

# TRUCKWEST

Western Canada's Trucking Newspaper Since 1989 • March 2014 Volume 25, Issue 3

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A new distribution centre and industrial park taking shape in Delta, B.C. near Port Metro Vancouver, already has one trucking tenant and the developers say the location is making it attractive to other distributors and truckers from further inland, including Alberta.



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## Down by Boundary Bay

New distribution facility located near the port aims to woo distributors from Calgary

**By Jim Bray**

**DELTA, B.C.** – Truckers in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia will soon have a new place to go for pick-ups and deliveries, thanks to a state-of-the-art facility scheduled to open its doors in May. The Boundary Bay Industrial Park is a project of the Dayhu Group and promises nearly a million square feet of space for companies looking for a location close to Deltaport.

"We are a firm believer that the flow of goods from Deltaport is going to dictate a growth of concentration of industrial buildings south of the Fraser," Paul Tilbury, Dayhu's COO, told *Truck West*. He noted that Dayhu, which already has in excess of four million square feet of distribution-type buildings in B.C. and Alberta, saw the pending completion of the South Fraser Perimeter Road as an opportunity for them to build what turned out to be nearly 900,000 sq.-ft. of distribution space

"arguably in the closest proximity to Deltaport that any building can offer," he said. "And so as an industrial landlord, it was a natural extension of our business for us to commit to a development at that facility."

Tilbury said the 45-acre site near the Boundary Bay airport, which he described as being about a seven minute drive from Deltaport along the new highway, is being built in two phases. The first 440,000 sq.-ft. facility, which will be ready for action by this May, has snagged its first tenant already. "We've got one client who's taken 110,000 square feet," Tilbury said, noting that the building is designed to accommodate up to four tenants in all. "We will then build the second building, or Phase 2 of the development, which will effectively mirror Building One," he said. Dayhu hopes to start construction on that phase later this year.

Chris McAuley, of CBRE, said he located the

**Continued on page 5**

## WCB rates rise, fall or stand pat

**By Jim Bray**

**I**t looks like 2014's WCB rates are a bit of an up and down proposition this year, depending on which western province you live in.

In B.C., according to WorkSafeBC, rates will increase by less than a tenth of a percentage of "the average employer's total payroll costs," which the organization says is similar to the 2013 hike, which came after "nearly a decade of level or declining rates."

What the new figures mean in cash terms is that the average rate per \$100 of employers' assessable payroll will increase from \$1.63 to \$1.70, which WorkSafeBC says is just under a 5% increase "in nominal terms," and means a small business employer with a payroll of \$500,000 and an average premium rate would see a rate increase of \$400 (\$33 per month) for the year.

It may not be a huge hike, but coming as it does at a time when businesses are struggling to stay in the black, it undoubtedly doesn't help. On the other hand, it appears that companies may be their own worst enemies when it comes to setting rates.

**Continued on page 8**

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# So, you want to haul dangerous goods?

## Editorial Comment

James Menzies

**I** have spent considerable time this month contemplating the transportation of dangerous goods by truck and changes that may be foisted upon that segment of the industry as a result of the terrible rail tragedy at Lac-Megantic, Que. last summer.

Federal Transport Minister Lisa Raitt has clearly stated she feels the Lac-Megantic incident wasn't just a rail issue, but a transportation issue, and she has vowed to review TDG by all modes, including truck. In fact, at upcoming hearings to review the transportation of dangerous goods, two full days are expected to be spent discussing truck transportation.

The concerns, some of which I've outlined in a feature you can find on Trucknews.com, include worries that the feds will impose further restrictions or tighter regulations upon trucking companies, even though dangerous goods truckers are already highly regulated – much more so than rail – and can boast a safety record that's really quite impeccable given the volumes of product being transported on a daily basis. It takes a special kind of driver to haul dangerous goods, and most carriers in this segment are cognizant of this. They seek out highly skilled drivers and then diligently train them to become product-handling experts.

I spoke to Marcel Pouliot, vice-president of safety and industrial services with Trimac, to find out the screening process it puts new hires through before handing them the keys.

The company has produced product

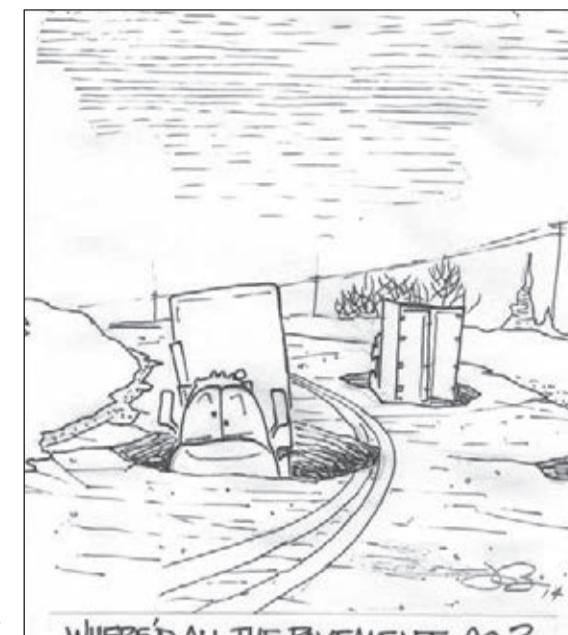
stewardship manuals for each of the commodities it hauls, and requires drivers to familiarize themselves with the material, so they're aware of the handling characteristics and unique challenges related to each and every product. This includes learning the intricacies of the equipment that's used to transport each of those commodities. Once classroom and hands-on equipment training has been conducted, drivers are paired with a driver-instructor, who they will job-shadow to learn first-hand how to safely load, deliver and unload product.

Once they demonstrate a proficiency in these areas, new hires are then turned over to a full-time driver trainer, whose job is to perform a job task observation of the new hire to determine whether or not they are ready to be sent out on their own.

