

# TRUCK WEST

Western Canada's Trucking Newspaper Since 1989 • January 2014 Volume 25, Issue 1

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## Port protest fizzles

Truckers' group gripes about access, rules at Vancouver port

By Jim Bray

**DELTA, B.C.** – A loosely-knit association of truckers on B.C.'s Lower Mainland is upset with conditions surrounding Port Metro Vancouver, and are making their collective voices heard in an attempt to have something done about their concerns.

They may be coming late to an ongoing party, however, meaning that while the United Truckers Association is raising its issues, it may also be flogging a bit of a dead horse.

"I would say that they're probably not as informed as they could be about all of the different activities that are being undertaken to improve operational efficiency at the port and the marine container terminal to ready ourselves for the increase in container volume that is being anticipated," said Louise Yako, B.C. Trucking Association president and CEO. Yako was responding to the group's one-day protest outside the Port Metro Vancouver corporate office in late October, at which time UTA members also hand-delivered a letter to port president and CEO Robin Silvester outlining their concerns.

The letter, which the 52-member group also posted on its Facebook page, raised several issues, including the complaint that the current system of rate enforcement is slow, piecemeal and "generally ineffective." The group called on the port to pay container truckers an hourly rate calculated in 15-minute increments "from the time they enter port property until the time they leave" and to ensure the necessary resources are in place to ensure container truck drivers can have a turnaround time of "no more than one hour from the time they enter the port property."

The UTA also wants the port to make the rates apply to "each move by any container (empty or full) on a round-trip basis" and for owner/operators and company drivers to be paid for "all container moves according to the ready rate schedule."

UTA members also think trucking companies that don't pay the proper rates

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Arrow Transportation has placed what is believed to be one of the biggest orders for the Bose Ride System.



Reach us at our Western Canada news bureau

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## Take a seat

Arrow buys 55 Bose Ride Seats as part of driver wellness initiative. Could roll high-tech seats out across entire 300-truck fleet.

By James Menzies

**VANCOUVER, B.C.** – As part of a recently-launched health and wellness initiative, Arrow Transportation has ordered 55 Bose Ride System truck seats, with the intention of installing the seat in all 300 of its trucks if an extensive trial proves successful.

Jackie Charles, director of corporate responsibility with Arrow, told Truck News the first Bose seats will be installed in early February.

"We ultimately want to make the product available to all of our drivers, so we need to adequately test the product," Charles said. "This is a serious trial for us."

The Bose Ride System seats will be installed in company trucks across several divisions. Drivers will provide feedback to Arrow's Truck Seat Task Force to determine whether a further investment will be made. Bose was recently invited to several of Arrow's facilities to demonstrate the technology to drivers. Charles said everyone was impressed with how well they worked in the demonstration, and the company is eager to see if they perform equally well on the highway over time. The Bose seats incorporate an electromag-

netic motor system with sensors and a computing engine to eliminate vibrations in much the same way the company's noise-cancelling headphones mute ambient noise.

The purchase of 55 Bose Ride System seats marks one of the first - and most substantial - investments Arrow has made since implementing an employee health and wellness program last year. The company has offered an employee family assistance program (EFAP) for about 20 years, but wanted to take its wellness program further. Charles said the company's first thought was to launch a group weight loss challenge - along the lines of The Biggest Loser TV show - but it decided to first survey employees to determine what they would most like to see in a wellness program. And it's a good job they asked.

About 63% (513 of 815) of employees completed the 11-page survey, and a group weight loss challenge ranked dead last among the initiatives employees wanted to see offered.

"Interestingly enough, a very small percentage (of respondents) wanted to take part in an organization-wide fitness challenge, so it's a good thing we didn't do The Biggest Loser or something like

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# CLASS 8 TRUCK SALES TRENDS

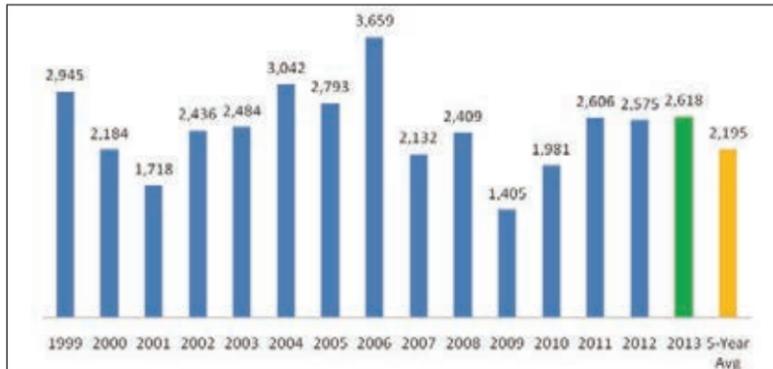
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The 2,618 trucks sold in October provided a pleasant surprise, being above last year's total as well as the total for 2011. This flies against the trend we've seen with Class 8 sales for the first three quarters, which have been good, but not as good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

### Monthly Class 8 Sales – Oct 13

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

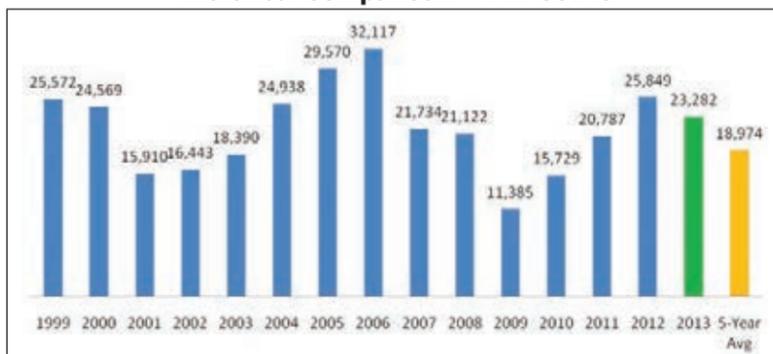
### Historical Comparison – Oct 13 Sales



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

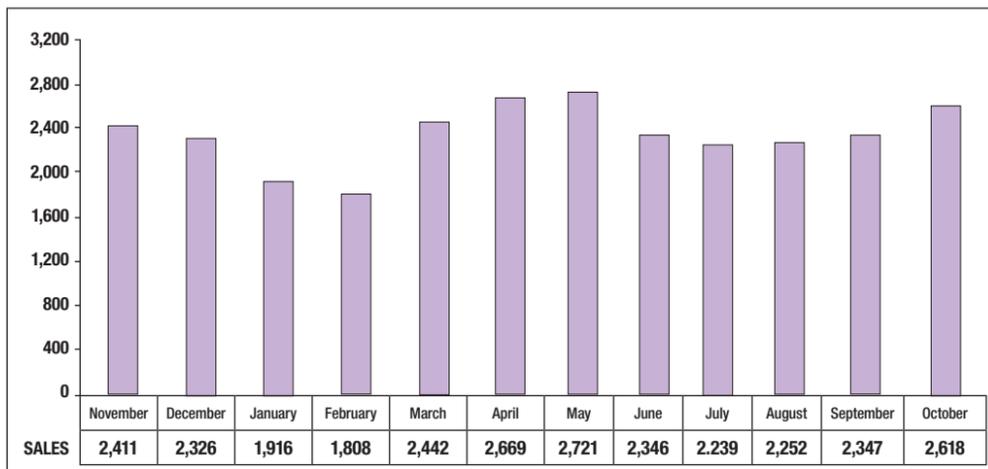
OEM	BC	ALTA	SASK	MAN	ONT	QUE	NB	NS	PEI	NF	CDA
Freightliner	494	686	186	317	2,592	991	312	107	21	38	5,744
Kenworth	667	1,509	419	104	700	742	95	0	0	0	4,236
Mack	142	280	165	55	681	327	67	65	0	14	1,796
International	140	578	70	164	1,538	670	108	45	33	31	3,377
Peterbilt	456	1,082	268	208	531	452	146	53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

### Historical Comparison – YTD Oct 13



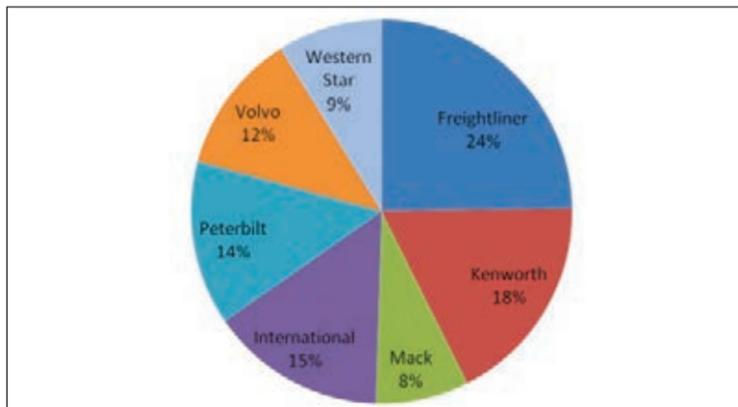
YTD Class 8 sales of 23,282 units places 2013 more than 2,500 trucks behind last year's pace but also more than 4,200 above the five-year average. So far this is the 7th best year in sales going back to 1999 and the slippage we were expecting for the final quarter did not surface in October. Our revised estimate is for Class 8 sales to come in around 28,500 vehicles in 2013.

### 12-Month Sales Trends



Class 8 sales have come in above 2,000, reminiscent of the industry's capacity boom years of 2005 to 2007, for eight straight months now. The three-month trend towards increased sales figures month over month came to an end in July but August showed improvement again as did September and now October. The big question was whether sales would hold up over the summer months and they have. Next question is how they will hold up for the final quarter of 2013 and October bore positive results.

