

TRUCK NEWS

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Page 22

Drivers needed!

Even private fleets are now feeling the pinch as a result of the shortage of qualified drivers.

Page 32

Going green

An Ontario fleet has found a new way to go green, by planting a tree for every shipment.

Page 36

Tech talk

With technicians in short supply, the only way to win the talent war may be to develop your own.

Page 56

Get comfortable

We take a look at the most popular anti-idling systems available and weigh the pros and cons of each.

Canadian trucking's leading ladies

Emerging leaders take centre stage at Women with Drive Summit

By Sonia Straface

TORONTO, ONTARIO

Trucking HR Canada's second annual Women with Drive Leadership Summit that took place on March 3 at the Crowne Plaza Toronto Airport Hotel saw record numbers in attendance, Hurricane Hazel McCallion as its opening speaker, and several educational panels and presentations.

Trucking HR Canada first put on the event last year in an effort to help its Women with Drive campaign – a national project that was launched to help attract more women into the transportation industry.

This year, one of its panel sessions focused on emerging leaders gave four young female leaders in the industry a chance to tell the audience how being a woman has helped them become successful, manage work/life balance, and understand the importance of mentoring.

Panelists included: Andreea Cisan, chief operating officer and executive vice-president of Andy Trans-

Continued on page 28

Careers:
38, 39, 40,
41, 42, 43,
44, 45, 46,
47, 48, 49,
50, 51, 52,
53, 54, 55,
56

Ad Index: 73
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PAGES 57-70

MTO
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Bijabhai
inspects a
trailer wheel.

We have a problem

A spike in wheel separations has Ontario enforcement officers cracking down

By James Menzies

TORONTO, ONTARIO

A flurry of high-profile wheel separations in Ontario over the past five months, including two that resulted in fatalities, has placed the issue of wheel safety back under the public spotlight and led to heightened enforcement activities.

There have been 27 reported wheel separations in Ontario this year to date through March 3, putting the industry on pace to record a startling 157 incidents, which would be the most since 1998. Wheel-offs were down in 2015, to 127 reported incidents compared to 148 in 2014 and 147 in 2013. However, each of the last three years was markedly higher than the 97 reported in 2012 and every other year dating back to 1998, during which no more than 99 wheel separations were reported in any given year (see chart, pg. 34).

Still, Chris Davies, strategic program and policy advisor, regional operations branch with the MTO, said there are some explanations for the uptick. Firstly, separations occur more often during the winter months, when cold temperatures cause fasteners to expand and contract more frequently. Also, snow and ice accumulation on the wheels can cause some drivers to overlook warning signs during their pre-trip inspections. So there's a chance the high monthly numbers reported early this year will level out as warm weather arrives.

And as for the three-year spike seen from 2013-2015

compared to the previous 15 years, Davies said it could be in part due to the fact MTO has appealed to its enforcement partners in recent years to do a better job of reporting wheel separations.

"We have strengthened up the reporting with our police partners," Davies said in an interview with *Truck News*. "It looks like there has been a spike. But at the same time, in our refresher training for our officers and with our police partners, we enhanced the reporting and sure enough, we got more reports."

Whatever the reason for the increase in reported wheel separations in recent years, the MTO is taking the issue seriously. On Dec. 22 it launched Operation Wheel Check and since then it has inspected more than 29,400 wheel assemblies and placed 20 vehicles out-of-service for wheel-related defects. The program places a "laser focus" on wheel safety, Davies explained, and allows zero tolerance for trucks and trailers found to have any wheel-related issues.

"When wheel defects are found, the vehicle is immediately taken off the road and prohibited from operating until it is brought into compliance," he explained.

In addition to the 20 vehicles placed out-of-service, another 110 have been held by MTO until repaired.

According to MTO data, 90% of wheel separations are hub and fastener related. Avoiding wheel-offs begins with a proper wheel installation, which can prevent nearly all sep-

Continued on page 34

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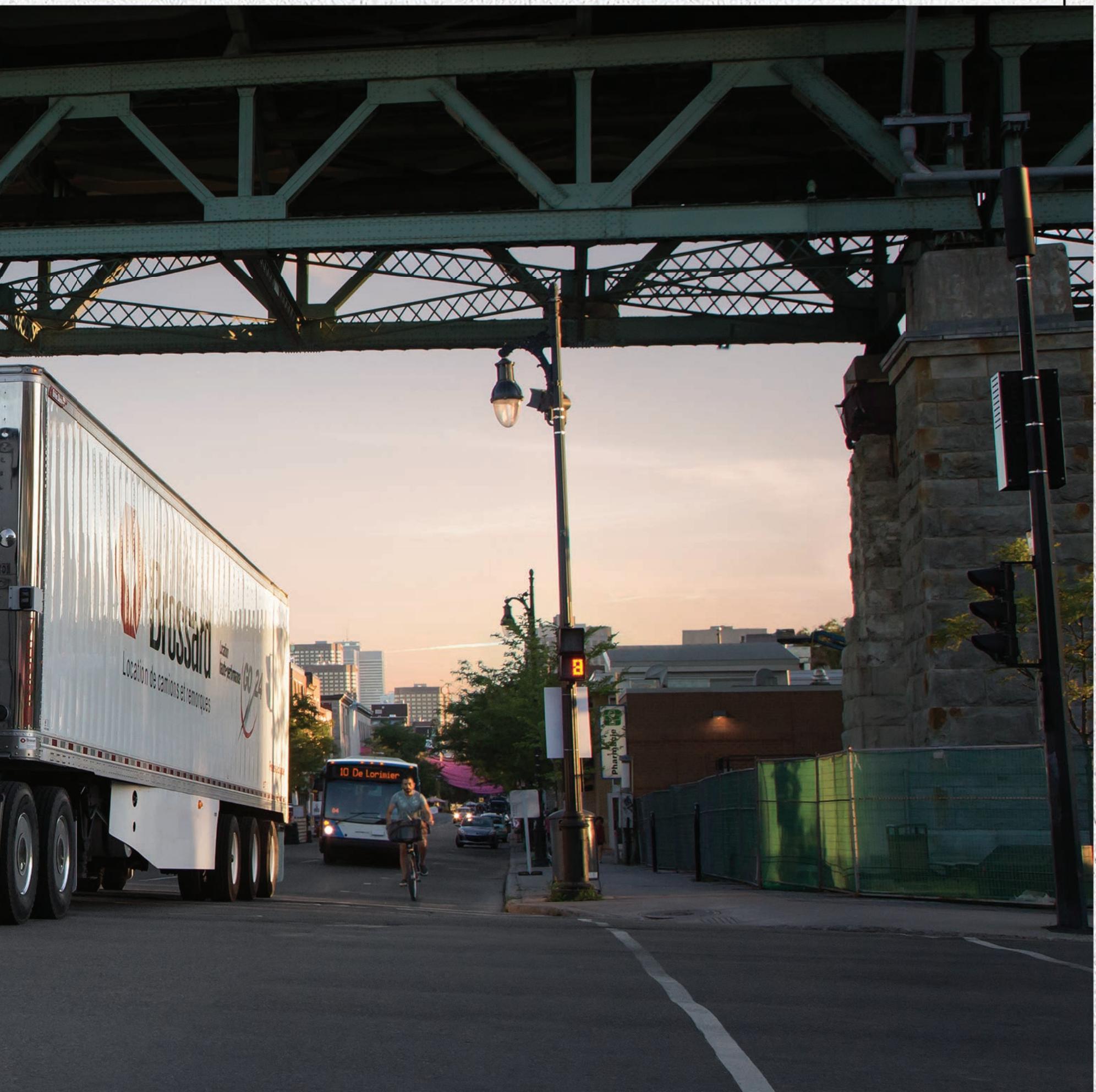
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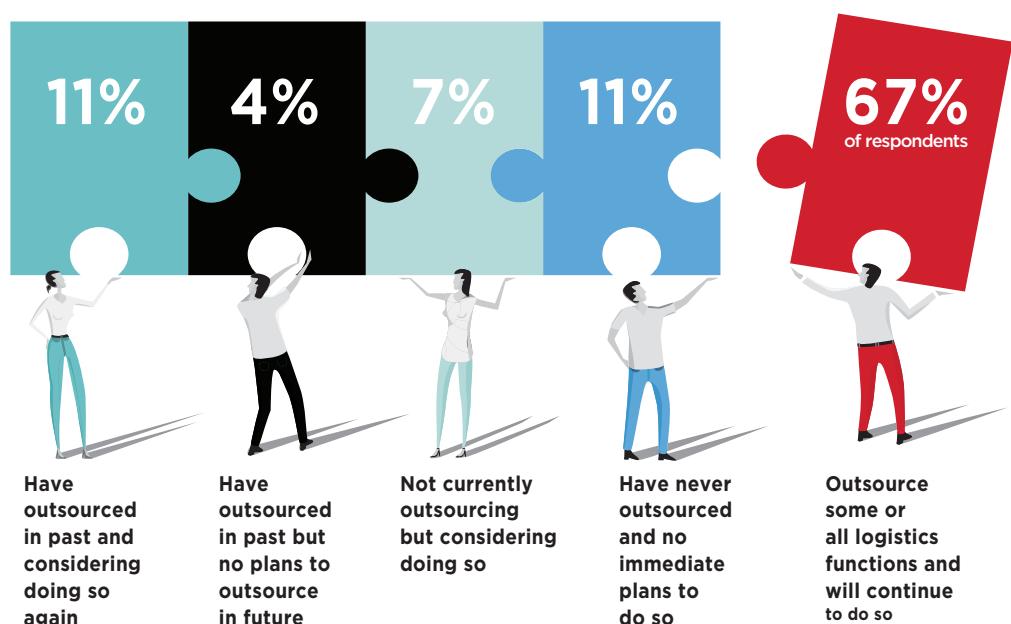
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INSIDE OUTSOURCING: HOW IT BENEFITS TRUCKING

The trend among Canadian business to outsource many logistics functions continues to be fueled by the need to reduce costs, our annual Third Party Logistics Survey indicates. Forty one percent of survey respondents chose reducing costs as their major supply chain challenge, a theme that has been prevalent since the Great Recession. More than two-thirds of shippers surveyed said they were outsourcing some or all logistics functions while another 18% said they were considering doing so. Outbound and inbound transportation as well as customs brokerage and customs clearance are the services most likely to be outsourced.

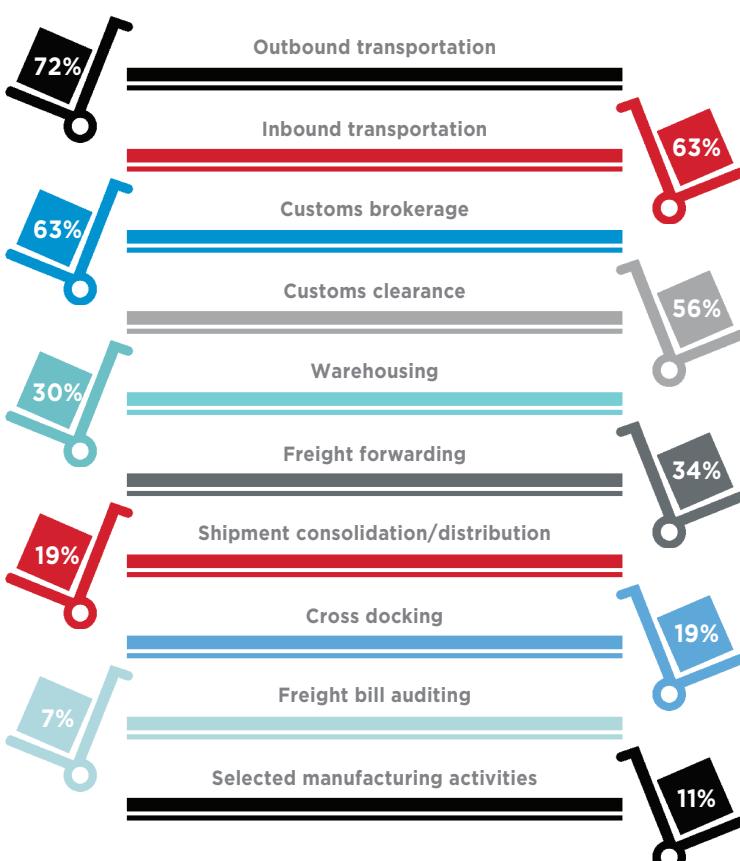
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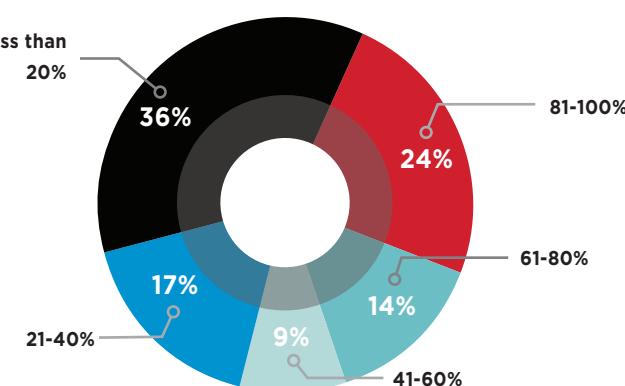
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MAIN SERVICES CURRENTLY OUTSOURCED



PERCENTAGE OF LOGISTICS EXPENDITURES DIRECTED TO OUTSOURCING



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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

78

The Last Word

Conrad Transport is an East Coast container-hauling original.

74

Mark Dalton in... Dalton Undercover

- 7 Editorial**
Lou Smyrlis and James Menzies both laud efforts by Trucking HR Canada to attract more women to the trucking industry.
- 9-27 Business**
A new SuperTruck project is launched in the US, fleets discuss their recruitment and retention strategies and Volvo talks connectivity.
- 28-31 Diversity**
We report on the Women with Drive conference and visit an Ontario fleet that's taking steps to become more inviting to women.
- 32-33 Fleet News**
The Best Fleets to Drive For have been named. Also, an Ontario fleet finds a creative new way to go green.
- 36-37 Feature**
Fleets, dealers and repair shops are struggling to find technicians. We examine the issue and explore strategies for addressing the issue.
- 39 Aerodynamics**
A new report from NACFE found that trailer aero devices do work, but some are better than others.
- 41-42 Scott Taylor - Tax Talk**
RRSP accounts shouldn't be treated as a rainy day fund. Scott Taylor has tips on how to avoid dipping into your retirement savings.
- 45 Bill Cameron - Opinion**
The customer isn't always right, Bill writes, recalling specific examples of when the shipper got it all wrong.
- 46-47 Karen Bowen - Health**
Is your job becoming a pain in the neck? Health consultant Karen Bowen has some ideas as to why that may be the case.
- 48-49 Al Goodhall - Opinion**
Mandatory entry-level training for commercial drivers isn't a fix all on its own, Al Goodhall writes from behind the wheel.
- 50 Mark Lee - Opinion**
Owner/operator Mark Lee pines for the simpler truck, even if it was less convenient to operate.
- 52-53 David Bradley - Industry**
Analyzing the Trudeau playbook and what it means to trucking.
- 54-55 Mike Millian - Industry**
The private fleet industry welcomes new ELD and ESC safety mandates.

56 Marketplace Feature
Everyone knows idling is bad business. But with so many anti-idling systems on the market, how do you select the right one?

71 New Products
We report back from the Technology & Maintenance Council with new product news regarding trailers, tires, wheels and lighting.

75 Book Review
Harry Rudolfs reviews *Singing Wheels*, a book about the Freuhauf Trailer Company and the invention of the semi-trailer.

77 Dr. Chris Singh - Health
The risks of high blood pressure have been well documented, but low blood pressure can also be a concern. Dr. Singh tells us all about hypotension.

In every issue

- 51 Announcements**
- 57-70 Marketplace**
- 73 Ad Index**
- 76 Newland Transport**

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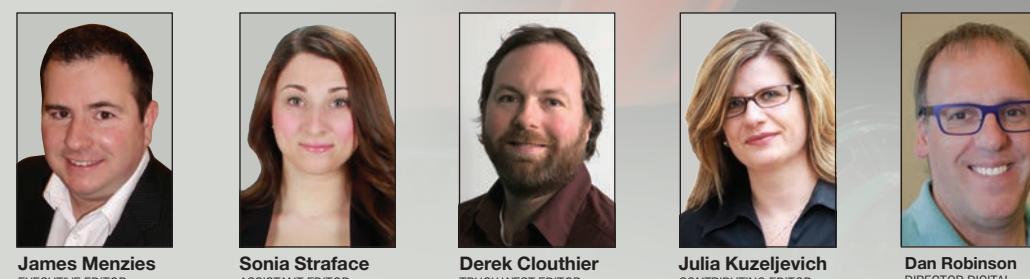
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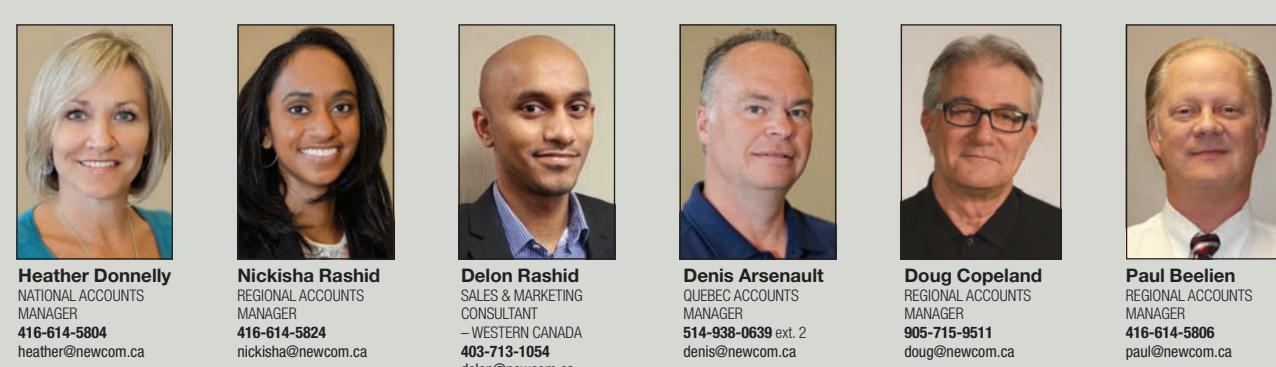
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EDITORIAL



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**Editorial
Comment**

JAMES MENZIES



We can do more to attract women

The second annual Women with Drive conference, held in Mississauga on March 3, was not just a great networking event, it was also inspiring. We heard from women who are true leaders in the trucking industry and I had the opportunity to moderate a panel of female drivers (as well as a corporate trainer and an apprentice technician), dubbed Women on the Road.

These ladies gave a frank, candid assessment of what it's like to be a woman in a male-dominated industry and also shared some insights into how this industry can be more inviting to women.

I was taken aback by some of the stories I heard. Alison Theriault, for example, applied to nearly 300 trucking companies before finding one that would hire her as a driver. And we claim to have a driver shortage? She said some managers bluntly told her the job wasn't for a woman; unless she wanted to marry a nice man and drive team with him.

This was in 2008, not 1968! When she introduced her partner Katrina to the profession and told her carrier at the time

that they wanted to drive team, they were told the mileage rate would be divided in two. Twice the miles for the same pay. How does that math work?

Today, they're happily driving team for Clarke Road Transport and doing their best to promote the career to other women, whether it be by reaching out on Facebook to women considering the career or blasting the air horn when a little girl in the car next to them gives them the universal signal.

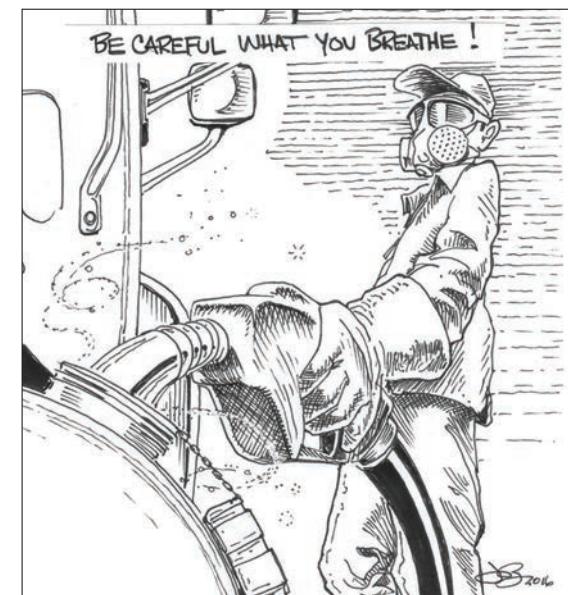
For Jennifer Duval, the path into trucking was equally difficult. She had to surrender custody of her two young children while she pursued a career as a professional driver – a necessary sacrifice to pay the bills and become financially stable. Every mile she put in was with the intent of becoming financially secure and gaining back custody of her children. This is a goal she accomplished, and with the over-the-road experience under her belt she was then able to transition to a local driving job so she could spend more time with her kids at home.

Despite the high cost of getting into

the industry, she too is an advocate for other women in trucking. She is now a driver-trainer with Kriska and her daughter works there as well. I found it interesting that while we hear so much about the separation that a trucking lifestyle creates, it can also bring loved ones closer together. In Katrina and Alison's situation, they're sharing each day together on the road. For Jennifer, she now gets to work at the same company as her daughter, albeit in different roles.

We make it hard on women who are trying to get into this business. I believe there are many progressive companies out there that have gone to great lengths to lower the barriers to entry for women but as we heard at the conference, there are still dinosaurs among us who think of trucking as a man's job. That needs to change. There's still so much more we can do to promote this industry to women and make it more welcoming to them.

The Women with Drive Summit, now in its second year, shines a spotlight on



this issue. It's encouraging that attendance nearly doubled this year, to about 180 people.

As Lou writes below, this is an important cause to get behind, as making this industry more attractive to women is the most obvious and immediate solution to the driver shortage. ☀

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

**The view
with Lou**

LOU SMYRLIS



Prepare for the future; embrace diversity

diverse workforce is to include more women at all levels of trucking organizations.

Consider that women account for 48% of Canada's labour force, yet they represent just 3% of Canada's truck drivers, technicians and cargo workers. They are also under-represented in other industry careers, accounting for 11% of managers, 13% of parts technicians, 18% of dispatchers, and 25% of freight claims/safety and loss prevention specialists.

I don't have statistics on the percentage of senior management positions in Canadian fleets held by women but I'm sure it's lower than the 29% figure for Canadian business overall. (That in itself is a pretty low bar given that women make up almost half the Canadian workforce).

In the past when I've raised the issue about the need for more women in

truckling, there have been many who reasoned the real problem was that women simply didn't want to be involved with trucking.