The driver trainer conducts a road test, a product-handling test and a knowledge test. Even at this point, some drivers are released from the company if they don't demonstrate the appropriate skill set. Others are finally allowed to begin making deliveries on their own. But the training doesn't end there. The driver trainers continue to perform job task observations on all existing drivers at least once per year. Pouliot told me that Trimac currently employs 1,150 drivers in Canada and last year performed 3,482 job task observations.

"That is how we train our drivers and how we verify the level of competency of our drivers," Pouliot said. "We coach them on an ongoing basis throughout their career."

Not only are dangerous goods drivers required to be professional drivers behind the wheel, they must also be prod-



WHERE'D ALL THE PAVEMENT GO?

uct-handling and equipment experts. There's a shared sense of responsibility for safety from the top to the bottom, and Trimac is not unique within the trucking industry in this regard.

Following the Lac-Megantic tragedy, Ed Burkhardt, chairman of the now-bankrupt railway that caused the catastrophe, gallingly shifted the blame to his employees. "I wasn't the guy who didn't set the brakes on the train," he told media. To decide trucking needs rail-type changes imposed on it because of an isolated incident would be like assuming, from Burkhardt's egregious comments, that the entire rail industry shares a similarly cavalier attitude towards safety. These types of generalizations must be avoided unless clear supporting evidence is provided. **TW**

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## Stop the stupid scorpion

**D**o you know the story about the scorpion and the frog? That's the one where a scorpion begs a frog to swim him across the river.

'No way,' says the frog, concerned that as soon as they're in the middle of the river, the scorpion would sting him.

'Why would I do that?' the scorpion replies. 'I'd drown with you.'

The frog can't argue with that logic so he lets the scorpion hop on his back and starts to swim across. Sure enough, right in the middle of the river, the scorpion stings the frog.

'Now we're both going to die,' screams the frog. 'I know,' replies the scorpion. 'I just couldn't help myself.'

To be honest, I never really got the moral of that story. Why would the scorpion be that stupid?

Yet, when you think about it, we have been that stupid when it comes to solving the driver shortage the past 20 years. Can you really call it a driver shortage when driver turnover is so high?

I had to laugh when a few weeks ago

## The view with Lou

**Lou Smyrlis**



the American Trucking Associations published a report indicating the annualized driver turnover rate for large truckload fleets improved in the third quarter of 2013 by two percentage points to 97%. That's a number we are supposed to feel positive about? The "improvement" still leaves large US truckload carriers three percentage points short of turning over their entire driving staff every year.

I realize Canadian TL fleet turnover levels are not that high but would anyone compare our turnover rate with other competing industries? At what point can we just admit the real problem is not so much a shortage of drivers but a problem with not treating and paying drivers well enough to keep them? Well, whatever your opinion on the reality of the driver shortage, the industry does have a clear chance to take a positive step.

A new national advisory committee, Supporting Women in Freight Transportation, has been formed to help women find and develop careers in the trucking industry. Trucking HR Canada is the lead organization behind SWIFT, but a broad range of senior managers, directors, presidents and C-level executives are involved as committee members, including our own Transportation Media associate publisher Kathy Penner.

According to figures issued by SWIFT, only 3% of truck drivers, mechanics, transport trailer technicians, and cargo workers in Canada are women. So there is a lot to be gained by attracting women to the industry. Yet, letters to the editor since we posted the SWIFT announcement a few weeks ago point out that one of the biggest obstacles for the few women already in trucking is the industry's own attitude towards women.

We have a clear opportunity here to engage a part of the labour pool that has primarily ignored us in the past. Can we stop acting the part of the stupid scorpion? **TW**

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# CLASS 8

## TRUCK SALES TRENDS

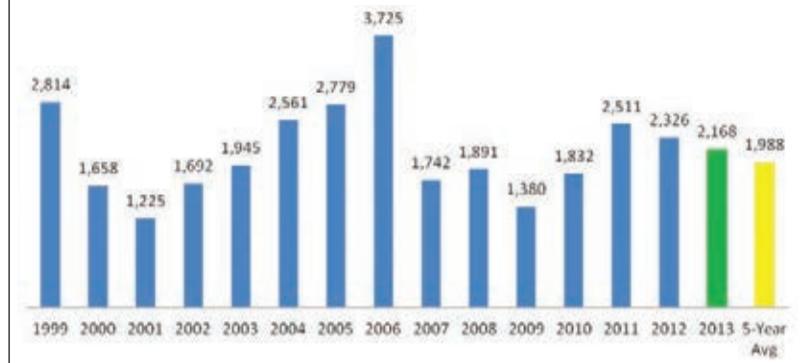
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### Monthly Class 8 Sales – Dec 13

The year closed with Class 8 truck sales of 2,168, reflecting the trend Class 8 sales have experienced for most of 2013, coming in slightly behind last year's totals. It made for the seventh best December going back to 1999. Only International, Kenworth and Peterbilt posted slightly higher figures than the previous year. The sales total for the month is also less than 200 above the five-year average.

OEM	This Month	Last Year
Freightliner	503	575
International	235	224
Kenworth	309	276
Mack	209	314
Peterbilt	365	317
Volvo	312	357
Western Star	235	263
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>2168</b>	<b>2326</b>