### Market Share Class 8 – Oct 13 YTD



Freightliner, last year's Canadian market leader, is solidly in control of the market share lead with about a quarter of Canadian Class 8 truck sales. Kenworth finished 2012 in the number two spot for market share and there it still sits with an 18% market share. Navistar International finished the year with 15% market share and remains in a close race with Peterbilt which has a 14% share of the Canadian Class 8 market. Volvo is the only other OE with a market share above 10%.

Source: Canadian Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association

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# Gazing into the crystal ball

**Editorial Comment**

James Menzies



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

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

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

Aside from a sluggish economy, it looks as though the pace of mergers and acquisitions activity will pick up, if the last few weeks is any indication. After what some observers characterized as a slow start to the year, there were several key deals announced in recent weeks, which you can read about in more detail beginning on this month’s cover. It looks as though consolidation in the marketplace will continue to be a trend moving into 2014. Manitoulin and Celadon have both established themselves as bona fide buyers as they look to expand their Canadian footprints.

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

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

Another trend from the past year that isn’t going anywhere is the regulatory onslaught both here in Canada and south of the border. In July, the US adopted new hours-of-service rules that in practical terms are adding significant costs to the industry while reducing productivity.

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

And of course, reduced productivity means the need for more drivers to do the same amount of work. The driver shortage continues to be one of the most pressing issues facing the trucking industry. I know, I know...many of you believe the driver shortage is a myth,

that it’s wages and working conditions that have caused perfectly capable professional drivers to sit on the sidelines.

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



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

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## Dealing with Requests for Proposals

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

Even companies with as little as \$50,000 in annual freight spend are putting their transport business out for bid. I believe freight bids are here to stay. Rather than wishing for them to go away, I think the best approach is for motor carriers to learn how to best deal with them and to encourage shippers towards a better RFP process.

To that end, we assembled a panel of leading shippers and carriers at our recent Surface Transportation Summit and dug deep into the subject of RFPs.

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

**The view with Lou**

Lou Smyrlis



over the next few weeks.

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

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

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

As Meyers, whose remarks made her an instant industry celebrity, pointed out: the carriers who do “win” these bids are not actually winning. It simply

means they are the cheapest or close to the cheapest and giving something up – Driver training? Safety? Security? – to be the cheapest.

All three affirmed the only action that makes sense in dealing with such RFPs: Refusing to participate if they seem structured to reduce decision making down to price.

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

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

To carriers, she said “When invited to participate in the tender process, start the dialogue. Talk about how you can impact their bottom line without being the cheapest. Invest in collaboration, bring your A-team and find ways to do better.”

Damn good advice to follow in dealing with RFPs. **TW**

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# Are new US HoS rules costing fleets, drivers billions?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

In some cases, drivers with long wait periods between loads were unable to use the restart because the 34 hours did not cover two periods from 1-5 a.m., or

168 hours had not elapsed since the previous restart. Drivers are getting less home time or accepting shorter hauls for less money, the survey found.

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

“The rules need to reflect the fact that drivers have to accommodate numerous factors they have no control over such as weather and traffic, in addition to the schedules of shippers and receivers who don’t have to comply with any regulations at all,” Spencer added. “Truck-

ers shouldn’t be expected to navigate the conflicting worlds of regulations versus reality and still operate safely and efficiently.”

In a Nov. 21 hearing, a US House of Representatives’ Committee on Small Business heard these complaints and others. Among presenters was Duane Long, chairman of Raleigh, N.C.-based Longistics, who told the committee that the industry is suffering serious negative impacts as a result of the restrictions.

“Simply put, the July 1 hours-of-service rule changes were unnecessary; the regulations adopted in 2003 were working and the administration offered rhetoric but little data to explain why they needed to be changed,” said Long. “Unfortunately, the gap between the administration’s rhetoric and the trucking industry’s operating reality is very wide.

These changes are having a very real, and very negative impact on hundreds of thousands of drivers and motor carriers.” Long said the rules are particularly disruptive for team drivers, who “resent the new restart restrictions and the effect they are having on their ability to make a living.”

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

“Less flexibility makes it more difficult to stop for rest, avoid traffic, or keep a schedule after being delayed by a shipper or receiver,” said Curl in his oral testimony at the hearing. **TW**

“Northbridge understands that when a truck is in the shop following a claim, it’s not making money.”

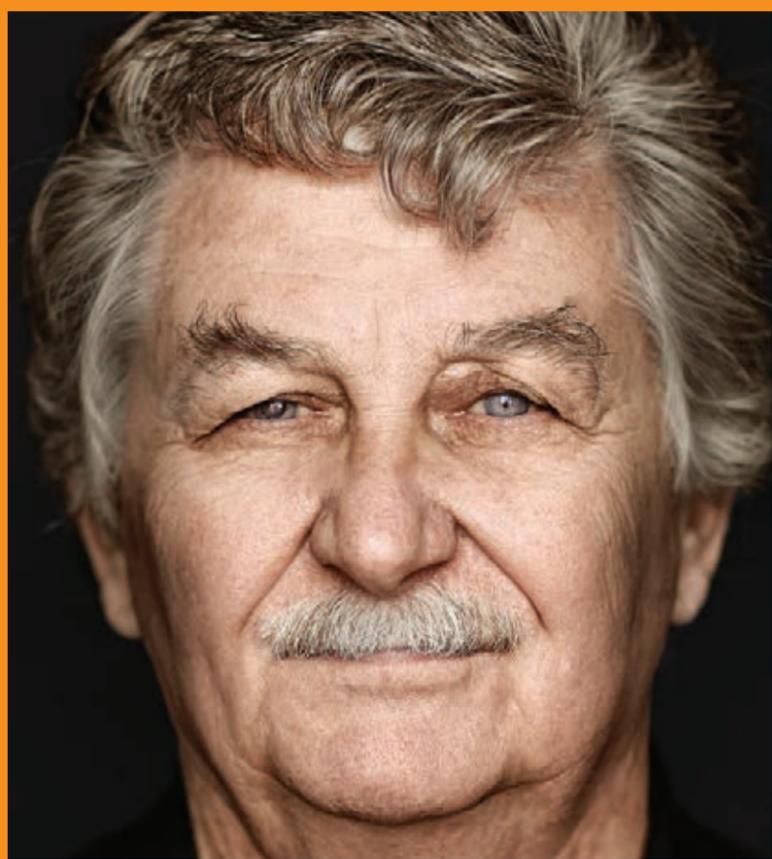
Ray Archer, Safety Director, Ventures West Transport, Sturgeon County, Alberta

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loss, as quickly as possible.

# Arrow making big investment in truck seats

Continued from page 1  
that," Charles said.

The survey found employees were most interested in receiving CPR/First Aid training, with health screening (including blood pressure, blood sugar levels, cholesterol and body mass index) coming in second. The open-ended question portion of the survey also identified many drivers were unhappy with their truck seats, and experienced pain and discomfort they attributed to the seats.

Arrow took action to address the biggest concerns among its employees. It offered to reimburse those interested in taking St. John's Ambulance training for CPR or First Aid. Arrow also commissioned a third-party health-screening provider to send a "company nurse" to

all Arrow's divisions, so drivers could receive a snapshot of their personal health.

"The wonderful thing about the testing we arranged is, there is no fasting required," Charles said. "A finger-prick medical device is used for most of the testing. This really helps for scheduling and getting people to participate. It can be done any time, the results are instant and it keeps costs down on our end."

To address driver complaints about truck seats, a Truck Seat Task Force was created.

"The Task Force spent a considerable amount of time reviewing incident rates for back pain and the numerous supplier options on the market and after lots of research and looking at different options, the committee made the recommendation to do an extensive trial with

the Bose seats," Charles said.

The Bose demonstration units visited Arrow's branches in Kamloops, Grande Prairie and Chilliwack in recent weeks.

"The feedback was very positive," said Charles.

While Bose doesn't divulge specific pricing details, it has in the past told Trucknews.com the seats retail for about \$6,000 including installation for a single unit. Volume discounts can bring the price down to less than \$3,800 when more than 10 units are ordered. Whatever the price tag, it's a big investment on the part of Arrow.

Asked how Arrow will measure a return on investment, Charles said that wasn't a priority when ordering the seats.

"We really didn't approach our wellness program with a consideration of

a return on investment," Charles said.

"We made the commitment as a company to support the health needs of our people and we are going to follow through on that. We have a tremendous amount of respect for our employees and we want to ensure we're doing everything possible to limit the physical stress of operating our equipment. The investment we're making in the Bose seats is substantial obviously, however, after seeing how the seats perform, the potential for improving alertness, minimizing fatigue and improving our drivers' long-term physical health, it's an investment we'll make gladly."

Once the initial seats are installed in February, the trial is expected to last six months to a year.

Charles said drivers who are chosen to pilot the seats will be in frequent contact with the Task Force and their input will determine whether or not the program is expanded.

Meanwhile, Arrow's wellness program will continue to grow to include other priorities identified by employees through the survey. **TW**

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

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Day Archer

## Apps first fleet to lease space in industrial park

**DELTA, B.C.** – Apps Express is the first tenant to commit to moving into a new Boundary Bay Industrial Park near Deltaport, Canada's largest container terminal. The area is being transformed with the construction of the billion-dollar South Fraser Perimeter Road, scheduled to open up soon.

With rising port volumes and the expansion of the nearby airport, some are referring to the area as the next big distribution hub for Canada and the US. The Boundary Bay Industrial Park is the area's largest new industrial project. Construction began there in the summer and Apps Express recently agreed to lease 100,000 sq.-ft. of space.

"We needed proximity to the port," says Apps Express president, Rob McDonald. "It was difficult for our trucks to get out of Richmond (the previous facility) or back in, but the new highway gives us more than one way to get into and out of Vancouver."