To that I say, have we considered how welcoming we've made the industry to women? For an industry facing a demographic tsunami, how long can we afford to ignore half the labour pool?

This is important beyond just the obvious need to be drawing from the entire labour pool. Not only do we need more women in our industry, we need to welcome more women from the variety of ethnic backgrounds that make up our country.

I'm not talking about simply checking off boxes here. Just adding more women of different ethnic backgrounds to the payroll is not enough. Diversity on its own has limited value because an organization has to be

willing to unlock that value. As one of my panelists, Jennifer Laidlaw, who is in charge of diversity inclusion with CIBC advised, to unlock the value of diversity an organization's leaders have to fight the temptation to take those differences and mold them into sameness.

Women and people from different backgrounds than what we have become accustomed to for several decades now, will bring new perspectives, new approaches to old problems. Company leaders will need to get comfortable with hiring people who may challenge them from the boardroom to the operations room with new ways of thinking.

They have to be ready and willing to create a company culture of inclusion where new employees are encouraged to bring new ideas to the table.

It's that kind of thinking that will drive our industry into the future. ☀

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



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Expert predicts US economy will continue to grow at slow, steady pace

US the 'best looking house in a crummy neighbourhood,' Larkin tells truckload carriers

By Sonia Straface

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

The US economy is growing at a snail's pace – slow and steady – and that's both a good and bad thing, according to industry experts.

John Larkin, marketing director and head of transportation capital markets research at Stifel, Nicolaus and Co. addressed the audience at the Truckload Carriers Association's annual convention March 8, to discuss what he believes is in store for the American economy in the coming 12-18 months.

He told the audience that even though things may be looking positive for the US economy because its currency is getting stronger, essentially, it is just "the best looking house in a crummy neighbourhood."

"The US is not growing at a break-neck pace," he said. "Our currency is strong so it makes it hard for us to export because everything we build or grow or manufacture is 25% more expensive than it would be had the currency not taken this big powerful move."

Larkin said that since the 2008 recession, the country has been unusually slow in recovering; only growing at a rate of 2%.

The two major components of economic growth are population growth, which isn't doing well, said Larkin, since

people are getting married later and not having as many children, and productivity, which hasn't been strong either.

In addition, Larkin said that from 2015-2016 consumer confidence declined because there is "some fear that there could be another recession forthcoming since this recovery has been very long in the tooth."

The driver shortage continues to be a huge problem.

John Larkin

He added that people aren't spending as much as they used to. This in turn causes the retail supply chain to become sluggish and suppresses transportation demand.

"People really aren't spending what they're saving at the gas pump," he said. Though people may not be spending as much, Larkin said that he doesn't see a recession in the future.

The rule of thumb here is all economic recessions are preceded by freight recessions, but not every freight recession predicts an econom-

ic recession," he said. "It looks like we are going to scrape by without an (economic) recession."

He said he believes that the most likely economic scenario for the near future is "continued slow, steady growth, because there doesn't appear to be a catalyst to push us off a cliff into a recession barring some sort of terrorist event or external issue."

And if Larkin is right, and the econ-

omy continues to grow at this slow place, he warned that the driver shortage will seem to suffocate the trucking industry even more so.

"The driver shortage continues to be a huge problem," he said. "It is not going away with the slowdown in the economy. It's no secret; the quality of drivers is declining. (We will be short) 250,000 drivers by 2022, which is rapidly approaching." ●

Could trucking costs drop a buck a mile? Industry forecaster thinks so

BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA

On the same day Google made news for patenting a driverless delivery truck, industry forecaster FTR predicted trucking costs could decrease as much as a dollar per mile within the next 15 years.

Speaking on a Webinar about the current truck market, FTR senior consultant Noel Perry outlined how this precipitous drop in transportation costs could become a reality.

"We are convinced very strongly that a digitally-fuelled technological revolution will dramatically reduce the cost of trucking and expand capacity at the same time," Perry said.

He predicts trucking costs could go from about US\$2.20 per mile today to about \$1.20 per mile in 2030.

"We think this revolution is equally important to the economy of the US as the invention of the super-highways in the 1950s," he said. "This is a big deal."

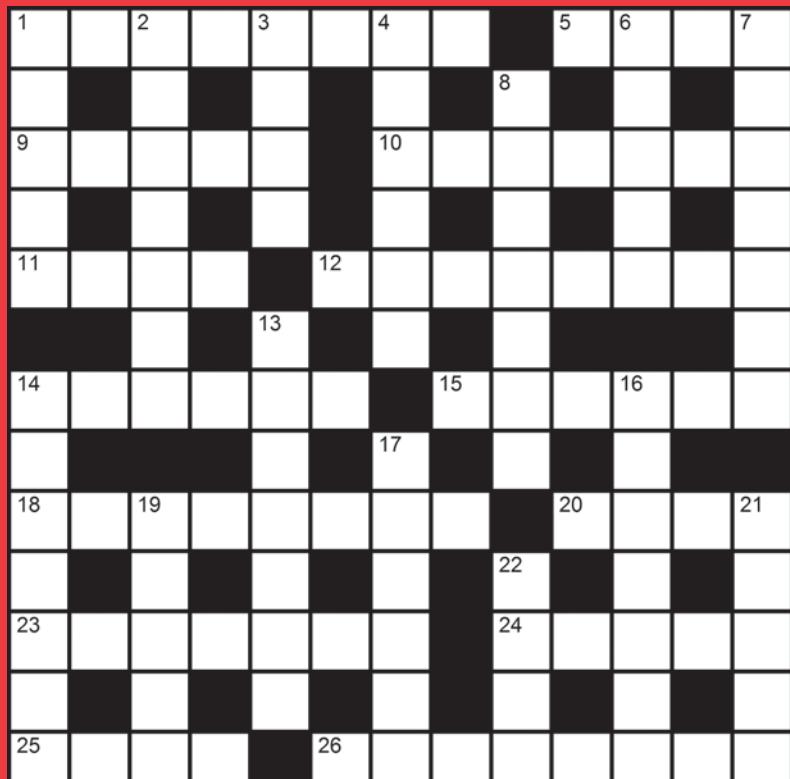
Perry said there are three enablers at play: autonomous vehicles that may be able to deliver product without drivers; greater access to information, which will reduce downtime and waste, allowing trucks to operate around the clock; and the arrival of larger, heavier trucks which will be allowed due to the increased safety brought by automation.

"We fully expect that as highways are automated, larger trucks will be allowed," Perry said. "Not only do you get better labour productivity and asset productivity but the trucks get bigger." ●

THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD PUZZLE

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Answers on page 73



Across

- 1 Headlight switch position (4,4)
- 5 Lode ___, Winkler, MB trailer maker
- 9 Ambulance wailer
- 10 Road type (3,4)
- 11 Fiscal or taxation period
- 12 Certain Irving facilities (3,5)
- 14 Word heard in pub
- 15 Alberta border crossing village
- 18 International's parent company
- 20 Winter road coating, sometimes
- 23 Diesel engine incontinence (3,4)
- 24 Canadian pumps' unit of measure
- 25 Unwanted engine oil deposits
- 26 Snowman's "Smokey and the Bandit" rig

Down

- 1 Name on some truck stops
- 2 Malodorous municipal truck material
- 3 Sleeper berth
- 4 Hwy. 417/Exit 184, ___ Truck Stop
- 6 State with "Famous Potatoes" plates
- 7 Chassis and wheel bearing lubes
- 8 Wi-Fi truck stop (3,4)
- 13 Grabs some sleep, slangily
- 14 Big rig processions
- 16 Big rig power unit
- 17 Oshawa based ___ Group
- 19 VNL and VNX brand
- 21 Gear protrusions
- 22 Seasonal Snowbelt vehicle

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Class 8 orders hold steady

February Class 8 truck net orders held steady in February, at 17,650 units, according to the preliminary report from FTR. That was down only 2% from January and down 43% year-over-year. FTR noted the results are falling into a more stable pattern. Orders have averaged 21,000 units over the last three months and the same average over the last 12 months. Total orders over the last 12 months have been 254,000, close to FTR's projections.

"The order patterns are very consistent with the current market situation. Fleets are basically finished expanding their truck capacity for this cycle," said Don Ake, vice-president, commercial vehicles at FTR.

"Purchases are now for replacement demand and the average orders and expected build are right at this level. We should expect orders to stay in a relatively tight range, around the 18,000-20,000 unit mark, for the next several months. OEMs have made significant production cuts and look to now be right-sized for the order demand. As long as there is some freight growth, the market should be stable for the next several months. Despite the recent downturn in Class 8 demand, February backlogs are still expected to be 14% higher than two years ago."

ACT Research reported February Class 8 net orders of 17,900 units and Classes 5-7 orders of 21,600 units.

"Orders for commercial vehicles in February largely mirrored the ongoing US economic narrative," said Kenny Vieth, ACT's president and senior analyst. "Healthy consumer-related indicators, such as disposable income, autos and houses, continue to support positive medium-duty demand. At the same time, ongoing weakness in the freight-rich manufacturing sector continues to weigh on heavy-duty demand."

Fleets adding trailers to better utilize drivers

COLUMBUS, INDIANA

January trailer orders fell 43% year-over-year and ACT Research says small and medium-sized fleets may be pulling back on their ordering activity.

"We're hearing comments regarding slow dealer activity. Small and medium fleets continue to be cautious and are likely faring worse financially than their large fleet competitors. ELDs (electronic logging devices) will likely generate further headwinds for that fleet segment," said Frank Maly, director, commercial vehicle transportation analysis and research at ACT.

However, he also noted large fleets are shifting more capital towards the purchase of new trailers because it can generate greater efficiencies than buying more power units.

"We're also seeing a pattern of continuing bias in fleet investment toward trailers over tractors," Maly noted. "Given the price difference, a relatively small shift in dollar expenditures can generate significant returns in trailer acquisitions, and adding trailers helps support increased drop-and-hook activity, making the best use of drivers."

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Bill Dawson, VP of Maintenance Operations and Engineering, Ryder System, Inc.

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Kirk Altrichter, Vice President, Maintenance, Crete Carrier Corporation

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Cummins opens new Mississauga parts location to improve service

By James Menzies

MISSISSAUGA, ONTARIO

A larger, better-designed parts distribution centre in Mississauga will help Cummins Eastern Canada better support its dealers and serve its customers.

That's according to president Jeff Van Poucke, who was on-hand at the grand opening Feb. 22 to offer tours to customers and other interested visitors. Cummins secured the new 16,000 sq.-ft. location in October and has been configuring it and moving in since. The new location provides parts for about 600 Cummins dealers and other independent shops and customers from across Ontario.

About 60,000 parts a month move through the facility, according to parts supervisor Steve Baguley, whom Van Poucke said was influential in the design of the new location. Baguley said Cummins retained as much ambient light as possible, installed racks that take advantage of the high ceilings to maximize storage space and installed an automatic shrink wrap turntable that safely and efficiently shrink wrap pallets.

"There was restricted space where we came from (on nearby Pacific Circle)," Baguley told *Truck News* during a tour. "It seemed like a lot of stock was put into areas that didn't fit our needs."

Cummins officials said customers

will benefit from the additional stock the company will now be able to carry.

Its old location had less than 10,000 sq.-ft. of warehouse space, which also housed other activities.

That space is now being used for power generation production, testing and upfitting, Van Poucke explained.

Visitors to the new location have access to a TV and Internet. Terminals are located throughout the facility to help staff find and process orders from various locations.

There are currently 12 employees working two shifts at the new distribution centre. Van Poucke said there's room to add more capacity as required.

Currently the new Mississauga facility receives about 15 trailer loads of product each day and sends out about 60 shipments. Parts are barcoded to ensure efficient and accurate processing, Baguley said.

The company also took steps to enhance safety. Areas with steps are gated off to prevent falling and a rail separates waiting customers from forklift activity.

"In the old facility, we had to unload in an area that was a third the size of this space," Van Poucke explained. "The probability for injury was much greater. Here, you have a broader expanse of space to manage inbound and outbound (shipments)."

It's also more environmentally friendly, featuring low-energy light-



A tractor-trailer delivers supplies to the new Cummins parts centre on Edwards Blvd. in Mississauga. Inset, parts supervisor Steve Baguley, who helped design the new facility.

ing and technology that optimizes the amount of packing material that's used. Located at 6950 Edwards Blvd. in Mississauga, the new facility operates from 7 a.m. till midnight Monday

through Friday.

Other Cummins parts distribution centres in Canada are located in Pointe-Claire, Que. and Dartmouth, N.S. ☀

US truck tonnage falls 1.4% in January

ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA

The American Trucking Associations' advanced seasonally adjusted For-Hire Truck Tonnage Index slid 1.4% in January. In January, the index was 132.8, down from 134.7 in December. Year-over-year the index was flat, according to the ATA.

"Clearly, 2016 started soft for truck tonnage," said ATA's chief economist Bob Costello. "There was a deceleration in freight volumes during the second half of 2015 which continued into the first month of 2016. The winter storms that hit in January likely suppressed volumes some, but by falling 1.4%, I doubt tonnage would have been positive without the storms. So, that tells me that the inventory situation continues to weigh on truck freight volumes. The sooner the supply chain cleans out the excess stocks, the better for trucking." ☀

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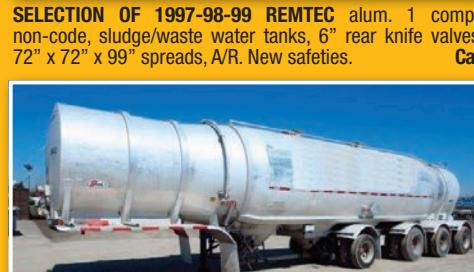
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With record-setting year in the books, Volvo eyes further growth

Truck maker identifies new segments where it feels it can grow its market share

By James Menzies

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Volvo built more trucks than ever before for the North American market in 2015, setting market share records in the US and Canada in the process.

But Goran Nyberg, president of Volvo Trucks North America, said the company has more room to grow and will be aggressively expanding its reach into certain market segments in the years ahead. Speaking to a group of trucking editors at the House of Sweden in Washington, D.C. in late February, Nyberg said he was proud of the growth Volvo achieved in 2015. Its market share climbed 0.4% to a record 12.4% in the US and was nudged up 0.1% to 16.3% in Canada, also a new record. Volvo shipped a record 38,849 trucks out of its New River Valley truck plant during the year, which surpassed its production in 2006, the best year ever for truck demand.

"We are adjusting to the new normal (in Class 8 truck demand) now."

Goran Nyberg, Volvo

Volvo also set new highs for the uptake of its own engines (93%) and its I-Shift automated manual transmission (83%) in Volvo trucks and saw its downsped XE powertrain package ordered in 27% of its trucks.

"If you can gain share even in a tough market, that's something that needs to be celebrated," Nyberg said.

The North American truck market in 2016 has showed signs of softening and Nyberg said he's anticipating demand for Class 8 trucks this year to total about 260,000 units.

"It's still a very good year," he said. "We are adjusting to the new normal now."

Nyberg said he's anticipating orders to ramp up in the second half of the year. Volvo achieved its record share in 2015 mainly on the strength of its long-haul and regional haul business but Nyberg said there are other segments the company will be chasing more aggressively. These include petro-chemical, intermodal and heavy-haul applications.

"I truly believe we have a great opportunity to grow in some of those segments," Nyberg said. "We will defend and continue to push our core segments but we will find further growth in other industry segments."

Nyberg said Volvo dealers have been investing in their facilities and are being rewarded with record dealer sales. Volvo dealers have invested about US\$500 million over the past five years, adding bay capacity, constructing new facilities and adding staff, tools and equipment.

"It expands our footprint and it tells us as a brand that they - in many cases family-owned businesses - believe in the future of this brand," Nyberg said.

Volvo Group recently restructured its global business to become more brand-centric.

"We've gone back to a brand organization, where each brand has a direct line out to every market they are represented in," explained Nyberg. He said the renewed focus on each brand within the Volvo Group will be beneficial.

"We recognized that customers are buying from brands," Nyberg said, adding Martin Lundstedt, the new president and CEO of Volvo Group, "wants us to be laser focused on each brand and maximize the opportunities for each brand."

Nyberg added, "From a Volvo Trucks North America point of view, we will be one step closer to headquarters and making sure we get all the attention we need." ●

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Green Truck Summit keynote highlights importance of clean energy

US official announces funding for a second SuperTruck project

By Derek Clouthier

INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

The Green Truck Summit kicked off at Indianapolis' Indiana Convention Center March 1, underscoring the myriad of ways fleets can reduce fuel costs, and at the same time their carbon footprint.

Touching upon several topics – such as alternative fuels, electric-powered vehicles, the future outlook of compressed natural gas (CNG) and telematics – the summit opened with a keynote address from US deputy assistant secretary of transportation for the Department of Energy Reuben Sarkar, who said it was critical that the government invest in energy research to curb global warming.

"We are really at the forefront of one of the defining issues of our time," he said, adding that it was an exciting time to working in the Department of Energy and with the transportation industry because the US needs to be a global leader in fighting climate change.

Sarkar said the transportation sector makes up 70% of all petroleum use, and one third of all greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, which was one reason his department asked for a 51% increase in funding in this year's federal budget for vehicle technologies research.

Sarkar said the US's top scientist say the country needs to curb its GHG emissions by 25% by 2025 and 80% by 2050 to avoid the most devastating effects of climate change.

"This (global warming) is no longer an abstract threat," said Sarkar, adding that 2015 was the hottest year ever on record.

With the world's population expected to increase by 33% in the next 20 years, Sarkar said all sectors must innovate their way out of the global-warming threat, including the transportation industry, which he said only invests 2.4% of its sales into energy research.

"This is much less than other sectors," he said, "and exemplifies the importance of government investments

into energy and into transportation research."

Sarkar said that government effort has paid off, with the \$931-million investment into vehicle combustion engine research between 1986 and 2007 achieving a total benefit of \$70 billion in fuel savings and environmental impact in heavy-duty diesel trucks.

"It shows that sustained investments can have long-term benefits in terms of hitting the bottom line for companies," he said.

Sarkar also highlighted the US government's Quadrennial Technology Review, which was released in September 2015, and emphasizes the need to reduce energy use and lower GHG emissions that come from medium- and heavy-duty trucks.

He did add that light-duty trucks accounted for the largest segment of energy consumption in the transportation sector in the US, but that medium- and heavy-duty were next in line and expected to increase.

Advising caution toward neglecting clean energy research given the current low fuel prices, Sarkar said the initiative was about much more than cost savings.

"Our transition to a clean energy economy is not just about fuel pricing at the pump," he said. "It's about the social cost of carbon and the effects on climate change."

Sarkar used the aviation sector as an example for the trucking industry to follow, saying it has been using savings from lower fuel prices and investing the funds into research and alternative fuel strategies.

The US government views work trucks as a key part of its initiative to develop more efficient combustible engines that are completely non-reliant on petroleum.

"Some experts will say that transportation is going to change more in the next 10 years than it has in the last 100 years," said Sarkar. "So that rate of change is happening considerably."

One way the US government is investing in exploiting new technolo-

gies is through its SMART Mobility program – Systems and Modeling Accelerated Research in transportation – which investigates energy use implications into future mobility and spans research programs, all with the goal of reducing GHG emissions.

Another project was 2010's SuperTruck program, which Sarkar said was so successful, that he announced the launch of SuperTruck 2.

The program challenges companies to come up with new technologies that improve fuel efficiency, requiring teams to achieve greater than 50% engine productivity in addition to improving freight efficiency.

Subject to congressional appropriations, Sarkar said the government would invest \$80 million into the SuperTruck 2 initiative for research, development and demonstration of long-haul tractor-trailer truck technology that improve efficiencies by more than

100% relative to the manufacturer's best-in-class 2009 truck.

Finally, Sarkar announced three funding recipients for plug-in electric powertrain technologies for medium- and heavy-duty vehicles.

Robert Bosch LLC of Farmington Hills, Mich., Cummins Corporate Research and Technology in Columbus, Ind. and McLaren Performance Technologies of Livonia, Mich. received a combined \$12.2 million to develop various electric vehicle innovations to be brought to the general public.

"Improving the efficiency of commercial trucks is critical to reducing our petroleum consumption, strengthening our clean energy economy, and further reducing our contributions to climate change," Sarkar said. "This new funding will not only accelerate innovation but also foster rapid market adoption of new energy efficient vehicle technologies." ●

FMCSA seeks input on sleep apnea screening

WASHINGTON, D.C.

The US Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) will host three public listening sessions to solicit input on the impacts of screening, evaluating and treating commercial truck drivers for obstructive sleep apnea (OSA).

The National Transportation Safety Board has recommended the US DoT take action to address OSA screening and treatment for transportation workers, including rail operators. A joint Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRM) is the first step towards proposing requirements specifically on sleep apnea.

"It is imperative for everyone's safety that commercial motor vehicle drivers and train operators be fully focused and immediately responsive at all times," said US Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx. "DoT strongly encourages comment from the public on how to best respond to this national health and transportation safety issue."

Estimates suggest as many as 22 million men and women could be suffering from sleep apnea without realizing it. The condition can cause unintended sleep episodes and deficits in attention, concentration, situational awareness, memory and the capacity to safely respond to hazards when performing safety-sensitive service, FMCSA indicates. For those with OSA, eight hours of sleep can be less productive than four hours of ordinary, uninterrupted sleep, according to the American Academy of Sleep Medicine.

"The collection and analysis of sound data on the impact of OSA must be our immediate first step," said FMCSA Acting Administrator Scott Darling. "We call upon the public to help us better understand the prevalence of OSA among commercial truck and bus drivers, as well as the safety and economic impacts on the truck and bus industries."