### Historical Comparison – Dec 13 Sales

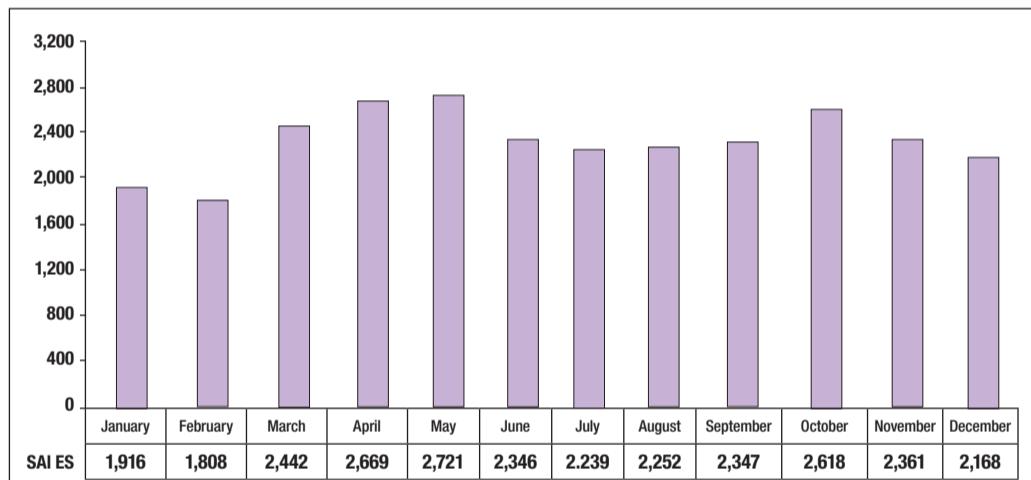


### Class 8 Sales (YTD Dec 13) by Province and OEM

OEM	BC	ALTA	SASK	MAN	ONT	QUE	NB	NS	PEI	NF	CDA
Freightliner	571	832	215	378	2,987	1,235	407	124	25	51	6,825
Kenworth	744	1,790	503	104	801	834	110	0	0	0	4,886
Mack	157	360	200	62	817	378	92	75	0	14	2,155
International	151	718	79	204	1,842	759	133	48	35	34	4,003
Peterbilt	564	1,286	321	251	685	504	173	60	0	0	3,844
Volvo	368	310	127	222	1,604	800	138	70	0	13	3,652
Western Star	358	809	78	79	476	446	63	95	5	37	2,446
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>2,913</b>	<b>6,105</b>	<b>1,523</b>	<b>1,300</b>	<b>9,212</b>	<b>4,956</b>	<b>1,116</b>	<b>472</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>27,811</b>

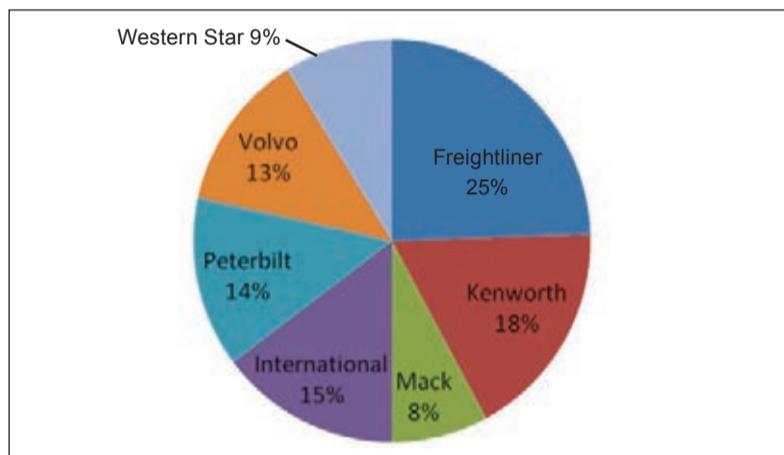
With the numbers from the final month of 2013 in, the year closed as the 7th best year for Class 8 sales since 1999, which is pretty much where it has tracked for most of the past 12 months. The slippage expected for the final quarter did not really surface till the final month, whose numbers were slightly disappointing although still above 2,000. As a result total Class 8 truck sales came in about 700 short of our revised estimate of around 28,500 vehicles for 2013. The year was also almost 5,000 trucks above the five-year average.

### 12-Month Sales Trends



Class 8 sales in 2013 may not be as strong as last year's but they have come in above 2,000, reminiscent of the industry's capacity boom years of 2005 to 2007, for 10 straight months now. The big question was whether sales would hold up over the summer months and they did. The next question was how they would hold up for the final quarter of 2013 and October and November both showed positive results. December was a bit disappointing but still came in above 2,000.

### Market Share Class 8 – Dec 13 YTD



There has been little change in market share over the past year. Freightliner, last year's Canadian market leader, was solidly in control of the market share lead all year long, and wrapped up 2013 with about a quarter of Canadian Class 8 truck sales. Kenworth finished 2012 in the number two spot with an 18% market share and has repeated its performance in 2013. Navistar International finished the year with 15% market share followed by Peterbilt which has a 14% share of the Canadian Class 8 market.

Source: Canadian Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association

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# Access to Pacific Rim markets improved, developers say

**Continued from page 1**

site initially and was involved in the purchase, design and marketing of the project, an association he said goes back about three years.

"We needed to find good, suitable land for a distribution facility," he said, "but with the lack of land in Metro Vancouver, it took us some time to find a suitable site. There are not too many 40- to 50-acre sites just out there ready for us to build on."

The primary target market for the facility is distribution companies, and to help snag them, Dayhu has not only built with a large footprint, but a tall one as well. "One of the unique features of the building is the 36-foot clear (unimpeded heights of the building) ceiling space," Tilbury said. "There's a move in North America to cubic storage and whilst historically buildings used to be 16-foot clear, most recent product in the Vancouver market is 30- to 32-foot clear." Dayhu upped the ante, he said, because it provides up to about 15% more cubic storage for businesses which "allows them to accommodate seasonal fluctuations in storage requirements within the same space and avoids businesses having to go out and lease secondary facilities."

The plan to go with 36-foot clear headroom was a compromise between offering maximum space while maintaining financial effectiveness for the tenants.

"A lot of these transportation companies are very cost-conscious, which they should be," McAuley said, "so we looked at the costs – because material handling equipment is a big cost for people – and the material handling equipment to go to the 36-foot clear is becoming more cost-effective."

Pushing the envelope higher than that, however, becomes a lot more expensive. "If you're going to go higher, you have to pay to heat that space, it changes your lighting, all different aspects of the building," he said, "so we wanted to make sure we were building something relevant to today's industry and that's going to be relevant for a long time to come."