McDonald said the new Boundary Bay Industrial Park will create an attractive option for retailers who have traditionally located distribution centres in Alberta, where there was greater access to large industrial spaces.

The Boundary Bay site is scheduled to open in May 2014. It is being constructed by The Dayhu Group.

"Tier one industrial distribution space in the Vancouver market is very difficult to find," says Paul Tilbury, CO of The Dayhu Group. "We're effectively the only option under construction that can offer contiguous space of this magnitude."

The facility will cover 47 acres and offer about 900,000 sq.-ft. of warehouse space. **TW**

# Northern conference hopes to help drive future transportation policy

By Jim Bray

**YELLOWKNIFE, N.W.T.** – An October transportation conference in Yellowknife saw business, community and government folk converge to discuss ways in which Canada's northern transportation policy can be moved forward through the 21st century.

Organized by the Van Horne Institute, a University of Calgary affiliate tasked with developing post-secondary programs and public policy research in advanced supply chain and logistics, the conference not only shone a spotlight on northern transportation issues, it presented them in the context of the overall view of transportation in western North America. A smaller picture viewed in terms of the big picture, as it were.

"What we were attempting to do

is follow up on work already done in what's called 'the rest of Canada,'" said Peter Wallis, the Van Horne Institute's president and CEO, noting that the idea is to help guide Canadian transportation policy going forward, especially since a major policy review is on tap for the not-too-distant future.

"The year 2000 was the last year the government of Canada actually had a fundamental review of its transportation policy, looking at all the legislation that is under federal jurisdiction," Wallis said, referring to a blue ribbon panel that crossed the country back then, holding hearings and developing research papers to advise Ottawa as to what was and wasn't working as far as its transportation policy was concerned.

But Y2K was a very long time ago, especially considering the growth Cana-

da has experienced since then. "Policy's not static," Wallis said, "and when you have a fundamental review, you look at it from top to bottom."

And with the next fundamental review scheduled for 2015, "maybe it's time for the government to perhaps early up its mandated review of its legislation and also to reflect on the fact that it's not just the federal government that has jurisdiction over transportation but also the provinces and the municipalities," Wallis said.

In other words, while the federal government may be the big frog in the pond, it certainly isn't the only one and perhaps it should be taking the smaller frogs' issues into account when it creates policy that will affect them. This is especially important to the north, which has special issues brought about by vast areas of difficult to access land,

harsh climate, and sparse population.

Wallis said the Yellowknife conference was designed to "take the southern fundamental review process to the north, recognizing that an efficient and effective transportation system is the lifeblood of the economy."

And to make it as relevant as possible to the region, the Institute consulted with the region when developing the conference's themes.

"We gave them this overarching premise about reviewing Canada's transportation policy," he said, "but the modules and who should come and speak and who should basically participate was very much driven by a group of the northern planners."

The program included a panel session that delved into the relationship between transportation policy and natural resources. Chaired by Matthew Spence, director general at the Northern Project Management Office of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency (CanNor), it noted – among other things – that the mining sector is growing briskly, fuelled by expansion in the Chinese market and presumed growth in the US.

All isn't sweetness and light, though. According to a presentation by Kirk Cameron of the Colorado-based consulting firm CH2M HILL, growth in the Yukon has been challenged by "two recent successful challenges by First Nations without modern Land Claims Agreements" which have had a significant impact on resource development there.

Cameron also noted that, while any northern transportation strategy has to take into account the volatility of world commodity prices and their effect on the economics of northern resource development, businesses also need to see a return on their investment. One way Cameron outlined that could help ensure that ROI for businesses would be for governments to make solid infrastructure commitments, primarily roads and bridges. "A long-term vision for strategic infrastructure commitments could make the difference between 'no go' and 'go'," Cameron noted in his presentation.

A session on community and social accessibility recommended that any northern transportation strategy prioritize infrastructure funding to help develop the economy at large.

"We had a lot of discussion on that from some airlines and shipping companies," Wallis said. "We talked about climate change and sustainability – very important topics when you're looking at something as dramatic as the lessening of the sea ice and the consequences of that."

One consequence of less ice could be more traffic through the Northwest passage, while another is that "the shoreline of the Arctic is now being more challenged by waves because normally it's mostly been icebound in the past," Wallis said, adding that "with some of the open waters, our navigation charts are not up to speed because they haven't had to be – no one navigates through the pack ice. Now, with those waters somewhat opening, we need to know where all the bad stuff is."

And while more open water might make it easier to get stuff into the north, it also creates the need for suitable ports



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so the communities up there can receive the goods. Wallis cited the example of some safe havens in northern Quebec ports, where a break wall has been built around which barges can travel and land their the materials onto the beach safely. That's only one possible solution, though.

"Even something as simple as extending the season for ice breaking would allow these ships with the cargo for the settlements to operate over a longer period of time, and allow the re-supply to go off in a more efficient way," Wallis said.

Addressing the topic of sovereignty in the great north, Dr. Rob Heubert, associate director of the Centre for Military and Strategic studies at the University of Calgary, spoke of Canada's need to access and protect its territorial interests in an area where other nations, such as Russia, Denmark and the US (as well as some aboriginal groups), have vested interests and claims. Heubert noted the growing importance of the Northwest Passage and the Northern Sea Route, both of which have seen increasing transits over the past few years. In the case of the NSR, for example, Heubert noted a rise in transits from six in 2010 to 46 in 2012, which may not seem like much right now but which could foreshadow a trend.

A session entitled 'Plausible approaches to Northern Transportation,' chaired by Transport Canada's Jutta Paczulla, looked into various alternatives for creating "a balanced and well-integrated transportation system with minimal duplications and maximum efficiency." Russell Neudorf, Deputy Minister of Transportation for the NWT government, noted during the session that most of the resource and development-rich areas of his home territory are accessible only by air, or by some 1,450 kilometres of winter roads that are rebuilt each year.

One way accessibility could be increased would be to construct all season roads; Neudorf, calling it the "cornerstone of the GNWT's plan for present and future economic development," noted that a 920-km all-weather highway has been proposed for the Mackenzie Valley Corridor to Tuktoyaktuk.

One of the biggest challenges is how to pay for such work, and Neudorf called for new sources of financing to be found by "promoting partnerships with stakeholders (oil and gas, mining) and the federal government to implement strategy."

He also called for a national transportation strategy that recognizes that, thanks to the uniqueness of the north, "one size does not fit all."

Neudorf also wants to see a transportation strategy that goes beyond economic issues, to consider "social benefits, sovereignty, accessibility, mobility" in any decisions.

Robert Long, Nunavut's Deputy Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, focused on the perceived need for better air, maritime and road infrastructure to improve links to the rest of Canada as well as capturing "the potential benefits of international air traffic."

Calling air travel "Nunavut's lifeline," he noted that a significant increase in such traffic, coupled with aging current facilities, has created the need for a new, \$300-million airport in Iqaluit, to be financed as a P3 project.

Long also pointed out that the re-

gion's marine infrastructure is out of date, inefficient and "unacceptable in comparison to the rest of Canada" and

Corridor all-season road, an all-season highway from Manitoba to Nunavut's Rankin Inlet has been proposed.

**'We need to take this opportunity to make sure we've got the best infrastructure in place.'**

**Peter Wallis, Van Horne Institute**

called for a road link to the national highway system. He noted that, as with the NWT's proposed Mackenzie Valley

Corridor all-season road, an all-season highway from Manitoba to Nunavut's Rankin Inlet has been proposed.

Wallis said, noting that it appears the message is starting to get through.

"I think government and industry are now coming closer and closer together to understanding that they're more or less joined at the hip when it comes to getting our products to market in the most efficient way," he said, "and to do that we have to have great infrastructure. So I think the understanding of the absolute need to do this on a collective basis is becoming much clearer."

Feedback from the approximately 90 people on hand was "very positive, actually," Wallis said. "I was delighted to see not only from speakers but participants saying they're glad we did this."

Now that the conference is over, the next step is for the Van Horne Institute to create a report. "I think we'll certainly come out with something that'll be thematic," Wallis said. "What we heard and the major issues that should be addressed within the context of policy and infrastructure." **TW**

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# Port problems resolved?

Continued from page 1

should lose their licences and face some kind of public shaming – as in “the nature of the offense and parties involved should be made public” – and that the licences of owner/operators and company drivers found guilty of rate infractions be revoked as well, with guilty parties not able to operate under another entity, “as has happened in the past.”

The letter didn't include an “or else” clause outlining what action the UTA members might take, so it's unclear if this is some kind of strike threat or mere venting of pent-up frustrations. But as the BCTA's Yako pointed out, it may be pretty much moot anyway.

“There are so many moving pieces in this particular sector,” she said, referring to initiatives she said have been in the works for “at least 12 to 18 months” and which

aren't bearing fruit quite yet - not only because such things take time, but also because they require “the involvement and cooperation, even if it's just the tacit cooperation, of a number of different groups and stakeholders.”

That may sound a bit like herding cats, but Yako - who noted that the BCTA has been involved in many of the port-related projects - said things are progressing and that “early in the new year (we) will be unveiling a couple of (initiatives) that we think will have direct and positive impact on the drayage sector.”

Yako speculated that the UTA members' concerns could stem from the fact that they're so close to their own particular issues that they may not be able to see the big picture, perhaps through no fault of the owner/operators behind the UTA.

“I think in part it's trucking companies

maybe not relaying that information to their owner/operators in a way that they can see the direct benefit to them,” she said, “and while the port does have a periodic drayage sector electronic newsletter that goes out (its schedule) probably hasn't been frequent enough to keep people up-to-date and to remind them of some of the ongoing projects.”