The ANPRM can be viewed at www.FMCSA.dot.gov. ●

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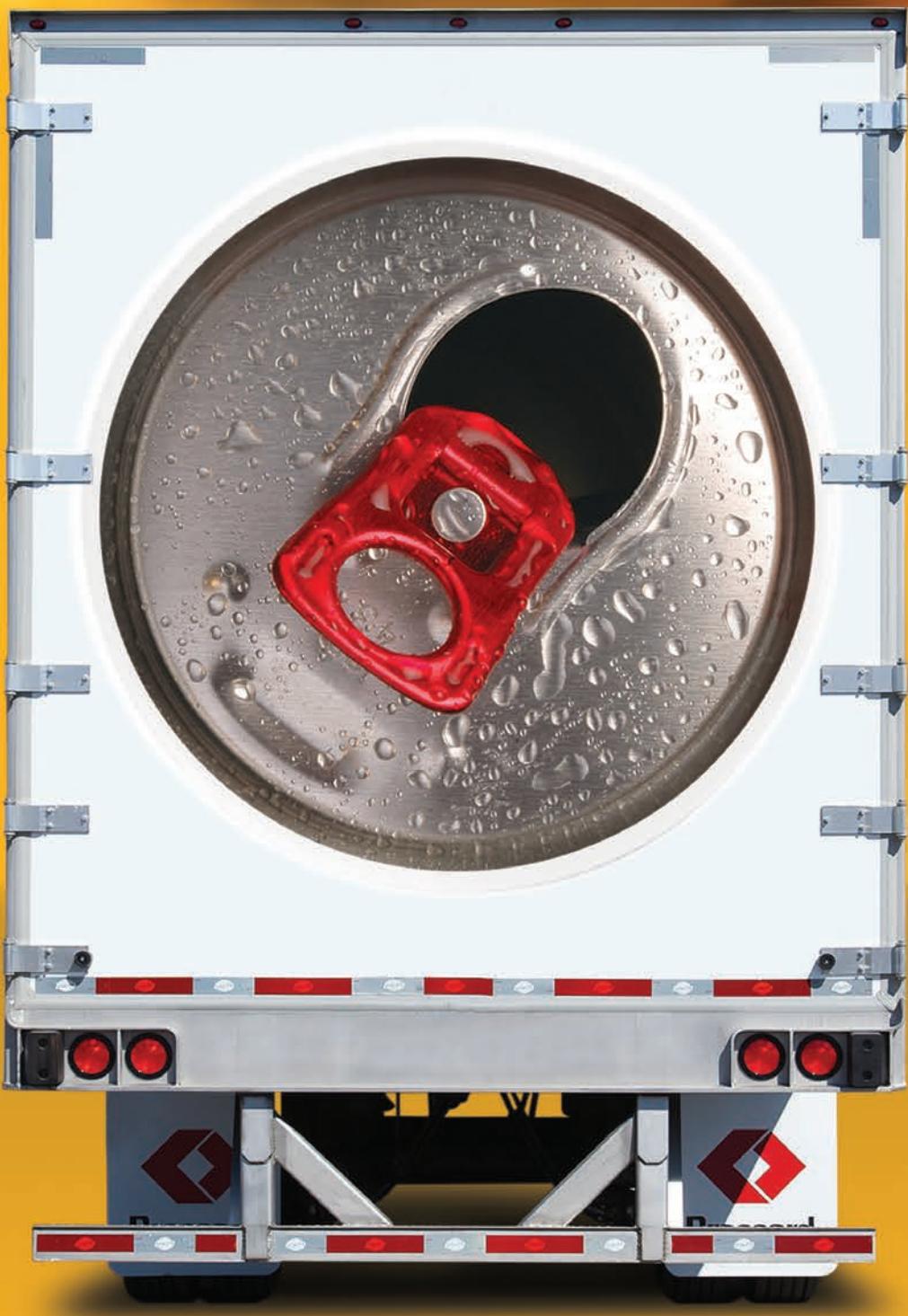
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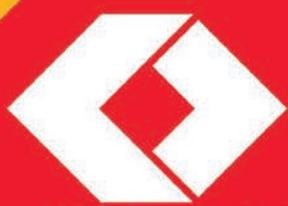
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Ontario Liberals hike fuel taxes

But infrastructure will get a spending boost

TORONTO, ONTARIO

The Ontario Liberals introduced a provincial budget Feb. 25 that will punish energy consumers but invest more heavily into infrastructure.

Fuel will increase by 4.3 cents a litre under the province's carbon cap-and-trade program, which aims to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 80% by 2050. Natural gas will also increase in price. The province says it will spend the \$1.9 billion the program is expected to generate annually on GHG-reducing programs and initiatives. The Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) said in a release it sees an opportunity here for some of these funds to be directed towards helping the trucking industry adopt more environmentally friendly equipment such as natural gas-fuelled trucks and electric-powered engines and reefers.

The OTA welcomed the announcement the province will step up funding of key infrastructure projects over the next decade.

Infrastructure projects include: the creation of high-occupancy toll (HOT) lanes in the Greater Toronto Area; the widening of a stretch of Hwy. 400 from eight to 10 lanes; the widening of a stretch of Hwy. 410 from six to 10 lanes; improved road maintenance and snow clearing on northern highways; and \$550-million in additional spending on northern highways, including a four-lane expansion of Hwy. 69 south of Sudbury and Hwy. 11/17 east of Thunder Bay.

Small, rural and northern municipalities will also get more funding to shore up roads and bridges.

The province announced it will drop the \$30 Drive Clean fee for emissions tests. It also vowed to streamline the issuing of superload permits for escort vehicles. The province also formally announced it is moving ahead with the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan (ORPP), which will be launched in 2018.

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) panned the budget, accusing the Liberals of "taxing the jobs for tomorrow and today." It noted 90% of small businesses in Ontario oppose the ORPP, with 70% of them claiming the plan will require them to freeze or cut staff salaries.

"Not only is the government completely ignoring small businesses' ORPP concerns, it is also turning a blind eye on its own polling and research which clearly show that the ORPP will be a job killer," said Plamen Petkov, CFIB's Ontario vice-president. "Delaying the first wave of ORPP implementation by a year was a good move, but relying on potential cuts in workers' compensation premiums to offset the ORPP impact is neither prudent nor sufficient. At a minimum the budget should have pushed back ORPP implementation for small and medium-sized employers, which are still set to be hit with the new pension tax in 2018 and 2019."

Petkov also decried the cap-and-trade scheme, which he said will allow major polluters to "play a credit trading shell game," while small businesses shell out more for fuel and heating. Ontario will incur a \$4.3-billion deficit, bringing its total debt to \$308.3 billion. 

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Private and for-hire fleets discuss the driver shortage

By Sonia Straface

MISSISSAUGA, ONTARIO

While the driver shortage seems to have plagued a majority of for-hire fleets across the continent over the last few years, private fleets have managed to take cover and avoid it. Until now, that is.

At the first annual Truck Training Schools Association of Ontario (TT-SAO) conference in Mississauga, Ont. Feb. 24, a panel of private fleet executives and another of for-hire executives spoke to attendees about the recent struggles both sides of the industry are facing when it comes to recruiting drivers to keep the wheels turning.

The private panel consisted of Andy Walker, Ontario distribution manager of Molson Coors, Dennis Shantz, director of fleet services at Home Hardware, John Harrison, director of transportation operations at Huron Services Group and Mike Millian, president of the Private Motor Truck Council of Canada.

The for-hire panel included Garth Pitzel, director of safety and driver development at Bison Transport, Alex MacKinnon, COO of MacKinnon Transport, Caroline Blais, recruiting manager at Kriska and Geoff Topping, director of recruiting and retention at Challenger Motor Freight.

To start, panelists were asked to describe what they feel is the root cause of the driver shortage.

Topping of Challenger said that the perception of trucking among the general public is ultimately to blame.

"I believe it's the perception of the profession," he said. "I think (the driving profession has) unfortunately been watered-down. People think of (driving) as a career of last resort. They don't think of it as a real profession and a real job, and it truly is. It is a job where someone can make a good living and look after their fam-

nel vision and think it's just us, but it's not. There's been so much press over the years about (the industry) wanting more drivers and it being a second career, that I think we've created a culture for our industry inadvertently that suggests that we are so desperate that we will take anybody. It's hard to correct that perception and it's hard for people outside the industry to understand that people in trucking in driving and non-driving roles are educated and intelligent.

try is no longer immune to the driver shortage.

"Private fleets generally never had to recruit," said Millian. "At my last job, we never had to recruit. Our drivers would come in with phone numbers of other drivers who wanted to work for us and we had a waiting list. When I left there a year ago, these numbers decreased and the waiting list was down to just one or two numbers."

The reason why private fleets didn't have such an issue hiring drivers in the past was because of the advantages the private fleet industry has to work with.

The panelists said that private fleets have an edge over for-hire fleets when it comes to finding drivers, because most have predictable routes for drivers who can build a healthy work-life balance by being home most nights of the week.

This is a desirable quality for those who know about the unpredictable life of a truck driver.

"Predictive routing is a really big thing (for private fleets)," said Harrison. "When I first worked at Schneider I was gone for two weeks at a time and I rarely knew where I was going ahead of time and I never went to the same place twice...our guys know exactly where they're going and when they're going to be back home and we pay well at Huron. Quite frankly, we're above average."

Millian agreed with Harrison

I think as an industry we need to make the working conditions better. Today, asking somebody to work two to three weeks in a row on the road is not okay."

Garth Pitzel, Bison Transport

ily. And be proud of what they're doing. And as an industry we need to push and continue to raise the awareness of that and raise the profession back to what it used to be."

Blais of Kriska agreed with Topping, but added that she thinks the industry has dug itself into a hole by failing to correct those misperceptions.

"In North America, every industry is struggling to find people," she said. "I know sometimes we may have tun-

"In our fleet, we have a number of drivers that have university educations. I think people would be surprised to know that and we should be getting more of that out there to attract more of the right people that we want to have."

On the private fleet side, panelists spoke about how their segment is changing its approach to recruitment, thanks in part to the driver shortage.

All of the private fleet panelists agreed that the private fleet indus-

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and the other panelists adding that, "Brand recognition is another advantage for private fleets looking to hire. You know what Molson Coors is, you know what Home Hardware is...so you'd be willing to drive for brands you know."

Because recruiting on the for-hire side of things is much harder, MacKinnon said that for his business, driver referrals are the best way to combat the shortage.

"Today we put a lot of weight on our referral bonus," he said. "By far, our best recruiters are our drivers. When one of our drivers tells another driver how awesome it is to work at MacKinnon Transport, it's a little more proactive than when I tell a driver how great it is to work at MacKinnon."

"We used to do a sign-on bonus, and we still have a small sign-on bonus...but we found that when we put a lot of weight on the sign-on bonus, a lot of those individuals jumped at the next sign-on bonus, which was frustrating. So we use our current fleet to help promote MacKinnon."

Bison's Pitzel said he thinks the key to solving the driver shortage is to change the driving culture completely, and getting long-haul drivers back home in a timely fashion.

"I think as an industry we need to make the working conditions better. Today, asking somebody to work two to three weeks in a row on the road is not okay," he said. "And I think we need to be up-front with them about wages because they want to know what they're making and how much they are taking home to their families every week."

Blais said Kriska is trying to battle the shortage by working with entry-level drivers.

"At Kriska, we have a philosophy that it's easier for us to grow a Kriska-quality driver from scratch than it is to try to rehabilitate an experienced driver with issues," she said. "We believe that the company that has the best drivers, not necessarily the most experienced drivers, but the best drivers will win."

Private fleets are also taking this approach and when looking for new hires, the panelists unanimously agreed that attitude trumps all other qualities on a resume.

"Attitude is huge," said Shantz. "You can always gain experience and knowledge with us through proper training. But I've always been a believer that it's very difficult to change someone's attitude. An attitude is going to reflect how they are going to be representing your company and that's important to us."

Attitude is so important to private fleets because Shantz says that drivers are much more than just people who move product, they are brand ambassadors.

"Our drivers see our dealers more than anybody in the company and they are seen by the public more than anybody in the company," he said. "So they've got to have that right attitude and they've got to be willing to go that extra mile."

Shantz, Walker and Harrison said they are even willing to overlook a driver's experience if their attitude is right.

"If they have a great attitude we are willing to bend on experience," said Walker.

However, said Millian, what fleets shouldn't and won't bend on is a poor driving record.

"That cannot be overlooked," said Millian. ☀

Canadian truckload volumes increased in February

TORONTO, ONTARIO

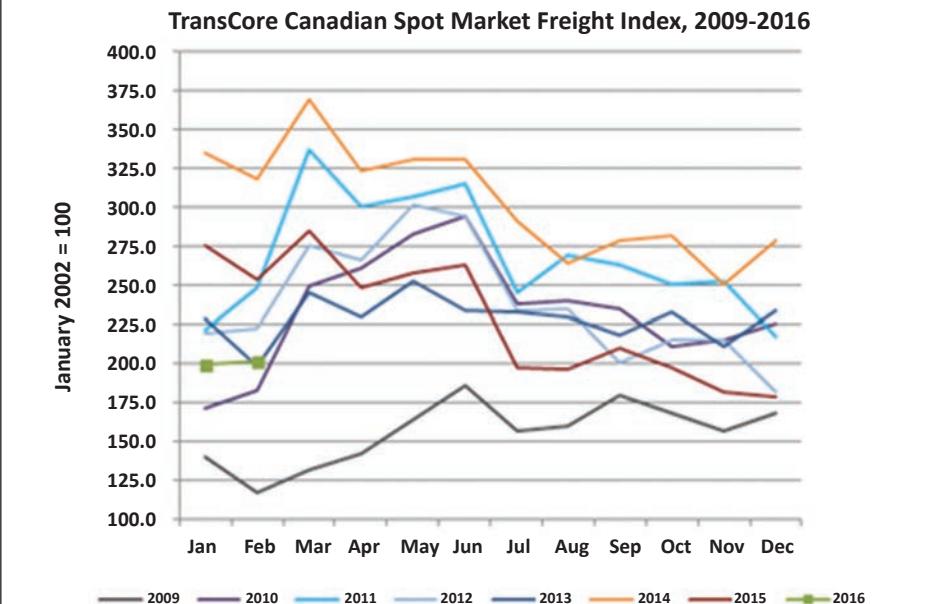
TransCore Link Logistics disclosed that load volumes for Canadian and cross-border loads increased 1% month-over-month from January 2016 to February.

However, year-over-year, load volumes were down 21% from February 2015. Intra-Canada load volumes represented 26% of the total volumes – down by 18% year-over-year.

Cross-border loads averaged 69% of the total data; loads leaving Canada decreased by 18%, and loads coming into Canada decreased 25% year-over-year.

Posted equipment increased in February, up 9% month-over-month and up 30% year-over-year.

The equipment-to-load ratio also increased to 3.42 from 3.18 in January. Year-over-year, this ratio increased from 1.90 in February 2015.



Finally, compared to last month, changes in the distribution of cross-border equipment entering Canada were

observed in three regions: Ontario decreased 5%, Western Canada increased 7% and Quebec decreased 3%. ☀

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US proposes mandatory entry-level driver training

WASHINGTON, D.C.

The US Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration has proposed a set of comprehensive national prerequisite training standards for entry-level commercial truck drivers.

The Notice of Proposed Rulemaking calls for comprehensive training requirements before obtaining a commercial driver's licence (CDL).

Under the proposal, applicants seeking a CDL would have to obtain a minimum of 30 hours of behind-the-wheel training from an instructional program that meets FMCSA standards. This would include a minimum of 10 hours operating the vehicles on a practice driving range. There is no proposed minimum number of hours that drivers will have to spend on classroom portions of their training.

"A diverse group of commercial motor vehicle stakeholders completed a tremendous amount of work, and that effort resulted in an unprecedented consensus," said FMCSA acting administrator Scott Darling. "These comprehensive entry-level driver training standards exemplify our commitment to working closely with our safety partners, including state and local law enforcement, the safety advocacy community, and all other stakeholders to reduce crashes and to save lives."

The rules would apply to first-time CDL applicants and CDL-holders seeking an upgrade.

An FMCSA representative told *Truck News* the proposed rule would have no impact on Canadian-licensed commercial motor vehicle drivers. However, the proposal reflects a similar movement in Ontario to introduce mandatory training requirements for entry-level commercial drivers.

The American Trucking Associations said it was generally pleased with the proposal, though it expressed some lingering concerns.

"FMCSA has been working toward a strong entry-level driver training standard since 1991 and we are pleased that they have released this proposed rule that will raise standards and improve safety," said ATA president and CEO Bill Graves. "This rule does a good job of outlining the knowledge and skills a new driver should have before heading out on the road, but ATA is concerned that an arbitrary requirement centered on behind-the-wheel training hours distracts from a more important focus on performance and safety outcomes."

ATA notes that demonstrating the ability to safely operate a commercial vehicle is far more important than the number of hours of instruction or practice a new driver received.

"Some prospective drivers may demonstrate proficiency before reaching an arbitrary minimum hours requirement, but more concerning is the possibility that achieving this time threshold will erroneously convey competence and possession of the skills needed to safely drive," Graves said.

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Trucking just 'scratching the surface' of what connectivity can achieve

Volvo Trucks North America president Goran Nyberg believes technology and connectivity have even greater potential for the trucking industry

By James Menzies

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Goran Nyberg wants Volvo's trucks to be the iPhones of the trucking industry. The president of Volvo Trucks North America told trucking journalists in February the future of trucking is all about connectivity and creating a vehicle that can be enhanced with third-party applications.

"We will be focused on being experts of the trucks and the performance of the trucks and whatever apps may come in the future, we need to have an open mind to make sure they work with our features," Nyberg said during a wide-ranging discussion with journalists that returned frequently to technology and connectivity.

Nyberg said trucking is just "scratching the surface" of what can be achieved through emerging technologies. He pointed out there are now 100,000 Volvo trucks using Remote Diagnostics and that the system is becoming more predictive.

The vast amount of data collected from those trucks now allows Volvo to predict when certain parts will fail and to warn customers. However, Nyberg said a change of mindset is required by fleets to truly take advantage of this opportunity.

"The culture in our business is, we repair trucks when they break down," Nyberg said. "We can bring more value to (customers) if we are allowed to be proactive in our approach."

Nyberg used the airline industry as an example.

Aircraft parts are replaced before they break because unplanned stops and failures aren't acceptable.

With Volvo collecting data from thousands of trucks it can now predict when parts will fail and encourage fleets to be more proactive about replacing those parts.

"Why should I run the truck until it breaks down if I know this component has reached its end of life?" Nyberg questioned.

This data also allows Volvo to act

more quickly to identify trends and activate campaigns.

Volvo continues its war against downtime, with the opening of its Uptime Center last year and now with the rollout of a Certified Uptime Centers program that recognizes dealers that have implemented strategies to repair trucks faster.

These dealers guarantee a diagnosis within two hours of a truck's arrival and have special lanes available for quick repairs.

So far, seven Volvo dealers have received the Certified Uptime Center designation, Nyberg said.

Volvo is also continuing to explore the potential of truck platooning. Later this year it will conduct trial runs with the University of California, Berkeley, running three VNL670s in platoon formation.

Nyberg stressed this technology won't replace drivers.

"In all technology, you need to have the human factor that can override the system when it's not working," he said.

Volvo officials acknowledged interest in alternative fuels, including natural gas and dimethyl ether (DME), has waned as diesel prices have fallen.

"I think we can all agree that alternative fuels will be a part of the future," Nyberg said. "We still believe in DME, but we don't think the market is ready...At \$2 a gallon (for diesel), it's a challenge for any alternative fuel to be financially feasible. I think we all know fuel prices will come back. It might take time, but if fuel goes back to somewhat normal, the appetite and interest in alternative fuels will increase again."

Volvo executives also hinted of a major powertrain breakthrough that will be announced in late March.

But despite the best efforts of journalists, they weren't revealing any details about what it will involve.

Check www.TruckNews.com March 23 for details on Volvo's new powertrain announcement. ☎

Cat exits truck business

PEORIA, ILLINOIS

Caterpillar announced Feb. 26 it is discontinuing production of its on-highway vocational trucks.

It cited the current business climate in the truck industry and a thorough evaluation of its own business as its reasons for withdrawing from the market.

It will no longer take orders for vocational trucks, though the company says it will continue to support existing truck customers and vehicles that are currently on the road.

Cat entered the truck market in 2011 through a partnership with Navistar. That partnership came to an end last year and Navistar earlier this year released its new HX Series vocational truck, which it acknowledged was inspired by its partnership with Cat.

Caterpillar was preparing to bring production of its trucks in-house at its Victoria, Texas production facility.

"Remaining a viable competitor in this market would require significant additional investment to develop and launch a complete portfolio of trucks, and upon an updated review, we determined there was not a sufficient market opportunity to justify the investment," said Ramin Younessi, vice-president with responsibility for Caterpillar's Industrial Power Systems Division. "We have not yet started truck production in Victoria, and this decision allows us to exit this business before the transition occurs."

About 70 jobs will be affected as a result of the move. ☎

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Female trucking executives working to overcome stereotypes

Continued from page 1

port; Angena Kalhar, president of KTL Transport; Jacquie Meyers, president of Meyers Transport; and Katie Erb, inside sales/account representative at Erb Transport.

Moderating the session was Kelli Saunders, president of Morai Logistics.

To kick things off, Saunders asked each of the panelists how their gender challenges them in the workplace.

Meyers said that being a woman in a leadership role means she (and others like her) have to work harder to overcome the stereotypical perception that women are weaker and less intelligent than their male counterparts.

"The good news is, most of what we're doing is overcoming the perception that women are the inferior or weaker sex," she said. "So there's no science that backs this. It's been ingrained in our heads over the last hundred years that women are inferior. So really the challenge that women face every day is overcoming that perception that we're weaker."

To combat this, Meyers said she supports women in the workplace, for starters, by hiring them.

She explained that Meyers Transport is well balanced, with as many females working in the office as males. She added that since she began running the company, she transformed the all middle-aged male executive board into a younger one with

three women and four men.

And most recently, she hired the company's first female director of operations.

Katie Erb, on the other hand, said that so far in her position, she has had no issues regarding her gender.

"My brother is one year older than I am, and we're sort of spearheading the next generation at Erb together," she said. "Growing up, my brother and I were treated the same. We were equal. We got the same opportuni-

For Crisan, the challenges she faces at work have more to do with her age than her gender, she said.

At just 25, Crisan said she isn't always taken seriously in meetings and once had a client jokingly ask her if she could legally work at her age.

Despite this, Crisan said she believes being a millennial has helped her grow the Andy Transport business, even if it is the most challenging part of her job.

"We have two generations build-

“Most of what we’re doing is overcoming the perception that women are the inferior or weaker sex. So there’s no science that backs this.”

Jacquie Meyers, Meyers Transport

ties...So in business, Kyle and I have progressed together."

She went on to say that she has never thought of her gender as something to discourage her from achieving her potential.

"I was a tomboy and I was always into male-dominated things. So I've never looked at things and said, 'Oh I can't do something because I'm a girl.' I'm going to do it because I want to do it," she said.

Kalhar echoed Erb's viewpoint, saying her parents were open-minded and she gained a love for trucking riding along with her father as a child.

ing the company at the same time," Crisan said. "(My father and I) are building the structure, we're hiring people...so sometimes there are diverging opinions. Sometimes there are arguments, but learning how to work those arguments out and make the best decision for the company and for our team wins. For me, that's the biggest challenge. My father has a lot of life experience and I have an educational background. I'm the first person from my family to graduate from university. But through mutual respect and trust, sometimes experience wins over education and knowledge; other times it's my education

and knowledge that wins over the experience. But learning how to accept the other person's opinion...is how we overcome that challenge."

