are those where trucks return to an operations centre on a daily basis, and that includes dump trucks, transit, mixers, local distribution trucks and of course refuse trucks where CNG is powering the lion's share of trucks sold today.

Subsequent to the session Mack announced that natural gas-powered versions of its Pinnacle models are available with the Eaton UltraShift Plus transmission and Bendix Wingman Advanced collision mitigation technology.

"Our customers told us they wanted the option of an automated transmission, as well as the benefits of Wingman Advanced safety technology in the natural gas Pinnacle model," said Stephen Roy, president of Mack Trucks North America in a news release.

Equipped with the Cummins Westport ISX12 G natural gas engine, Mack Pinnacle models can run on ei-

ther CNG or LNG, making them eminently suitable for regional-haul and distribution. The maintenance-free aftertreatment system, combined with low-cost natural gas, reduces vehicle life-cycle costs and thereby improves customers' return on investment, said the company in its news release.

Training and maintaining

Back at the TMC meeting, Thomason introduced the NGVi, an organization that offers training and consulting in

Continued on page 77

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C.A.T. stands by decision to go with natural gas, despite cheaper diesel

By James Menzies

TORONTO, ONTARIO

Having advised his company to invest heavily in 100 natural gas-powered trucks just months before oil and diesel prices experienced their precipitous decline, Hugo Brouillette opted not to wear a tie to the PIT Conference Feb. 26.

The vice-president of asset management for C.A.T. said he didn't want to invite any additional choking hazards into his life, beyond what already existed back at the office. But with all joking aside, when addressing the PIT audience, Brouillette still seemed comfortable with the decision.

The trucks are still on order and should be in service by August, once the fuelling network connecting Montreal, Que. to Laredo, Texas is completed. The public-access fueling stations are being built by Gain Clean Fuel in: Coteau-du-Lac, Que.; Mississauga, Ont.; Scranton, Penn.; Charlotte, N.C.; and Laredo, Texas. Despite the rapidly shrinking spread between the price of natural gas and diesel, Brouillette stands by the decision. Not only is diesel expected to once again spike in price – eventually – but the company also has had its fill of reliability problems associated with the latest emissions systems on today's diesel-powered trucks.

When it first looked at CNG, only an 88 diesel gallon equivalent tank package was available, making it impractical for linehaul. Now, the company can get 165 DGE tanks while maintaining the payload it requires for its US-bound loads, providing it with an acceptable range of 600 miles. The tanks add about \$50,000 to the cost of the trucks, some of which the company is hoping to recover in the form of provincial incentives.

"The reason we chose CNG was because of the low cost (of CNG), there's less technology on the engine and it's easy to use for the driver," Brouillette said.

It's a big commitment. With 350 trucks in the fleet, C.A.T. is effectively changing over more than a quarter of its fleet to CNG. In doing so, it will lower its carbon footprint by 17%, Brouillette said.

Louis Mellet, director of business development with Ryder System, said low diesel prices are the "800-lb gorilla in the room," but added in the right application, natural gas can still deliver an acceptable payback – even with oil prices at \$65 per barrel with incentives, or \$75 per barrel without. That's based on a tandem axle day cab running 100,000 miles per year with a 123 DGE tank package.

Mellet said the ISX12 G engine is proving to be reliable – as long as it's kept within its approved GVWR limit of 80,000 lbs.

"Everybody is very comfortable with the 12L and its performance," he said.

Many fleets are continuing to add natural gas trucks to diversify their asset portfolio and protect against a sudden rise in diesel prices, he added.

With 500 natural gas vehicles on the road accumulating 30 million miles, Ryder has learned a few lessons along the way. Mellet said one of those lessons is to hone in on and work with a limited number of fuelling providers. And if your volumes will allow, ask for dedicated lanes at public fuelling stations so your trucks don't end up having to queue up behind other vehicles, extending fuelling times.

"You have to have the ability to leverage your size and scale onto one or two

vendors if you have a big fleet," Mellet said. He also suggested working with fuelling partners that will ensure back-up storage on-site and quality fuel.

"It's really critical if you're thinking about this, that you really think through who you're going to partner with and leverage your scale onto one or two partners," he said. "We foresee lanes that will be dedicated to customers, that will not be affected by outside traffic."

While lower diesel prices have curtailed interest in natural gas, technology continues to improve – especially related to the tanks. Ryder has worked with a partner to take 800 lbs out of a standard tank package over the last year.

For now, without the availability of a 15-litre engine capable of gross weights



C.A.T. announced last year an ambitious plan to run CNG-fuelled trucks from Quebec to Texas. That was before diesel prices plummeted but the carrier isn't wavering. (The truck shown is a diesel).

in excess of 80,000 lbs, Mellet acknowledged Canadian fleets are facing some headwinds. However, he said it's still a

good fit for fleets such as C.A.T., which run primarily north-south hauling lighter payloads. ◉

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Great Dane promotes Hammond; Cowan Insurance names new Ontario rep; and a Canadian leads Kenworth's Parts Council.

Great Dane has announced the promotion of **Chris Hammond** to the position of executive vice-president of sales. Hammond will be charged with leading the company's overall sales, marketing and aftermarket parts and service functions. He has been with Great Dane for more than 22 years, most recently as vice-president of dealer and international sales.

"Chris has been an integral part of Great Dane's success for a number of years," said Dean Engelage, president of Great Dane. "I am confident in his abilities to refine our sales and distribution strategies and to lead our sales, marketing and aftermarket teams to new heights."

Bridgestone Commercial announced that **Taylor Cole** has been appointed as its new president of the commercial tire division.

As president, commercial OTR, Cole will be responsible for leading Bridgestone's North American strategic direction, and will be instrumental in harnessing resources for continued growth of the division.

"Taylor brings rich and diverse experience to the commercial team," said Kurt Danielson, president, US & Canada Commercial Tire Sales. "He will lead the vision and execution of our short- and long-term direction, including strengthening our value proposition, developing a high-performing team and ensuring market strategies

tie into the vision of both the Commercial division and Bridgestone. Taylor's management strength and initiative will energize our team and commitment to all OTR segments."

Most recently, Cole was the managing director of all US new equipment and aftermarket business units at Howden North America.

Cowan Insurance Group has named **David Black** as its new v.p., business development, Ontario.

In his new position, Black will be responsible for leading the continued growth, strategy and development of Cowan's Ontario branch. He will also be accountable for driving the alignment between sales and corporate marketing to support sales across the group. He has had more than 20 years of experience in property and casualty insurance.

Kenworth has announced its 2015 Parts Council consisting of leading managers from Kenworth dealerships in the US and Canada.

The new chair is Canadian, **Jo Frost**. She works out of Edmonton Kenworth. •



David Black



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Mid-Ontario named top Canadian Mack dealer

BARRIE, ONTARIO

Mid-Ontario Mack of Barrie, Ont. has been named the top Canadian Mack Trucks dealer for 2014.

The company named Vanguard Center of Phoenix its North American Dealer of the Year earlier.

In 2014, Vanguard Center surpassed its sales goals by almost 50%. It also invested more than \$5 million to mod-

ernize its Phoenix facility.

The Used Truck Dealer of the Year award went to Mack of Nashville, based in La Vergne, Tennessee.

"As representatives of Mack Trucks, these award winners are without equal," said Stephen Roy, president, Mack Trucks North America. "I am extremely proud of their commitment to our customers' success through their dedication to exceptional service."

Volvo tool helps with powertrain spec'ing

GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

Volvo Trucks North America has launched a new survey recently to help customers find the best powertrain torque package for their operation.

The survey goes with the theme, "Don't Go Power Crazy" and Volvo is promoting the survey with several short videos.

The survey is completely online and asks users several multiple-choice questions to gather key information about the customer's preferences.

Once completed, the survey recommends a torque package and gives important information to the customer.

"Our torque management software and integrated powertrain allow us to deliver highly customized spec's to match customers' specific applications," said John Moore, Volvo Trucks product marketing manager – powertrain.

"The number of choices can be confusing, so the new online tool breaks the decision down to just a handful of key questions that will help identify a recommended option in less than a minute."

Descriptions of the various powertrain packages are available at www.volvo-trucks.us.com/torque.

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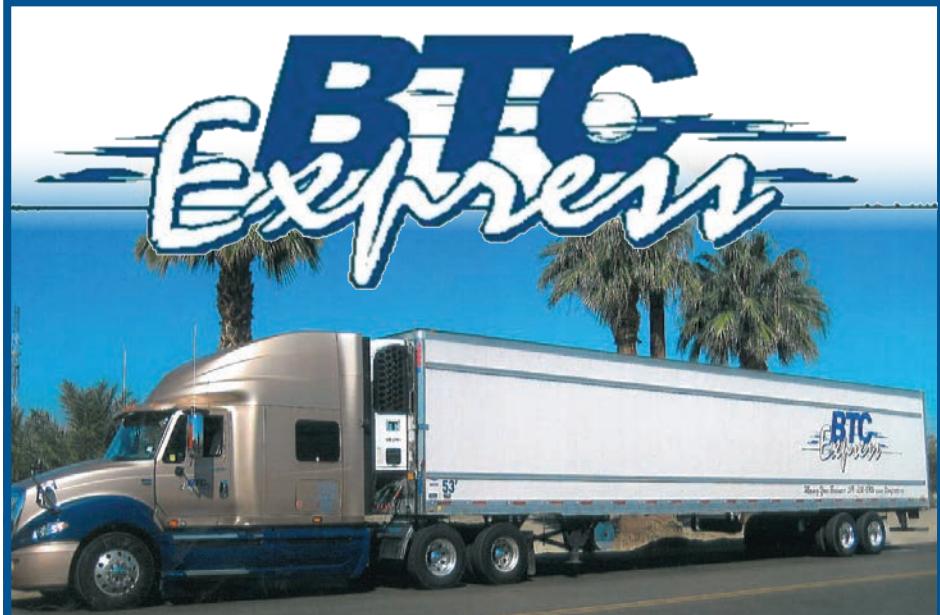
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New truck orders remain strong through February

Preliminary data shows February was another strong month for Class 8 truck orders, coming in at about 31,000 units. February order activity was 12% below January's numbers but at a more reasonable, seasonal level than in the past four months, according to FTR. It still marked the strongest February since 2006 and was up 7% compared to last February.