The group has no official affiliation with the BCTA, Yako said, and established itself deliberately as a non-unionized group, forming instead as “a loosely knit group that wants to act together to improve conditions for owner/operators.” She admitted that some of the members might have a BCTA connection, kind of by osmosis, in that the companies they contract with may be BCTA members. “We allow individual owner/operators to be members but typically if a company is already a member they already paid a membership to cover their owner/operators, so the owner/operators wouldn't individually be BCTA members.”

And since the BCTA membership includes over 50 companies with Port Metro Vancouver truck licences, “I would assume that some of the owner/operators who were there at the demonstration are affiliated with BCTA members or contracted by some BCTA members,” Yako said.

As for the target of the late October protest, Port Metro Vancouver president Robin Silvester said in a letter of response to the UTA that, while the port takes the group's concerns seriously, “as some of the issues you raise cannot be addressed by PMV alone, we are actively engaged with government and terminal operator, to ensure all necessary parties are involved in finding solutions.”

Silvester agreed that increased demands have led to challenging operating conditions for the truckers but noted that steps are being taken.

“We have implemented a new rail operations protocol with the agreement of rail operators and terminals that allows the port to temporarily stop rail switches and allow trucks to move through the South Shore,” Silvester noted, claiming that the move has improved traffic flow and will remain in effect until the Stewart Street overpass, “which should remove many of the conflicts at South Shore container terminals,” is completed. The letter also noted that infrastructure upgrades to the Deltaport Road and Rail Improvement Project (to be completed by mid-2015) will “greatly enhance access and egress from Deltaport for the trucking community.”

As for waiting times, Silvester agreed that they're too long, writing that “ideally, waiting time compensation should not be necessary if wait times can be reduced.” The port boss also noted that a one-hour turnaround time is an appropriate target and that “a wider window of gate operating hours is necessary to meet the demand for road and terminal capacity as we continue to grow.”

Silvester noted that expanding gate operating hours “in a coordinated way, where the benefits and impacts are shared equitably, is a goal of the Smart Fleet strategy,” and that the Port “would like to encourage and broaden private sector initiatives currently emerging in this regard.”

The letter went on to note that the Port has 1,000 GPS units installed in container trucks currently, representing about half of the container fleet serving PMV's terminals, and that penetration could reach the full fleet by sometime in 2014 “to ensure that PMV and stakeholders have more complete data on routing, performance and bottlenecks to aid in performance monitoring and modelling.”

Silvester said the GPS program represents the best available method of building “better overall transparency and accountability between the port, terminals and the container trucking sector.”

Silvester's response also noted that, while the UTA may think the status quo is neither effective nor transparent when it comes to the enforcement of rates, the Port “works closely with the province of British Columbia to investigate complaints that are brought forward,” and “has begun to publish sanctions against drayage firms in a Decision Digest on the PMV Web site.”

The letter also addressed the UTA's call for a freeze on new licences, noting that a moratorium on issuing new independent operator permits was put in place in 2007, but that “a new Joint Temporary Permit (JTP) pilot project was developed as a result of industry concern that attrition had significantly reduced available trucks and that business surges could not be adequately met.” **TW**

*He's making his list and checking it twice. Are you?*

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A convoy of trucks rolls down Lumsden Valley in support of The World's Largest Convoy for Special Olympics in Saskatchewan.

## More than 60 trucks take part in convoy

By Daniela Piteo

SASKATOON, Sask. – The seventh annual Saskatchewan leg of the World's Largest Truck Convoy for Special Olympics rolled through the province this past September.

The convoy covers the stretch of road between Saskatoon and Regina.

"The convoy started at the Credit Union Centre in Saskatoon and ended at Regina's Turvey Centre," said Chelsea Fidler, the director of marketing and development for Special Olympics Saskatchewan.

The convoy covered 248 kms of road with one designated stop en route in Chamberlain, where additional trucks joined.

This year, 63 trucks, including a dump truck and a tow truck, rallied together to raise funds for the Special Olympics.

The end point of the convoy was the Turvey Centre in Regina, but it's not where the show ended.

"The drivers rolled into a space that doesn't seem like it would fit 63 trucks, but they managed, and it is very impressive to see the professionalism and skill it takes when they drive, especially when they are (maneuvering) in a small space," said Fidler.

Once all the trucks settled in at the end of the drive, participants, Special Olympians and volunteers enjoyed a barbecue and a truck pull, pulling a 15-tonne semi for 15 metres.

"A lot of work goes into organizing the event and we wouldn't be able to do it without the hard work of our volunteers, our sponsors and the police – who help ensure the routes are safe," said Fidler.

A special thanks went out to the numerous sponsors: Jay's Moving and Storage, Hornoi Leasing, 620CKRM, Harvard Broadcasting, Gran Tierra Energy, and 18 Wheel.

"We hope that next year will be bigger and better," said Fidler. "We want to see a lot of people out on the road in many different trucks." TW



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# Prepare former drivers for jobs outside of the truck

**C**hoosing an office chair instead of a driver's seat was not easy. My life as an owner/operator had been rewarding. I enjoyed the chance to travel and see North America. There was a freedom which few other workplaces provide. Every trip to New York City or Calgary left time to meet friends at a favourite restaurant; famous monuments were always just an off-ramp away.

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

Collectively, it led me to jump at the opportunity to work in the fleet operations, overseeing trucks, drivers and owner/operators across Western Canada. The new role offered a chance to apply my skills in an industry I loved, and sent me home at night.

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

Like many former drivers who exchange a cab for a desk, I struggled with some of the realities of a workplace with-



**Ask the Expert**

**Matt Graveline**

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

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

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

Experienced drivers can be great candidates for many of a fleet's office-based tasks. Many successful dispatchers, trainers and safety teams rely on skills that were honed while following a highway's little white lines. But finding and retaining someone who is the best fit for an office environment will involve looking beyond a clean abstract. Leading candidates for a new career path or supervisory role tend to share a number of traits. They are the drivers who are always approached by their peers for

answers and advice.

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

Above all, they have the positive attitudes, which are welcome in every workplace. Formal orientation programs will prepare these workers for the challenges to come - and set realistic expectations about how lives will change.

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

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

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

It's why a new office employee would benefit from the guidance of a trained mentor and a clear description of what a job will be like. Nobody will offer more insight than workers who have gone through such a change themselves. As experienced as a driver may be, there will also be new skills to master. Formal orientation checklists can help

to ensure that steps in a new role are not overlooked, whether scheduling a load or filing an Automated Commercial Environment (ACE) manifest. But learning each skill takes time.

The human dynamics in a workplace might require some attention of their own. Even the most popular driver can run into jealous peers who feel they are more deserving of an office job.

Extra attention from fellow managers will help to lessen or avoid such complaints before such feelings have a chance to fester. A new job can represent one of the biggest changes in a driver's life, and any successful transition requires a dedicated focus.

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

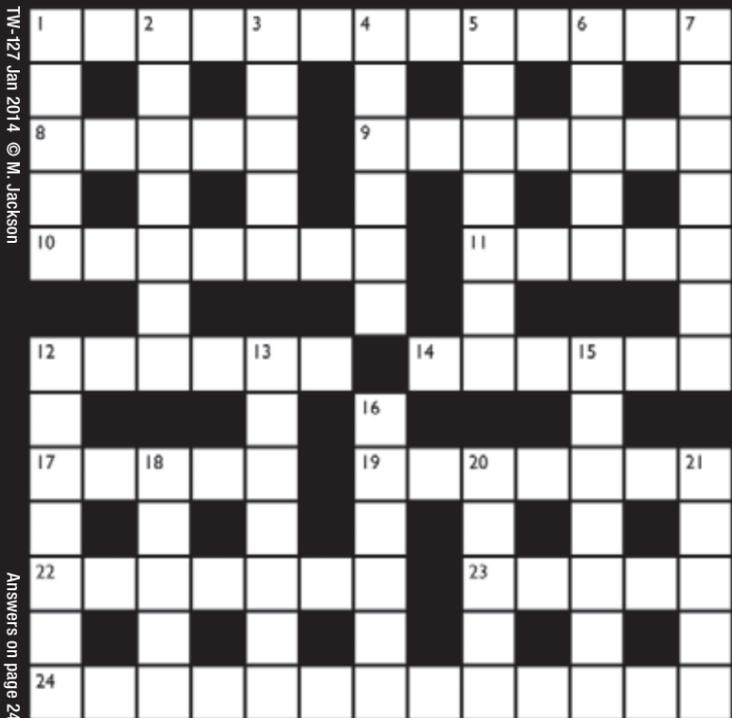
A few trips back and forth to Michigan helped retain my skills at the wheel, and other changes at a personal level made differences of their own. I found that workouts released some of the stress.

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

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

*This month's expert is Matt Graveline, senior risk services consultant with Northbridge Insurance. Matt has more than 20 years' experience in the trucking industry as both a long-haul driver and an owner/operator. You can visit Northbridge at [www.nbins.com](http://www.nbins.com).*

## CROSSWORD PUZZLE



### Across

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

### Down

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

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# So, CRA sent you a letter

**S**tarting this month, Canada Revenue Agency is sending out 33,000 letters to help Canadian taxpayers (as they put it) “better understand their tax obligations and to encourage them to correct any inaccuracies in their past income tax and benefit returns.”

This is the fifth year that CRA has sent these letters, focusing on certain areas where the CRA has encountered compliance issues in the past. This year, taxpayers who claimed self-employment or rental losses, or who have claimed certain employment expenses on their T1 income tax return, are the target.

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

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

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

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

Here are some recent examples. In addition to the court-imposed fines, people who are convicted of tax crimes must still pay the full amount of tax owing, plus interest and any civil penalties that may be assessed by the CRA.