Erb agreed with Crisan that being a millennial within the family business, while challenging, is helping the business.

"We know how to move a truck from A to B," she said. "(Erb) has trucking down pat. So as the market changes, we need to be innovative...and I'm part of a business development team to help re-brand the company with a new Web page and a stronger social media presence. So we can teach the older generation at Erb about the impact of social media and smart marketing, and they teach us about transportation."

On managing their work/life balance, each of the panelists offered up their own advice as to what works for them.

Meyers said that managing her career and social life has been something she has struggled with, but she has found a solution by making friends at work.

"One of the things that I've done that has worked for me is surrounding myself with co-workers, customers and suppliers that I respect and enjoy. So if I have to be entertaining on a Friday or Saturday night, at least it's with people I enjoy spending my time with," she said.

In contrast, Erb said what works for her is separating her personal life and her work life equally.

"Everything I do I give it 100%...so when I'm at work, I'm all work. And I like to leave work at work," she said. "And that's hard nowadays because you're constantly mobile and you're just one click away...but you have to have a personal life because if you get out and do what you enjoy, you'll have more energy to give to work."

Kalhar said after she suffered an injury years ago, she has better managed her work/life balance by keeping one thing in mind - her health.

"Being in a leadership role is very demanding," she said. "I need to be able to perform to support my team, and they need to be able to perform. I had a significant injury a few years ago...I had seven surgeries in a year-and-a-half and it really drove home how important it is to take care of yourself...there's a few non-negotiables in my week, which is going to the gym and getting fresh air. While that life balance may not be able to happen every day or every week, it's important to have downtime to take care of yourself."

Finally, all panelists agreed that in order to drive more women into the trucking industry, mentoring is required.

For Meyers, having a mentor was "life-changing."

"I've worked very hard on surrounding myself with people I can learn from that can help me grow and it has changed my life," she said. "It has changed my personal life, my career. I've been very lucky."

She added that at first she resisted help from others in the industry because she felt she was a burden, but she quickly learned that mentoring is rewarding for both parties.

"Don't feel guilty about taking their time," she advised the audience, adding that if you've been in the industry a while, to consider mentoring others.

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View from the front lines

Female drivers, trainers and technicians speak out about their experiences in the industry

By Sonia Straface

TORONTO, ONTARIO

Anyone in trucking will tell you that without drivers and technicians, the industry would cease to exist.

So it was only natural that at Trucking HR Canada's second annual Women with Drive Leadership Summit March 3, a panel was dedicated to those female truckers and technicians who keep the industry moving. The panel, titled *Women on the Road* allowed real Canadian drivers, trainers - and a tech - to express their views on the trucking industry.

Panelists included Jennifer Duval a driver at Kriska; Helen Thorpe, a corporate trainer at Seaboard Transport; Samantha Sharpe, a technician apprentice for Nova Truck Centres; and Alison and Katrina Theriault, team drivers for Clarke Road Transport.

Truck News' James Menzies moderated the panel.

Because the industry is looking for more female drivers and technicians, Menzies asked the women on the panel how they believe trucking companies and shops can be more inviting to women looking for a fulfilling career.

All the women agreed, above all else, if you want to attract more women into your company, make sure you treat them the same way you'd treat

any other employee.

"Kriska never made me feel any different being a woman in the industry," said Duval of her employer. "If anything, I felt more welcomed for being a woman in the trucking industry."

Similarly, Sharpe, who worked for nine years in child care before becoming a technician apprentice, said what attracted her to Nova was how welcomed she was as a woman.

"There was never any special treatment and I was immediately welcomed with open arms," Sharpe said.

Alison Theriault, on the other hand, said she was turned off by companies who refused to employ her simply because she was female. When she first began in the industry in 2008, she applied to almost 300 driving positions and was turned down from almost all of them.

"Starting out, I didn't get hired because I was a woman and they told me so," she said. "They would tell me I could find a nice man, I could marry him and then I'd be allowed in the truck with him. I was screamed at."

She said she still keeps those companies - who turned her down because she was a female - in mind and often sees their trucks rolling down the highway.

Panelists also said they are looking for a company that has things that every driver - male or female - is looking for:



The Women on the Road panel. (L-R): Samantha Sharpe, Alison Theriault, Katrina Theriault, Helen Thorpe, Jennifer Duval and mod James Menzies.

good equipment, fair pay and flexible hours.

Duval said above that, she has stayed with Kriska because they motivate her to be the best driver she can be, and that is something she values.

"I've worked for Kriska from day one. They took me out of driving school," she explained. "Kriska is like my second family. They inspire me and they make me feel good about what I do. The pay rate is competitive. They have safety bonuses. There are a lot of things to strive for month by month to get that reward."

Duval and Thorpe added that having a female trainer in the fleet is also important in the effort to recruit more women.

"When I joined Kriska, I know I was more than thrilled to be getting a female trainer myself. It made me feel more comfortable," Duval said. "And now when I get a female trainee, I know when she leaves me, I've boosted her confidence up."

Though Alison Theriault is not a formal trainer at her company, she said she is single-handedly trying to recruit more women into the trade by reaching

out to other women on the Internet. She said she scours online forums and personal advertisements and e-mails with women who are curious about driving professionally.

On the other hand, the women on the panel expressed that nothing will make them run from a company faster than if there are pay discrepancies, if the communication between management and drivers is non-existent, and if the equipment is less than satisfactory - all of which are red flags for male drivers as well.

Thorpe said that in addition, not only do individual companies need to change their policies, but the industry as a whole needs to evolve to attract drivers. She said some drivers she trains are completely unaware of the reality of the industry and are naive as to what trucking entails. She said this could be resolved if the industry were to adapt to the different lifestyles people want these days.

"I think the industry does need to change to accept these younger people by giving the option of shorter hauls and pre-scheduled trips," she concluded. ☐



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Students visited J.G. Drapeau to learn more about the industry.

A field trip to the terminal

By Sonia Straface

ETOBICOKE, ONTARIO

In an effort to get more women into the trucking industry for good, Margaret Hogg, general manager of J.G. Drapeau, a family business that hauls mostly hazardous materials, invited students of MicroSkills' Women in Transportation Program to tour the company's terminal on March 11.

The day's purpose was two-fold, according to Hogg.

The first was to give the women a first-hand look into the everyday job duties of a typical commercial driver.

"I want to really show them what they can expect when they say they want to be a driver," Hogg said. "And I want them to know how much safety goes into the job."

During the visit to the terminal the

students were shown what exactly is required during a pre-trip. They also got to climb up into the truck and look around the office and observe other jobs within the industry, like dispatch.

The second purpose of the day was a chance for Hogg to practice her mentoring skills.

"I had mentors when I first started in the industry and now I want to be the mentor," she said. "I know we're not a large carrier and we're very family-oriented but I want to be there for (women) and support them and let them know that being a woman, they have just as much skill as a man does. I want to let them know it's a good industry to work in."

J.G. Drapeau currently employs just one female driver but Hogg says it is actively looking to recruit more. ◉

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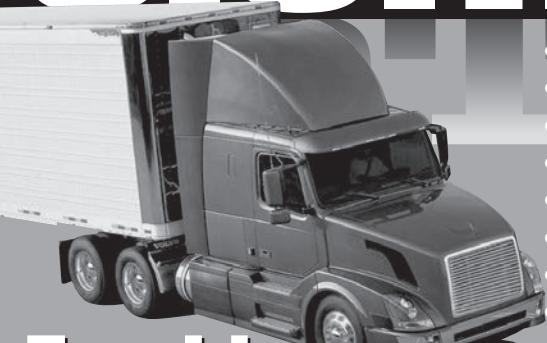
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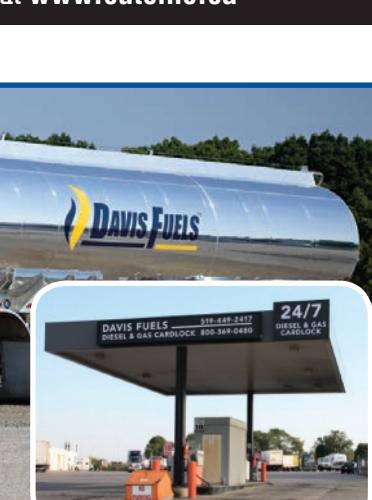
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Ontario fleet finds a new way to go green

Thompson Emergency Freight Systems plants a tree for every load

By Ron Stang

WINDSOR, ONTARIO

The largest expedited freight company in Ontario, which has long been an advocate for the environment, has teamed up with a couple of forestry groups in a program called Book a Load, Plant a Tree.

"Choose Thompson to execute your next expedite shipment and, in recognition of your trust, a three-year-old tree sapling (native species only) will be planted each Spring," the company tells potential customers on its Web site.

Thompson Emergency Freight Systems, with a fleet of 100 trucks – including tractor-trailers, straight trucks and non-commercial vans – and with services largely in Ontario and Que-

bec, the US Midwest and as far south as Texas, has had a history of community and environmental commitment.

The company, with headquarters in suburban Tecumseh and a secure yard in Milton, has been a member of the SmartWay Transport Partnership, started in 2003 by environmental groups and the EPA. The partnership aims to track and reduce emissions and the use of fuel from the industrial movement of goods.

Last year Thompson celebrated its 30th anniversary.

Spokesman and recruiting manager Mark Bortolotti said company founder and president Michael Ouellette wanted to do something in recognition of that milestone, and so contacted Forests Ontario, a non-profit group that oversees a huge variety of rural

and urban natural reclamation sites through tree planting activities.

"He said, 'Why don't we plant a tree for a company that books a load with us?'" Bortolotti said. "It's not the most environmentally friendly industry, and after 30 years of running the highways we've certainly made our carbon footprint felt, so this was a little way to give back."

Thompson has a huge customer base and many loyal customers who have readily embraced this effort. These include many in the US, resulting in the company partnering with a second organization, The Greening of Detroit, which plants trees in inner-city neighbourhoods.

"We have a lot of American customers and frankly they were asking 'What about us?'" Bortolotti said.

The Book a Load campaign started last September and so far has raised more than \$5,800, the equivalent of 2,000 planted trees.

"The customers really support it," Bortolotti said. "They're calling us direct instead of calling third parties and shopping it around."

Thompson's busy fleet offers just-in-time delivery, and has long been driven by the automotive and southern Ontario manufacturing industries.

"But there are other companies, too, like aerospace, anything where it's time-sensitive and you need a vehicle to pick it up and deliver it tout suite," Bortolotti said.

Forests Ontario CEO Rob Keen said other corporations have also donated to the organization but believes this is the first transportation company to do so.

"They wanted to give back to the environment, as it were, and do some good social responsibility activities so they felt that tree planting was a good thing to make a contribution towards," he said.

Forests Ontario works with partners to plant trees, and has a goal of 50 million plantings by 2025.

Partners include conservation authorities, forestry consultants, local stewardship councils, nurseries and First Nations. The agencies in turn work with landowners to determine proper planting sites.

"The contributions Thompson is providing are going more towards larger-scale tree planting," Keen said. "But when we're working with corporations, quite often, if they want to do their own tree plantings or contribute through a community tree planting effort, we can have those discussions as well."

The Greening of Detroit is a similar, if smaller scale, group focused directly on the Motor City.

It reclaims as green spaces former vacant lots, of which Detroit's inner city abounds. It also trains unemployed young people and adults for jobs in agriculture and landscaping.

"We really admire the corporations such as Thompson that are really looking for an opportunity to be a part of Detroit's revitalization," director of development Monica Tabares said. ●

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Bison named best overall large fleet to drive for

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

CarriersEdge and the Truckload Carriers Association (TCA) revealed the winners of the best overall fleets to drive for, in both the large and small carrier categories at the TCA annual convention in Las Vegas March 8.

The best overall large fleet winner was Canada's own Bison Transport of Winnipeg, Man. There to accept the award, sponsored by Bose, on behalf of the company was Garth Pitzel, di-

rector of safety and driver development for Bison.

"On behalf of all of our employees and contractors at Bison, I'd like to thank the TCA and the Best Fleets to Drive For sponsors," he said. "And I certainly want to recognize CarriersEdge for their involvement and commitment in this important industry program. At Bison we never create a program to be recognized, we create it to improve the lives of our professional drivers. What's most rewarding is it started with a driver nominating Bison and it was validated by our professional drivers."

According to CarriersEdge, Bison won the overall award because of its outstanding range of driver programs, stellar safety performance and low annual driver turnover.

This year marks the second time Bison has been named an overall winner of Best Fleets and the sixth time it has been listed among the Best Fleets Top 20.

FTC Transportation of Oklahoma City, Okl., took home the title of best overall fleet in the small carrier category. EpicVue sponsored the small fleet category award.

Jane Jazrawy, CEO of CarriersEdge, explained the significance of the Best Fleets to Drive For program at the TCA convention.

"This year's best fleets provide outstanding experiences for their drivers across a variety of categories. Whether it's embracing new technologies or pay models, these fleets are finding new

ways to push the boundaries," she said.

She noted that both of this year's overall winners are providing a winning combination of outstanding programs for their drivers, satisfaction rates above 90%, and low driver turnover of less than 30%.

Both companies were also 2014 grand prize winners of TCA's National Fleet Safety Awards (and as was later revealed at the conference, repeated as winners of those same awards this year).

"It's interesting that both of our Best Fleets overall winners are also previous grand champions in the safety arena...it may well be that their safety numbers are outstanding because of all the other things that they do," Jazrawy said.

"Both have taken a holistic approach to improving fleet operations and working to build a more efficient, more inclusive fleet that all drivers can benefit from. As a result, they have happier drivers, who focus on doing their jobs better, leading to better safety and more efficient operations. This, in turn, makes everyone happier, and the cycle continues."

This was the second portion of the Best Fleets to Drive For awards. CarriersEdge revealed the Top 20 best fleets earlier this year. Canadian fleets in the Top 20 included: Bison; Challenger Motor Freight; Erb Group; Kriska Holdings; and TransPro Freight Systems. Trimac Transportation in Calgary, Alta. was named a Fleet to Watch. ◉

Trimac feels impact of western slowdown

CALGARY, ALBERTA

The slowdown in oil and gas drilling activity in Western Canada during the fourth quarter resulted in a decline of revenue for Trimac, but the company has reduced its debt, maintained its average fleet age and has grown its revenue in Eastern Canada.

Operating earnings decreased \$1.5 million in the fourth quarter.

The company says it reduced administrative costs by \$2.2 million and reduced its debt by \$10.3 million to \$82.8 million.

It decreased capital expenditures by 40.5%, while still maintaining its average fleet age.

"The economic slowdown continued to negatively impact all of our segments in the fourth quarter with a 9.3% decrease in revenue and reduced income before income tax expense of 16.7%. However, from a balance sheet perspective, Trimac reduced its long-term debt by \$10.3 million and increased working capital \$6.9 million despite the revenue shortfalls," said CEO Matt Faure.

"This was the direct result of the continued focus on operational excellence, which resulted in lower administration costs, reduced operating equipment and improved utilization. We finished the year with a strong balance sheet and earnings slightly below prior year despite a 5.1% decrease in revenue. The cost controls and process improvements implemented will allow us to continue lowering operating costs as we compete in the volatile markets across western Canada in 2016."

Trimac is projecting demand for transportation services to remain relatively flat or slightly lower for 2016 and is not anticipating any real growth from customers in resource-based industries.

It noted the weak Canadian dollar may boost transportation revenue for some commodities it hauls in Eastern Canada, as exports increased during the last half of 2015.

The company says 2016 will be another challenging year, and it will continue to remain diligent in managing costs while looking to achieve growth in segments where economic activity is improving. ◉

TCA names safest fleets

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

The grand prize winners of the 2015 National Fleet Safety Awards were revealed at the TCA Annual Awards Banquet in Las Vegas March 8 and it was Canada's Bison Transport taking top honours in the large fleet category.

The awards honour trucking companies that demonstrate an unrivaled commitment to safety.

Divisional winners were selected earlier in the year and were divided into six categories based on how many miles each fleet drove. Winners were selected based on their accident frequency per million miles driven.

Division winners were then invited to compete for one of two grand prizes (one for carriers with total annual mileage less than 25 million miles and one for mileage more than 25 million miles).

For the sixth consecutive year, Bison Transport won the grand prize for the large carrier division.

In total, Bison has won the National Fleet Safety Award nine times.

"Our mission is to make sure that every one of our drivers makes it home safely each and every time," said Rob Penner of Bison, who accepted the award.

FTC Transportation took home the grand prize in the small carrier division for the second year in a row. ◉



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Wheel separations back in the public spotlight

Continued from page 1

arations.

"The engineering of the components is adequate," said Rolf VanderZwaag, manager, maintenance and technical issues with the Ontario Trucking Association (OTA). "There is no inherent weakness in any of this, so that leads to, if you put them on right, everything will perform as expected."

VanderZwaag helped Ontario develop its mandatory Commercial Vehicle Wheel Service training program, which was introduced in the mid-1990s following another series of high-profile and tragic wheel-offs. Today, Ontario is the only province that requires wheel installers to become certified, though the program is widely used in other provinces as well.

"We've trained thousands and thousands of people," VanderZwaag said.

But Dave McDonald, commercial sales manager with Bridgestone Commercial Solutions, noted not all technicians have received sufficient training on wheel installations from their technical schools. The biggest problem he sees in the field is the installa-

mating surfaces and inspecting the components for signs of wear before they're re-installed. It's a job that can't be rushed, he stressed.

"If the job takes 45 minutes, it takes 45 minutes," he said. "I don't care if dispatch is screaming for the truck or operations are screaming for the truck, you have to do all the steps. It's a complete system."

Jim Wagner, sales manager with Bast Tire and Auto Service in Waterloo, Ont., added installers need to inspect studs carefully between installations – especially in applications where the wheels are frequently removed.

"It's really hard for a person to be able to tell whether the stud has been stretched to the point where you have to replace it," he acknowledged. "I deal a lot with the waste industry and because they have so many flats on some of these trucks, they may have the wheel off and on one truck 12 times in a year. Every time you're torquing that thing down, you're stretching that stud and at some point in time your stud is going to become very weak."

It's also important to use quality

"People believe it's the torque that holds the wheel on the vehicle, but it's not. It's the clamping force."

Dave McDonald, Bridgestone Commercial Solutions

tion of wheels without lubrication.

"A lot of people don't understand that the torque values in a hub-piloted wheel system are lubricated values," McDonald explained. "If you don't use the proper lubrication in combination with a calibrated torque range... the torque you put on is not going to develop the necessary clamping force and the wheels can come loose. Just because the torque range says 475 lb.-ft. doesn't mean you have the right amount of clamping force. People believe it's the torque that holds the wheel on the vehicle, but it's not. It's the clamping force."

McDonald said wheel installers need to take a complete systems approach to their work, noting how each step in the process affects other components within the system. This means properly cleaning fasteners and

fasteners, which will be more resistant to fatigue.

"If you want to save money in your maintenance budget, this is not the place where you want to save 20 cents on a cheap offshore nut," McDonald said. "You want to make sure you're using top quality fasteners and top quality wheel-end products."

When a wheel has been removed from and re-installed onto a truck or trailer, operators are required to stop to have those wheels retorqued 100 kilometres into their trip. Torque stickers should be placed on the unit to remind drivers to have this done.

"All the joints, as you put them together, have what they call stack settling (between metal components)," Wagner explained. "Even if you torque it, let's say there's a little bit of dirt or oil or something between those stacks,

Reported commercial vehicle wheel separations: 1997-2016 (year to date)

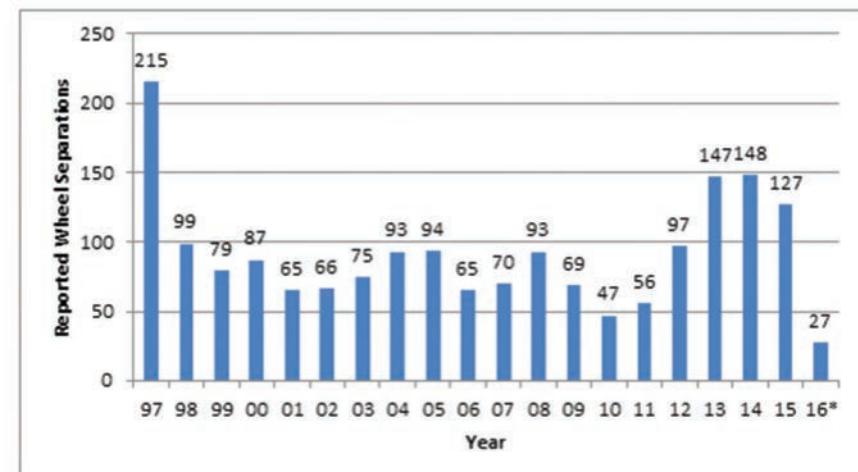


Chart supplied by MTO

as it moves and flexes and twists and so on, you may lose a bit of clamping force."

Do most operators take the time to stop for a retorque after 100 kilometres? Opinions on that vary widely. Dale Holman, president of a small fleet called Tabcor Holdings and a certified wheel installer, pointed out retorquing has its limitations.

"Nobody gets their wheels retorqued unless they have a very strict company policy and they have four tire companies within a radius of their shop, where they can pull in and get retorqued," he said. "And if I'm a guy doing the retorque, how do I know the first guy doesn't have it torqued to 1,000 lb.-ft.? You can't measure excessive torque without removing the nuts and then it starts the whole process all over again."

McDonald agreed that, "The success or failure of the retorque is directly dependent on the original installation. If the original installation was done improperly or they didn't use lubrication, you can retorque the thing until the cows come home. You're going to get the right amount of torque but the wheel's still going to be moving behind the nut because you don't have the clamping force."

Davies emphasized the importance of verifying the torque within 100 kms to ensure the installation was done correctly and the wheel is still secure. Fleets should have incentive to conduct rechecks, since they're required to maintain a full and complete vehicle maintenance file, which includes the name of the technician who did not only the wheel installation, but also the retorque.

"With no paper trail," McDonald said, "they don't have any of that."

If an issue exists with a wheel installation, drivers are the last line of de-



This imminent wheel separation was recently prevented by MTO enforcement officers at the Whitby scales on Hwy. 401.

fence before a potentially catastrophic separation occurs on the road. They should be conducting thorough pre-trip inspections and looking for tell-tale signs of movement, such as rust streaks.

"That's a sign of metal rubbing on metal," McDonald explained. "It's just metal filings that splay out from the wheel through the centrifugal force of it driving down the road. Then, you get a little moisture in the air and the metal filings turn to rust and it turns into a rust streak. Anytime you get that type of thing emanating from the wheel nut, that's a classic sign of an issue and you're out of service right there."