Orders have totaled 378,000 units over the past 12 months.

"Orders were spot on our expectations of 31,000. The market has calmed down but is still operating at a very healthy level," said Don Ake, FTR's vice-president of commercial vehicles. "The economy and freight demand is more predictable, so orders should follow their cyclical trends for the next few months. However, it will be important to see how these orders are distributed through-

out the year. There are still build slots that need to be filled in the first half of the year in order to keep build rates up. January orders were skewed for more deliveries in the second half of the year. It will be interesting if this 'speculative' order pattern repeats in February."

Classes 5-8 truck orders totaled 51,400 units, up 6% compared to last February, reported ACT Research.

"The run of excellent new Class 8 order activity continued into February as 31,200 NA net orders were booked," said Kenny Vieth, ACT's president and senior analyst.

"Up 7% compared to last year, February's orders marked the 25th consecutive month of year-over-year gains in net orders. While February's order volume qualifies as the weakest month in the past five, on a seasonally adjusted basis it also represents the ninth consecutive month of orders

over 28,000 units. However, there is a recognition that with the 2015 build schedule filling rapidly, it is unlikely

that this string of excellence will remain unscathed by the time we get to late Q2," he added. ●

Halo tire inflation system named top tech achievement by truck writers

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

Aperia Technologies' Halo Tire Inflator won the 2014 Technical Achievement Award from the Truck Writers of North America (TWNA). The award was presented during the Technology & Maintenance Council's (TMC) annual meeting in Nashville.

Halo bolts onto an axle hub and uses the wheel's rotational motion to drive an internal pump that main-



From left to right: Jim Park, chair of the TWNA Technical Award committee, Aperia CEO, Josh Carter and Brandon Richardson, Aperia's chief technology officer.

tains air pressure in a tire. It operates on a similar principle to a self-winding watch, Aperia executives said when they unveiled it last year. Halo can be used on drive and trailer axles, and a version is in the works for steer axles.

The award was accepted by Aperia CEO, Josh Carter and chief technology officer Brandon Richardson. Both are co-founders of the Burlingame, Calif.-based company.

"We had some very innovative products to consider for this year's award," said Jim Park, equipment editor of *Heavy-Duty Trucking* magazine and chair of the TWNA Technical Achievement Award committee. "Aperia's Halo Tire Inflator is joining an exclusive group of products that has contributed much to the efficiency and prosperity of the trucking industry."

Aperia's Halo was picked from five finalists through an elimination process that started with more than a dozen products. The four other finalists were Dana's Spicer AdvanTEK 40 tandem drive axles, Fontaine Fifth Wheel's dual camera system, Peterson's LumenX Series 7 LED and Webb Wheel's Vortex Unlimited vented brake drum.

"We're honoured to receive this award and we consider it to be a reflection of the hard work and dedication of our R&D team and the guidance and collaboration we received from the industry," said Carter. "Our product development philosophy was to involve real users of the product early and often. We worked with senior managers and top executives, as well as shop managers, mechanics and drivers too. As a result, after five years of intensive R&D and immersing ourselves in the field with fleets, the Halo is proving to meet the tough demands of the industry, and we're excited to be watching it drive value for our customers."

The award finalists were chosen by the association's Technical Achievement Award committee, including Paul Abelson of *Road King* and *Land Line* magazines, John Baxter of Baxter TechWrite and technical director of Advance Diesel Concepts, Tom Berg of *Heavy Duty Trucking* and *Construction Equipment* magazines, Peter Carter of *Today's Trucking*, David Kolman of *Fleet Maintenance Magazine* and *Road King*, James Menzies of *Truck News* and *Truck West*, and Park of *Heavy Duty Trucking* (chair). ●



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Erb Transport was one of the first Ontario fleets to add ATDynamics' trailer tails to its fleet, once they were approved by the province.

Trailer tails could get boost from new parent

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

Officials from ATDynamics and Stemco expanded on the recently announced acquisition of the former by the latter, during their Technology & Maintenance Council press conference.

Just last month Stemco announced it had purchased trailer tail manufacturer ATDynamics, and will roll it into its Innovative Tire and Mileage Solutions (ITMS) division, which provides products that increase fuel efficiency, reduce tire costs and improve safety. That division is headed by Bob Montgomery.

"We looked at just about every company out there that produces OEM or aftermarket products," he said. "When it came to unaided brand name recognition for rear drag aerodynamics, no other product was named in our studies. These guys are leading the charge. It's great technology and it's real-world technol-

ogy. It's very robust, very common sense and it just works. That's why this is so exciting to us."

Andrew Smith, who founded the company in 2006, was equally excited. He'll stay on with the organization and said the immediate benefit will be the leveraging of Stemco's existing sales force.

"I could not be happier about this match," he said. "In a few weeks we will have an additional 40 salespeople across the country, talking about the benefits of these products."

ATDynamics has enjoyed tremendous growth since its inception, and has sold more than 35,000 units to more than 500 fleets. Already, more than 1,450 trailer tails have been sold into the Ontario market since the regulatory barriers were removed. The addition of a Stemco sales force should bring about another "inflection point" soon, Montgomery said. ●

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Mercedes-Benz introduces new mid-sized commercial van

The new Metris joins Mercedes' Sprinter as part of a broader, revitalized line of commercial vans

By James Menzies

INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

Mercedes-Benz has taken the wraps off its new mid-sized commercial van dubbed Metris.

Mercedes is positioning the new van as "right-sized" for commercial applications, capable of doing the job of a full-sized van in a smaller package. It has the benefit of being more maneuverable than full-sized vans in tight urban environments and can be parked inside a garage or in an underground parkade.

"The Mercedes-Benz Vans business has experienced double digit growth in Canada over the last few years," said Tim A. Reuss, president and CEO of Mercedes-Benz Canada. "The Sprinter's success story is a clear indication that Canadians have embraced the Mercedes-Benz know-how that can be attributed to over 120 years of experience in the commercial vehicle sector. It is therefore a most timely and natural progression for Mercedes-Benz Canada and our dealer network to now expand our successful vans business in Canada with the addition of the Mercedes-Benz Metris."

The Metris is based on the popular Vito model offered in Europe. It offers up to 67% more payload and 40% more cargo volume than other mid-sized commercial vans currently on offer, Mercedes claims. The cargo version carries an MSRP of \$33,900 in Canada, making it the most inexpensive Mercedes vehicle available.

The Metris is a high-end van though, featuring many of the same capabilities offered in the full-sized Sprinter.

"The Metris will be following in the footsteps of the Sprinter as the second model offered by Mercedes-Benz Vans in Canada," said Pablo de la Peña, vice-president of the Mercedes-Benz Vans division in Canada. "We are looking forward to setting new benchmarks in the mid-sized commercial van segment by means of the Metris' unmatched combination of cargo capacity, payload and efficiency."

All Canadian Mercedes-Benz dealers will sell and service the Metris, beginning in October. The van is powered by a four-cylinder turbocharged gasoline engine producing 208 hp and 258 lb.-ft. of torque. It will be mated to a seven-speed automatic transmission. The powertrain will boast a 25,000-kilometre service interval.

The cargo Metris will come with six airbags and will carry Attention Assist, Crosswind Assist and load-adaptive electronic stability as standard features. Optional safety features include active parking assist, lane-keeping assist, Parktronic, collision prevention assist, blind spot assist and a rearview camera.

Mercedes continues to gain ground in the Canadian van market. In 2014, it sold 4,077 Sprinter vans, an increase of 19.1%. The Sprinter underwent a complete redesign last year and is now available with Crosswind Assist and in a 4x4 configuration, which De la Peña told *Truck News* has been well received in Canada.

"Since its launch in Canada in 2010, the Sprinter has rightfully earned a

huge amount of respect from the industry and from its owners as a truly impressive large van. We have learned a great deal in the last five years and are now fully prepared and excited for the imminent arrival of the Metris in Canada," De la Peña further added.

Sales of Sprinter vans have also been brisk in the US. Bernhard Glaser, vice-president and managing director of Mercedes-Benz Vans USA, said Sprinter sales grew 18% in 2014, making the US the second strongest market for the van in the world, behind only Germany.

Mercedes was first in the US market to offer a European-styled van as well as



The new Mercedes-Benz Metris is based on the Vito model from Europe.

a diesel engine. It now enjoys 30% market share in metro areas, Glaser claims. He said he's expecting the Metris to be as well received as its larger sibling.

"We are now a full range vans pro-

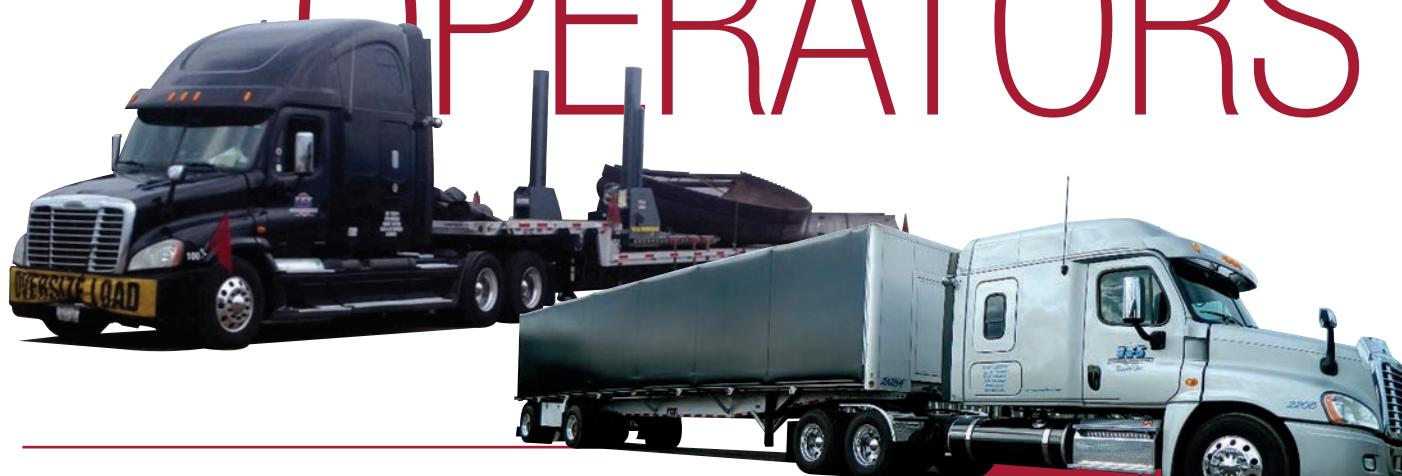
vider with payloads and price points that cover a much broader spectrum than ever before," Glaser said during the unveiling at the NTEA Work Truck Show. ◉



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Ford reveals new Tonka-inspired medium-duty truck

By James Menzies

INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

Ford's new F-650/F-750 medium-duty truck is much quieter than its predecessor, but the company is making some noise with its introduction by showing it in Tonka trim.