## GST/HST

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

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

## Cash sales

Geoffrey Shui Lung Young, a director and one-third shareholder in a company that owns a Chinese restaurant in Winnipeg, pleaded guilty to tax evasion for failing to report \$757,496 in the tax years 2006, 2007, and 2008. The unreported income included cash sales

## Tax Talk

Scott Taylor



that were deleted from cash register tapes and earnings from private functions held at the restaurant. The corporation was fined \$127,499, or 75% of federal taxes evaded. It also had to pay GST not remitted to the CRA on the unreported income amounts.

## Unreported benefits

Haverluck Enterprises, a pharmacy in

Dauphin, Man., pleaded guilty to federal tax evasion after it failed to report \$481,764 in the tax years 2004, 2005, and 2006. The unreported income included benefits received from a pharmaceuticals company that provided more than \$100,000 of household furniture, a custom wine cellar, and a golf cart. A drug wholesaler also paid for a family wedding and another golf cart that were improperly claimed as business expenses. Personal expenses of Myles Haverluck, one of the corporation's directors, were also falsely claimed as pharmacy purchases or advertising expenditures.

It's incredible to think that Canada's

tax system is based on what amounts to an honour code. While 90% of Canadian taxpayers meet their obligations and file on time, 10% is still a huge number for the CRA to contend with.

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

Hate to say it, but it'll be April 30 before you know it. **TW**

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

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## JANUARY

- Jan. 17, **Toronto Transportation Club Ski Day**, Craigleith Ski Club, Blue Mountain, Ont. [www.torontotransportationclub.com](http://www.torontotransportationclub.com)
- Jan. 18-22, **National Private Truck Council**, Private Fleet Management Institute, Jacksonville, Fla. [www.nptc.org](http://www.nptc.org)
- Jan. 20-23, **National Biodiesel Conference and Expo**, San Diego, Calif. [www.biodieselconference.org](http://www.biodieselconference.org)
- Jan. 24, **Toronto Trucking Association, Annual Ski Day**, Devil's Glen, Glen Huron, Ont. [www.torontotrucking.org](http://www.torontotrucking.org)
- Jan. 26, **Retail Industry Association Leadership Forum**, Naples, Fla. [www.rila.org](http://www.rila.org)
- Jan. 27-31, **COHMED Conference**, Sarasota, Fla. [www.cvsa.org](http://www.cvsa.org)
- Jan. 27, **Heavy Duty Remanufacturing Group Summit**, Las Vegas, Nev. [www.hdr.org](http://www.hdr.org)
- Jan. 27-30, **Heavy Duty Aftermarket Week**, Las Vegas, Nev. [www.hdr.org](http://www.hdr.org)

## FEBRUARY

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

## MARCH

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

## APRIL

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

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

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

## MAY

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

## JUNE

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

## JULY

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

## AUGUST

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

## SEPTEMBER

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

## OCTOBER

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

## NOVEMBER

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

## DECEMBER

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

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# Bringing gas to the Island

Cold Star Freight first to bring natural gas trucking to Vancouver Island. President Kelly Hawes says small fleets have unique concerns.

By James Menzies

VICTORIA, B.C. – Cold Star Freight is breaking new ground with its purchase of 10 natural gas Mack tractors. The company is the first to bring natural gas fuelling infrastructure to Vancouver Island, and is also among the smaller Canadian fleets to adopt the increasingly popular alternative fuel.

Kelly Hawes, president of Cold Star Freight, attended the Natural Gas Vehicle Infrastructure Conference Oct. 1-2, to discuss his company's natural gas strategy. Cold Star runs 35 trucks,

transporting perishable products between the Lower Mainland of B.C. and Vancouver Island.

It partnered with FortisBC through an incentive program that pays back 75% of the cost premium associated with natural gas trucks.

Cold Star also reached a deal with Fortis to build a fast-fill compressed

One frustration for Cold Star has been that natural gas costs considerably more on the Island than on the Lower Mainland.

Hawes said the company briefly considered setting up routes that would enable the trucks to fuel up on the mainland, but wanted to do its part to develop a natural gas fuelling infrastructure on Vancouver Island.

"Once we have this here, we want to go out even to our competitors and say 'There is a solution here,'" Hawes said, adding Fortis is trying to come up with a way to establish more consistent pricing between Vancouver Island and the Lower Mainland.

While Hawes is optimistic about the potential for natural gas, he admitted he still has some concerns. The trucks run 20 hours a day, so unplanned downtime will be extremely disruptive.

"We don't have time to have them in the

'We don't have the capital to withstand a period of trial and error. We don't have excess equipment for downtime.'

Kelly Hawes, Cold Star Freight

natural gas (CNG) fuelling station on the Island.

For a small fleet such as Cold Star, the incentive program and a close collaboration with a fuel supplier was key to taking the leap, Hawes said.

"I can tell you that without that program, we wouldn't even have entertained this idea," Hawes said. "For a small company like ours to take on a challenge with such a huge capital (investment) would be too big a risk."

Hawes estimates Cold Star will reduce its diesel consumption by about 380,000 litres per year once it takes delivery of its natural gas-powered trucks in December.

It is already looking to possibly add another 10 natural gas trucks to operate out of its Nanaimo location in 2014, with a CNG fuelling station to be constructed at its terminal there.

Hawes said his company enjoyed a strong relationship with its local Mack dealer, and was comforted by the fact it could switch to natural gas without a radical departure from its traditional spec'.

"We have a great relationship with our Nanaimo Mack dealer," Hawes said. "We were thrilled when they came to the table with a solution. They also have a maintenance shop in Victoria they are converting to look after all our maintenance requirements. We were able to spec' out the exact truck we currently have, except we're adding the natural gas."

The one change is that the CNG tanks required a slight wheelbase extension. Cold Star has chosen the Cummins Westport ISX12 G engine, mated to a 13-speed transmission, with 45 DGE (diesel gallon equivalent) tanks.

shop," he said.

Cold Star will also have to change how it services its vehicles, which today is often done by a team of mobile mechanics; work on natural gas trucks will have to take place in approved facilities.

Hawes also is cognizant that the province could begin taxing natural gas if it gains traction as a transportation fuel.

Another challenge is how to share the savings with customers and establish a fair fuel surcharge model. Hawes said he's also unsure of when to sell the diesel trucks the natural gas vehicles will be replacing.

He plans to keep the diesel tractors for a few months before selling them so that the company has a backup in place while it learns the nuances of natural gas.

While this experiment is still very much in the early stages, Hawes said he feels natural gas is a viable option for smaller fleets, not just the big guys.

"I do believe there's an opportunity for smaller fleets to get involved in natural gas, but it's important for the OEMs and fuel providers to understand the unique challenges of small fleets," Hawes said. "For example, we don't have the capital to withstand a period of trial and error. We don't have excess equipment for downtime. Those are huge, huge challenges for us."

Still, Hawes said Vancouver Island is home to many small fleets and owner/operators, and as the fuelling infrastructure is developed, there should be some excellent opportunities for them to take advantage of the potential savings. **TW**

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## Volvo building off-road track at Virginia truck plant

By James Menzies

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

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

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

Next, a call was placed to Volvo's construction equipment group, and a good deal secured on equipment rentals. Before long, the dirt behind Volvo's sprawling 1.6 million square foot truck plant was being rearranged and the track began to take shape.

Two months of near-steady rain slowed progress, but the track is now drivable, and on schedule to be completed by next summer. When complete, it will feature a 1.1-mile paved road course (with banked corners so trucks can easily achieve highway speeds) with an off-road vocational truck track within its perimeter. This marks the first time Volvo will have a place of its own to demonstrate the capabilities of its VHD vocational truck in an off-road environment. It also means customers – including fleet owners who may not have a CDL – will be able to get behind the wheel of Volvo vehicles without venturing onto the Interstate.

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

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

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

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

I also had the chance to drive the track, from behind the wheel of a Volvo VHD dump truck, powered by a D13 engine with 500 hp and 1,750 lb.-ft. of torque. The truck was equipped with



Volvo has built an off-road track at its Virginia plant to show off the vocational capabilities of its VHD.

Volvo's I-Shift transmission, so I had the opportunity to see first-hand how several of the I-Shift's features contribute to greater productivity and safety in construction applications.

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

The VHD itself is a vehicle that prob-

ably doesn't get as much attention as it deserves, overshadowed as it is in the construction market by the popular Granite, produced by sister company Mack. Among the VHD's attributes are a wider cab than what is available with the Granite, and a large, one-piece windshield. The interior of the VHD is spacious and comfortable and it's a handsome truck when viewed from the outside.

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

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

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

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

The VHD has never reached its full potential in the vocational truck segment. But when Goran Nyberg was appointed Volvo's North American president of sales and marketing last year, the vocational segment was one in which he asserted Volvo must become a stronger player. Volvo now has at its disposal a powerful tool with which it can demonstrate the capabilities of the VHD in a harsh, off-road environment that closely matches – or surpasses – those in which this truck will be asked to operate on a daily basis. **TW**

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# Mexico trucking industry in transition

Volvo bringing feature-laden, high-tech trucks to Mexican trucking market. We visited the first fleet to take delivery of trucks with the I-Shift transmission.

**By James Menzies**

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

"The technology that arrives in Mexico is lower than what is offered in other countries," Valdes said during a tour of the company's facility.

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

Volvo has announced a new strategy

for the Mexican market, which involves providing feature-laden, high-tech trucks rather than decontented, lower-cost vehicles. TMS has had its eye on the I-Shift for some time, and leapt at the opportunity to be the first Mexican fleet to place an order for VN tractors with the I-Shift transmission. It ordered 100 such trucks earlier this year, and has already taken delivery of 25 of them. So far, with nearly 300,000 kms of experience, the benefits of the I-Shift are meeting expectations.

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



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Handwritten signatures: Kimberly, Lon, Kelly, Bob, Julia, Don, Daniela, Carolyn, Beverly, Jeff, Breyer, Lou.