Wagner advised against placing caps over the studs, as they can conceal potential warning signs.

He also said drivers should give tires a good kick during their walk-around inspections to see if there's

Continued on page 72

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Who will fix the trucks?

The only way to win the talent war is to develop your own

By James Menzies

Rarely does a month go by in which Brent Edmonson doesn't receive an unsolicited e-mail or phone call offering him a job as a truck and coach technician.

"I keep getting e-mails, phone calls, hits on LinkedIn non-stop from people I don't even know," he says. "I ask, 'How the heck did you get my number?' and they've gone through five or six people to get it, just to see if I want to go work for them. Quite often, they say 'What will it take to get you here?' They're not even saying what they pay, they're saying 'Name your price and we'll see what we can do'."

Such is the demand for experienced truck and coach technicians. Edmonson, at 36 years of age, is younger than most of his peers and engaged with the industry through social media. He works for independent shop Transaxle Service Centre in Aberfoyle, Ont. and sees first-hand how demand for technicians like him is outpacing the arrival of new talent into the industry.

"Every shop is swamped," he says. "We're run off our feet. It's been non-stop, go-go-go. The work keeps piling up. Half of the guys in our shop are over 50 and we're realizing, in five, 10, 15 years, when all the baby-boomers have retired, we're going to be in trouble."

Employers are realizing that, too. Some are randomly calling up technicians and trying to poach them from the competition with sweet offers of more money and better benefits. Others are taking a longer view and developing talent from scratch.

Bison Transport falls into the latter category, and it's a point of pride for Jeremy Gough, the Calgary-based director of fleet maintenance, who is responsible for overseeing Bison's national maintenance operations.

"You can hire for today, but you need to create for tomorrow," Gough says. "We always want to be very strategic about not only recruiting for our place, but to recruit people into the industry."

This means reaching out to high

schools, technical schools and other post-secondary institutions wherever Bison has terminals. Bison participates in job fairs and offers scholarships for students. It seeks out ex-military servicemen and women who are transitioning back into civilian life.

Gough looks for potential recruits that exhibit a good attitude above all else.

"Hire for attitude, train for skill," he says.

Other attributes he looks for are the ambition to carve a career path and a hunger for continuous learning. While developing a technician from scratch is generally more costly than hiring a seasoned technician, Gough said it's also more rewarding.

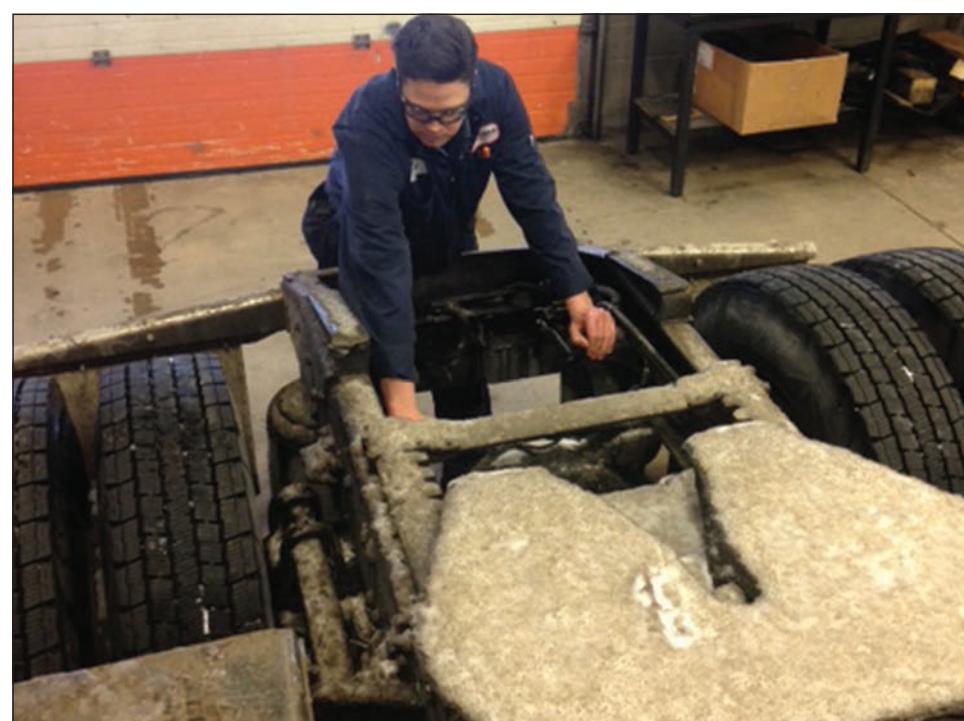
"There needs to be a consistent, well thought out process to bringing those entry-level people in and setting them up for success," he says. "It might take a little longer than your highly skilled technician that already has his licence and has been through that, but the rewards that come out of there from creating an entire team are greater. It's like being a hockey coach. Someone may not be the best right winger but if you consistently give them opportunities and new challenges and support them, you're going to make them better."

Ed Roeder, LCL director, transport maintenance with Loblaw's Canada, when speaking at the 2015 PIT Group conference, said maintenance managers have a responsibility to cultivate talent.

"Apprenticeship is expensive, it can be frustrating as hell, but I do encourage you if you manage fleets or even manage a third party, to hire an apprentice because if we don't hire them, train and give back, the shortage is going to kill this industry," he warned.

The right mix

The constant challenge when mixing apprentices with seasoned technicians is to achieve the right balance, but Bison's Gough said there's no perfect ratio because when talent becomes available, you must always be



Brent Edmonson (pictured) feels service managers should be more proactive about targeting potential new recruits. This could include visiting them where they spend their recreational time, such as at the race track.

willing to recruit.

"If you see somebody that's full of talent, you can't stop recruiting," he says.

Attracting young technicians is just part of the battle. Retaining them is equally important, especially when the investment has been made in helping them become licensed and they begin receiving those phone calls with alluring promises of more money. This is where developing a positive corporate culture rich with opportunities for further learning

es. "Their voice is always heard when they see a new opportunity. We empower them to elevate our business."

Edmonson agrees such initiatives are important, as are common perks like boot and tool allowances. However, he also offers suggestions on how those could be improved. Edmonson says he has spent \$75,000 on tools since he entered the trade 15 years ago - roughly \$5,000 per year - and that investment benefits his employer as well.

"I can't stand borrowing other

"If we don't hire (apprentices), train and give back, the shortage is going to kill this industry."

Ed Roeder, Loblaw's Canada

and continuous engagement pays off, says Gough.

"It's very tough to leave family," he says. "We do a lot of things outside the box."

Bison offers flexible work shifts, has gyms available at most of its facilities, recognizes achievements through awards programs and banquets and celebrates its culture through events such as barbecues.

Gough said providing technicians with the opportunity to bring forward new ideas and suggestions is just as important, when it comes to retention.

"Treat them as an owner," he advises.

people's' tools and having more, I'm able to work quicker, easier and more efficiently," he points out. So, why don't employers do more to assist technicians with the purchase of tools, he wonders, including ensuring they actually use their tool allowances for the intended purposes?

"Some places, once a year will give you a cheque for \$1,000 and call that a tool or a boot allowance," he says. "Well, a couple hundred bucks is deducted right away for taxes. Why doesn't the owner go out to the Snap-on tool truck and give every guy a thousand bucks? And then you know it's actually going towards tools and a

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guy isn't going to buy a big screen TV to put in his man cave. You're basically reinvesting in the company because you know those tools are going to be bought and will be in the shop."

Edmonson also agrees the workplace environment is important. Technicians don't want to work in a dingy, rundown shop, he reasons. And flexible working hours are important if employers want to hang on to technicians as their lives evolve.

Edmonson says flexible working hours are one of the reasons he has remained at Transaxle despite frequent offers to go elsewhere. When he began his career he regularly put in 60-70 hours a week.

Now, with a young child at home, he has scaled back his working hours to 40 or 50 per week - straight days - so he can spend more time with his family.

He also relishes the opportunity to do side jobs, repairing trucks for friends and family, something that many employers won't tolerate.

"At dealers, you're often asked to sign a contract saying you will not work elsewhere," he says. "I won't stand for that."

Edmonson enjoys working at an independent service shop because of the regular hours, the accessibility of the owners and the ability to work outside a major city.

"Everybody calls you by your name. You put your name on the work order, not a mechanic's number that's four or five digits long," he says.

But he acknowledges training opportunities are sometimes too few when you are working for a smaller, independent organization.

"If you're not working in a dealership environment, training opportunities are few and far between," he claims. "Everybody wants to be continually trained. The technology is changing so fast now. You don't want a truck rolling in the door with something you've never seen before. It's going to be pretty intimidating, to say the least."

Failing to provide adequate ongoing training, when truck technology is evolving so rapidly, will leave technicians in the lurch and unable to effectively do their jobs, according to Loblaw's Roeder.

"If the truck can't do its work, it's no good to anybody and if we can't fix it, that's an even bigger challenge," he said. "It's no offense to the technicians - it's about training. Training, and patience on an employer's part to allow these people to get better at what they do and to understand the products that are out there."

Second career

Samantha Sharpe, a first-year diesel mechanic apprentice with Nova Truck Centres in Dartmouth, N.S., says companies looking to proactively develop new talent should seek out future technicians who are looking for a second career. And she speaks from experience.

Sharpe earned a diploma in early childhood education, a field she worked in for about six years before seeking something that would be more rewarding. She enrolled at a local college part-time and was paired with Nova Truck Centres, which hired her full-time just four shifts into her work term there.

Now, she's working towards obtaining her red seal certification, a Canada-wide program that requires 8,000 hours of work experience and four blocks of classroom instruction, each lasting six to eight weeks.

Sharpe says she joined Nova Truck Centres because it was the most visible among employers in working with local colleges.

"As far as I was concerned, Nova Truck Centres was the only truck centre that was looking (for apprentices)," she says. "If you're not already into the trucking or car industry, you have no idea these places exist."

Sharpe is now active in promoting the trade to others - male or female.

"It's an interesting job in general, not just for a female," she says. "I really don't like to be treated any differently than anybody else."

She says to attract more young people into the trade, employers need to do a better job with outreach to students and educating them about the opportunities that exist. Edmonson agrees, but adds they should take it even further and seek out potential recruits where they spend their recreational time.

"Not only should they go into high

schools to approach kids, but when trying to find truck and coach technicians, go to where you think future technicians may be," he suggests. "Go to the truck show, the local drag strip, the race track, where gearheads tend to congregate during their leisure time. Set up a booth there. Get them interested. That way it's not a blanket approach like going to a high school where only 1-2% of the kids will be interested."

And once you find these potential recruits, don't forget to mention that it's an extremely rewarding career - and the rewards come in many forms, it's not all about the money.

When asked about the most rewarding aspects of their career, young technicians turn surprisingly sentimental.

For Sharpe, it's about contributing to the success of the company she

works for and its customers. She cites "Growing clientele," as the most rewarding aspect of the job. "Helping people," she adds. "Sometimes they'll come back and they specifically ask for you to work on their truck, which is nice. Knowing that when I pass a truck on the highway, that it was one I worked on."

Edmonson agrees.

"I couldn't be happier," he says of his career choice. "I'm always learning. Everything is constantly changing and to me, it's a necessary job. Freight has to move. People have to eat. Food has to get from the farmer's field to the supermarket to your kitchen and if the truck stops, everything grinds to a halt. Watching that truck go down the road loaded after you did a ton of work on it, knowing everything is working as it should be, is one of the most satisfying things." ●

Right to Repair agreement opening access to OEM software

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

Canadian fleets and independent service centres will soon have access to the same software the OEMs and their dealers enjoy.

A Right to Repair Memorandum of Understanding has been agreed to by OEMs and the service industry, after lengthy negotiations. Heavy-Duty Aftermarket Canada was among the organizations at the table, lending support from this side of the border.

During an update at the Technology & Maintenance Council's spring meetings, Marc Karon, president of Total Truck Parts, said while the MoU is not a legally-binding agreement, it appears all OEMs will honour it by uploading their software to a Web site overseen by the National Automotive Service Task Force (NASTF) at www.nastf.org.

Vehicles of the model year 2010 and newer are covered by the MoU but some OEMs will provide software for older vehicles as well, Karon noted.

"The OEMs are going to supply everything they give to their dealers," he explained. "If the dealer gets a code, we get the code. If the dealer gets the ability to recalibrate, we get the ability to recalibrate."

Other information to be shared includes sensor locations, wiring diagrams and the ability to re-flash on-board computers. Visitors to the NASTF site will have access for a "reasonable" fee, Karon added. NASTF is a non-profit organization that will simply host the software and process questions from users. It will also try to resolve disputes between OEMs and end users.

By 2018, all OEM software will be designed to be compatible with an off-the-shelf PC, so independent service shops won't require different computers to service different makes of vehicles. Telematics is not covered under the agreement.

In addition to the heavy truck and engine manufacturers, suppliers including Bendix, Allison, Eaton and Meritor-Wabco have agreed to participate. The OEMs won't provide training on how to use the software but Commercial Vehicle Solutions Network (CVSN) is working on training modules that will be available at www.cvsn.org. ●

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NACFE report supports the adoption of trailer aero

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

A recent Confidence Report issued by the North American Council for Freight Efficiency (NACFE) concluded that trailer aerodynamic devices do work, providing fuel savings ranging from 1-10%.

The study looked at three areas of the trailer that present opportunities to reduce fuel consumption: the trailer gap; the underbody; and the rear of the trailer.

"It's not a case of whether fleets

"Every trailer will benefit from improvements in aerodynamics."

Rick Mihelic, NACFE

should be adding aerodynamic devices, it's more about when is the right time and which ones they'll add," said Mike Roeth of NACFE, during a press conference to discuss the results at the Technology & Maintenance Council's spring meetings.

He also acknowledged the value equation changes as fuel becomes less expensive. Roeth noted that in 2014, fuel represented an expense of about 58 cents a mile in the US. Then, fleets were paying about \$70,000 per year on diesel for every truck. Today, diesel represents an expense of about \$36,000 a year per truck, Roeth pointed out.

"You need to think about, when you buy equipment, what do you believe fuel prices are going to be in 2020 or 2026?" Roeth said.

In addition to improving fuel economy, NACFE's study on trailer aerodynamic devices also found these products improve stability, reduce the risk of rollovers, reduce splash and spray and even reduce driver fatigue since the truck often handles better.

NACFE also found the reliability and durability of trailer devices has improved.

Challenges related to trailer aero devices include: added weight, complicated testing requirements, variance among product performance, high trailer to tractor ratios, and questions of reliability and durability.

Roeth said trailer side skirts and trailer tails provide an effective combination.

"Almost always, the rear device incrementally adds to the fuel savings from the skirts," Roeth said.

Trailer aero devices have matured and will continue to do so, the report found. NACFE expects government regulations will scale these technologies, resulting in lower purchase prices.

"Every trailer will benefit from improvements in aerodynamics, but there are no one-size-fits-all solutions," said Rick Mihelic, program manager with NACFE. "This report reduces the confusion and explains the combinations that make sense for fleets." You can download the complete report for free at www.TruckingEfficiency.org.

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An RRSP is not a rainy day fund

The best advice you'll get about retirement savings is to make regular, automatic contributions to your RRSP.

The amount you contribute can be deducted from your earned income, and any income from investments in your RRSP will compound tax-free. By the time you retire, you'll probably be in a lower tax bracket than you are now, when you're working. Funds withdrawn at that time will be taxed at a lower rate.

Doesn't sound so hard.

Well, life is what happens to you while you're busy making other plans.

If you have debt or other bills, an RRSP looks like a ready pool of cash. Should you withdraw funds to pay off debt or a major expense?

Early withdrawals

When you pull funds from an RRSP, your financial institution withholds the tax immediately. The tax rate depends on where you live and the amount you withdraw.

If you're a Canadian resident, you'll pay a withholding tax of 10% (5% in Quebec) on withdrawals up to \$5,000; 20% (10% in Quebec) on withdrawals of \$5,001 to \$15,000; and 30% (15% in Quebec) when the amount exceeds \$15,000.

So let's say you want to take \$20,000 out of your RRSP early. The withholding tax applied would be \$6,000 (30%). That leaves \$14,000.

Additionally, an early withdrawal means you lose the contribution room of those funds permanently. Also, the amount you take out will be added to your taxable income. It could bump you to a higher income tax bracket. The consequences of an early withdrawal are steep. There are a couple of special situations where the RRSP withdrawal rules differ: the Home Buyers' Plan (HBP) and Lifelong Learning Plan (LLP).

Under the HBP, you can borrow up to \$25,000 from your RRSP to buy or build a home. You have to be a first-time home buyer or not have owned a home in the last five years, and you must agree to repay the funds into your RRSP within 15 years.

The LLP allows you to borrow up to \$10,000 a year to a total of \$20,000 when you or your spouse are enrolled full-time in a qualified program. You cannot use an LLP to finance your child's education.

Another option

An RRSP is a long-term savings plan, not a rainy day fund. For most working Canadians, it's probably the best way to

Continued on page 43

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Resist the urge to dip into your RRSP

Continued from page 41

reduce their tax obligation and maximize their savings over many years.

If you need more flexibility and less restriction, a tax-free savings account (TFSA) is a better option.

A TFSA is a way for adults to set money aside tax-free throughout their lifetime. Any amount you put into a TFSA as well as any income earned in the account (for example, investment income and capital gains) is generally tax-free, even when it's withdrawn.

There's a limit to how much you can contribute (the annual TFSA dollar limit for 2015 was \$10,000), but you can see how much room you have by using My Account at www.cra.gc.ca/myaccount or by phoning 800-267-6999.

Since you can generally withdraw any amount from the TFSA at any time without penalties, it's a useful financial tool. Why not establish a TFSA at your bank and deposit your GST/HST refunds there? Your money can grow tax-free until you send your payment to CRA.

A TFSA can be your rainy day fund, an account for emergencies like a major repair that you'd otherwise put on a credit card. You don't want to be paying for that engine rebuild for the next 10 years.

Talk to your accountant about how to maximize the use of both programs. Better yet, your advisor can help you plan for times when cash is tight without having to deal with the consequences of tapping into your RRSP. •

Scott Taylor is vice-president of TFS Group, a Waterloo, Ont., company that provides accounting, fuel tax reporting, and other business services for truck fleets and owner/operators. For more information, visit www.tfsgroup.com or call 800-461-5970.

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The customer isn't always right

The customer isn't always right. That advice was passed on to me in 1984 by my employer, the owner of an automobile dealership.

At the ripe old age of 19, I thought he was crazy. But the longer I'm self-employed, the more this makes sense.

While most customers consistently deserve respect, eventually many of them need to be politely shown that they're wrong.

If the situation is serious, sometimes 'polite' needs to go out the window and you need to fire both barrels at once. Subtlety won't cut it. Occasionally, it will cost you a customer, but often, it's no loss.

A common problem in our industry is a shipper/receiver that considers themselves an expert in our profession, which they clearly aren't.

If you just nod your head and smile, the situation will escalate to the point where the working relationship becomes a disaster.

I have a few examples of how I've handled these situations in the past. In hindsight, some could have been handled better, but at the time, it worked.

Disagree at your leisure.

A shipper needed a load picked up in Hagerstown Md., and decided that since our truck delivering for it in Paramus N.J. was "the closest," that truck could be dispatched. She was shocked when I politely but firmly assured her we'd get her load picked up, but not by sending a truck 350 miles empty.

We had other trucks that were closer. She foolishly believed that she was our only customer, therefore our exclusive reason for existence.

The same company had a salesman covering construction sites in the Greater Toronto Area. I would regularly call him when a new job started, just to get the lay of the land.

Calls were never returned. One

day, a major mix-up occurred due to his incompetence, a situation that he attempted to dump on me. I easily caught him in his blatant lie, thanks to pictures he'd e-mailed that actually verified my argument.

I reported the entire situation to the general manager, including details about the unreturned calls.

Next came a call from the salesman, with his freshly reamed back-side, asking if maybe we had a "misunderstanding?"

Time to fire both barrels.

I told him there was no misunderstanding; I understood him perfectly, and knew now exactly how to deal with him.

I reminded him of the lies he'd been caught in, and informed him that his non-communication hurt his customers – and no one else.

I also reminded him that he was doing a stellar job of getting on the wrong side of the company's contracted dedicated carrier, who his future success obviously relied heavily upon.

My next call was to the manager, to report this conversation as well, before it could be embellished. End of problem.

One company's Quebec customers hired their own trucks, and paid by volume. I saw loading slips for 94,000 lbs for four-axle trailers, and 97,000 lbs for B-trains.

I told the manager this was not usually legal, to which he haughtily answered, "not my trucks, not my problem."

I enlightened him that a serious crash would quickly make this his problem and the overloads stopped.

Another customer had a truck hired with a multi-axle trailer and a piggy-back-type forklift.

They asked if we'd supply a 53-foot trailer, now that they were legal, since their current 'milk run' carrier wouldn't.

I told them the 53-foot would result

in less usable deck, not more, because the 8-ft. wide piggyback would need to go up on the deck, not ride behind like it did on the 48-ft. trailer. The longer trailer would result in three feet less of usable deck space, a fact their current carrier, for some reason, had never explained.

Another customer was shipping lumber to locations 700-800 miles away. After the initial stocking order, our trucks weren't used, apparently because our rate was too high.

I drove past one day as one of these loads was being loaded, and phoned the customer to inquire how much difference there was between the two freight rates.

Even though it was several hundred dollars, the customer was, at first, dumbfounded when I told him that fundamentally, our rates were identical.

I had seen the equipment the loads were being taken on: all steel 53-foot step decks.

I explained to him that with the additional weight we could carry on our

48-foot aluminum trailers, his cost per foot of lumber would be almost the same.

Not knowing a headache rack from a moose bumper, he hadn't even considered it; he was acting solely on price per load. Another customer did the same thing, sadly more than once. (Slow learners, some folks).

They requested quotes for multiple loads to a job 1,000 miles away, which could move on any type of trailer.

We were never asked for a maximum payload; it was being awarded entirely on a 'per load' basis. Our price, based on 47,500-lb loads, was too high, and the job was given to another carrier.

When their trucks arrived, loads were cut back by over 10%, because this carrier was using reefers.

This occasion, followed by several suggestions by me that their proposals include payload, oddly, still hasn't produced any changes.

So as you can see, there are ways to educate your customers to save your self future problems.