The Tonka-inspired F-750 unveiled at the NTEA Work Truck Show will be hitting the road and appearing at other industry events throughout the year, including the Mid-America Trucking Show.

The medium-duty truck itself is much quieter than previous versions. Ford claims that at idle, it's 45% quieter inside the cab and 35% quieter outside. At highway speeds it's 25% quieter. This is due to a newly designed 6.7-litre V8 Power Stroke diesel engine.

"Our all-new F-650/F-750 medium-



This Tonka-themed new Ford F-750 will travel to industry events to promote the company's quieter new model.

duty trucks are purpose-built to give our hardworking vocational customers maximum capability," said John

Ruppert, general manager, Ford Commercial Vehicle Sales and Marketing. "While the truck is able to work harder,

we also made life inside the cab easier. Lowering in-cab and exterior noise levels improves driver comfort and minimizes disturbances while idling at work sites."

The new V8 diesel is mated to Ford's own transmission, allowing for optimized performance. Ford says it's the only medium-duty truck maker to produce its own fully integrated engine and transmission.

The truck will be offered in regular cab, super cab and crew cab styles and in a straight frame, dock-height and an all-new tractor configuration.

Ford also announced its renaming its telematics solution to Ford Telematics and will be rolling it out globally. It was previously known as Crew Chief. The system will continue to be powered by Telogis. New features and analytics have been added to the platform.

"Commercial trucks have to be more than delivery boxes on wheels, and innovations like Ford Telematics are critical to helping our fleet customers succeed," said Raj Nair, chief technical officer and group vice-president, global product development with Ford. "Ford, in coordination with Telogis, is leading the development of smart solutions for hardworking fleets so they can maximize their operations to better serve their customers."

Ford is the only manufacturer to offer a full line of Classes 1 through 7 commercial vehicles. Ruppert said it commanded 43.2% of this segment's market share in 2014. He also said the new Ford Transit full-sized commercial van has been well received, with 23,000 units sold over the last three months. And the redesigned F-150 with aluminum body has come out of the gate strong. Ruppert said more than 1.5 million prospective customers have used the build-and-price feature on the company's Web site, setting a new record and attracting more interest than even the Mustang. ●

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Train Trailer opens new Quebec facility

COTEAU-DU-LAC, QUEBEC

Train Trailer has announced the opening of a new transport trailer rental, lease and maintenance facility in Coteau-du-Lac, Que.

The new space has six mechanics and support staff to service the Quebec region.

"We've been looking at opening in Montreal for some time now," said president and COO Rick Kloepfer. "Our philosophy is to have our own people in place to ensure we can carry on the same quality operation as our other facilities across Canada. We strive for the same customer experience at each location. We're excited about having the additional facility in Montreal so that we can better serve and grow our Quebec based business."

The company now has four locations in Calgary, Toronto, Cornwall and Montreal.

In addition to the opening of the new facility, the company appointed Nick Pereira as the district account manager for Quebec. The new location is at 4 rue du Transport, Coteau-du-Lac, Que. The phone number is 514-357-0900. ●

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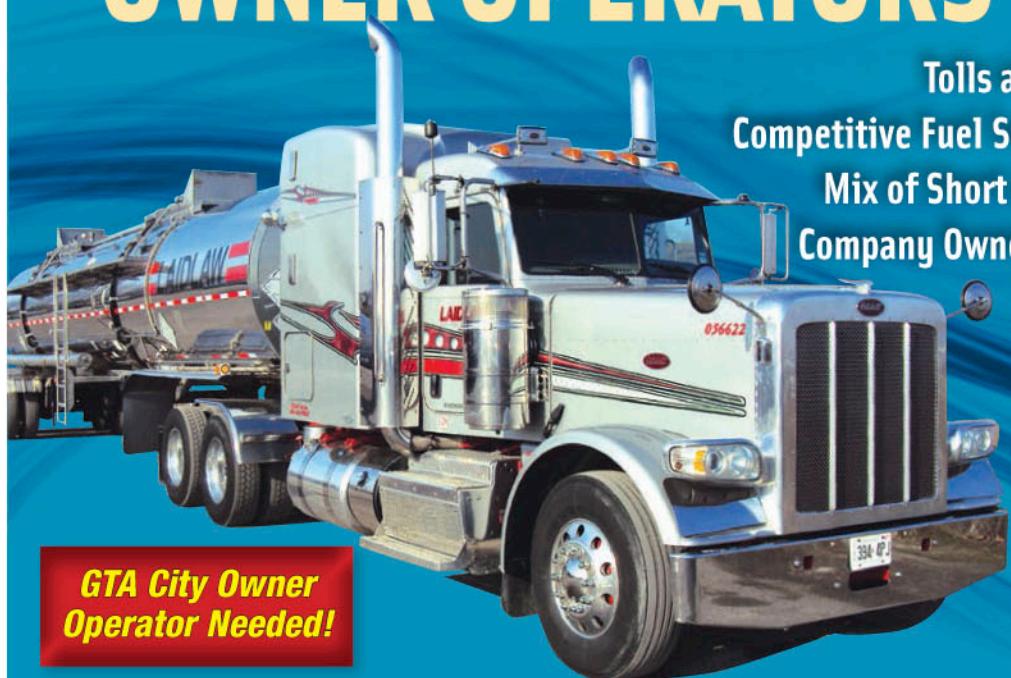
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Fleets can improve fuel economy by 5-8% by optimizing parameters

By James Menzies

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

Fully optimizing engine parameters that already exist on today's modern diesel engines can allow fleets to improve fuel economy by 5-8%.

That was the finding of a new Confidence Report on electronic engine parameters, produced by the North American Council for Freight Efficiency and released at the Technology & Maintenance Council meetings in Nashville.

"Optimizing engine parameters is well worth the effort - it enhances fuel economy and saves fleets a lot of money. But the complexity of optimization is preventing many fleets from enjoying the benefits," announced Dave Schaller, NACFE program manager.

More than 100 customizable parameters exist on today's heavy-duty diesel engines. They can be used to do everything from control vehicle speeds, reduce idling, incent drivers to operate more efficiently and manage engine speed and torque.

Setting these parameters basically equates to free fuel economy improvements, Schaller pointed out.

"It doesn't cost anything extra to get it on your truck. It doesn't add any weight to the truck and it doesn't add any maintenance - and it doesn't break," he said at a press conference.

However, NACFE also found there is unnecessary complexity surrounding the utilization of engine parameters - especially among smaller fleets. Some truck dealers struggle with understanding how the parameters can be optimized for their customers and because they are not a tangible item that can be seen or demonstrated, many fleets are unaware of how beneficial optimizing these parameters can be, explained Mike Roeth, operation lead, Trucking Efficiency.

"You can't go kick them or point one out," he said. "I don't think it's something dealer salespeople have been thinking about. They can sell a truck with or without it; without it is a little less effort."

Another barrier to utilizing engine parameters is driver resistance. Many of the settings focus on vehicle speed, idling, etc. Fleets need to work with drivers to ensure they understand the benefits of optimizing engine parameters and why it's necessary, Roeth said.

Even setting just some of the parameters will yield a fuel economy improvement of 3-5% compared to using none at all, the report found, with greater benefits of 5-8% available to fleets that optimize all of the available parameters.

A 5% fuel economy improvement can net a fleet a \$4,000 per year fuel

savings per truck based on US diesel prices in 2013, NACFE calculated.

"In theory, programmable engine parameters should be the most attractive pathway for a fleet to improve its fuel economy," the Confidence Report indicates. "As opposed to nearly every other efficiency technology, software-based electronic parameters weigh nothing and cost nothing to adopt; they are included in every engine made today. Plus, if set thoughtfully and correctly when the truck is purchased, they require zero regular maintenance. No other technology that Trucking Efficiency has studied offers such significant cost savings with no real upfront cost and minimal management cost."

As part of this project, NACFE produced a Manufacturer Parameter Name Comparison Tool, to help fleets understand the nomenclature used by the various OEMs for their various engine parameters. Contact details are also provided for OEM representatives who can help fleets better understand the benefits of optimizing parameters. The report is available for free from www.truckingefficiency.org.

Gummins, Eaton build on collaboration

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

For the third consecutive year, Cummins and Eaton shared a stage at the Technology & Maintenance Council annual meetings, to update industry journalists on their collaborative efforts. This year, the message was that the two companies are broadening their collective approach to powertrain integration and will be looking to enter new segments. Ryan Trzybinski, product planning manager for Eaton, indicated the company's Procision dual clutch transmission will be offered in July with the Cummins ISB 6.7-litre engine. The companies would not yet disclose which vehicle OEM will be the first to offer the combination.