Truckers may find the facility amenable to them, thanks to 140-plus trailer parking stalls on the property.

"A lot of businesses like to be able to rotate their trailers away from loading docks prior to shipping," Tilbury said, "and a lot of buildings in the Lower Mainland, because land is so tight, are unable to offer extensive trailer parking. We've been able to accommodate that on the site."

Tilbury claimed the lack of such facilities in the Lower Mainland to date has actually sent companies scrambling as far afield as the Calgary area – which is obviously nowhere near the ports, but which does offer plenty of wide open spaces.

"There's availability of land in Calgary that has not been available in the Lower Mainland," he said, "and you'll find in Calgary numerous buildings which are in excess of 400,000-500,000 square feet. And what we're finding as we speak to potential tenants is that it's not that (they) wanted to be in Calgary, it's just that they found themselves having to be in Calgary because there's no viable options in the Lower Mainland market. We're now providing those options and with the proximity to Deltaport, which handles in excess of 70% of all of the con-

tainers coming into the Port Metro facilities, the nearness of the import/export market is a strong attractive factor about this particular site that Calgary doesn't offer."

The obviously bullish-on-Boundary Bay Tilbury suggested that such comparatively easy access to the Pacific Rim could even tempt some established players to pull up stakes and abandon Alberta's blue skies and dryness for the West Coast.

"We've had companies that have otherwise located in Calgary and exist in Calgary looking at our site as a viable alternative and a viable opportunity for them to finally find a location in the Lower Mainland that suits their needs," he said. He wasn't at liberty to share the identities of any such potential tenants, but he did hint that a number of groups are in various stages

of doing their due diligence.

Everything appears so far to be on track for the facility to open on schedule. "Most often what we do with these facilities is that we have a fairly tight construction schedule," Tilbury said, "and as long as our contractor sticks to that schedule we'll be actually done ahead of May. It's really subject to their own timeline, but if somebody wanted to be operating in that building as of May 1, we're in a position to deliver that."

McAuley noted there are ongoing talks with about six companies for possible tenancy at the facility and said an announcement could be made by around the end of February. He also credited the old 'if you build it, they will come' factor as one of the things that helped make the Boundary Bay project attractive to potential tenants.

"It's not too often that you do a lot of

pre-leasing," he said, crediting Dayhu with putting its corporate mouth where its money is. "In marketing, the building usually has to be up before people make commitments to you. There are places that will build for you, if the right tenant comes along, but clients need to make decisions and need to be in and operating within six to nine months. They can't wait for an 18- to 24-month development cycle. So with Dayhu going ahead on spec', that's why we're able to draw the activity here."

McAuley said he's quite happy with the level of activity to date, and that it shows there's pent-up demand for companies looking for a strategic location in Metro Vancouver.

"What we're offering is a viable option to Calgary, if you want to be closer to the port for your distribution. People are looking at that now." TW



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## Why single-trip permits for oilfield services companies may be more costly than they appear

By James Menzies

CALGARY, Alta. – Alberta-based oilfield services companies that are using single-trip permits to conduct work in neighbouring provinces may be doing it wrong. And it could cost them a bundle of money.

Sandy Johnson, managing partner with North Star Fleet Solutions, says many oilfield services companies don't realize they're required to pay provincial sales tax on equipment used in B.C. or Saskatchewan, and given the cost of that equipment, it could amount to quite the bill.

During a recent webinar on the topic,

Johnson gave the example of an Alberta-based oilfield services provider using a million dollar piece of equipment in B.C. In addition to requiring Alberta plates (\$2,400) and a trip permit (\$312 per month), the company would also be expected to pay 7% provincial sales tax on the equipment, which totals \$70,000. But since B.C. has a temporary use formula

'B.C. and Saskatchewan are saying,  
Have you paid your sales tax?'

**Sandy Johnson**

in place, the equipment owner would have to pay just one third of that amount initially, which still totals about \$23,000 in the first year. (The one-third formula applies each year of use until the tax payable of 100% is reached in the third year, Johnson explained).

The situation is similar in Saskatchewan, where a 5% provincial sales tax exists.

The alternative, said Johnson, is to permanently licence the equipment for use in neighbouring jurisdictions.

A piece of equipment that will spend 80% of its year in Alberta, and the other 20% divided between B.C. and Saskatchewan can be permanently licensed for \$8,043 per year.

"The benefit of that is that you're licensed for the entire year, you have all three provinces and it costs about \$24,000 for three years which is what it would cost for one year in B.C.," Johnson explained.

It also makes it easier to charge back the licensing fees to the customers, she said, because a simple formula can be used to determine the daily rate of operating the equipment outside its home jurisdiction.

And, "You can leave and go across all three provinces at a moment's notice, you don't have to wait around for a permit," she added.

Johnson estimates about 85% of oilfield services providers would benefit from the permanent licensing method, but she said few take advantage of it, not realizing the tax implications involved with a single-trip permit strategy. She said provincial governments have the ability to demand retroactive payment for unpaid sales tax and are on the lookout for these scenarios.

"B.C. and Saskatchewan are saying, 'Have you paid your sales tax? We want our money.' The gambler may buy a single-trip permit and not pay tax, but if you don't and you're audited, you're going to pay the tax and they can go back a number of years and collect that money, plus penalty and interest," Johnson warned.

The same applies to trailers, tires and commercial vehicle repairs, she added.

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# Rates a reflection of workplace safety records

**Continued from page 1**

"The explanation for the increase is that there are increasing claims costs and the underlying reason for the increasing claims cost is that there are a higher volume of long-term disability awards," said Louise Yako, president and CEO of the B.C. Trucking Association. "That makes sense intuitively because the average age of workers is increasing, so as you get older there is a greater likelihood that you're going to take longer to get better if you become injured."

And of course health care costs continue to rise across North America.