The trucking industry in Mexico is facing many of the same challenges it is here in Canada, yet it also has to contend with the perception it's a low-tech industry running shoddy equipment. That may be true of some Mexican carriers, but TMS demonstrated during a visit, a high level of sophistication and professionalism. For example, while driver wellness has in recent years been brought to the forefront in the US and Canada, TMS has a program that would rival any you'd find north of Laredo. The company runs an on-site medical facility 24/7, and requires drivers to undergo a mini-physical before setting out on each and every trip. Things like temperature, blood pressure and vision are tested a maximum of one hour before the driver leaves the yard. Think of it as a pre-trip inspection for drivers. If medication is required, the fleet provides it free of charge on the spot.

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

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

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

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

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

Still, the profession remains stigmatized, with few young people looking at truck driving as a viable career. TMS is aiming to change that. It has built a training school at its headquarters and hopes to begin developing its own drivers. Turnover at TMS is about 25%, well below US standards but still a costly problem.

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

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

To avoid these issues, TMS conducts extensive background checks, numerous interviews with various depart-



TMS is Mexico's 16th largest trucking company. It runs a young fleet of Volvo trucks and has begun using the I-Shift automated transmission.

ments, a road test and a mentoring program. For every 10 drivers who apply for a position, only one is selected. It takes about a month, and costs \$1,000, to hire a new driver, Valdes explained.

"Sometimes this can be expensive,

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

Security is not just a concern within the fleet. TMS also contends with real

concerns over hijackings and stolen loads. To reduce the risk, drivers travel in convoys and must stop only at pre-authorized locations for food or fuel. Every truck is satellite-tracked and dispatchers closely monitor the movements of loads. When loads do get stolen, two-thirds of the time TMS is able to recover the cargo with the help of law enforcement.

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

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

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# Parts availability a primary focus of Alliance Truck Parts

By Daniela Piteo

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

Todd Biggs, director of parts and service marketing, Daimler Trucks North America, says the company continues to set the brand apart by ensuring availability – Alliance Truck Parts are stocked at over 800 North American locations; through recognition – the Web site is constantly evolving and a continued social network presence is being built; and through education – Alliance truck parts are serviced and maintained by qualified technicians that thoroughly understand the Daimler product. While Alliance Truck Parts are available throughout North America, the company will continue to expand in the market, hoping to gain the attention of small fleets and owner/operators.

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

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

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

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

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

“There are often service level advantages to visiting a reputable dealer, like an Elite Support certified dealer, but from a parts perspective,

any real advantage is again related to having the right parts in stock, or having quick access to parts distribution systems so any repair can be made quickly,” Biggs said.

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

“Alliance Truck Parts has really embraced technology as a way to help customers get the parts they need to keep their trucks on the road. Better communication tools allow our customers to find parts locations, specific parts and specials much more easily than ever before,” said Biggs. “Alliance uses social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter to inform and to hear back from our customers.”

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

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

In addition to a Web presence, Alli-

ance Truck Parts has invested in mobile technology that works to serve customers on the road.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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 **Kathy Penner** @Kathypenner 14 Nov  
Congratulations to our good friend Norm Sneyd, Bison Transport who  
won the Shaw, Service To Industry Award!

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# Savings out of thin air

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

By James Menzies

"Steer tires mounted two weeks ago were found today at 90 psi. A result of pressure set at indoor temps moving to cooler outdoor temps."

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

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

"So the tire is already at 94 psi, and if it wasn't at the correct inflation pressure to start with, it might be assumable the tire is below 90 psi," Kramer explained. "Then you have a 1% drop in miles per

gallon and anywhere from 9-16% drop in overall mileage if it's not addressed. It can have a huge impact."

And that's just the impact of temperature alone. Unfortunately, few fleets and drivers are adequately maintaining inflation pressures even in ideal weather.

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

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

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

Tire manufacturers have been preaching the importance of maintaining inflation pressures for 100 years, but "It's still not being given adequate attention,"

Kramer contended. Technology such as tire inflation monitoring and management systems have come on-board to help address the issue, but even those systems, when adopted, are not a panacea.

"The reason adoption has not gone further with that technology is, there is no foolproof solution yet that exists," Kramer said. "There are deficiencies with each one and that has hindered further adoption by fleets, so air pressure is still a major issue."

Ideally, inflation pressures should be checked - with a tire gauge, not a ham-

mer - at least once a week. ing can tap into a reputable vendor and access the same expertise. The truck tire market is highly competitive and the in-the-field support being offered by the biggest suppliers is comprehensive. Consultations, however, should begin even before the first tire is installed, pointed out Michelin's Beaudoin.

"When purchasing tires from their dealers, fleets need to make sure they tell their dealers what kind of application they'll be doing," she said. "If you purchase the wrong tire for the wrong application, you can put all the air you want into your tire - you're not going to get the performance you're looking for."

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

"Keep in mind that SmartWay verification is done by the tire company involved - so it's self-policing," warned Cressman.

**'Air pressure is still the most critical component.'**  
**Bert Jones, Bridgestone**

Achieving SmartWay certification is not an easy process, but tire companies can choose different paths to compliance - and it may involve compromises in other equally important areas. "It's not easy to hit the SmartWay target, but sometimes it's such that you sacrifice all other performance attributes," Kramer noted of some suppliers.

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

"It has had a major impact on the industry and it has required a push in technology that I think has been very successful," Jones said. Rolling resistance, which influences a tire's contribution to fuel economy, is a relatively new concept, he added.

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

If fuel economy is important - and it usually is - it's okay to seek out a SmartWay tire, but also ensure the tire's performance in other areas will be up to expectations, advised Michelin's Beaudoin. "Sometimes, you need to sacrifice on mileage to have a SmartWay tire, so you have to be careful about that," she warned. "They may have a great tire on fuel, but if it only lasts 100,000 miles instead of 500,000 miles, it may not be worth it to you." **TW**