Testing has shown this pairing can improve fuel economy by 8-10% compared to a torque converter-style automatic transmission, Trzybinski said. The Procision is the first dual clutch transmission in the North American Classes 6/7 market. It provides smooth powershifting with no torque interruption. But perhaps the greatest example of the closer collaboration between Cummins and Eaton is the SmartAdvantage powertrain, which continues to gain market acceptance. Trzybinski noted there are now nearly 200 fleets in the US and Canada using the SmartAdvantage, which features a Cummins ISX engine and the Eaton Fuller Advantage Series automated manual transmission.

"Sales have exceeded our expectations," Trzybinski said. The package is now offered by International, Peterbilt, Kenworth, Volvo and Freightliner. The SmartAdvantage powertrain with ISX12 engine is now available for order, which delivers 2-4% better fuel economy, said Mike Taylor, global powertrain director, Cummins. It is aimed at regional haul applications and can produce 425 hp and 1,350/1,650 lb.-ft. of torque.

Also new is availability of the ISX12 G natural gas engine with the Fuller Advantage Series automated manual transmission. Previously, only the previous generation UltraShift Plus was available with the nat-gas engine, which was the first time natural gas power could be spec'd with an AMT.

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Mack makes mDrive HD standard in Titan heavy-hauler

The mDrive HD is the first automated manual transmission to be offered in the Titan

By James Menzies

TORONTO, ONTARIO

Mack Trucks officials came to Canada's National Heavy Equipment Show March 5 to announce the company's ultra-heavy-haul Titan by Mack will now come standard with the mDrive HD automated manual transmission.

Previously the Titan could only be had with a manual, but the company says the new HD version of its mDrive transmission has been engineered for extreme payloads.

It can handle gross combination weights of more than 140,000 lbs,

Mack announced, as well as 2,060 lb.-ft. of torque. The mDrive HD you'll find in the Titan has been programmed for heavy-haul applications and will perform differently than even the mDrive HD that was announced last month as standard on the Mack Granite.

"It won't skip-shift, it will go through all the gears," said Stu Russoli, product manager, construction segment with Mack. "It will get the load started and keep it moving by going through all the gears."

He noted different software has



Mack's Titan heavy-hauler now comes standard with the mDrive HD automated manual transmission, engineered for severe-duty work.

been developed for the mDrive HD for each of the applications into which it will be deployed. A construction version is available as well as an

EZ Shift configuration for sensitive bulk hauling applications.

The mDrive HD offers ease of operation and broadens the potential driver pool. It also offers operational benefits: it's up to 237 lbs lighter than alternative options and uses less oil, about 17.8 quarts compared to nearly 50 in some other transmissions. The cooler has been relocated to the gearbox, which simplifies maintenance and allows for greater control of operating temperatures, Russoli said.

While it's based on the same 12-speed mDrive first introduced on the Mack Pinnacle highway tractor, it has been reinforced with hardened gears and a stronger split synchronizer for increased durability in heavy-haul operations. It also requires a higher-viscosity transmission oil.

The mDrive HD comes with features such as Grade Gripper, Rock-Free and Power Launch. Grade Gripper works with the ABS system and will hold the truck on a hill, giving the driver time to transition their foot from the brake to the throttle without rolling backwards. Rock-Free enables the driver to rock the truck back and forth and escape from mud or a frozen surface simply by pumping the accelerator. If that doesn't work, Power Launch allows the operator to increase torque and engine rpm for an extra boost at launch.

The mDrive HD also allows the operator to choose Manual mode to override gear selections when necessary.

"We built on the success of the Mack mDrive, previously only available on our highway models, and engineered a heavier-duty version of the automated manual transmission, resulting in the mDrive HD, standard on the Mack Granite and now standard on the Titan," said Stephen Roy, president of Mack Trucks North America. "When paired with the powerful heavy-haul Titan, it offers Mack customers unparalleled muscle to easily handle the most difficult of loads."

John Walsh, vice-president of marketing with Mack Trucks, gave a brief overview of Mack's standing in the marketplace. He projected North American Class 8 truck demand to total 310,000 units.

He said infrastructure investments in key Canadian markets such as Vancouver, Montreal and Toronto should help sales of its construction trucks, and noted the Granite remains the top-selling Class 8 conventional straight truck in the US.

"Where there's demanding work to be done, there's a Mack to get it done," Walsh said. ●



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Bose introduces next-generation Ride System

By James Menzies

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

Bose has introduced its next-generation Ride System, which offers drivers multiple settings and improved ergonomics.

It also comes with a built-in driver orientation module to help drivers learn about the seat's capabilities.

"With the Bose Ride System II, more

drivers can feel safer, recover faster, and expect a longer driving career, while travelling over more varying road conditions," said Mike Rosen, Bose Ride chief engineer and general manager, while introducing the seat at the Technology & Maintenance Council's spring meeting. "The Bose Ride System II is now an even better tool for fleets looking to improve their business performance."

The new seat comes with three settings: Soft, Middle and Firm. Rosen acknowledged not all drivers liked the feel of the previous seat - at least initially. The multiple settings will allow each driver to find the setting that works best for them, and in some cases they may graduate up from the firm setting to soft, which offers the full benefits of protection against vibrations.

The Soft setting provides the

smoothest ride and maximum protection against road-induced shaking, Rosen explained. The Middle setting gently follows road contours and protects the driver from shakes and bumps, while offering a slightly firmer ride than the Soft setting.

The Firm setting protects the driver while adapting the ride for rough on-road and even off-road environments, providing the best protection against bottoming in harsh conditions. It also offers a more familiar feel for drivers transitioning to the Bose Ride from traditional air-suspension seats.

The new Ride System has been designed to handle a wider variety of applications, Rosen noted. While it was initially designed as an on-highway product, customers have put it through a wide range of environments and so the new-generation seat has been designed with that in mind.

Also new is a built-in driver orientation, which allows first-time users to understand how to get the most out of the seat. The high-speed electromagnetic motor is used as a speaker to play an informational audio track, while providing the motion necessary for the driver to experience what to expect from the seat.

The seat top has been redesigned by Sears Manufacturing to provide improved comfort.

The Bose Ride System II will be available beginning April 1, and won't be priced higher than the current product. When bought in batches of 100 the Ride System costs US\$2,995 per seat. Ten to 99 units will cost US\$3,695 per seat.

Volvo is the only truck maker to offer the seat as a factory-installed option. It will be offering the new version later this spring. ◉

Michelin introduces Tire Care

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

Michelin has introduced a new Tire Care program it says will help fleets better manage their tires and reduce their operating costs.

It was announced at the Technology & Maintenance Council's annual spring meetings and is available immediately in the US, and within the next year in Canada.

Tire Care is an advanced tire monitoring program that aims to improve uptime and reduce costs. Michelin claims it's the only fully digital, nationwide fleet tire monitoring program and it is backing it with a guarantee that fleet members will see: reduced service calls; improved CSA scores; better fuel economy; improved driver satisfaction; and/or increased tire mileage.

The program is supported by Michelin's Commercial Service Network, whose technicians will capture truck tire data electronically and store it in the cloud. Fleet operators can then use this data to maximize uptime and reduce tire-related expenses. Data collected through the program will be available to fleets in real-time.

"Fleet operations and maintenance managers are looking for consistent, trustworthy tire monitoring and evaluation. Michelin Tire Care gives them the valuable information and technical insights they need to ensure they are getting the best ROI from their tire assets," said Vic Koelsch, chief operating officer, Michelin Americas Truck Tires Division. "Tire Care is a valuable new component of our existing service offers - all of which are aimed at improving a fleet's performance and ultimately its bottom line."

Fleets can choose between two Tire Care programs: Fleet Ready and Fleet Fit.

Fleet Ready provides regular tire monitoring for air pressure, tread depth, valve caps, irregular wear and offers a full visual inspection scheduled at a pre-determined frequency. Technicians will provide actionable summary reports to highlight immediate needs and project tire replacement.

Fleet Fit offers all of the above, plus expert guidance on tire by wheel position and application, tire forecasting, budgeting and tire optimization by vehicle. Tire Care complements Michelin's existing support programs, which include ONCall 2.0 and Michelin Truck Care. ◉

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Capacity looks to slash costs with new Sabre model

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

In the terminal truck world, new models don't come along often. So it was with much enthusiasm that Capacity introduced at the Technology & Maintenance Council's spring meetings, its new Sabre design.

The Sabre, thusly named because of its potential to slash operating costs, was designed around total cost of operation, according to Capacity Trucks president Scott Lord.

He said the company set out to build a truck that will reduce operating costs without sacrificing the durability and customization its products are known for.

"Those are the two things we didn't want to give up," Lord said of durability and customization.

Capacity drew on the expertise of its parent company, Allied Specialty

Vehicles, and took an automotive approach to the redesign of the terminal truck.

This meant subjecting it to rigorous testing, including studying how the truck is being used in the field and then replicating the harshest conditions it's subjected to.

Capacity found one of the most punishing fleet environments its trucks are currently operating in and then recreated the boom hook in that application and repeated it 96,000 times to mimic a full life-cycle in that environment. This was accompanied by 96,000 door open/close cycles.

"We have tested this like no other," Lord said.

Capacity also examined its top 30 warranty items and worked to design those problems out of the new truck. It also made the truck more serviceable by providing easier access to fre-

Y I O

quently serviced components.

The frame of the truck has been reinforced, using military grade 110,000 psi steel, which Lord said is twice as strong as the frame on its previous truck.

Driver comfort was enhanced through tuning of the cab dampening system.

The Sabre will also be better sup-

ported, thanks to the creation of a new customer support team set up to address any issues promptly as they arise.

The Sabre will replace existing models yet won't come at a cost pre-

mium, Lord noted. The hope is to replace all previous models by June. Some Sabre trucks are already in production and available for order today while other models – such as the air-ride and tandem versions – will come on-stream soon. 

Freightliner honours hard-working cities

INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

The host of the NTEA Work Truck Show was recognized as the first of Freightliner's Hardest Working Cities, part of a new promotion intended to reward hard work, investment and innovation. Freightliner announced the new program at the Work Truck Show and explained how it will work. Canadian and American cities will be graded using 11 data categories, covering everything from average hours worked, improvement in unemployment rate, contribution to GDP and vocational truck sales.