It isn't all health issues, however. "The second reason is that the WCB investment portfolio is quite conservative," Yako noted, "and in a low-interest rate environment we're not expecting a high return in investments."

She expects WCB premiums will continue increasing, but noted that the industry is taking some proactive measures such as the establishment of the Trucking Safety Council of B.C. which she said is "developing proactive programs for employers and hopefully, as the programs and services they offer increase and the demand and awareness in the industry increases, that will help to mitigate increasing costs based on increasing injuries."

John McMahon, the Trucking Safety Council of B.C.'s executive director, echoed Yako's sentiments, noting that his group's main focus is on "protecting the people involved in moving product up and down the supply chain. We are trying to work with the commercial vehicle inspector and the RCMP, the BCTA

and ICBC to look at some of the behaviours in and around trucks."

He pointed to an educational ini-

hind trucks, and the like, and said the TSCBC is trying to get something similar happening in B.C., "but with the limited resources that we have, we're trying to see if there's an appetite amongst the key players to do something similar here."

McMahon also touted his organization's COR program as a way to not only work toward enhanced safety, but more productivity as well - and how such recognition can help in market-

ing a company.

"We see the program as enabling companies to clearly state to their competitors and potential employees that they care about workplace safety and they're less likely to let you down. They are genuinely trying to run their business safely and look after your health, safety and welfare if you're an employee or a contractor. Of if you're acting as a supplier within the supply chain, we're going to get your product where it needs to be, on time, because they've got an efficient, safe operation."

Rates in Alberta went down for 2014, according to Don Wilson of the Alberta Motor Transport Association, who said that three groups (general and specialized trucking and garbage collection/disposal) will all see a break on premiums, while 88% of the overall industry will see a decrease in their rates.

"I know WCB (rates) aren't totally apples to apples right across (the west)," said the AMTA's executive director, "but I do know there seem to be some positive results across the board in Alberta, certainly in our industry, which is a positive thing. It's trending in the right direction."

Wilson said he'd like to think the rate reduction has to do with some of the initiatives that the trucking - and other industries - are doing at pushing safety.

"The pushing of the CORs now - that's big here," he said, noting that "a lot of companies now are saying if you're going to haul for us you have to have a COR - like the City of Calgary and others - so that's raised the bar substantially. I'd like to think some of that is the reason why it's trending in a positive light. It would be nice."

In Saskatchewan, meanwhile, WCB rates are up slightly, according to the STA's Al Rosseker.

He told *Truck West* he'd like to be proactive about the situation, through enhanced safety initiatives, but keeps running into roadblocks.

"It's an odd thing for us in that we've promoted a safety association called Road Safe Saskatchewan, and we've tried to get it off the ground with the help of the WCB but they've basically turned us down three times," he said, noting "we don't have a lot of resources here and after devoting 18 months we just threw up our hands and aren't playing the game anymore. WCB in Saskatchewan seems to be content with what's happened."

The issue Rosseker cites as keeping Road Safe Saskatchewan stillborn is funding.

"We're one of the few trucking asso-  
Continued on page 10

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**10 | WCB RATES**

# WCB rates

Continued from page 8

ciations in Canada that isn't subsidized by government," he said. "We're primarily a lobby group, a very small one. Right now our staff is less than four - so you kind of pick and choose your priorities and we certainly push safety so we do what we can do."

Manitoba Trucking Association head Bob Dolyniuk noted the average assessment rate did not change for 2014 in that province, but that's the exception rather than the rule for the past few years.

"As far as the trucking overall assessment rate is concerned, it has gone from \$2.82 in 2011 to \$2.91 in 2012 and \$3.01 in 2013," he said, suggesting that "these overall assessment rate increases are due to increase claims costs during this same period of time."

The MTA also noted in a recent publication that Manitoba's average rate remains one of the lowest in Canada and quoted Winston Majaraj, president and CEO of the province's WCB, as saying "our rates are a competitive advantage for Manitoba employers. The fact that most employers will either see a decrease in their rates or no increase tells us that our message of workplace safety is being heard."

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## Report finds Provencher Boulevard should remain a truck route

**WINNIPEG, Man.** – The City of Winnipeg has released a report, concluding that Provencher Blvd. should remain a truck route.

Delisting it as a truck route, as some had advocated for, would not only be inconsistent with the guiding principles of the Transportation Master Plan, but would also produce negative safety results, the report concluded.

The Manitoba Trucking Association welcomed the findings.

"While we don't agree with their approach, we understand the intentions of certain citizens in the St. Boniface area who are attempting to improve their neighbourhood," said Terry Shaw, general manager of the MTA. "That said, we believe that their wants are far outweighed by the needs of the rest of the citizens of Winnipeg. This report, authored by a City of Winnipeg Professional Traffic Operations Engineer, confirms that position. Provencher Boulevard is a full-time truck route and needs to stay that way." **TW**

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# The challenge of managing digital tax documents

In last month's column, I wrote about the various types of tax deductions that may apply to you and encouraged you to gather up all your receipts and other paperwork.

That gathering up of receipts is what this month's column is about. Because it sure has changed, hasn't it? In the old days, all of your tax documents and other paperwork were printed on paper. You had a copy you could hold in your hands and file away.

Today, virtually everything is online or "e"-something accessible.

In many ways, electronic documents and online access have made it easier to manage the statements, transaction records, and tax slips you need to produce an accurate return and properly support your claims.

The many benefits to electronic documents include lower mailing costs, to less paper, to reducing the space required to store printed copies.

Given the savings for banks, businesses, and government agencies, it's virtually certain that virtual documents are here to stay.

But electronic documents have created a new set of challenges and conflicts,

## Tax Talk

Scott Taylor



especially in trucking.

Electronic logbooks or electronic on-board recorders (EOBRs) are a prime example. Last month, as everyone started gathering up their tax documents, the light bulb went off: where are my logbooks? By law, a logbook is required in order to show the hours you work and rest – it's a safety record. If you claim meals as a deduction on your tax return, your logbook is also a tax document.