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

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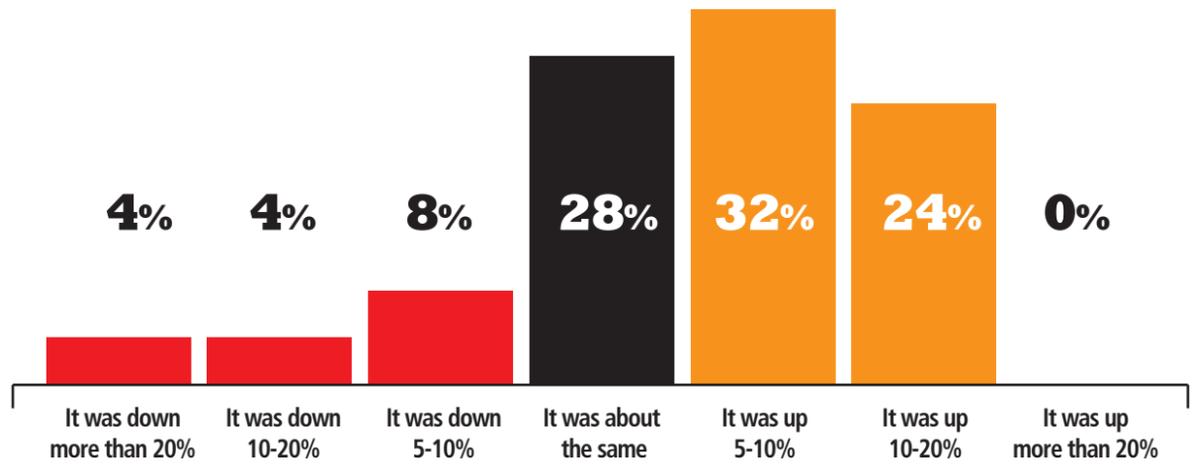
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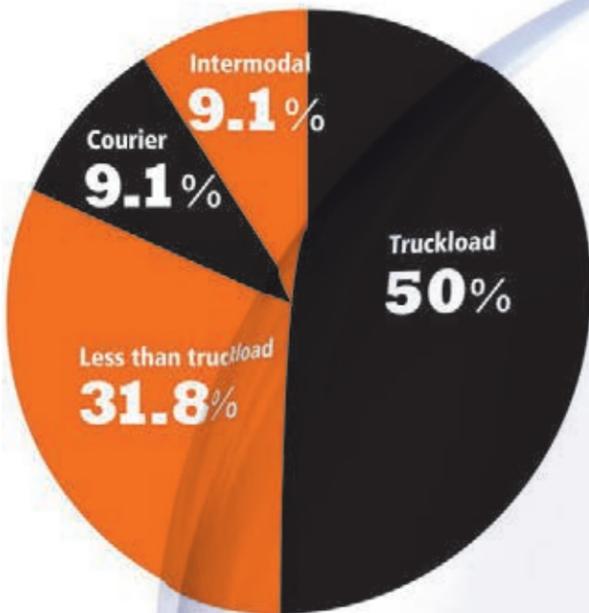
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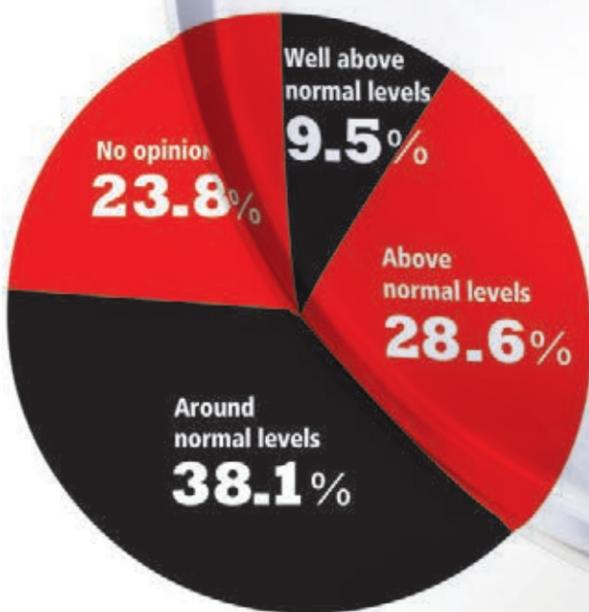
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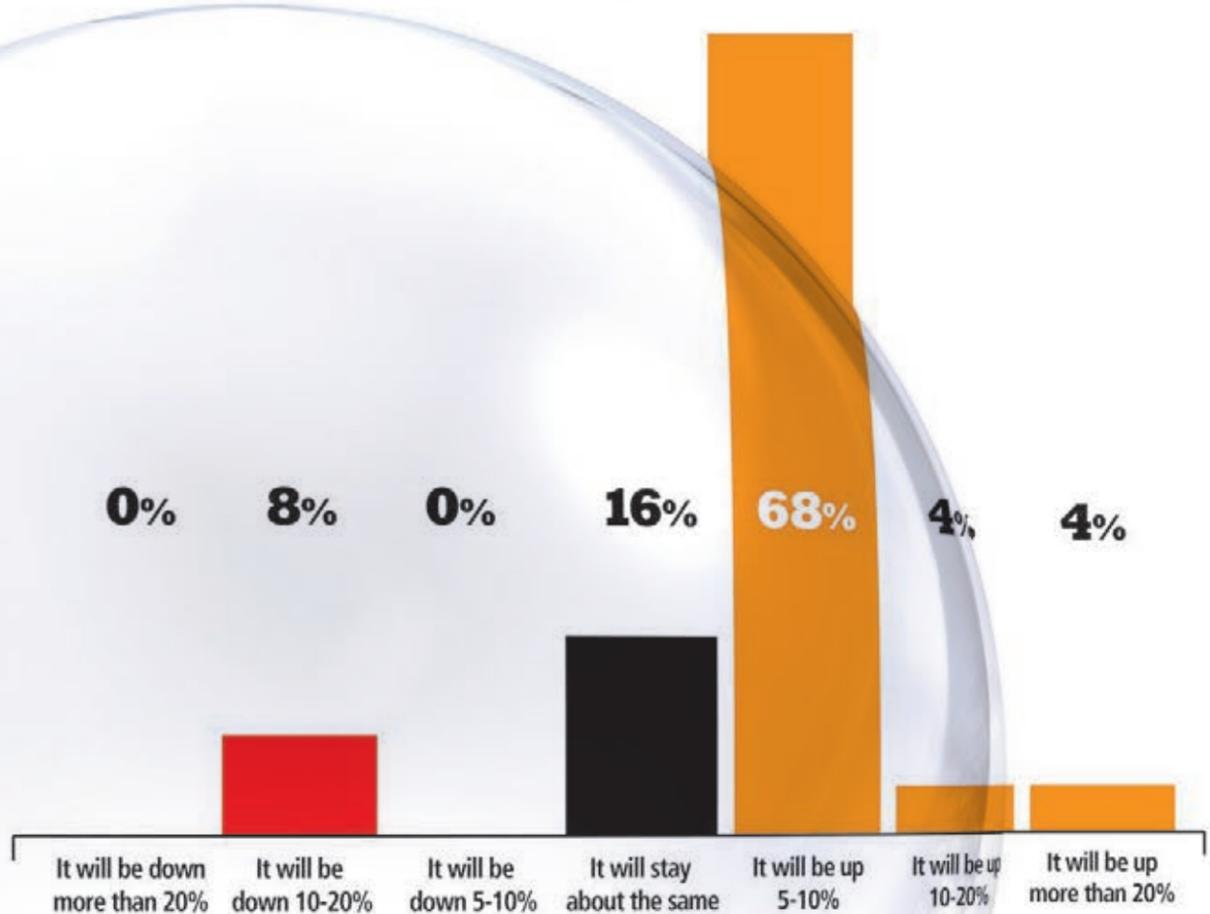
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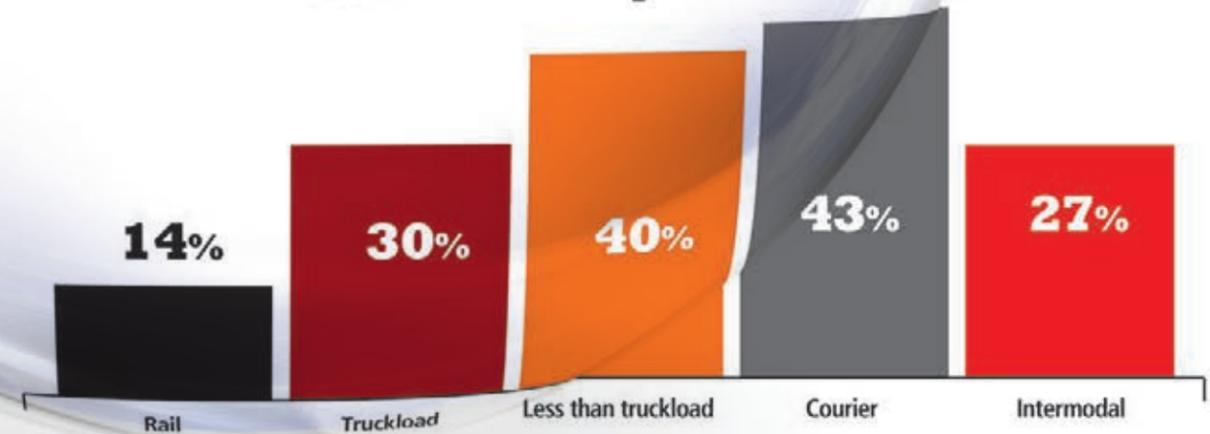
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**Shipping expecting to increase use of surface transportation in 2014**



**W**estern Canada-based shippers are quite optimistic about their freight volume projections with 76% forecasting growth in 2014 and only 16% expecting freight volumes to remain the same, according to our recently completed Transportation Buying Trends Survey, conducted in partnership with CITA and CITT. That is considerably better than the national average, which has 59% of shippers expecting freight volume increases in 2014 and 34% expecting volumes to remain on par with 2013. Western Canadian motor carriers stand to gain from the optimistic outlook on freight volumes with 40% of shippers expecting to increase their use of LTL transportation services and

30% expecting to increase their use of TL services over the previous year. That ranks among the top for surface transportation with only courier showing greater potential for growth. And that may also translate into a rise in freight rates. Our survey found that 50% of Western Canada shippers expect TL to have the greatest pricing power and 32% expect LTL to have the greatest pricing power among all modes.

For a detailed analysis of the trends affecting surface transportation in Western Canada be sure to take in editorial director Lou Smyrlis' address to the upcoming Manitoba Trucking Association's Annual General Meeting March 11, 2014, at the Viscount Gort Hotel. **TW**

# Accuride introduces new coating for steel wheels

By James Menzies

EVANSVILLE, Ind. – Accuride has announced the development of a new coating technology for steel wheels, which it says will extend service life by two years. The new Steel Armor coating will better protect against corrosion, and will be available at no additional cost compared to today's process, the company announced in a Webinar with journalists. The new coating will be available in January 2014, Accuride announced.

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

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

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

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

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

"While others outsource their steel wheel coating, we're committed to keeping that expertise in-house," said Craig Kessler, vice-president of engineering with Accuride.

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

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

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

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# Twin steer prep kits available for Freightliners

PORTLAND, Ore. – Freightliner has announced the availability of twin steer chassis prep kits for its 114SD and 122SD truck models.

The prep kits allow quick aftermarket conversions and installations of second steer axles and heavy-duty suspensions, resulting in faster delivery to the customers, Freightliner says.

Providing the turnkey solution is Simard Suspensions of Baie-Saint-Paul, Quebec. The product is aimed at crane, dump, wrecker, mixer and logging applications.

"To provide a simplified transition from factory to conversion, we developed a cost-effective and timely process that still allows for customization," said Mary Aufdemberg, director of product marketing for Freightliner Trucks. "We are responding to our customers' needs by providing a streamlined solution that will get them on the job as fast as possible." **TW**

By Edo Van Belkom

## THE STORY SO FAR...

Mark is attending Truxpo Can, his favourite truck show of all. While he's at a booth he overhears two men talking. One tells a story about how a driver got him in trouble with the police, while the other says a driver put coloured diesel into his tanks. Both men would sure like to find the guy. Mark knows they are talking about him and slinks away.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

In the northwest corner of the hall there was a display of 20 or so antique trucks, most of them serving as rolling advertisements for the companies that owned them. There were a couple of vintage dump trucks from the 60s, a couple of milk delivery vans from the 50s and no less than three flatbed delivery trucks from the 1930s. Normally Mark would spend an hour going from truck to truck checking to see if each vehicle had been restored to original or updated with modern upgrades that would allow them to keep up to traffic on today's roads.