"We feel this is not only a great occasion for the Freightliner Trucks family to celebrate what our company stands for, but to honour those who take our products to the next level," announced Diane Hames, general manager, marketing and strategy for Daimler Trucks North America. "We're more than a truck manufacturer, we give our customers tools to impact their communities, and it's important to recognize the innovation taking place in cities large and small."

Cities that are selected as being among the hardest working will be recognized in various ways. Surprise deliveries of coffee and donuts will be made to local work sites, a celebration will be held at a local Freightliner dealership, an award will be presented to the city and international recognition will be heaped on business and community leaders.

"This will be an ongoing program to salute determination, innovation and job creation," said Mary Aufdem-berg, director of product marketing for Freightliner. "We see the impact of vibrant economies and how investments are made in construction, manufacturing and transportation to help create stronger communities."

More info can be found at
www.HardestWorkingCities.com.

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Volvo extends intervals

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

Volvo has extended recommended maintenance intervals on oil changes and diesel particulate filter (DPF) cleanings. The extended intervals apply to all model year 2011 and newer Volvo trucks with Volvo D11, D13 or D16 engines. Volvo claims the new maintenance intervals will save customers thousands of dollars over the life of the truck.

The drain intervals on engine oil and filters have been stretched out 10,000 miles in long-haul, regional haul and heavy-haul applications. The new intervals are 45,000 miles for long-haul, 35,000 miles for regional haul and 25,000 miles for heavy-haul. Owners must use oil that meets Volvo's VDS-4 standard and if idle-time is greater than 30%, drain intervals should not be extended, Volvo warns.

DPFs, which previously had to be cleaned or replaced after 250,000 miles, can now go 400,000 miles between servicings. This extension follows more than a year of testing and analysis, Volvo claims.

"We are always looking for opportunities to reduce our customers' operating costs, and these new recommended maintenance intervals can significantly help their bottom line," said John Moore, Volvo Trucks product marketing manager, powertrain. "Now that we have some experience with and data from EPA10-compliant trucks, we have confirmed our assumption that the reduction in particulate matter means longer-lasting engine oil and less ash in DPFs. In addition to saving money, longer intervals mean trucks are more productive because they spend less time in the shop."

The new oil drain intervals could eliminate between four and 16 oil changes over a 600,000-mile life, saving customers hundreds of dollars. The longer DPF maintenance intervals could allow many customers to service the filter just once, rather than twice, over the life of a truck. •

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A little downspeeding can save a lot of money

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

Dana took time at the Technology & Maintenance Council's annual spring meeting to raise awareness about the benefits – and risks – of engine downspeeding. Every 100 rpm reduction in engine speed translates to a 1% improvement in fuel economy, meaning there is significant savings to be had by spec'ing downsped powertrains, according to Steve Slesinski, global product planning, commercial vehicle driveline technology with Dana. However, reducing engine speeds and spec'ing faster rear axle ratios also places greater torque on downstream components such as the driveshaft.

Dana promotes a two-pronged approach to protecting against damage that can be caused by the extra torque generated by downsped powertrains: torque-limiting the engine and fortifying the drivetrain.

Slesinski said Dana has come out with products engineered specifically to perform with downsped powertrains. These include the Spicer AdvanTek 40 tandem axle, the SPL 350 driveshaft and the SPL 250 inter-axle shaft. Engine providers can set parameters that torque-limit the engine and reduce the risk of damage caused during low-speed maneuvering, however that won't protect against high-cycle fatigue, Slesinski said. While today's downsped pow-

ertrains typically aim for a 1,150 rpm cruise speed, Slesinski said the trend is expected to continue.

"We think rpm is going to continue to go down because of the big benefit you have by improving the efficiency of the engine," he said, noting cruise speeds of 900 rpm could be attainable in the near future. To this end, Dana is anticipating the need for products that can handle the demands of downspeeding without adding substantial cost and weight to the vehicle.

The company also has taken a leadership role in educating the industry about the benefits of downspeeding, through creation of a new online training module that will go live later this year. The program will help dealers, fleets, service managers and others understand the implications of downspeeding, Slesinski said. Dana also launched a new drive axle lubricant designed for high-efficiency drivelines. The all-synthetic Spicer XFE 75W-90 axle lubricant is designed to further reduce operating costs by as much as \$730 over a five-year life-cycle. It also qualifies for a 500,000-mile service interval. Combined with the AdvanTek 40 axle and an engine that is downsped by 200 rpm, a customer can achieve fuel savings of about \$9,835 per vehicle over a five-year period based on US\$4/gallon diesel prices, Dana claims. •

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Goodyear shows off its most fuel-efficient tires

By Sonia Straface

SAN ANGELO, TEXAS

The phrase "Everything's bigger in Texas" took on a whole new meaning at Goodyear's 2015 Tire Technology Showcase in early March. The showcase was spread out across more than 7,000 acres at the colossal Goodyear Proving Grounds in San Angelo, Texas and was attended by customers and industry journalists from across North America. The Proving Grounds was founded back in 1944 and is the largest of six global facilities Goodyear uses to test its tires.

The day was used to show off the company's latest long-haul tires, the Fuel Max LHS and the Fuel Max LHD G505D. The

company claims they are the most fuel-efficient steer and drive long-haul tire combination in North America.

"Technology in tires is advancing like IT technology," said Brian Buckham, general manager, commercial marketing product and innovation, Goodyear.

He explained the LHS and the LHD tires contain four rubber compounds in the tread area, with a sub-tread that helps reduce rolling resistance, as well as a cushion that helps adhere the tread package to the belt. There is also a tread shoulder compound that helps prevent scuffing and tearing.

Goodyear officials said they are confident in the feedback they have received from customers that have made the

switch to the Fuel Max tires.

"One of our customers made the comment that for as much money as (they were) saving on fuel, with the super fuel-efficient tires, they can buy brand new tires three or four times a year," Buckham said. "In 2013, an average fleet in America was running 120,000 miles on a tractor, and if you do the math at 65 cents, every tractor is buying about \$78,000 on fuel a year. And if we can save you 1% on fuel costs, that's about \$800 per truck per year. And we're trying to save you a little bit more than that with the tires and it'll start adding up."

Buckham added there are a number of ways to calculate how fuel is being saved with the tires, so the media and customers in attendance were invited to go onto the grounds with Goodyear representatives to watch several fuel-saving demonstrations in action.

SAE fuel economy test

One of the ways Goodyear demonstrated how fuel-efficient the tires are was through the industry-standard SAE Type II fuel economy test. Trucking journalists watched as two identical International ProStars were hooked up to weight-matched trailers (80,000 lbs). Both trucks were identical except the tires, Goodyear officials claimed. One was equipped with Tier 1 competitive tires on the steers and drives and the other was fitted with the Goodyear Fuel Max tires on the steers and drives.

Normally, said Buckham, the test is run on the company's eight-mile track but because of the other tests going on that day, the trucks were forced to go out on the public roads just outside the Proving Grounds.

While journalists and customers went on to view other tests on the grounds, the two identical trucks went onto the public highway for the test. They travelled from San Angelo to Abilene, Texas and back, making it a 120-mile round trip test.

Clint Carrell, the testing supervisor at Goodyear said the trucks would be driving the same speed, 65 mph, and that fuel meters were installed on both tanks to monitor fuel consumption. At the end of the 120-mile trip, both trucks arrived back at the testing grounds and the data was presented to the attendees.

"When you get down to the end of the math, you save 3.3% of fuel," said Buckham. "That's \$2,200 of fuel per year per truck."

Coast-down test

In designing the new Fuel Max tires, Goodyear said it wanted to maximize performance by not sacrificing tread life to improve fuel economy. To test the rolling resistance of the new tires, the company performed a coast-down test on its eight-mile track. The demonstration was performed with two identical fully loaded (80,000 lbs) Volvo tractor-trailers running the same speed (25 mph) along the track, until they reached a marker, about a mile-and-a-half from completing the full eight miles.

"When the driver reaches that point, he'll put it in neutral and you'll see the truck coast down the track," said Andrea Rusell, assistant brand manager, commercial, Goodyear. "The goal is to coast the furthest."

The only change in the trucks was the steer and drive tires. One had Goodyear's LHS and LHD tires, while the other was equipped with Tier 1 competitive tires.



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Goodyear's Fuel Max tires stood out in the wet stopping distance test, coming to a full stop on a slick pavement faster than its competitors did.

Goodyear G316 tires were on both trailers to keep the playing field level, so the results were for the steer and drive tires.

In both demonstrations (which featured at least one trucking journalist alongside the driver) the truck with the Fuel Max tires coasted further than the truck with the competitive tires proving that the LHS and LHD tires had a lower rolling resistance and will help contribute to fuel savings, Goodyear claimed.

Goodyear officials said the tires surpassed all of their competitors on average in the coast-down tests (not seen on this particular day).

In addition, Buckham said that the new Fuel Max LHS tires is 9% better in rolling resistance than the previous steer tire Goodyear produced and even has improved tread life.

"So, we were able to do two things with this new tire," he said. "We didn't

just sell out for rolling resistance and effect the other performance characteristics of the tire."

The company also announced it would be rolling out a matching retread to the Fuel Max Fuel Max LHD G505D tire soon.

"It will be the lowest rolling resistance drive retread we have in our portfolio, replacing our 305 which used to be the lowest," added Buckham.

Wet stopping distance test

Finally, to flaunt the advantages of the Fuel Max tires, Goodyear showed attendees of the tire technology day how they held up in a wet stopping distance test.

Two identical trucks were set up first on the dry end of the track. One truck had Tier 1 competitive steer tires and drive tires, while the other was outfitted with the Fuel Max LHS and LHD tires.

One after another, the trucks acceler-

ated to 25 mph, and braked hard once they reached the marker on the wet surface of the pavement. Once completely stopped the truck's front end was marked to compare the tires stopping ability.