Here's where the first purpose conflicts with the second.

Canadian and US laws require truck drivers to keep their logbooks for six months. It's standard practice in the industry that on the first day of the seventh month, all logbooks are destroyed.

If you don't have a copy of it, your logbook for the month is gone forever.

I have spoken to two of the major EOBR suppliers and they both assure me that drivers and owner/operators can indeed download their logbook data

(you'll need to talk to your carrier about accessing the records).

But the six-month rule is an issue. If you haven't been downloading or printing your logs over the past 12-plus months, your data may be gone.

The best you can do is to download as much of your logbook as you can right away, and then set up reminders to start yet another routine and download your logbook each month on a go-forward basis. Another important tax document that's easily accessible online is your bank statement. Most banks provide Internet access to statements and other records related to your business and personal accounts. But make sure you're getting the right information. There is a big difference between a bank statement and a transaction printout.

Bank statements are guaranteed to be accurate and, most importantly, any cheques you have used will be included as a scanned item. How else are you going to prove that payments out of your account went to truck service or other costs rather than to you? Cancelled cheques and your bank statements are absolutely required for bookkeeping and CRA.

A transaction printout is also flawed

in that it usually does not show any identification details. This may sound silly, but how can a printout of transactions be identified as yours? How can it be confirmed that it was not created or falsified? Your bank statement will show your name, address, and account numbers plus your bank's name and address.

Visit your bank's Web site (or call a human being in customer service) and find out where it posts bank statements for your account. You should print out this statement each month.

Downloading it and storing it somewhere on your computer isn't a bad idea, either. Whether it's an "e" document or printed on good old-fashioned paper, you need to be able to back up any deductions claimed on your tax return or your business income statement.

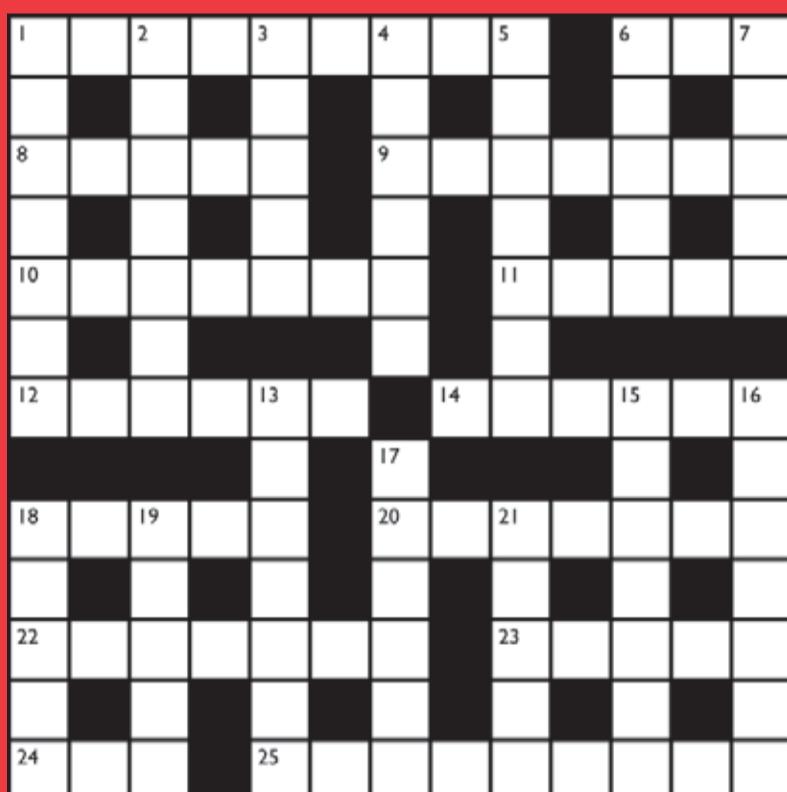
If the idea of electronic records makes your head spin – and I know a lot of people who are in this boat – talk to your accountant about how to make it easier to manage. If you need a reason, here's a good one: The Government of Canada announced in December that it will stop sending paper cheques by April 2016. That means direct deposit for everyone for everything related to CRA, CPP, OAS, EI, Child Benefits, etc. If you want your money, you need to be prepared to go electronic. **TW**

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

## THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD PUZZLE

TW-129 Mar. 2014 © M. Jackson

Answers on page 22



### Across

- 1 Transmission type
- 6 Trucker's workplace
- 8 Turbocharger \_\_\_\_ gauge
- 9 "Yours To Discover" plates' home
- 10 Shell engine-oil brand
- 11 Late-'70s Chevy conventional
- 12 Pneumatic-suspension component
- 14 Ontario GM-plant city
- 18 Truck pulling mobile home
- 20 Arkansas' "The \_\_\_\_ State" plates
- 22 Reefer or dry van
- 23 VIA's roadway
- 24 Less Than Truckload, briefly (1,1,1)
- 25 Home of "America's Dairyland" plates

### Down

- 1 "Wild Rose Country" plates' home
- 2 With 3-Down, low-price stopover option (3,4)
- 3 See 2-Down clue
- 4 Typical traffic type (3,3)
- 5 Urban-transit vehicle (4,3)
- 6 Urban tire-sidewall scuffers
- 7 UPS truck color
- 13 Truck-aerodynamics focus
- 15 Semitrailer-and-pup rigs (1,6)
- 16 Truck-transmission brand
- 17 Traffic tie-ups, informally
- 18 Really write off a truck
- 19 Cabot \_\_\_\_, scenic Cape Breton route
- 21 Power-boosting engine add-on

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# Are you empowering or controlling drivers?