Or maybe I'm just a wise-ass with no patience for foolishness. ☺

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

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Avoiding a pain in the neck

As a driver, good neck mobility could help avoid accidents. Freely moving your head optimizes your mirror usage and minimizes blind spots. But, if you are like more than two-thirds of North Americans, you occasionally have neck pain that is severe enough to interfere with your head movement and your safety.

Your head rests on a flexible, supportive structure formed by the joints in your upper back and the lower joints in your neck.

Its flexibility to allow a broad range of head movement also makes your neck vulnerable to pain and injury in several ways.

Overuse can trigger neck muscle strain: while sitting stationary driving your rig or working on your computer for long periods of time; while cradling your phone between your shoulder and ear; while reading in bed with little head support; while grinding your teeth;

No matter how painful, neck pain is rarely a symptom of something serious.

while carrying a heavy pack using one shoulder strap; while sleeping on your stomach with improper support; and/or while maintaining poor posture.

Injury can also cause neck pain. Whiplash, accidents, falls and any other activity that forces your head to move quickly in one direction and then back again can damage the soft tissue in your neck.

Bone conditions also lead to neck pain, including: osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis, where the cartilage between the joints breaks down, allowing the unprotected bone edges to painfully rub together; herniated discs, where the discs between the vertebrae move out of position, putting pressure on the spinal nerves; bone spurs, where bony projections form along the edges of vertebrae, interfering with the joint's range of motion and irritating nerves; spinal stenosis, where the open spaces in the spine become narrowed, putting pressure on the spinal cord and the nerves travelling through your spine to your arms and legs; and/or cervical spondylosis, age-related deterioration of the spinal discs

in your neck.

Other medical conditions can also be responsible, like: ankylosing spondylitis, an inflammatory disease that can cause some vertebrae to fuse together, leading to a permanent, hunched-forward posture; meningitis, a serious inflammation of the membranes (meninges) surrounding your brain and spinal cord, causing a stiff neck, along with headache and fever; tension headache, leading to tense neck muscles and stiffness; and/or TMJ (temporomandibular joint) disorder, where the joint connecting the jaw to the skull becomes displaced.

Usually, neck pain caused by muscle tension or strain doesn't require much treatment and will resolve itself within a few days. However, when the pain lasts longer than a few weeks, try some self-care activities like applying cold/heat, stretching, massage, and/or exercising for relief.

To use cold or heat, apply an ice pack (or bag of frozen vegetables) to your neck for 15 minutes, three or more times a day to reduce the blood flow and swelling. Alternatively, take a daily hot shower or bath to relax the muscles.

For stretching, gently stretch your neck muscles by nodding your head up and down and turning your head from side to side.

When massaging, lightly knead the tender neck areas to help reduce muscle spasm. Take every opportunity to be active and exercise, by shifting positions, getting out of your rig, stretching and walking. As well, maintain a proper sitting posture by adjusting your seat position and using an appropriate back support. No matter how painful, neck pain is very rarely a symptom of something serious.

However, seek medical care if your pain gets worse in spite of your self-care or persists after several weeks of self-care; if your neck pain corresponds with numbness or weakness in your arms or hands; if you also have pain shooting into your shoulder and down your arm; if you have weakness in your legs and have trouble walking; if you also have a headache, high fever and numbness or tingling in your hands or feet; and/or if your pain was caused by a fall, an accident, or a heavy object landing on your head.

When a doctor's care is required, your treatment plan may include a prescribed pain medicine and/or muscle relaxants; physical therapy to reinforce correct posture and alignment, neck strengthening exercises to avoid further injury; TENS (transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation) to deliver tiny electrical impulses through the skin that relieve pain; traction to gently stretch your neck with weights, pulleys and/or an air bladder and relieve pain; and/or limited immobilization with a soft neck-collar brace to support the neck and reduce the pressure on your neck's internal structures.

Your doctor may also recommend corticosteroid or lidocaine injections to reduce pain; surgery to relieve spinal cord or nerve root compression; OTC (over-the-counter) pain relief like naproxen sodium (Aleve), ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin IB, etc.), and acetaminophen (Tylenol, etc.); acupuncture; massage therapy; and/or, chiropractic care.

Be sure to remain healthy. Avoid injuries, stay active, maintain proper posture, and follow a healthy diet. Why risk your neck? ☀

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





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48 INSIGHTS



Over the Road

AL GOODHALL

driver training that currently exists across the trucking industry. It is not. It is merely the first step down the road. Why is that so?

Because the proposal closes with the following statement: "This proposal is not designed to impose new training obligations on existing Class A driver's licence holders."

Now I'm not saying that MELT is not needed. It definitely is. But existing licence-holders don't receive any training as a result of this proposal and new drivers will face an expectation from employers and the travelling public that they are far more competent than their predecessors.

As professional drivers, we should not allow the public, or our carriers, to perceive that MELT is the solution to fix everything that is wrong with driver training and truck safety.

I spent three years as a mentor to graduates of a few different truck driving academies.

Those new drivers received excellent entry-level training. But what really mattered to those drivers was to be hired by a reputable employer and to put their newfound skills into practice under the tutelage of an experienced driver in real-world situations.

To these drivers, entry-level training is just that, a foot in the door to a new and exciting chapter in their lives. Why doesn't the industry exploit this incredible learning opportunity?

Probably because it is so labour-intensive and difficult to envision beyond the expense line on a company's operating statement.

The program I was able to put together with the help of my employ-

er was based on the knowledge I had garnered through numerous training courses and experience as a manager and business owner prior to my rebirth as a trucker.

I spent a minimum of three months with each new driver. The first month was demonstrate and repeat, repeat, repeat, increasing the challenges in the training process day-by-day and discussing skills in detail.

It was a period to develop trust and comfort in the cab. The second month saw drivers taking full responsibility under my supervision, asking for support as they needed it.

The third month saw the addition of some extreme driving conditions in which we reverted to the demonstrate and repeat, repeat, repeat model of the first month, but now the new driver was instilled with a level of confidence and a stronger skill set to cope with the challenges.

It was a program that was very well received by the new recruits and my employer.

But at the end of three years, I was of the mind that no single individual or single carrier can carry on this intense level of training in perpetuity without broad support from across the industry.

Ironically this is how the MELT program has been developed.

To act as a mentor is to serve as a trusted counselor or teacher, especially in occupational settings.

Safety is embodied by an intense period of mentoring provided by professional driver-trainers that make permanent the skills drivers have learned through introductory training. Practice only makes perfect if a learned skill is repeated under the supervision of a qualified coach and mentor.

That process needs to be institutionalized across the trucking industry. Now is the time for professional drivers to step up and take possession of this critical file.

Road safety is a driver issue; drivers own it. Drivers should be involved heavily in every step of the training process and its development.

The answer as to how drivers will accomplish this is straightforward. Get involved. But we can't do it as individuals, we have to take on this challenge as a group. Therein lies the hurdle drivers have been unable to overcome, because we not only have to bring our skills together as a group but we then have to interact with carriers, enforcement, training institutions and legislative bodies.

That's a huge task and is usually met with people throwing up their arms and saying it can't be done.

But it can be done in four distinct stages: 1) MELT; 2) mentoring for three to six months; 3) team driving for a period of one year; 4) remedial/ongoing training developed by all partners and made available universally across the industry.

This is the path to recognizing our profession for what it is, a skilled trade, and it will only come to fruition if professional drivers take an active role in its development.

At the moment there are too few experienced drivers engaged in the training process.

We can change that. 

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



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I say tomahto

MARK LEE



Pining for the simpler truck

I was having a conversation with a friend recently about spec'ing the perfect truck. We both bought our trucks from stock, so our involvement was nothing more than picking the best of the bunch. But next time around, if we had a clean sheet, what would we choose? Our ideas turned out to be very different.

We would both stick with the marquee we run now and we would both have disc brakes, but that is about all we agreed on. My friend said he would go for the big condo cab, whereas I would prefer the mid-roof as I like the versatility it gives. Since I'm very happy with my current carrier, it may be the next owner of the truck that benefits from the added versatility.

I also like the slightly smaller cab as it's less space to heat and cool in APU-free zones.

My friend would go with an automated manual transmission. I want a 13-speed manual. Even though I miss the AMT in my other truck, I like the lack of complexity in the old-fashioned way of doing it.

I want a double overdrive, but my friend would go with a direct top set-up. I want a 6x4 with full lockers, my friend would go 6x2. A lot of this is a result of the different work we do. If I was doing his job, I would tick the same

boxes as he would (with the exception of the AMT, I would still take the 13-speed).

As I said, I miss the manual in my other truck. I'm no luddite, I just happen to think that there's a whole lot of sensors and electronic magic involved in replacing my left leg, right arm and my eyes and ears.

It was at this point in the discussion that I really started to think about things a little deeper.

I've been driving trucks since 1986. When I first started out, I had trucks from the '70s. There have been constant developments in trucks since then and comparing a '70s truck to a 2016 truck is like comparing a single engine bi-plane to the space shuttle in terms of complexity. But maybe not when it comes to productivity.

Fuel economy has got better, no doubt about that, but not by much. You don't have to try so hard to get good mpg in a new truck, but that's relative anyway, because not many people tried to get good mpg in the '70s through the '90s. Better manufacturing methods and better materials have made engines last longer before they need major work, but there are far more things to go wrong on a new truck and newer trucks see the inside of a workshop far more often than older trucks did. And I'm not just talking about problems

with the emissions control systems - that's a whole other story.

I'm talking about completely unnecessary things like electrically adjustable mirrors, climate control systems, electric windows and those types of things. Sure, they're nice to have - they're luxury items and we all like to be spoiled - but do they have a place in a truck? I don't think so. There is more

I'm only going to Alberta and back each week, not orbiting the moon, so I need a simple work horse, not a space shuttle.

wiring in the door of a 2016 truck than there was on an entire truck from the '70s, with the exception of the wiring to the dash gauges.

My trucks even have an electronic control module for the windows and mirrors! That is far too much complexity to replace a window winder and how often do I adjust my mirrors? Every

time I clean them, but that's only because they're electronically adjustable and the slightest touch moves them. They also shake more than a non-adjustable mirror fixed solidly to the mirror arms.

Climate control systems have a bunch of sensors and control modules. One minute they're blowing hot air, the next cold as they try to maintain a constant in-cab temperature. I don't know about you, but I managed just fine with a simple hot/cold lever. If I was hot, I slid it towards the blue end, if I was cold, I slid it towards the red end. It was a really simple process that didn't require much thought or energy, yet now I have sensors, modules and half a mile of wiring doing that for me.

Electric windows are the same: modules, sensors, motors and wiring, all replacing the simple act of cranking a window winder. Then there are far more complicated things like traction control systems. Really? Are our driving skills that bad that we can't feel a wheel start to spin and back off the throttle a little bit?

So my ideal new truck will be very different than the stuff on the lot. If a process can be achieved with a lever instead of modules, motors and wiring, then it will be. I'm only going to Alberta and back each week, not orbiting the moon, so I need a simple work horse, not a space shuttle. ☀

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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A Canadian O/O wins top TCA award; Trailer Wizards names Ontario v.p.; and Canada gets a rep on Kenworth's Dealer Council

The Truckload Carriers Association's Owner/Operator of the Year Award has been presented to **Mark Tricco** of Bison Transport. Tricco has driven for more than 35 years and has accumulated more than 4.4 million accident-free miles. He was honoured at the TCA's Annual Awards Banquet in Las Vegas, Nev.

"I'm very humbled to be receiving this award," said Tricco. "There are so many great professional drivers in our industry, so to be recognized as one of the very best is special."

The Company Driver of the Year Award went to **Danny Smith** of Big G Express, which is based out of Shelbyville, Tenn.

Guy Broderick of APPS Transport Group based out of Brampton, Ont. was a runner-up in the company driver category. Grand prize winners took home a cheque for \$25,000 while runners up received a cheque for \$2,500.

Trailer Wizards announced recently that **Sherry Mossman** will be its new vice-president, Ontario region.

Mossman will lead the Ontario management team and be responsible for a fleet of approximately 8,000 trailers, along with operations, service, parts, and sales for Trailer Wizards' Ontario locations. She joined Trailer Wizards in 2012 and most recently, she was the branch manager for the Edmonton, Alta. customer care centre.

"Sherry's experience and dedication to Trailer Wizards' customers makes her ideal for this role," said Anne McKee, Trailer Wizards' chief operating officer. "Her strong record of accomplishment, solid operational experience, team building, and leadership expertise will be an asset to our Ontario team and customers."

Kenworth has named its 2016 Dealer Council and it will have Canadian representation in the form of **Mike Nagle** of Bayview Kenworth in St. John, N.B. The council works with Kenworth to improve customer support through its dealer network.

It will also promote Kenworth PremierCare and the new PremierCare Gold Certified program. The council will be chaired by **Carl Herzog** of Central Illinois Trucks.

Trans Plus Systems has named **Chris Manhire** its new general manager.

The position was newly created for the trucking software company and Manhire was appointed to implement a strategic growth plan for the company. In his new position, Manhire will oversee all departments of the organization to drive maximum performance, innovation and quality.

"Chris has many years of experience in working with companies just like Trans Plus and we are very excited to have him join our executive team," said president Dave Wright. "Chris will play a pivotal role in executing our vision for the company while upholding our steadfast commitment to providing high quality solutions to our customers as we grow."



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52 INSIGHTS

Industry Issues

DAVID BRADLEY



The Trudeau playbook

The federal Liberal election platform, *A New Plan for a Strong Middle Class*, sets out where the Trudeau government wants to go over the next four years.

Like any successful lobby group, CTA will try – to the extent possible and where it makes sense to do so – to frame its “asks” within the context of a government’s agenda. Here are some thoughts on what I mean.

Youth job creation is a key plank in the Trudeau government’s platform including a commitment of up to \$10 million per year to help young Canadians gain the skills they need to enter high-demand trades. Unfortunately, under the National Occupational Classification, the truck driving occupation is deemed to be “unskilled,” which raises doubts that student truck drivers would qualify for such support. Currently, there is little to help young, underemployed Canadians and

others seeking a career change to defray the costs of training to become a truck driver. The next opportunity to change the NOC does not occur until 2020. This situation needs to be addressed.

The government will run deficits (how large and for how long is becoming less clear than the plan proposed) to fund a major infrastructure investment program. The aim is to stimulate economic growth. Much of the focus is on cities, where congestion is a serious problem, and getting people out of their cars and onto transit. But the problem is more complex than that. Just because they build it doesn’t mean people will come. And, what about urban goods movement? It essentially occurs on roads, which continue to be short-changed. Our cities have been designed, developed and grown – their buildings constructed – with nary a thought to how trucks are supposed to make their pick-ups and deliveries. That needs to change.

Most economists agree the proposed infrastructure program could provide a much-needed economic injection, which could also have some long-term benefits. However, it does not replace the need for a long-term, sustainable program of strategic infrastructure spending, particularly as it pertains to highways and bridges. The recent problems at the Nipigon River Bridge in Ontario underscore the need for continued support for roads and bridges and for a greater federal role with regards to the Trans-Canada Highway, particularly in remote regions.

Over the years, many groups, including CTA, have identified revenues from federal fuel taxes as the appropriate funding source for a permanent transportation investment program. The federal excise tax on diesel fuel currently

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serves no policy purpose; the revenues simply flow into general revenue.

It is clear the Trudeau government will take a much more proactive, aggressive and Pan-Canadian approach to climate change. It has already commenced discussions with the provinces to work together towards national GHG reduction targets and carbon pricing systems.

The Trudeau plan earmarks \$2 billion for a new Low Carbon Economy Trust to fund projects that materially reduce carbon emissions. Transportation is identified as a significant contributor to Canada's carbon output. Regardless of the carbon pricing mechanisms employed, the trucking industry will – directly (carbon tax) or indirectly (cap-and-trade) – pay more for fuel. This will create revenue for governments, which if they are serious about carbon reduction as opposed to using the money to clean up their own fiscal imbalances, must be reinvested in our sector to accelerate the penetration of currently available, reliable and proven GHG-reducing technologies/devices and alternative fuels into the marketplace. The New Plan calls for \$200 million more per year to support innovation and the use of clean technologies in the natural resource sectors. Why not trucking?

The government's plan includes a commitment to make Canada the world's most competitive tax jurisdiction for investments in the research, development and manufacturing of clean technology. That's a good thing. But as above, why not use the tax system – ie., accelerated CCA rates for carbon-reducing heavy truck technology – to get more people deploying what is already available?

The New Plan states that Canada's economic success relies on strong trade relationships with our closest neighbours – particularly the US. A cabinet committee is being created to oversee this. We would also suggest the special group within the Privy Council Office that has worked towards more efficient borders and regulatory cooperation and coordinated the efforts of the line departments and agencies in recent years be maintained. The Beyond the Border (BTB) Agreement did not achieve all of its objectives. But some sort of formal bilateral process is still needed.

The government's plan identifies the need to promote a steadier flow of goods and business travellers by modernizing border infrastructure and streamlining cargo inspections. That's important. There is still a lot to be done to automate the border. Construction on the Gordie Howe Bridge needs to start. Truckers make up a huge cohort of business travellers. Yet the rules governing driver movement – take the repositioning of foreign empty trailers – are out of date with modern logistics practices.

The New Plan calls for properly negotiated and implemented free trade agreements. Who doesn't want that? But, why not also take a look at some of the existing agreements and protocols? Take the US APHIS fees. They are clearly inconsistent with the US's obligations under GATT and NAFTA. What are we doing about that? The issue grabbing a lot of headlines – legalizing marijuana consumption and incidental possession – could also have implications for Canada-US trade that need to be accounted for. Not to mention the need for clarity on the obligations and rights of employees in safety-sensitive positions and their employers, on-road enforcement protocols, etc. It's going to be a busy four years. ☺

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54 INSIGHTS

**Private
Matters**

MIKE MILLIAN



ELD and ESC laws are good news

Transport Canada recently made two long-awaited announcements. On Feb. 15, it revealed to *The Canadian Press* that electronic logging devices (ELDs) and electronic stability control systems (ESCs) would become mandatory on heavy-duty vehicles in Canada. The PMTC has long been in favour of both of these mandates and we welcome this news from Transport Canada.

While no timeline was announced for ESC, Transport Canada did announce that a new manufacturing standard will be put in place that requires these systems to be installed on all new heavy-duty vehicles manufactured for the Canadian marketplace. In my view, the sooner the better for this standard.

These systems mitigate the chances of a rollover or collision, and while they are not foolproof and cannot compensate for all errors in judgement, they have been proven to greatly reduce the risk of incidents. And in cases where they may not prevent crashes, they still can reduce the impact.

Nothing new is required from manufacturers to meet this standard, as many truck purchasers have been ordering trucks with ESC for some time now. The benefits from these systems have been proven over time to far outweigh the cost of implementation. Let's hope this standard is introduced as early as 2017.

ELDs have garnered a lot of attention over the years, and it has been a much more controversial topic than ESC. To me, this mandate is also a no-brainer. The paper logging system is outdated and antiquated in the 21st century.

Everything in our lives – both professional and personal – has been inundated with technological advances over the years, which have increased productivity and oversight. While you can argue that not all advances are for the better, there is no valid argument against this one.

Pulling out a paper and pen to complete a legal log of your hours is just plain ludicrous in today's environment. Can you imagine going to the office and arguing with your employer that computers should be removed from the offices and that everyone should go back to simply communicating with pen, paper and phones?

You would be laughed out of the office, so why has this been accepted for so many years in the trucking industry? The fact that log books are referred to as comic books by drivers tells you all you need to know.

Will electronic logs eliminate all manners and forms of "bending" the

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rules? Of course not. No matter what regulations are put in place, someone will always try to circumvent the rules and find some sort of perceived advantage. But no one can argue that it will greatly reduce the amount of rule-bending that takes place and will make it much more difficult to get away with. While I fully believe the vast majority of companies and operators in our industry are following the rules – even in today's paper environment – the introduction of ELDs will increase oversight and encourage even greater compliance.

We all know that rules and regulations are made for the few that do not follow them, not the majority that do. The increased oversight will help to level the playing field and will help to remove unscrupulous operators from our industry, those whose business plans include "fracturing" the laws.

These types of operators contribute to keeping rates low on the backs of their employees to the detriment of the industry by undercutting rates. Companies who operate legally are put at a disadvantage in these cases and that is something that we as an industry must do everything we can to combat.

The benefits of these devices have been proven over time to fleet operators and drivers who have instituted these on their own. In my previous job, I introduced and rolled out electronic logs for the fleet I managed. At the beginning of the process, our drivers were equally split on their preference towards e-logs versus paper, but within six months of introduction, this was easily converted to a 90/10 split in favour of electronic logs.

It even got to the point where if a unit went down in a driver's truck, I had

him or her in my office asking when the system was going to get repaired, as they were tired of returning to paper logs after only a day or two.

The majority of drivers soon get used to the systems and embrace e-logs. From a management standpoint, the amount of time that was saved in verifying and checking log compliance was reduced by more than 50% and a lot of verification that was not being done prior, was now being done.

Verification can be done in real-time and trip planning for fleet managers and drivers becomes much easier and more transparent.

There is simply no good argument against the introduction of these systems. With the US announcing its mandate, which is to come into force in late 2017, it made sense that Canada should follow suit. Transport Canada has yet to announce an implementation date for this mandate, but has indicated it is likely to closely follow the timelines in the US. While we view this announcement as a positive step, much work is yet to be done.

In order for the standard to have any teeth, Transport Canada must work with the provinces towards provincial and territorial mandates as well, as Transport Canada has jurisdiction over fleets that cross provincial and territorial boundaries only. Transport Canada also has to rely on the provinces to enforce federal rules at roadside. ●

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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Driving down idle time

There are several options to choose from when it comes to picking an anti-idle system. But which one is right for you and your fleet?

Fleets and owner/operators looking to reduce idling to save money while maintaining comfort in the cab have multiple options to consider.

However, because of all the options out there, choosing the right anti-idle system for your operation can be tricky.

We asked several idle reduction system experts which of the three most popular idling alternatives – bunk heaters, gen-sets and battery-based systems – they think is best, what potential purchasers should be aware of when looking at their options, and which systems are really worth the dough.

APUs

Out of all the anti-idle options, the diesel powered APU is the most popular application right now, said Cettina Sciberras, sales operations manager at Reefer Sales. And it's because the APU offers one whole complete package for driver comfort – it heats, it cools, and it provides power.

"It has five main features that we promote," explained Sciberras. "It heats your bunk. It cools your bunk. It heats your engine so you don't have a cold start in the winter. It charges the truck batteries so you don't have any no-starts. And it also offers an electric port so you can run things like your microwave or TV or laptop."