The wet surface the trucks would be braking on was extremely slick according to Jason Stine of Goodyear.

"It is a slippery polished concrete that is similar to being on a sheet of ice with a thin layer of water on it," he said.

He added that this is a standard test all commercial tire makers use.

Each truck completed the test three times and all three times the truck with the Goodyear Fuel Max tires stopped before the truck outfitted with the competitive tires.

Stine said it has run similar demonstrations with other tire brands as well and the Goodyear tires also outperformed them on the wet track.

"We saw distances as high as 75 and 80 feet before on average," added Stine. "There are different variables too, like a driver could hit the brakes a little sooner or later, that's why we have multiple runs and take an average."

The tires are optimized for traction and optimized for fuel efficiency, he added.

In keeping with the Texas theme of bigger is better, Goodyear ended the day by displaying its second largest super-sized tires at its Proving Grounds.

The giant tires – nearly 13 ft. tall – used for mining and other construction applications were fit onto the company's off-road test truck that weighs a whopping 200 tons and is powered by a diesel-over-electric motor.

Just one of those tires – the 5380 – costs more than \$50,000. ◉

Goodyear unveils new tire tech app

SAN ANGELO, TEXAS

At its Tire Technology Show-case in San Angelo, Texas in early March, Goodyear announced it has launched a new free smartphone application designed for tire technicians.

The new service is called the "SmartTech App" and allows tire technicians to minimize making mistakes while getting information during service calls from customers and dispatchers over the phone.

The company claims it will make the road service call process easier for techs and fleets alike, while reducing roll times.

The app works in conjunction with Goodyear's Fleet HQ, fleet customers and Goodyear tire technicians so that all information can be monitored and shared so everyone is in the know about every tire problem and the status of its repair. The app also allows technicians to take photos of the truck tires via the Goodyear-Fleet HQ Tire Pix program through a secure network so the customers can see the repairs or damage in real time. The SmartTech app is free and can be used on both iPhone and Android devices in both the US and Canada. You can download it through the Google Play Store or Apple App Store. ◉

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Ingersoll's new underslung suspension

INGERSOLL, ONTARIO

Ingersoll Axles has announced the introduction of a new fully-integrated underslung suspension. It is aimed at drop deck, lowboy, specialty van and auto-hauler segments. The new underslung suspension is compatible with all brands and sizes of disc brakes as well as all sizes of drum brakes, the company says.

Benefits of the new suspension include full compatibility with disc brakes and a maintenance-free fully integrated axle connection, the company claims.

The suspension is rated at 25,000 lbs, uses industry standard components and features a low ride height. A lack of u-bolts reduces maintenance costs.

"The underslung suspension is another example of how customers drive innovation at Ingersoll Axles," said Cheryl Hacking, vice-president of marketing, Ingersoll Axles. "We listen to our customers' needs and monitor the industry, in order to continuously improve our products, and make sure our technology is on the cutting edge."

You can find more info at www.ingersollaxles.com. ●

Converter dolly narrows trailer gap

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

Silver Eagle has come out with a converter dolly that automatically telescopes at highway speeds to reduce the gap between trailers.

Testing has shown a fuel savings of 2.5% can be delivered by the new T-Dolly. It also provides "wiggle-free tracking" for better handling and it is compatible with existing equipment, Silver Eagle announced at the Technology & Maintenance Council's annual spring meeting.

"The only reason to have a large gap between trailers is to make a sharp turn at low speed," said Gary Gaussoin, president of Silver Eagle. "Just think of how little you turn the steering wheel at highway speeds to change a lane; there is a very small steering angle in those situations."

The dolly takes its speed readings from the trailer ABS and narrows the trailer gap by 12 inches when speeds

of 45 mph are attained.

"From the beginning we were very aware that the T-Dolly had to fit into the fleet like any other dolly, and it had to be fail-safe and return to the normal extended position," said Kevin Sternes, lead engineer.

UPS has been testing the system on a Portland, Ore.-Everett, Wash. run.

"The T-Dolly will play an important part in reducing fuel consumption in our fleet," said Bill Brentar, UPS director of maintenance and engineering for transportation equipment. "UPS drivers who use these dollies preferred the way they feel in the closed position and that they settle down right away when changing lanes."

Silver Eagle officials said the T-Dolly will hit the market at about US\$14,500 – approximately \$4,500 more than today's standard dollies – and will deliver a payback in about 3.5 years. ●

Shell creates new PC-11 Web site, launches new coolant

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

Shell has taken the wraps off a new Web site designed to educate customers about the upcoming PC-11 heavy-duty engine oil category.

The Web site, which can be found at www.WhatIsPC11.com, covers the fundamentals of PC-11, impending changes, testing updates and how it will affect new, current and older engines when the category replaces API CJ-4 by 2017.

"PC-11 is a constantly developing specification and new information is available regularly to guide the industry through the expected changes," said Kate Faucher, global marketing projects lead for Shell Lubricants. "The new Shell Rotella interactive PC-11 Web site will serve as a resource for fleets, owner/operators and anyone driving a diesel powered pickup truck or operating equipment to learn more about PC-11 and how it will affect their business."

PC-11 will feature two categories – one for conventional-weight oils and another for low-viscosity engine oils. Only one of the categories will be backwards-compatible, necessitating some educational outreach, Shell claims.

"With two subcategories and new engine hardware tests, there will be lots of questions about how the oils will be formulated and which oil should be used for different applications," said Dan Arcy, OEM technical manager for Shell Lubricants. "As we formulate and test the new oils, Shell Lubricants can offer valuable resources to those operating diesel engines both on- and off-highway to support them through the transition over the next few years."

Some of the topics already covered on the site include: Why a new engine oil specification is needed; How the two subcategories are different and will be distinguished in the marketplace; What PC-11 will mean for fleets, owner/operators, construction, agriculture and diesel pickup trucks; Changes to diesel engine technology;

The type of testing done to make PC-11 a reality; And how Shell Lubricants is developing its new Shell Rotella PC-11 heavy duty engine oils.

Shell also demonstrated at the TMC meetings a new nitrite-free extended life coolant.

Shell Rotella ELC-NF was added to the company's coolant portfolio as a companion to its Rotella Ultra ELC.

"Shell Rotella ELC-NF was formulated to meet more severe operational conditions of modern, hot-running engines," said Stede Granger, OEM technical manager, Shell Lubricants. "This is particularly important for new emission engines, especially those with exhaust gas recirculation."

Shell says ELC-NF provides improved protection of aluminum components including brazed aluminum heat exchangers. Its heat transfer is superior to conventional coolants

and it offers protection against cavitation, Shell claims. It can also extend the life of water pumps, radiators and other cooling system components.

"As engine technology advances, we continue to develop new products such as the Shell Rotella ELC NF with our customer's current and future maintenance needs in mind," said Chris Guerrero, global marketing manager, Shell Lubricants.

"We know our hardworking customers are looking for the best products that help them meet today's and tomorrow's challenges for on- and off-highway engines. Shell is excited to offer a new product that fulfills customer needs, and is a great addition to our coolant portfolio."

The new coolant is designed to run 600,000 on-highway miles or 12,000 hours in commercial applications with proper monitoring. ●



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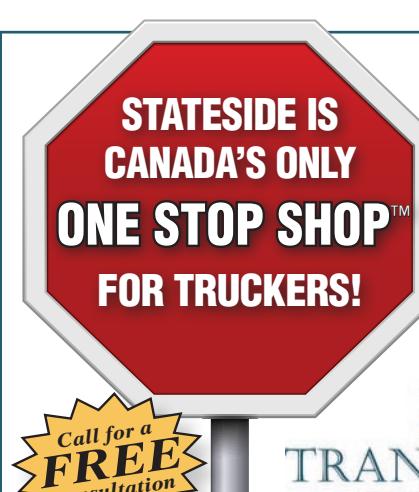
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The logo for Truck Exhaust Installation & Supply features the company name in a bold, sans-serif font inside a dark grey rectangular box. This box is positioned between two stylized white exhaust pipe graphics that curve upwards and outwards from the sides. The entire logo is set against a red background.

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C.A.T. introduces door-to-door intermodal delivery service

COTEAU-DU-LAC, QUEBEC

C.A.T. recently announced a new door-to-door intermodal service for its clients shipping to all points in North America.

The new service combines the company's asset and non-asset based network, and so far it has added capacity, and a reduced carbon footprint in comparison to over-the-road transport.

C.A.T. is coordinating the transport of 20-, 40- and 53-ft. full load container shipments to and from the rail ramp. From there, the containers are transported by rail through the States by various class one railways. Finally, the delivery is executed by the C.A.T. logistics team door-to-door.

To oversee the new operations, industry veteran Derrick Broome has been appointed to the position of vice-president, intermodal.

President of C.A.T., Daniel Goyette said, "Derrick Broome is a welcome addition to our team and a great asset to our company. As vice-president, intermodal, Derrick will head up the specialized intermodal division and will be based out of Columbus, Ohio."

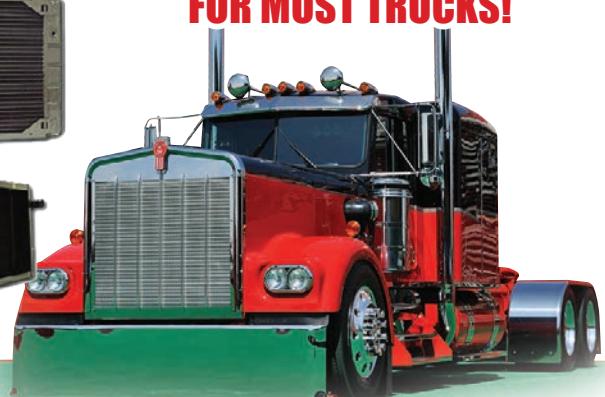
Broome commented: "I have been involved with most aspects of transportation including rail, road, dray, sales and operations. This position gives me the opportunity to use all these skills but more importantly, allows me to use my years of experience to drive further efficiency into our customers' supply chain." ●



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Morneau Sego expands in Newfoundland

WABUSH, NEWFOUNDLAND

Morneau Sego, a division of Groupe Morneau, has announced the opening of a new terminal in Wabush, Nfld.