**A**s long-haul truck drivers, we spend the majority of our time observing what is happening around us. Most of us are very good at it. It is a set of skills that extends far beyond the ability it gives us to be safe, professional drivers. In fact, as drivers we are uniquely positioned to provide feedback that is valuable when it comes to streamlining operations and improving productivity. Despite this, the industry has developed a culture aimed at controlling its drivers rather than enabling them. No doubt this approach stems from compliance with the rule of law, but this approach need not be so.

Look at the hours-of-service legislation and how it is applied to drivers. Sleep research recognizes the differences between individual drivers that contribute to fatigue. Differences such as: a driver's schedule; their age and the effects of any existing health condition the driver may have; and the time of day he/she may be driving. Sleep research has also shown that the average adult requires seven to nine hours of sleep per night, yet the National Sleep Foundation's 2008 Sleep in America poll showed that 44% of working adults get an average of six hours and 40 minutes sleep on a workday and the average workweek was reported at 45 hours. So based on that, is it reasonable to expect that you can force individual drivers to sleep seven to nine hours in a row while at the same time work well in excess of 45 hours per week?

We still require our rest but we require the flexibility to obtain that rest within the confines of the job we are performing and dependent on our own individual needs. The answer here is education and training on a regular basis as well as laws that enforce the required amount of rest in each 24-hour period but still leave a wide margin of flexibility to the individual driver as to how they manage their time. This is where the control culture butts up against the culture of empowerment. Has the trucking industry as a whole lost sight of the big picture and the true purpose of legislation that reinforces the safety of drivers and the travelling public? It's easy to lay the blame for this situation on government regulation (or over-regulation if you prefer) and enforcement agencies. But I think that is a bit of a cop-out on the trucking industry's part and we all own a slice of that pie. Why is it a cop-out?

Because we are living in a golden age of communication. There is this little thing called the Internet ripe with social media that is still very much in its infancy. These tools empower drivers by providing an infrastructure capable of gathering their collective experience. Yet for the most part social media has been seen as a business-to-business tool by carriers and I believe they have missed the boat, or at least underestimated the value of social media. Drivers are developing loosely organized social circles on platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube. With the ability to link all of these platforms together, drivers have a much louder voice, but is it being heard?

Then there is the rapidly developing "industrial Internet," a term originally coined by General Electric. It's all

## Over the road

Al Goodhall

about linking together machine-learning, big data, the Internet of things, and machine-to-machine communications. Think about advanced braking systems, stability control systems, the virtual technician that remotely reports engine fault codes, cars that will park themselves and of course the Google driverless car. The vehicles we drive – whether personal or commercial – will continue to communicate with the world around them in more meaningful ways

at an exponential rate over the next several years, or at least as much as government regulators will allow.

So again, as drivers observe from the driver's seat, is this technology being used to empower the individual driver or is it being used to control the individual drivers' actions? I often think of the signs posted on the side of Ontario's highways that state, "Safety through enforcement." I don't disagree with that statement when it comes to enforcing the black-and-white rules of the Highway Traffic Act but it doesn't cut the mustard when it comes to applying a set of one-size-fits-all regulations to issues like driver fatigue. This is why electronic on-board recorders are reviled by many drivers.

An EOBR cannot empower a driver and advance a driver's safety and quality of life. The EOBR enforces a set of one-size-fits-all rules for the average driver, but an average driver doesn't exist. Although we all share the same characteristics we are uniquely different. There is a lot that drivers observe from driver's seat. In today's environment I think it's fair to ask if we are to become cogs in a machine. I would hope to hear a resounding NO! **TW**

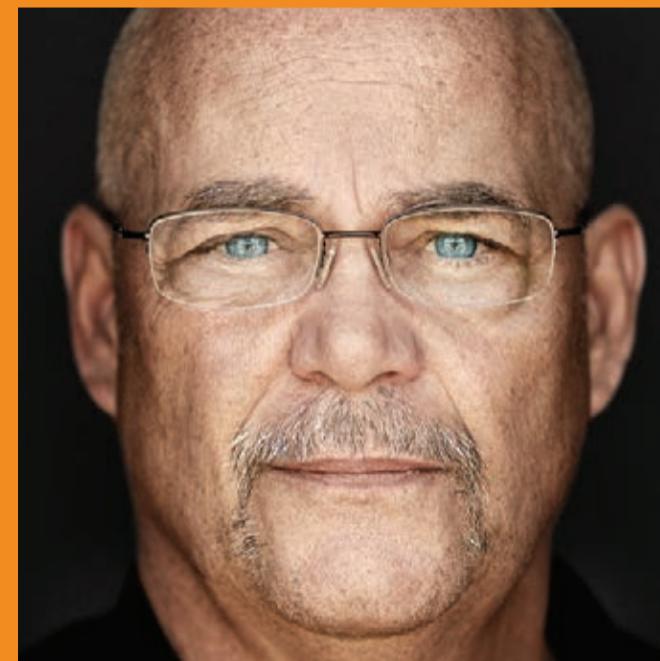
*Al Goodhall has been a professional long-haul driver since 1998. He shares his experiences via his 'Over the Road' blog at <http://truckingacrosscanada.blogspot.com>. You can also follow him on Twitter at @Al\_Goodhall.*

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*Steve Farris*

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# Looking for used iron?

By Harry Rudolfs

The used truck market usually follows the peaks and valleys of new truck sales by the space of a few years, but since fewer Class 8 vehicles were made and sold during the recession years of 2008 to 2010, a bottleneck presently exists in the availability of low-mileage late-model vehicles.

"If we look at the trade cycle," says Joe Burns, used truck sales manager at Altruck International in Cambridge, Ont., "bigger fleets tend to turn over their equipment every 48 to 60 months. But production was down in 2008 and there was a pre-buy in 2007 and a lot of fleets took advantage of that. So right now there's a shortage of 2008 and 2009 models."