But with the easy convenience of the APU comes a loaded price tag, which is only increasing with the disparity between the Canadian and US dollars – a major con for those considering their anti-idle options.

This up-front price, however, is worth it according to Mike Forbes, technical specialist at Reefer Sales.

"The beautiful part of (an APU) is that it will save you money," he said. "First and foremost because you do not have to waste fuel to run a huge diesel engine and secondly, it saves on the wear and tear on the engine because you're not idling as much."

Because APUs are such a pricey purchase, Sciberras and Forbes stressed that maintenance of the system is very important.

"From a warranty standpoint, there is an initial 50-hour service that needs to be done (on APUs)," said Forbes. "That 50-hour service is probably the most critical service if you want your warranty to continue and it's the most overlooked ser-

vice because it's done at 50 hours. We have seen warranty claims rejected because customers didn't do the 50-hour service and then at 2,000 hours, they have a problem."

"Once you first do the install, and the truck goes running down the road with the vibrations and such and the change in temperature...we just want to make sure everything is still tight and nothing's loosened so you don't get any leaks and such. And that's what the 50-hour service checks," Sciberras added.

After the 50-hour service, APUs should go in for full-service maintenance every 1,000 hours, said Forbes.

Diesel-powered heaters

For those whose primary concern is keeping the bunk warm, the diesel-fired bunk heater is an attractive option because of its simplicity and lower price point. It can be coupled with an inverter to provide power, if necessary.

Bunk heaters weigh just six pounds



Don't forget the maintenance. When weighing your options, maintenance expenses play an important role in overall cost.

has shown a bunk heater costs about \$1.60 to run for eight hours (with diesel priced at \$3.50/gallon) compared to \$8.01 for an APU.

However, Forbes said that maintenance and regular use of bunk heaters is crucial.

"Diesel heaters are very susceptible to outside dirt, debris, and salt," he explained. "So they need to be inspected at the very least once a year. And usually we say to do this in September and October before temperatures start to drop. A lot of people forget to run them in the off-months. So when diesel heaters sit for long periods of time without being used, the diesel fuel will sit inside the heater and the fuel will gum up and when they go to use it in November, it'll cause issues."

To prevent this from happening, Forbes says to take advantage of the

"The beautiful part of (an APU) is that it will save you money. First and foremost, because you do not have to waste fuel to run a huge diesel engine and secondly, it saves on the wear and tear on the engine."

Mike Forbes, Reefer Sales

compared to an APU, which weighs in at up to 400 lbs, and because of their compact design they can be installed in the tool compartment underneath the bunk rather than eating up valuable frame rail space. They're also quieter than an APU.

"Drivers love them because they're easy to operate," said John Dennehy, vice-president, marketing and communications with Eberspaecher Climate Control Systems North America. "They act much like a home furnace; set the temperature, push a button and that's it."

Compared to battery-based systems, bunk heaters draw about one amp per hour rather than 30-60 amps. And there's no bank of batteries to replace. Dennehy said testing

system's timer feature and schedule it to run each week for 15-30 minutes early Saturday or Sunday morning so you don't need to think about it.

Battery-based systems

Brian Lawrence, a Canadian agent for Autoclima said he believes that battery-based systems are the future for anti-idling solutions.

"Are battery-based systems the future? Absolutely," he said. "What's holding battery solutions back is batteries. If we get better battery solutions, then we could be in a position where we could get more run time per stopover. It's the recharge time for the battery pack in between stopovers that is preventing the real growth of battery solutions in the marketplace."

Lawrence believes that battery systems are superior to APUs because they don't use fuel, need less maintenance and cost less.

"In the case of a battery solution...the yearly maintenance that should be required is just 10 hours of in-shop time to clean batteries up, check the batteries, check the condenser core for dust and that," he said. "So it's really 10 hours a year in the shop. The real cost of ownership for a battery solution is, you might require a second set of batteries within a five-year window. And that cost is around \$1,000."

"But even if you need new batteries, overall a battery solution is a much cheaper option for fleets."

Lawrence said this small price to pay for maintenance on a battery-powered system is dramatically different from the price you'd pay for maintenance on an APU even if it'll save you money in the long run.

"We use an expression here that if you buy an APU... you'll almost pay that price again in five years, because of the cost of fuel, because of the oil changes, etc. The costs really do add up," he said.

One plus for the battery-based systems that Forbes added he sometimes hears from customers is that battery-systems are a lot less noisy than some diesel-powered APUs.

"With any diesel-powered APUs, you will have the engine running outside and that can get a little noisy," he said.

Sciberras added that of her customers who choose to go the battery route, most know the climate they are going to be staying in.

"Most of our customers who choose batteries aren't going long distance and they know the climate they're going to stay in," she said. "So the battery option works for them because they don't need all the other benefits of the APU."

Despite his loyalty to battery-based systems, Lawrence believes that APUs aren't going away anytime soon.

"An APU will always get the job done," he said. "I think they'll always be in the market because they're trusted and they really do their job well."

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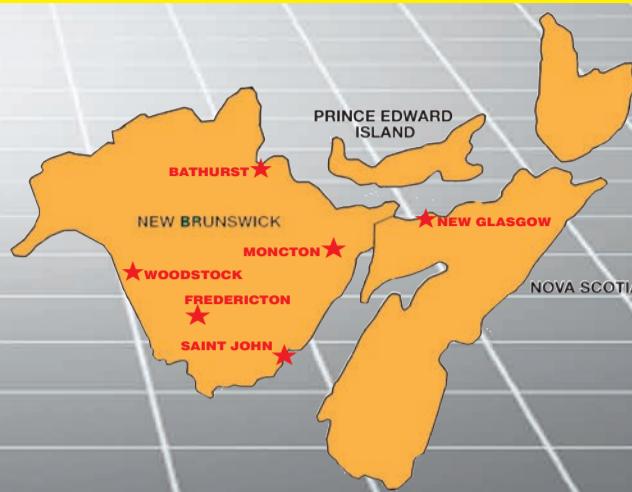
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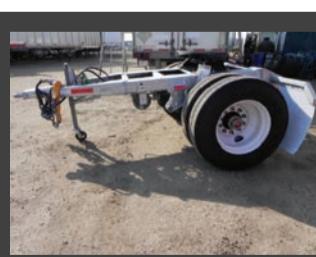
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Hamilton, Ontario based Drive Star International Inc. continues to expand its reach and range of services by opening new locations in both Canada and the USA while diversifying and entering the asset based transportation market.

Drive Star Shuttle Systems Ltd., a wholly owned subsidiary of Drive Star International Inc. provides transportation and logistics services in the drive-a-way and tow-a-way markets as well as rail and "Ro" / "Ro" ocean service coordination for clients around the globe.

Drive Star Shuttle Systems Ltd. is opening its newest location in April 2016 on Britannia Road in Mississauga, ON. "This new location is in the heart of the industrial and trucking sector of the GTA and will allow us to better service those customers requiring local and regional deliveries" explains Drive Star Group President, Andrew G. Priest.

From this location Drive Star will also be extending its reach and expansion into the asset based transportation market through its purchase of company owned tractors which will be used for the relocation of trailers for a wide variety clients including rental and leasing companies, fleets, manufacturers, dealers and repair facilities.

Drive Star Shuttle Systems Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of Drive Star Transportation Group Corp. which operates in the USA has also ex-



panded its US presence by purchasing 20 acres of land with offices and two shops in Niagara Falls, NY. This facility has 24 hour manned security, is fully fenced and lighted. "We take cross border trade very seriously here at Drive Star" says Priest, the company's founder. "As Canada's only 'PIP' and 'C-TPAT' drive-a-way / tow-a-way company, we set the standard when it comes to truck, trailer and light duty vehicle deliveries internationally."

In 1993, Drive Star was founded for the purpose of providing "drive-a-way" services to the class 6, 7, and 8 truck markets, in both Canada and the United States. Today, more than twenty years after they began, they

continue to provide premiere drive-a-way and tow-a-way services continent wide.

"Drive Star differs from the competition in so many ways," proudly states Priest. "Our company was built on the foundation of compliance and sound governance with the intent on placing the protection of our customers' assets ahead of anything else. Drive Star is committed to ensuring NO customer will ever be placed in harm's way while using our services."

As Canada's largest drive-a-way company, Drive Star is now targeting the US market for future growth. "We have been very fortunate over the last twenty plus

years here at home," says Priest, "and we look forward to continuing to expand and diversify here in Canada but, as we all know, the biggest market is just south of the border."

Drive Star has also consciously broadened its range of services here in Canada during the past few years by expanding into the Trade Show and Event Management Business. "Historically we would simply pick up and deliver trucks, trailers and equipment to various trade shows and marketing events around the country and leave, however, has that ever changed" comments Priest.

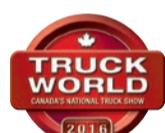
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Since its creation, Show Star has seen tremendous growth in this market and now services truck and trailer OEM's, engine manufacturers and dealers.

"Drive Star is very proud of where we've been and excited about where we're going" says Priest, adding "We will continue expanding our great customer relationships and building on the promise that 'We will not ask for your business unless we can help improve it.' For more information on the company please visit www.drive-star.com or simply call 866-DRV-STAR.



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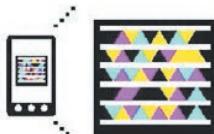
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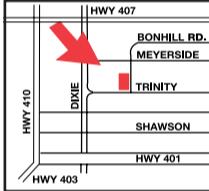
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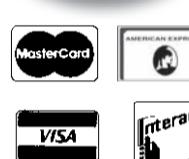
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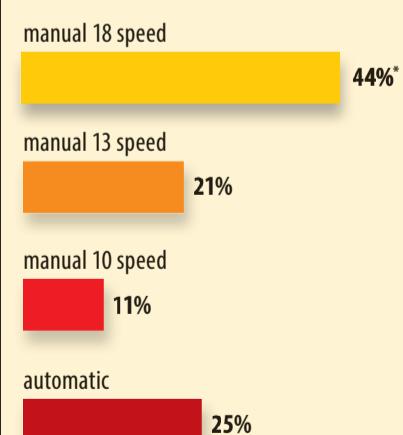
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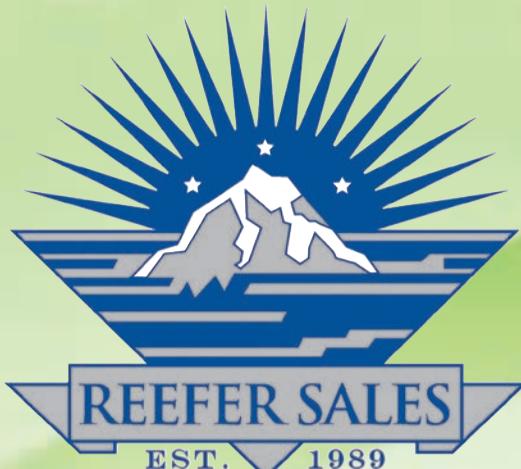
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Equipment Buying Trends Survey 2015, Newcom Trucking Group



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skylights, extra light pkg., Hendrickson air ride
suspension, aluminum wheels. -102039



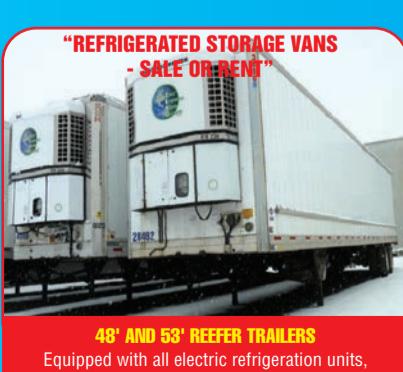
2014 GREAT DANE 53' X 102" VAN
Vents front and rear, 6 sky lights, aluminum roof,
air ride suspension, logistic posts,
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2015 WABASH 36' REEFER BOX
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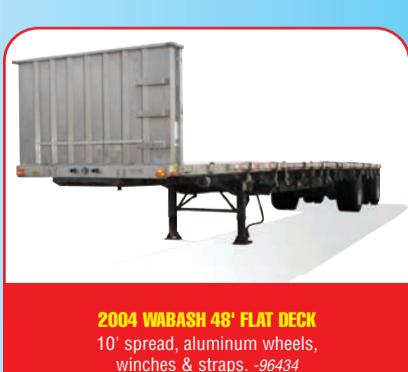
2013 GREAT DANE 53'x102" PLATE VAN
Hendrickson air ride susp; aluminum roof,
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liner, very clean low mileage unit. -115100



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Trailers

Wabash has developed a new **rear impact guard** for 53-ft. dry van trailers that it says better prevents underride in multiple offset, or overlap, impact scenarios. The new RIG-16 rear impact guard was shown for the first time at the Technology & Maintenance Council spring meetings. The new guard is constructed of high-strength steel and features two additional vertical posts and a longer reinforced bumper tube. It is galvanized to resist corrosion.

J.B. Hunt Transport Services placed an order for 4,000 Wabash National DuraPlate dry van trailers with the RIG-16. Limited production of the new design began in January.

Truck-Lite introduced a new **light-out detection system** that alerts drivers when a trailer light is no longer functioning. The system is installed to the trailer as part of the nose box assembly and is integrated into the trailer's electrical system. It simplifies the pre-trip inspection of lights by cycling through the various circuits for 30 seconds each, allowing the driver to ensure all lights are working while doing a walk-around.

If a light goes out while in transit, a small blue light positioned on the front of the trailer notifies the driver of the issue. Truck-Lite says the immediate notification allows drivers to fix the light before it is noticed by enforcement. The system was introduced and demonstrated at the spring meetings of the Technology & Maintenance

Council. The Light-Out Detection System works only with LED lighting.

The system tests the lighting every 50 milliseconds to provide an immediate notification if there's a failure. A circuit key is engraved on the module panel, notifying the operator which light is out. Truck-Lite says it has deployed about 75 units into the field. It's working with several trailer OEMs with the hope of making the system a factory option. For now, it's offered as a retrofit kit. Full production will begin in April.



Tires & Wheels

Michelin has a new **steer tire** it says will provide 20% more mileage than any other - and it's backing up that claim with a guarantee. The company unveiled its new X Line Energy Z at the Technology & Maintenance Council spring meetings. It says the new design will offer 20% more mileage than leading competitive line-haul steer

tires. If it doesn't, Michelin will pay back to the customer double the price differential between the tires. The new tire replaces the XZA3+.

The tire features a double compound tread that provides long life and fuel efficiency, Murphy explained. The tread features decoupling grooves and directional mini-sipes to promote even tread wear. It also comes with a new casing design that's backed by a seven-year, 700,000-mile warranty. The new casing design provides 5% less rolling resistance, Michelin says.

Murphy said customers should be able to get three retreads out of the tire. The tire is available now in 11R22.5, 275/80R22.5, 11R24.5 and 275/80R24.5 sizes in both G and H load ranges.

Alcoa has expanded its line of Ultra One **lightweight aluminum wheels**.

The company announced at the Technology & Maintenance Council meetings the addition of three new sizes. They include: 24.5"x8.25",

22.5"x14"; and 22.5"x9" sizes. The wheel was already available in the standard 22.5"x8.25" size.

The additional sizes will be available for order May 15.

The 24.5"x8.25" wheel for wide-base tires shed three pounds and weighs just 51 lbs. The 22.5"x14" weighs 52 lbs after an additional two pound reduction. The 22.5"x9" wheel weighs between 48 and 56 lbs, depending on fitment. Alcoa says the wheels are five times stronger than steel and require no painting. They're covered by a five-year warranty.

Bridgestone Americas introduced its new R283A Ecopia **steer tire**, which the company says is engineered to deliver best-in-class performance for commercial trucking fleets for long- and regional-haul service.

The steer tire offers Bridgestone's advanced technologies that provide 21% longer wear life than its predecessor, 3% better rolling resistance and superior fuel efficiency.

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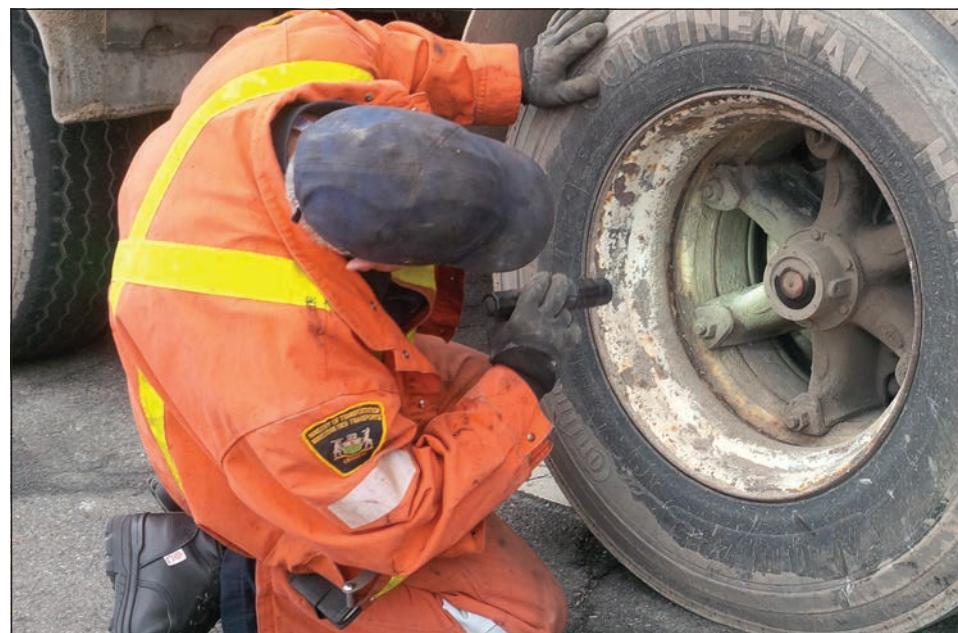
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MTO officer Mitch Morissette conducts a wheel inspection.

Drivers can prevent wheel-offs

Continued from page 34

any movement.

A loose wheel will often vibrate or sound different than a secure wheel when thumped.

"When you find one that is loose, the sound is totally different than what a tight one is," he said.

Drivers should also look for cracks, especially around the wheel holes and on the face of the wheel. The driver's role in preventing wheel separations cannot be overstated. In Ontario, wheel-offs constitute an absolute liability offense, meaning the vehicle owner is held responsible with no defence and will incur a fine of between

\$2,000 and \$50,000.

Bridgestone's McDonald said fleets need to impress upon their drivers the importance of regularly inspecting the wheels and also having issues addressed immediately.

"If the mechanic or the wheel installer makes a mistake and you get a little bit of movement on the wheel, the pre-trip inspection is where the driver is going to see that movement," McDonald said. "I don't think drivers understand that when they see some fault, a little bit of movement or clocking of the wheel behind the nut, that they're out of service right then. I don't care if your garage is 150 yards down the road, you do not move." ◉



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 **Truck and Trailer.ca Marketplace**

A&A Exhaust.....	60
Action Trailer Sales	70
Atlantis Radiator	67
Bayview Truck Centre	59
Benson Tire	57
Brant Tractor	64
Clifford Truck Show	60
Curtainsider.....	67
Dependable Truck & Tank	67
Diesel Specs.....	58
Drive Star Shuttle Systems.....	63
Eastway Tank & Emergency Vehicles	62
Kingpin Specialists	65
King Radiator HD.....	65
Kings Chrome	62
Maximum Powertrain	62
Morgan's Diesel.....	66
Reefer Sales & Service	69
Sousa Truck Trailer Repair Ltd.	61
Texis Truck Exhaust	65
Trison Tarps.....	68
Truck Exhaust Place	68
Verduyn Tarps	60
Woodstock Truck Show	66
XL Radiators	64

ALPHABETICAL LIST

205 Doney Inc.....	31
A&A Exhaust	75
Accutrac Capital Solutions.....	15
Alutrec	29
Arnold Brothers Transport	45
BF Goodrich	78
Bison Transport	47
BTC Express.....	49
Burrowes Insurance	19
C.U.T.C.....	31
Capacity of Ontario	28
Careers.....	38,39,40,41,42,43,44,45, 46,47,48,49,50,51,52,53,54,55
Cascades Transport	50
Castrol-Wakefield Canada	34
CFMS	11
Challenger Motor Freight.....	38
Chevron Global Lubricants.....	4
Child Find-Missing Kids	77
CITT	10
Classified	71
Contrans Flatbed Group.....	54
Cooney Bulk Sales.....	39,53
Country Transport	50
Cummins	26
Cushman Wakefield	75
David Benjatschek-Authorenticity.....	72
Davis Fuels	31
Doyle Transportation	50
Edge Transportation	52
Empire Transportation.....	41
Eberspacher	23
Enterprise Nama	37
Flo Components	25
Forbes-Hewlett Transport	49
Freightliner	2,3
G. Zavitz	51
Globetrotter Logistics.....	46
Goodyear	16,17
Great Dane	6
Hargraft Schofield	36
Holmes.....	48
Howes	32
Hyndman-A Celadon Company.....	40
International Truckload Services	47
IPS Invoice Payment System	12,13
J-Line Transport	52
Kee Transport Group	39
Keypoint Carriers	55
Kriska Transportation	41
Laidlaw Carriers.....	44
Liquid Capital Midwest Corp.....	71
Location Brossard	18
Mack	79
Manac	24
Marketplace.....	57-70
Martarp	71
Michelin	73,74,80
Nal Path Insurance Brokers.....	15
Napotrans Transportation and Logistics	45
NecPlusUltra Solution	36
Ontario Drivers Medical	32
Peterson Lighting	35
Petro Canada	10
Pierquip	22
PMTC	77
SAF Holland	19
Scotlynn Commodities.....	42
Shell	30
SLH Transport	51
Stateside Consultants	73
Surface Transportation Summit	7,25
Tankmart International	14
Texis Crossword Puzzle & Solution	9,73
TFS Group	72
The Erb Group of Companies	43
The Rosedale Group	46
Thunderstruck Trucking	55
Total Transportation Solutions	48
Trailer Wizards	27
Trans-Frt. McNamara	53
TransX Group of Companies	43
Transcourt	33
Transport Financial Services	72
Truck News-Driverlink	72
Truck News Subscription	71
Truck News-Truck Ops	54
Truck World	20-21
Trucks for Change	75
Trucker Radio	70
Uniroyal - Newland Transport	76
Villeneuve Tank Lines	48
Volvo	8
Wilson's Truck Lines	55
Xan Systems	52
Young Transportation System	52
Z Source	31



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By Edo van Belkom

THE STORY SO FAR

Bud convinces Mark to go undercover at a trucking firm to see if he can help stop cargo thefts from the company.

Mark is hired by Chenai Trucking and shows up to take on his first load for the company.

Over the next few weeks Mark drove for Chenai Trucking as if it were any other company he'd worked for over the years.