The company says the new location will improve service in the Quebec and Labrador regions. It will also enable more competitively-priced connections and faster deliveries, according to the company.

"This terminal further strengthens Morneau Sego's operational flexibility, and improves the overall service for which Groupe Morneau is renowned," said Frederic Ruel, development director at Morneau Sego.

"We have been serving the northern regions for years now; our clients come from a number of sectors such as mining, energy, and other related industries, including the distribution of consumer goods," added Serge Gosselin, president of Morneau Sego.

Groupe Morneau president Andre Morneau said the addition, as well as investments in Baie-Comeau and Sept-iles, confirm the company's commitment to the regions. ●



Kiska CEO Mark Seymour (left) presents professional driver Robert Lavergne with the keys to a new Harley-Davidson motorcycle.

Kiska awards Harley Davidson to winner of Fuel Reduction Challenge

Competition allowed Kiska to reduce its fuel consumption and share the savings

By James Menzies

PREScott, ONTARIO

Robert Lavergne is riding high on the hawg this spring.

The professional driver for Kiska was just awarded a Dyna Street Bob Harley Davidson for winning the company's first Fuel Reduction Challenge.

The Harley, valued at about \$17,000, went to the driver who demonstrated the best fuel economy improvement over the course of the past year. Drivers were divided into categories based on equipment type and route and then compared against their peers, explained Denise Elliott, Kiska's safety manager.

"Robert was a perfect guy to win, it could not have played out any better," she told *Truck News*. "He's one of those guys who gets things done and does everything by the rules."

Jonathan Wahba, chief operating officer at Kiska, agreed.

"I'm especially pleased for Robert, who generated some truly remarkable results for the company this year, and is now the well-deserved and proud owner of a brand new Harley," he said.

Kiska came out a winner as well. Elliott said the program helped the company reduce its fuel consumption by nearly 0.1 miles per imperial

gallon in 2014, presenting a total savings of about \$1.1 million based on \$4 per gallon and 33.7 million miles run. Its fleet-wide fuel consumption improved from 7.05 miles per imperial gallon in 2013 to 7.51 in 2014. Of course, Elliott said some of this savings can be attributed to newer, better-spec'd trucks, driver training and other variables as well.

However, Kiska is convinced the Fuel Reduction Challenge played a role and is fine-tuning the competition for 2015.

In an effort to make the contest appeal to a wider population of drivers – including those who don't ride – and to level the playing field further, it is adjusting the rules.

The top 10% of drivers in every category will receive \$25 gift cards each month, as well as a ballot they can enter into a ballot box. At the end of the year, a \$10,000 grand prize will be awarded to whoever's name is drawn from among the previous winners.

"Developing a continuous improvement culture relative to fuel economy is a long-term goal for us at Kiska, and includes both our associates who are over the road, as well our office support staff," Wahba said. "From how we spec' the trucks, to where we purchase fuel, to improving our drivers' habits behind the wheel, we are delighted with the progress we've realized over the past 12 months." ●

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Volvo looking to reward safest North American fleets

GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

Volvo will once again this year recognize two of North America's safest fleets.

The truck maker announced it will recognize two North American trucking companies with the safest driving records and best safety programs.

Each will be awarded \$25,000 to put towards their safety-related activities.

Kriska Transportation won the 2014 award in the category for fleets running more than 20 million miles. This will be the seventh consecutive year the award has been presented by Volvo. It is co-sponsored by Michelin Americas Truck Tires.

"Nothing is more important in managing a fleet than maintaining a stellar safety record, and we are proud to honour the trucking industry's best performers again this year," said Göran Nyberg, president of Volvo Trucks North America. "Safety is a core value at Volvo, and we are proud to offer active safety technologies to help make the highways safer for everyone and passive safety features to help protect a fleet's most valuable asset: The driver."

"Michelin Americas Truck Tires is proud to continue our sponsorship of the Volvo Trucks Safety Award," added Mike Cain, Michelin Americas Truck Tires vice-president of original equipment. "This award embodies the commitment to safety that has been a foundation of Michelin for 120 years, and we are thrilled to again participate with Volvo Trucks in recognizing the safest truck fleets in North America."

All US and Canadian fleets that have at least five Class 8 tractors can enter. At least one of the trucks must be a Volvo.

Entrants will be ranked on their accident frequency rates and the quality of the accident prevention activities. Grand prize awards will be presented in two categories: over and under 20 million miles.

The deadline to enter is June 30, 2015 and the awards will be presented at the American Trucking Associations Management Conference & Exhibition in Philadelphia this fall.

For entry details, visit www.volvo-trucks.us.com/safetyaward.

R+L Carriers moves closer to Canada

JANESVILLE, WISCONSIN

R+L Carriers says it will improve Canadian service capabilities by moving its Canadian Gateway Service Center from Elgin, Ill. to Janesville, Wisc.

The relocation will offer expanded Canadian service capabilities with improved daily direct loading to and from nine Western Canada service centers in B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, the company announced. The new facility provides easy access to I-90 and I-43 shipping corridors. The company says it will expand its Canadian expedited service through this gateway and across its entire network.

Titanium Group buys Muskoka Transport

WOODBRIDGE, ONTARIO

Titanium Transportation Group has announced its acquisition of Muskoka Transport.

Muskoka is based in Bracebridge, Ont. with additional terminals in Barrie and Bolton, Ont. It provides flatbed freight and van shipping services with more than 100 power units and 400 trailers as well as 170 employees.

"Titanium has a proven track record of acquiring asset-based transportation companies, extracting synergies, and implementing leading edge technologies," announced Titanium CEO Ted Daniel. "Muskoka Transport is the seventh acquisition that Titanium has completed since 2011. This acquisition is expected to add significant further growth, development, and synergies for Titanium, particularly with existing Titanium customers in the Orillia area. We welcome the Hammond family and Muskoka Transport's management team and staff to Titanium."

Muskoka Transport was founded in 1971 by Paul Hammond.



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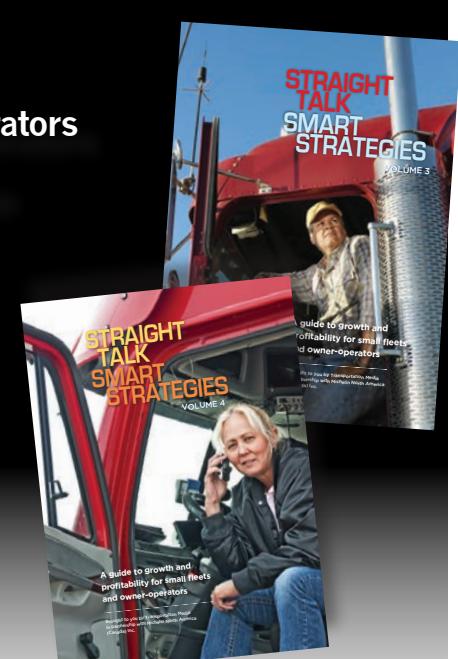
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THE STORY SO FAR

With a storm coming, Mark pulls into the Husky in Dryden, Ont. He offers help to a woman driver struggling to install her chains, but she tells him to get lost. Some time later, she enters the restaurant and is teased by a group of men who'd been watching her. She confronts the biggest loudmouth of the group head on and shuts them down, gaining Mark's respect.

Mark ends up talking with the woman, Nancy McEvoy, and realizes she's smart and good at her job. But he also realizes that she's got it tough working in a male-dominated industry and gives her even more credit for being able to compete... and succeed against the men.

Hours later, after Mark had taken a nap and the storm looked as if it had passed, he decided it was time to finish this leg of his haul westward to Winnipeg. But before heading out, he turned up the radio and listened to the local forecast. Basically, the storm had run its course, but in the process had dumped close to a foot of snow. The road crews had been working steadily in both directions, but the roads were still pretty slick. Mark decided to chain up himself and get to Kenora before turning in for the night. By morning the rest of the highway would be cleared and he'd be able to make it into Winnipeg on time and without his chains.

As he worked on the chains, he realized he was having trouble of his own getting them all set up. They were in good shape, of course, and he'd installed them dozens of times before, but there was something about the cold and snow that just made putting on chains a dirty thankless job. And that's when he was struck by the thought: 'And here she was struggling like I am now, but with the eyes of the world on her just waiting for her to fail so they could tell her she wasn't good enough, or she couldn't hack it, or she should just go home to make dinner and babies full-time.'

No wonder she's got a chip on her shoulder, Mark thought. I'd have a brick, if it were me.

Eventually Mark had the chains wrapped tight around his drive wheels and was ready to head out. The ride with the chains was bumpy and noisy, but he could feel them bite into the ice and snow, and as long as he didn't get carried away and started driving too fast, he'd be safely at his destination in just a few hours.

Just then, Mark's phone rang.

He took a look and saw it was Bud.

"Hello," he said.

"Mark, is that you?"

'Who else would it be?' Mark thought. "No," he said at last. "Who's Mark? This is Margaret."

"What?"

"Yeah, what if I were Margaret instead of Mark?" he said. "Would you still call me up and give me the good loads."

The line was silent for the longest time. "Mark, are you sick?"

"No, just wondering what it would be like working



Just one of the guys

for you as a woman."

"I think you are sick," Bud said. "In the head...um, maybe you should just pull over for a bit." A pause. "When was the last time you took your temperature?"

"Relax," Mark said. "I'm just thinking out loud."

He went on to explain what had happened at the last truck stop and how it got him to thinking about women drivers and what it must be like dealing with the likes of guys like, well...Bud. Mark could hardly stand him, imagine what a woman would think of him.

"I'll have you know, Dalton, that I already have two women driving for me. One's part of a team, but the other one's an owner/operator just like you."

"Really?"

"Yes, really."

"And they put up with you?"