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

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

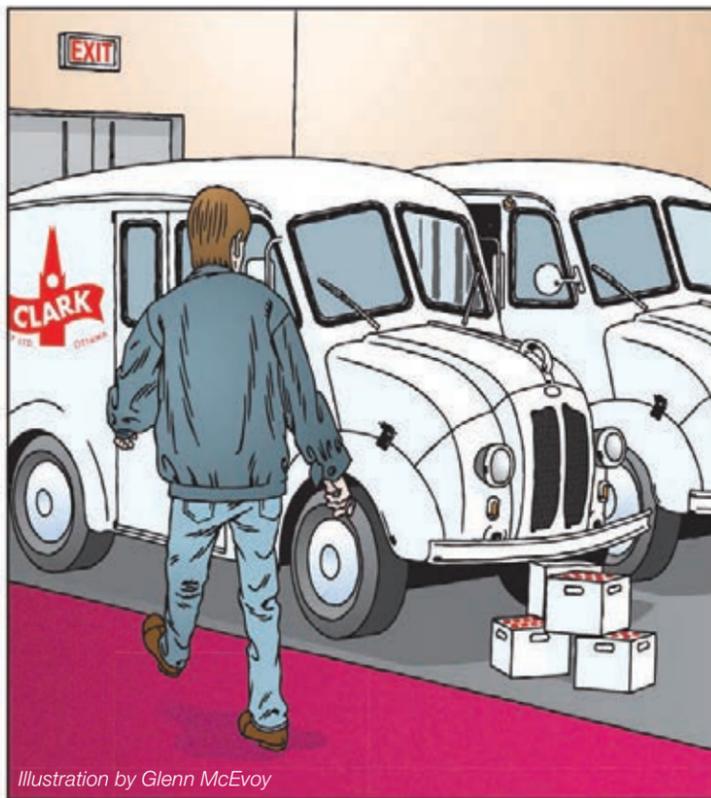


Illustration by Glenn McEvoy

# The Truxpo Gambit

PART 3

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

What to do?

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

He could call the police, but what would he tell them? "I think someone wants to hurt me." And when they asked why he thought that, it wouldn't take long before he sounded crazy and paranoid enough for the police to come looking for him.

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

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

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

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

Mark shook his head, "I sure hope not." **TW**

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

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



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## Bison wins award for corporate culture

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

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

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

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

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

"As a company, it is important that our beliefs and behaviours are instilled in the workforce and that the environment we create allows our people to grow, prosper and excel," Penner said. "It is gratifying to know that the collective efforts of the people of Bison

Transport are being recognized in this great manner. It also serves as a great reminder that it is not just about what you do, but also how you do it and how you treat and interact with others matters too." TW

## Caravan Logistics rebrands, launches new Web site

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

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

The company said in a release that it has "extensive expansion plans," which will make it "an even more powerful player in the trucking and transportation industry." The new Web site can be found at [www.caravangroup.com](http://www.caravangroup.com). TW

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# JIM'S BRAYINGS



Welcome to Jim's Brayings, a quick look at some interesting community news items from across the west that we think will interest you. If you have some news you think will be a good match for this column, pop me off an e-mail at [jim@transportationmedia.ca](mailto:jim@transportationmedia.ca). We can't run everything, of course, but we'll try to get in as much as space permits...



Manitoba Driver of the Year Marc Tricco of Bison Transport was honoured at the association's recent AGM.

*Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! Whether you're holding this issue in your hands before, during or after the holidays, my compatriots and I at Truck West wish you all the best and hope that your 2014 is happy, rewarding and profitable. And thanks for your support and your feedback over the past 12 months. Well, for most of the feedback...*

*As we move ahead to 2014 there are plenty of challenges on the horizon, but there are just as many - or more - opportunities, so there's always reason for good cheer! We'll see over the coming dozen months how it all shakes out.*

## New year's fitness regimen?

Well, I can think of 15 people who may not need a new year's resolution to keep fit. According to Vedder Transportation's Fred Zweep, the 15 folk in question are the group that took on a corporate health and wellness challenge that started in September of 2012, culminating in the Tough Mudder Whistler Challenge last June. Dubbed (at least on Vedder's Web site) "Probably the toughest event on the planet," the Challenge consists of 19 clicks' worth of trails, mud and military style obstacles. The event puts participants' perseverance, will, grit, determination and camaraderie to the test from start to finish. And maybe after that.

The B.C.-based Vedder team "looked it right in the face and emerged victorious," so good on them!

The challenge was documented by Dave Brunt and you can catch a rogues' gallery and a video on their Web site at [www.veddertransportation.com/fitness-challenge.php](http://www.veddertransportation.com/fitness-challenge.php). Congratulations to the "fabulous 15!"

## Industry excellence in Manitoba...

From the Manitoba Trucking Association comes word of the province's top

drivers, recognized at the MTA's Fall Awards Gala on November 18. Awards handed out included:

MTA 2013 Pioneer Club Inductees: Gary Arnold and Gerald Gardy, both whom are with Arnold Bros. Transport. The Pioneers Club recognizes members of the industry who've been employed in the trucking business for at least twenty-five years continually, are currently in a management role and who have made positive contributions to industry during that time.

MTA-Volvo Trucks Canada Manitoba Driver of the Year: Marc Tricco of Bison Transport, honoured for his 33 years free of accidents as well as his commitment to a safer industry.

MTA-Payne Transportation LP Associate of the Year: Bert Wiebe, of Marsh Canada, who has been an invaluable resource to the MTA for more than 20 years. Wiebe started his career as a truck mechanic, then spent 27 years focused on safety and compliance in the Transportation Sector.

MTA-RBC Royal Bank Service to Industry Award: Tom Payne Jr., of Payne Transportation. Tom began his career while still a teenager and went from doing odd jobs (he impersonated James Bond villains with deadly hats), to dispatcher and then to commercial driver.

In 2008, Tom was appointed President and General Manager of Payne Transportation. Active in the industry for more than 30 years, Tom has served with the MTA, the Canadian Trucking Alliance, CentrePort Canada and the Winnipeg Airports Authority.

MTA-SHAW Tracking Distinguished Member Award: Penner International for its generations of dedication to the efforts of the MTA and the industry.

Penner is a three generational family-owned company that got things rolling with one truck back in 1923

and now operates from locations in ON, MB, AB and B.C.. The Penner family has also been active with Provincial and National Trucking associations, with several of their team serving in executive positions with the MTA.

## ...and in Saskatchewan

The Saskatchewan Trucking Association held its 76th Annual General Meeting and Gala on Oct. 19 at the Hotel Saskatchewan Radisson Plaza, with over 150 showing up for the bash.

Perhaps since it was in Saskatchewan, and lots of people there undoubtedly had a Grey Cup-hosting date in late November on their minds, they broadcast the Saskatchewan Roughrider/B.C. Lions CFL game at the event (the Riders won 35-14), which also carried a Roughrider green and white theme.

Awards were given out as well. Driver of the year (sponsored by Volvo Trucks Canada) was Harold Kinvig of C.S. Day Transport. The Dispatcher of the Year, sponsored annually by Cervus Equipment Peterbilt, went to Timothy Moorman, dispatcher for D.J. Knoll Transport. The Service to Industry Award, sponsored by Shaw Tracking, went to Jim Friesen.

Congratulations to all!

## Giving Rimrock another shot

The Alberta Motor Transport Association is moving up - or is it moving back? The group has announced that its 2014 Management Conference and Annual General Meeting weekend (scheduled for April 25-26) is returning to its old haunts up the hillside, at Banff's Rimrock Hotel, after a couple of years at the famed Banff Springs.

"The committee thought it was time for a change of venue," AMTA executive director Don Wilson said, "and the Rimrock welcomed us back with open arms."

Friday night at the Conference traditionally means a theme-based party. This year's saw folks dressing up circa the 1970's, and you wouldn't have believed all the acid dropped that night!

Okay, it was acetylsalicylic acid, a.k.a. aspirin, but there sure were a lot of ex-hippies out that night!

Next year's theme will be "Sand and Surf," so if you plan to attend better start "digging" out suitable shorts, Hawaiian shirts, flip flops and shades.

Another big reason to attend: 2014's Saturday lunch keynote will be given by Michael "Pinball" Clemons, CFL legend and vice-chairman of the frigin' Argos.

Clemons was a great player who is now a much sought after speaker who exemplifies the qualities of personal ex-

cellence, teamwork, community leadership and overcoming the odds.

## Like reading? How about a free e-book?

From the BCTA comes news that professional drivers across North America are being offered free digital downloads of some works by B.C.-based suspense author William Deverell. According to the BCTA's Web site, Steve Scherf Audio Books is offering a free digital download from one of the titles listed below.

Here are the titles that are being offered:

- Needles (won the \$50,000 Seal First Novel award in 1979) - Corrupt streets of Vancouver in the early 70's Chinese heroin trade.

- High Crimes (1981) - Smuggling large amounts of pot from Colombia to Newfoundland, and the RCMP foibles that ensue.

- Mecca (1983) - A Montreal poet/terrorist infiltrates a European/Middle East cell bent on starting World War III.

- Mindfield (1990) - A Montreal cop underwent electro-shock/drug therapy at an institution funded by the CIA in his early years and is starting to remember...

- Kill All The Lawyers (1992) - Members of a group of Vancouver lawyers start to die after a series of trials that don't seem to have any connection...

Of course, there's a catch:

1. You need an account with either Amazon.com or Audible.com, although you won't go through them directly to receive these books.

2. Send an e-mail to Steve Scherf, [stevescherfaudiobooks@gmail.com](mailto:stevescherfaudiobooks@gmail.com), with the title from the list above that you'd like to receive and the e-mail address registered with your Amazon.com account. Steve will send a free digital copy of the audio book for download to your iPod, iPad, smartphone or other device.

3. In return, Steve asks that if you enjoyed the book you post a short review on the Amazon or Audible site, and spread the word about Deverill's work and Steve Scherf Audio Books to other drivers.

If you have questions, please contact Steve at the e-mail address above.

For more information about the company and William Deverell, visit [www.stevescherfaudiobooks.com](http://www.stevescherfaudiobooks.com).

Note: neither the BCTA nor me - nor Transportation Media - have a stake in this offer; we're just passing the notice along. **TW**

*That's it for this month's prattling. As always, if you have an item you think deserves the attention of your peers (assuming you have any!), feel free to fire an email off to me at [jim@transportation-media.ca](mailto:jim@transportation-media.ca). We try to get as much stuff in here as space permits. Happy New Year!*



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Rick Reinbolt,  
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