As promised, he got great loads to far away places and the company paid on time.

Furthermore, in all of his time working for the company, not a single load had been stolen, either from the company's yard or on the road.

The addition of a security gate, cameras and a security guard had obviously had an impact on the company's fortunes, but it was still odd that they had gone from being one of the most robbed trucking companies in the GTA to one of the least.

If things continued like this much longer, Mark would have to consider either becoming a regular full-time driver for the company or cutting his ties and moving on to something else.

The money was good, but Mark had signed on for some adventure and so far there had been none.

He decided to plant some seeds to see if anything would grow.

Coming into the Chenai yard late one Friday night, Mark stopped at the security gate to let the guard make note of his trailer's identification numbers and the serial number on his seal. When he was done jotting down the information, Mark followed the man into his kiosk and started up a conversation.

"Do they keep you busy?" he asked.

He was an older South Asian man who had probably been a truck driver once upon a time.

His face was old and weathered, with one eye half closed.

He hobbled more than walked, as if he'd injured his knees or spine at some point in his life...maybe both.

"Trucks in. Trucks out. I walk the yard every half hour. Sometimes someone calls on the phone. It's enough."

"Did you used to drive truck?"

The man smiled, revealing a gap-toothed smile. "Years ago," he said. "In India."

"Why not here?"

"In India, crashed my truck. No eye here," he said, pointing to a sunken right eye socket. "Broke my back, broke my legs. No more truck. This job is good...good for me."

Mark sighed in disappointment.

If the cargo thefts had been an inside job, then chances would be good that the new security guard might somehow be in on the operation.

But that didn't seem to be the case.



Dalton Undercover

This guard seemed happy to have work, was thorough and careful about how he did his job and was open about his life history with seemingly nothing to hide.

Still, that didn't mean he couldn't plant a seed with the man and see what might come out of it. "But you'd still like to drive if you could?"

"Of course," he said, looking out the window of his booth at the road that cut across the horizon. "This is a big country. I'd like to see more of it."

A sigh. "Do you like to drive?"

Here was the opportunity Mark had been waiting for.

"I don't mind driving so much, it's how much the ex-wife takes from me every month that I don't like. The more I drive, the more I make, right?"

The man shrugged.

"Wrong. The more I work, the more she gets."

Mark shook his head, trying to sell his anger. "Don't get me wrong, I love my kids, but do they need cheerleading and riding lessons? I can't keep up most months and my truck payments are always a few days behind."

The man looked at Mark for a long time, studying him.

Mark let him look all he wanted, giving him all the time he'd need to get the story right when he told someone – anyone else – about the new driver with money problems.

"I'm always looking for extra money," he said.

PART 3

"You know what I mean?"

"Yes, I understand."

"Good," Mark nodded. "Now I have a question for you."

"Okay."

"If you had a choice, would you rather go to the East Coast or West Coast?" To Mark's surprise, the man didn't laugh or even crack a smile.

Instead, he half closed his eyes and thought seriously about the question. "West. The Rocky Mountains. I hear they are nice to see."

Mark grinned.

He enjoyed seeing all that Canada had to offer as well.

"I like the mountains too," he said. "Maybe I'll take you for a ride one day."

"I'd like that very much."

After his talk with the security guard, it didn't take long for the feeling Mark had working at Chenai Transport to change.

Whenever he was in the company yard it felt as if he were being watched, not by the security guard, but by other drivers in the yard.

It could have been just his imagination but he couldn't help but feel there were far more trucks idling in the yard than usual, more tires being changed, more maintenance done on trucks.

And all the while there was at least one set of eyes on him, screening him... For what? Mark wasn't sure.

Nothing happened for several days.

Mark picked up and delivered his loads as usual, people seemed to watch his every move in the yard, and there was no talk about stolen loads.

Until Mark was approached by another driver.

He was doing an extensive circle-check in the yard, making sure to be around for as long as possible so that if anyone wanted to talk to him, they would know where to find him.

"You Mark?" a voice said.

Mark climbed out from under his trailer and said, "That's me! Who are you?"

"My name is Suki. I was talking to Parwinder in the security office and he told me you like to make money."

Bingo! Mark thought, struggling to maintain a strict poker face.

"Yeah, my ex-wife is bleeding me dry."

Suki nodded.

"Yes, he told me." He paused a moment to take a quick look around. "You want to make some money, fast?"

"What do I have to do?"

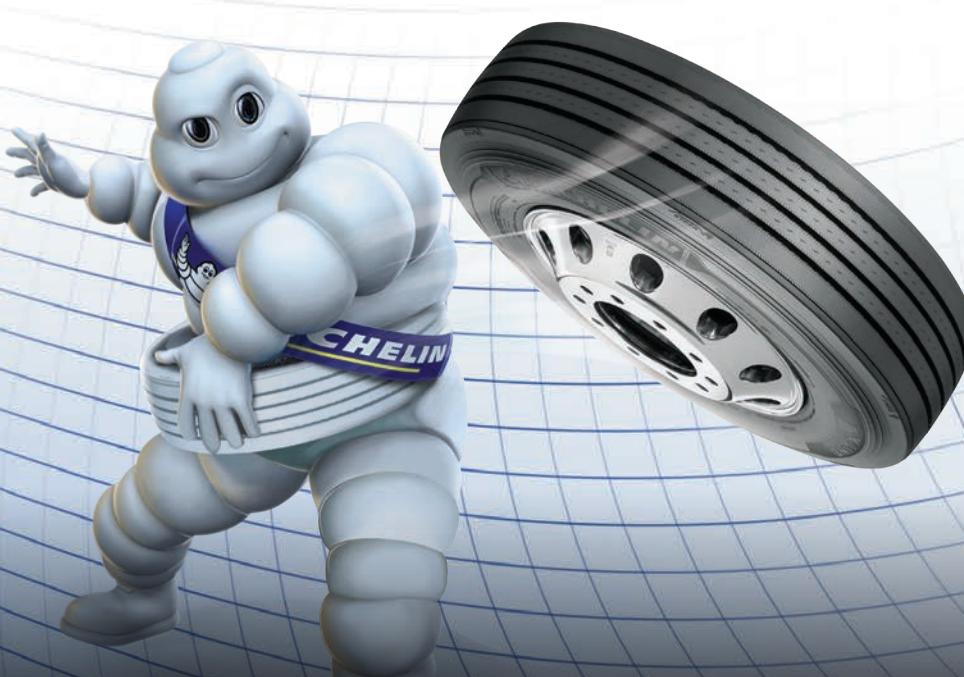
"Not much. You just park your truck in a place where we say. Then go have a nice long dinner. You know, take your time."

Mark nodded and rubbed a hand over his stomach.

"I'm feeling hungry already."

- *Mark Dalton returns next month in Dalton Undercover Part 4.*

Illustration by Glenn McEvoy



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Singing wheels

August Fruehauf and the history of the Fruehauf Trailer Company

By Harry Rudolfs

In her book, *Singing Wheels*, Ruth Ann Fruehauf credits her grandfather August Fruehauf, a Detroit blacksmith and carriage maker, with the invention of the modern truck trailer. The story goes back over 100 years to 1914, when a Detroit lumber baron and regular customer asked August to convert a horse-drawn trailer into a conveyance that would haul a boat to his vacation home pulled by a Model T roadster.

Ruth finds it fitting that Detroit, the centre of the automotive universe, would also be the birthplace of the "semi-trailer," what's considered a "tractor-trailer" in Canadian parlance - we rarely use the term "semi."

Apparently the nomenclature goes back to August Fruehauf's day. He called a trailer with wheels at one end, a "semi-trailer."

Australians also like to use "semi" to denote a single tractor coupled to a trailer, whereas the Brits call them "articulated lorries" or "artics."

Via e-mail, Ruth asserts that the term "semi" is important to the genesis of the invention.

"The other trailers, by and large, were four-wheeled trailers, not two-

wheeled trailers. It is a big distinction. In 1919 at an early industry convention of trailer manufacturers, the Fruehauf representative was mocked and made the laughing stock. The next year Fruehauf's sales peaked at just over a million dollars. They had the last laugh."

However, Alexander Winton, an early auto and truck manufacturer from Cleveland, Ohio, should be acknowledged as an early pioneer of the truck trailer idea.

In 1898 he was trying to figure out a way to deliver autos to customers, and developed a float-type trailer that had wheels on one end and an elevated platform that latched to the top of the tractor's mid-frame engine. The configuration could haul one car and it somewhat resembles the removable goose-neck configuration used today by heavy equipment haulers.

Another trailer manufacturer, "Utility created a similar design around 1915-16 but don't claim the invention of the semi-trailer," according to Ruth Fruehauf. So it seems the prize must go to August, the son of German immigrants to Detroit, who laid the foundation for a great manufacturing empire from humble beginnings in the family shop on Gratiot Ave.

Singing Wheels documents the rise



August Fruehauf is credited with inventing the semi-trailer in a new book, written by his granddaughter Ruth Ann Fruehauf (pictured below).

and fall of the family-owned corporation, which at one time the author calls "the General Motors of truck trailers." With more than 1,000 patents the company's innovations extended to development of hydraulic liftgates, reefers, flatbeds, and aluminum and steel-bodied trailers.

Fruehauf ceased to be family-owned and controlled with the deaths of August's sons (the last one, Roy, died in 1965), and Ruth suggests sibling rivalry, in part, contributed to the company's eventual unraveling. Trailers are still being made in other countries under the Fruehauf name but it ceases to exist in North America. The company filed for bankruptcy in 1997 and the corporation was bought and absorbed by Wabash, which showed no interest in keeping the brand going.

Singing Wheels is an attractive book that should be the part of any truck enthusiast's collection. Half the volume is a record of photos and ads from various eras. These offer a fascinating



glimpse into high-society Detroit during its automotive heyday.

Ruth Fruehauf wrote *Singing Wheels* to celebrate the 100th anniversary of her grandfather's invention. But she also thinks it's important to draw lessons from history.

"Some techniques and devices can inform modern day technology...It is remarkable that so many years later, so many people still are using the trailers and still rave about the quality of manufacturing and workmanship," she said. ◉

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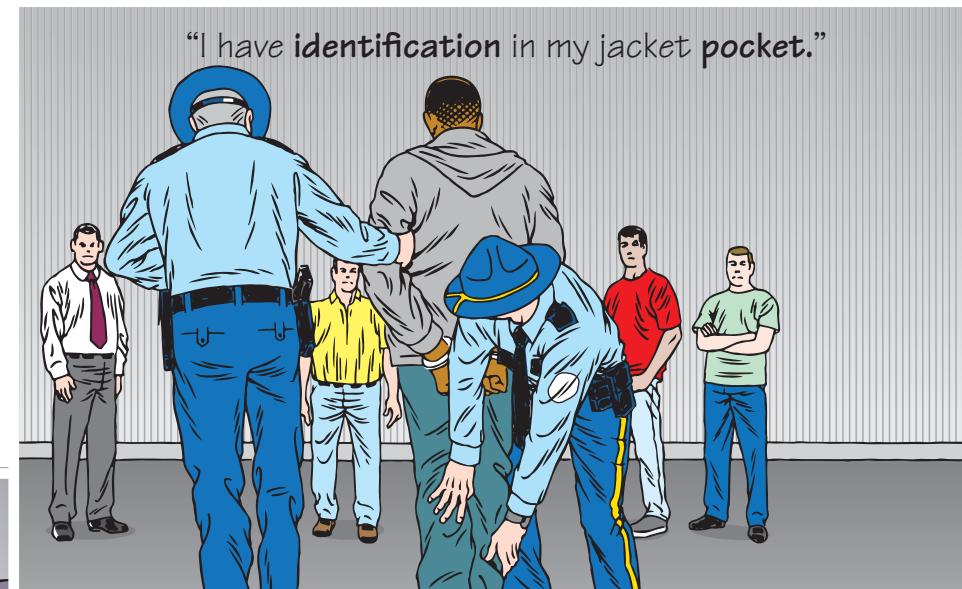
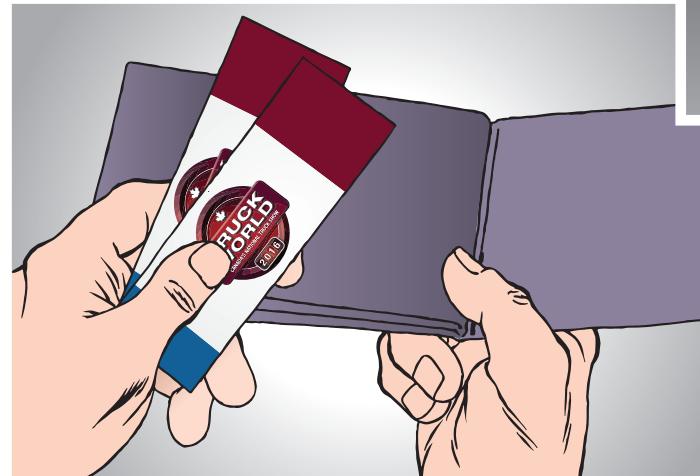
The Adventures of **NEWLAND TRANSPORT**

By Edo Van Belkom

The sheriff finds his wallet and opens it up in search of Vic's identification. "It's true!" the officer who did the search says. "He's a truck driver and that's his truck. He even has tickets to some kind of show called Truck World."

Vic is delivering a load of electronics to a yard in the Southern United States. He arrived early and with extra time on his hands, decides to do a circle-check. Someone called the police and Vic was tackled by two Sheriff's officers and placed in handcuffs.

"My name is Vic," he says. "I was just checking my truck after a long drive."



"Where is the regular driver, George Whitehead?" someone in the crowd asks.

"I don't know who that is," Vic replies.

"He's the regular driver on this run," someone else says. "George always said it was impossible to get here on time with this load. Why are you here so early?"



"It's hard," Vic says, "But not impossible. I figured out a way to get here on time, even a little early."

For a few moments everyone stands around in silence, perhaps realizing that Vic had been given a hard time just because he wasn't George Whitehead and looked like he was from somewhere else. Finally, someone in the crowd steps forward and says, "Sorry Buddy. We thought you were trying to steal this truck. You understand."



"An honest mistake is all it is," the man says.

Vic is unconvinced. "I guess."

"Say, where you from anyway?"

"I'm from Toronto."

"Yeah, but what nationality are you?"

No I don't understand," Vic says, shaking his head. "I was just delivering my load to your truck yard... just doing my job. Why would you think I was anything but a truck driver?"

"Our bad," a man from the truck yard office says. "We've had a lot of thefts from our yard in the last few months and we get a little suspicious when we see people who aren't from around here checking out trucks in our yard."



Illustration by Glenn McEvoy

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Low blood pressure a risk, too

Maintaining a healthy blood pressure level is an important component of good health. A blood pressure reading of 120/80 mm Hg is considered by most doctors to be ideal. Most people who have issues with blood pressure suffer from hypertension or high blood pressure.

However, for some people low blood pressure or hypotension can cause a variety of symptoms which include dizziness, fainting or even death. As you can imagine, this could be a dangerous situation for a professional truck driver.

It is widely accepted that people with a systolic (upper number) blood pressure of 90 mm Hg or less or diastolic (lower number) blood pressure of 60 mm Hg or less have low blood pressure.

In many cases, low blood pressure is not a serious medical condition. However, consistently low readings or blood pressure that suddenly drops may indicate a more serious underlying issue.

There are several causes of hypotension. Dehydration is a common cause of hypotension among athletes and young children. This occurs when the body loses more water than it takes in. Due to this, the volume of blood decreases, which in turn reduces blood pressure.

Similarly, losing a lot of blood due to injury or internal bleeding may lead to a decrease in blood pressure. Pregnancy is a common cause of hypotension in women. This is due to the rapid expansion of a woman's circulatory system during pregnancy. In most cases, blood pressure returns back to normal shortly after delivery.

Cardiac problems as well as endocrine issues such as thyroid conditions may also lead to hypotension. Finally, it is important to note that some medications may temporarily reduce blood pressure.

The signs and symptoms of hypotension vary from person to person. In addition to dizziness and fainting, people may experience difficulty with concentration, blurred vision, nausea and fatigue. In more severe cases of hypotension, symptoms such as cold, pale skin and rapid, shallow breathing may be present.

It is critical to seek medical attention if you experience any of these symptoms for a prolonged period of time.

If your doctor suspects that you are experiencing low blood pressure, he or she may order a series of tests to help identify the underlying cause.

Blood tests are used to gain information about the overall health of the patient such as sugar or iron levels. An ECG may be performed in order to de-

termine if there are any irregularities in the heart rhythm or electrical activity. In addition, a cardiac stress test may be recommended.

In most cases of mild hypotension, medical treatment is not required. However, in more severe cases, treatment of hypotension usually depends on the underlying cause.

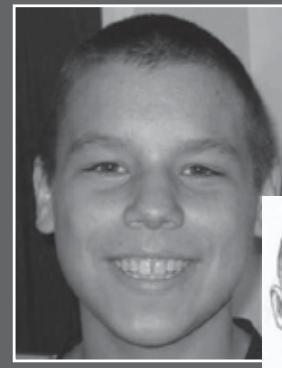
Once the cause is determined, your doctor will be able to recommend the best treatment options. As in the case of dehydration, treatment could be as simple as increasing water intake. In other cases, lifestyle modifications such as increasing salt intake, eating smaller, low-carb meals or wearing compression stockings are necessary. Medications may be required to treat more significant underlying medical conditions.

Until next month, drive safely. •

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

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Conrad Transport: A container hauling original

Conrad Transport has a rich history. Not only has the business been run by the family since the 1970s, but it was one of the first to haul containers out of the Port of Halifax. Carroll McCormick caught up with Scott Conrad, the company's v.p., to talk about Conrad's ongoing success.

Seeing a good thing coming, Conrad Transport got in on the ground floor of the container hauling business in 1970 – just one year after the Halifax International Container Terminal officially opened – and became the first common-user container terminal in Canada.

All these years later, it's still moving containers around the Maritime provinces, Upper Canada and the US.

"We were one of, if not the first, (carriers) to haul containers out of the Port of Halifax. We hauled them on flatbed trailers around Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. This was before my time. No one had container chassis then," recounts Scott Conrad, vice-president, Conrad Transport, which is headquartered across Halifax Harbour in Dartmouth.

For years, before the container business sailed into port though, the original company, Conrad Brothers, specialized in hauling steel products, machinery and building materials of all kinds. Scroll back in time even further to the 1950s, and we see the founders, Conrad's father Jim and his brother Fraser, expanding from owning a gas station into buying trucks, and hauling beach sand and gravel from the Eastern Shore.

"My father and my uncle were born to a farmer in Cole Harbour. They did very well for themselves. We wouldn't be where we are if not for them," Conrad says.

Anticipating that container hauling would become a big thing, Conrad Brothers, which owns a 550-acre quarry in Dartmouth, incorporated Conrad Transport in 1978; around the time construction began on the Fairview Cove Terminal.

Even as separate entities, the two companies help each other out when the trucking gets frantic. "If Conrad Brothers are busy, if we can hook one of our trucks onto a belly dump, we fill in for them," Conrad says. "You can't mention Conrad Transport without

mentioning Conrad Brothers, which is the parent company."

Any way you cut up the duties, this is still one big family enterprise. Scott's brother Brian is the president of Conrad Transport and between them they have four sons in the business who run the warehouse, drive, and take care of duties such as the health and safety committee, log books, and dangerous goods training. (On the Conrad Brothers side are Fraser's sons, Kim, Rod and Brent).

Scott Conrad went straight from high school into the family business at age 17, in 1977. He worked around the yard and spent a decade driving between the yard and Halterm in Halifax, around the city, and around Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick. Brother Brian has been with Conrad Transport full-time since 1976.

Pretty much everything that can be done on land with a container, the company does.

"A lot of fish comes from Newfoundland in reefer trucks. We transload it into reefer containers for (shipment) overseas. We also have containers coming into Halifax that we transload into dry vans and reefer trailers. They go to Montreal, Toronto, and the Midwest. We farm some loads out to other companies for long-haul delivery. We haul import and export containers. We haul just about anywhere. We move some containers 10 miles, others 500 miles or more," Conrad says.

"We were one of, if not the first, (carriers) to haul containers out of the Port of Halifax... No one had container chassis then."

Scott Conrad, Conrad Transport

The company has a 9,600 sq.-ft. warehouse for storing product. In its four-acre yard a 70,000-lb capacity full container machine and an empty container machine move the cans around.

Off the top of his head, Conrad figures that the company moves 6,000 containers a year. "We are probably in the top five container movers in Nova Scotia. One time we were number one and we may still be number one."

The container business in Halifax is stable and Conrad does not see much room for the growth of container traffic



Conrad Transport

into Halifax.

"There is only so much freight moving in and out," he comments.

The company has around 90 container trailers and 24 tractors. With the exception of one 2015 Volvo, bought when there were not any Freightliners available, the tractors are all Freightliners: A few are Columbias and Classics, vintage 2005 to 2007. The Freightliners 2008 or younger are Cascadias.

"Our 2016 trucks are Freightliner Cascadia Evolution. At this time we intend to stick with them. They are little bit more fuel-efficient. The last

Bridge, which makes landfall almost on top of the port. Other than more fuel-efficient trucks, the other techniques the company uses to keep fuel consumption down is a speed limiter setting of 105 km/h and weekly monitoring of truck mileage and fuel.

The company employs 24 full-time drivers, six full-time owner/operators and half a dozen part-time owner/operators. Warehouse, maintenance and office personnel bring the total to about 45 employees.

"My father and my uncle were always proud of the fact that they employed as many people as they did, and the families that they have been able to help, and contributed to charitable things," Conrad says. "I think that they would be proud of how we have been able to employ approximately 100 people between both companies, grow and still support the Dartmouth and area charities."

"As far as the family business, between the two companies, we have been big supporters of the Dartmouth General Hospital from its inception. We support a lot of local charities and whatnot."

"We support Cole Harbour with different things. This is something we are proud of being able to do."

A foundation built with countless hours of dedication lies beneath any successful company, but Conrad keeps his counsel simple when asked for any tricks of the trade: "Service is a big thing. Supply service and it keeps you working."

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The new MICHELIN® X® Line™ Energy Z steer tire is guaranteed to deliver 20% more mileage versus the competition¹, along with a 5% improvement in rolling resistance². It also comes with an ultra-fuel-efficient casing, so you can trust this tire for the long haul.



1 See MichelinTruck.com/XLineEnergyZ for details. 2 Compared to the MICHELIN® XZA3®+ EVERTREAD® tire. © 2016 Michelin North America (Canada) Inc. All rights reserved. The "Michelin Man" is a registered trademark of Michelin North America, Inc. (C14032)