Bud didn't answer right away. "They didn't care too much for me at first and they told me so. They're good, reliable drivers so I've learned to tone it down with them. They've stayed on and one of them is even talking about bringing in a friend of hers."

"Then why are you so rough with me?"

"Because you're a pain in the ass, that's why."

"But you still love me, or else you wouldn't have called." Mark paused. "By the way, why did you call?"

"I've got drivers in Northern Ontario – including that woman driver – and I heard there's a storm passing through, so I'm checking up on them all. You got your chains on?"

"Of course," Mark said. "I might be a pain in the ass, but I'm careful."

"Good. Let me know when you reach Kenora. I'll see if I can have something for you by the time you

get to Winnipeg."

"Will do." Mark was about to hang up the phone, when a thought popped into his head. "Hey, Bud, what's that woman's name...the one driving in Northern Ontario right now?"

"Nancy," he said. "Nancy McEvoy." "Well, I'll be," was all Mark could say.

Highway 17 was a mess, but Mark kept his speed constant and a firm hand on the wheel and was able to keep Mother Load travelling in a straight line.

About an hour outside Kenora, Mark saw a pair of rigs on the shoulder, warning lights flashing and a single flare on guard duty at the rear of the rearmost truck. As he neared, he recognized the lead truck as the one belonging to Nancy.

Mark slowed, hoping that she wasn't stuck and in need of rescue. Getting stuck in the snow happened to all kinds of drivers, even the best on the road, but no one would give a woman the benefit of the doubt in a situation like this. She'd gotten stuck because she couldn't drive in bad weather, or was too careless behind the wheel. But as he got closer, Mark smiled widely until he was grinning from ear-to-ear. Nancy wasn't stuck at all.

Far from it.

She had seen a fellow trucker stuck in the snow and pulled over to help him get out of a jam. She was out behind her trailer, hooking up a set of chains to the rig behind her in the hopes of helping to pull him out of the

snow. Mark stopped on the highway, even if it meant that he might get stuck himself. "Look at you!" he said. "I would have thought you'd have just driven on by."

She climbed up onto the side of Mother Load and poked her head inside the open passenger window. "He needed help," she said. "And I was able to do something."

"I'm impressed."

Just then, the second driver, the one who was stuck behind Nancy climbed up onto Mother Load. When his face appeared in the window, Mark's jaw dropped and his mouth gaped open – the driver she was helping was one of the loudmouths from the truck stop. In fact, it was the one who'd been the ringleader.

"I thought I could make it without chains," was all he said.

Mark looked at Nancy and said, "You're a better person than I am."

She shrugged and climbed back down on the road, leaving Mark with the bigmouthed driver. It was such a perfect chance that Mark couldn't resist giving it to the guy, chiding him about how he had to be helped out by a girl.

But then he was struck by a moment of clarity and realized to do that wouldn't be fair to Nancy. So in the end he said, "Lucky you...being helped by a..." He paused, then said. "By a fellow trucker who by all rights should have kept right on driving."

The man said nothing in response, but his lowered ball cap spoke volumes. ☺

Mark Dalton returns next month in the conclusion of Just one of the guys.

Illustration by Glenn McEvoy



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TMC explores alternative fuels in fleet environments

Continued from page 49

all areas of natural gas for gas vehicle owners and users.

In particular and in a breathlessly fast overview, she touched on the mandatory requirements for storage tanks, gas quality and building modifications to accommodate the gas-fuelled vehicles' maintenance.

It's important, she said, to realize that it is a National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) requirement that vehicle tanks for CNG be inspected every three years or 36,000 miles.

This regulation is obviously intended for passenger vehicles and she used a client, Frito-Lay, as an example of a commercial operation that has to check and re-certify tanks every 13 weeks or four times a year. Following industry best practices, this check should be accompanied by an inspection of the whole natural gas system on the vehicle, she said.

Technician training and certification is highly desirable, said Thomason, from a safety perspective but also because techs need to understand how natural gas differs from conventional fuels.

One of the main considerations is the highly variable quality of the natural gas, which does not have the same rigorous standards of composition as do other petroleum fuels.

In particular, natural gas can come laden with water and suffer widely varying BTU content depending on the gas utility supplying it.

Also, during compression of the gas, oil can leak into the gas, which is why coalescing filters are included in the fuel system on the vehicle.

However, for them to work satisfactorily they must be properly maintained.

Technicians should also understand that oil or water in the fuel will cause hard starting and ragged performance and that such symptoms indicate a fuel problem and not a me-

chanical issue within the engine.

If they see fouled spark plugs or even poisoned expensive catalytic converters (they can cost as much as \$23,000) then steps have to be taken to address the quality of the fuel rather than turning to conventional diagnostic tools and fault-tree service procedures.

The implication was made that such unforeseen events can severely impact the cost of running natural gas vehicles as well as their uptime availability.

And, should a gas-powered vehicle be in for repair, technicians must be aware of procedures to de-fuel the vehicle, whether it be to a storage tank, another vehicle or, in special circumstance, to the atmosphere.

Because natural gas is lighter than air, there are building constraints to be aware of that could result in a combustible mixture pooling in the roof or rafters of a building. To guard against this not only should the building have no areas where gas can collect, but a ventilation system must be provided as well. Since the requirement is for 0.75 to 1.0 cubic foot for every square foot of floor area, providing full-time ventilation 24/7 could prove very expensive.

A better alternative would be a combination ventilation system interlocked with methane detection. And methane detection is one of the industry best practices that should be considered.

Given the variable quality of the gas, the question of owning the fuelling facility often arises.

According to Thomason having on-site fuelling assures the user of quality control and gas consistency.

Also there's a financial advantage of directly receiving rebates and tax credits for using the gaseous fuel.

The disadvantages include the significant up-front investment and the training to operate the facility safely, along with associated maintenance costs. •

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Phil Blanchette: A knight in shining armour

Phil Blanchette is an owner/operator for Bison Transport based out of Mississauga, Ont., and is the only O/O to join the Ontario Trucking Association's Road Knights team for the 2015/2016 term. He has been driving for the better part of his life and hopes to teach others about the work truckers do everyday. Sonia Straface caught up with him recently to talk about his plans with the Road Knights.

Making the move from a company driver to an owner/operator isn't a decision a professional trucker takes lightly. The preparation involved is enough for some to change their minds and they often find out it's not exactly what they expected.

Phil Blanchette of North Bay, Ont., however, claims making that decision to become an O/O back in 1998, is a decision he'll never regret. Blanchette, now 59, has been driving professionally for more than 30 years and has learned a lot along the way. He has no intention of putting his truck in park for good anytime soon.

He claims his interest in becoming an owner/op was thanks in large part to the acquisitions the trucking industry is no stranger to.

"I drove part-time back in 1984," he said. "I was a company driver for six years at the first fleet I worked for. Then, I left there and I worked for another company where I was home three nights a week, and I liked that, so that worked out pretty well for me. I did that for a couple years and then a big company came in and ate us up and every-



Phil
Blanchette

thing changed. So then I started out as a lease/operator and I did that for three years. Eventually, I just turned in my lease, because I just couldn't get home enough. (The company was in southern Ontario, he lives in North Bay). I went back to the first company I ever worked for and I bought a truck through them and they helped me finance it and that's where I started."

Blanchette said the move was a risk, not to mention an expensive endeavor.

"It was a big risk," he said. "And the first truck I bought, it was older and I probably paid too much for it. But, I had it paid off in 15 months and actually I paid almost as much in repairs as I did for the truck. I paid \$30,000 for the truck and it was \$18,000 for repairs when all was said and done. It was hard doing that, but once I got a new truck, it was easy. With a new truck, sure you have your truck payments, but

O/O's paycheque. And it's a good paycheque but you have to remember out of that paycheque comes your taxes, your truck payment, and your maintenance. You have to be sure that's what you want to do. Because once you buy that truck, in all likelihood, you're going to be locked in for five years. So you can't just walk in because that's what you want to do. You have to be committed and ask questions, learn, find out what it's all about before you jump in."

This year, Blanchette took another risk and auditioned to become one of the Ontario Trucking Association's Road Knights. He was nominated after fellow Bison drivers mentioned his name to the safety department because of his healthy curiosity about the program. After the nomination, he was invited by the OTA to present a speech on a safety topic of his choice and earlier this year, it was announced he had

"When you're away from home, you know your spouse wishes you never got into this business...But, I'll never look back, I'll never regret doing this for a living."

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you have a new truck. You aren't going down the road wondering what's going to break next."

Today he drives a 2011 Western Star and averages 8 mpg during the summer, and between 6.5 and 7 mpg during the cold winter months. He has been with Bison Transport for almost 12 years.

His advice for those drivers who are thinking about making the leap into the world of business ownership is simple: be committed.

"I asked a lot of questions when I bought the first truck," he said. "The guy I was working for helped me out a lot and taught me a lot. I also got myself an accountant because that's pretty much the first thing you have to do. I also don't drive fast. I chug along. I keep telling guys your money is in your right leg. You've got to slow down. This idea of driving as fast as you can to get another load isn't right. An extra five miles in a day isn't getting you anywhere or making you any money."

"If you're going to become an O/O, you have to be committed. There's always people who say, 'Ooh. That's a lot of money,' when they hear or see an

made it and was officially named an OTA Road Knight for the 2015-2016 term.

Blanchette said he wants to focus mostly on truck awareness during his two-year stint.

"I hope to teach people about truck awareness," he said. "And how to conduct yourself when you're in heavy truck traffic and try to teach them that you can't stop like you can in a car. I want to educate them about the blind spots and to remind them about how dangerous tailgating is. It's been a good life. Trucking has treated me well, but there's always room for improvement."

He claims the best part of being an O/O is the freedom that comes with owning and operating his own truck, though the time away from home is the same across the board for all professional drivers, and being an owner/op doesn't exactly mean you'll be home every weekend.

"When you're away from home, you know your spouse wishes you never got into this business and that makes it hard," he said. "But, I'll never look back, I'll never regret doing this for a living."



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