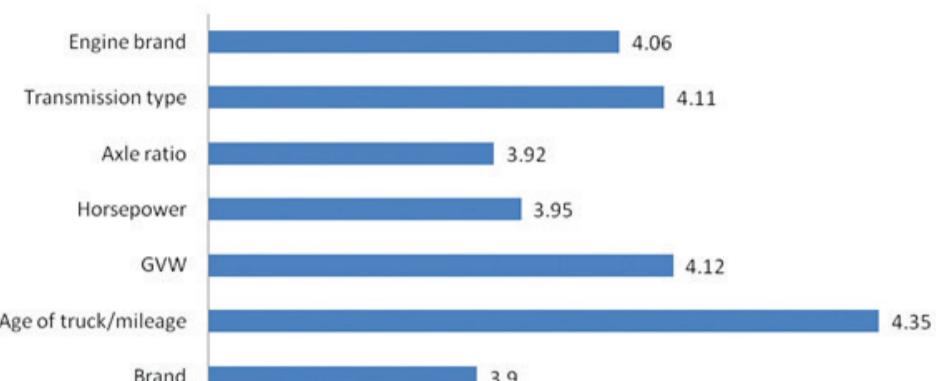
Burns thinks that shortage comes at a difficult time for many small fleets and multi-unit owner/operators looking to ramp up their operations as the economy improves.

Decent late model used trucks with low mileage are getting more difficult to find, thanks to a dearth in production from 2008-2009.

"For a lot of our clients the outlook is good for 2014, but finding low-mileage used equipment is going to be hard to do," he says.

Conversely, if you're looking to sell or trade in a low-mileage tractor, you should be able to get a good buck for it. "I'd say the valuations on used trucks are pretty good right now," says Burns. "We're paying a strong dollar on low-

## Top factors considered when selecting used trucks (scale of 1 to 5)



**Age of truck and mileage are the most important consideration for used truck buyers, according to our Equipment Buying Intentions Survey, 2013.**

mileage trucks."

Despite the fact that pre-2008 EPA trucks are either miled-out or almost impossible to get, used truck salespeople will tell you that a segment of their clients are still squeamish about getting involved with newer trucks because of the perceived problems with the emissions systems.

"There's some people that have the inaccurate perception that anything made between 2008 and 2010 is not necessarily a good product, though most buyers are aware that the OEMs have done a pretty good job with the upgrades," says Burns. "And the technology has improved with each stage."

Dennis Sheehan, owner of Sheehan Truck Centre of Burlington, Ont., has had the same experience with some

customers.

"Honestly some of the trucks from the model years 2008-2010 are not running as bad as people have it in their heads. There was also a bit of a learning curve involved here. Keep in mind this was a new product, people didn't know how to work on them at first," Sheehan says.

Truck salespeople agree that there is a segment of used truck buyers that will never be accepting of the generation of trucks manufactured between 2008 and 2010. Those customers may be more comfortable with the new-generation EPA trucks that add diesel exhaust fluid (DEF) to the afterburn, but some buyers may still not be familiar with how the emission system works. According to Burns of Altruck: "There is a misconception in our industry amongst some consumers that DEF has replaced DPFs (diesel particulate filters). Nothing could be further from the truth. With the advent of DEF, we now have both systems on-board trucks produced on or after Jan. 1, 2010 to comply with emission standards."

Owner/operators are constrained by the fact that carriers want them driving something less than five years old.

"Instead of going with an older truck, we try to get our customers into something more modern," says Vik Gupta, sales manager for Arrow Truck Sales of Mississauga, Ont. "Instead of going backwards, go forwards, and that way they can be ahead of the game. But I would say that overall confidence is returning to buyers when it comes to the DEF/SCR systems. There's not an engine made that doesn't occasionally have problems, but there are some really good products out there."

Gupta adds there's no such thing as a typical customer. Someone doing city work will want a different package than someone doing regional pulls and different yet again from a long-distance hauler who stays out for weeks at a time. Thirteen- and 10-speed transmissions remain popular among used buyers, and automated transmissions like the I-Shift are getting more popular.

"Someone looking for a highway tractor will usually want 425-450 horsepower, maybe more depending on what's being hauled," says Gupta. "And if you're going to be running the highway as a team, you're going to want a 60- or 70-inch bunk as well."

Highway trucks may get traded up every four or five years, but city drivers who own day cabs usually hold onto them a few more years. Martin Smith, centre manager for SelecTrucks of Mississauga, Ont., acknowledges that day cabs comprise a large portion of his

*Continued on page 16*

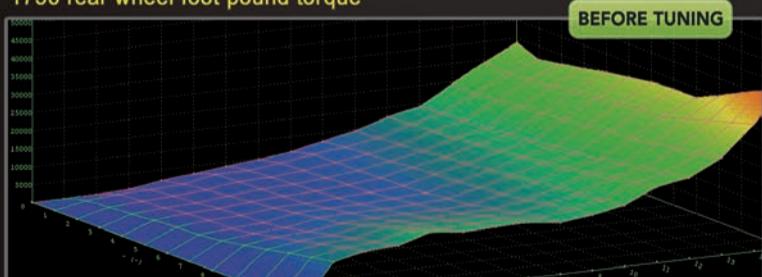
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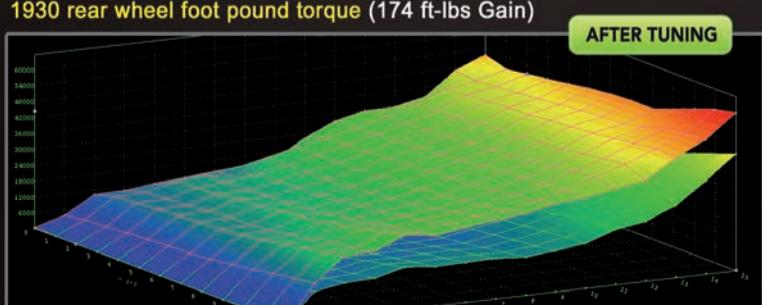
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**16 | USED TRUCKS**

## Used trucks in high demand

Continued from page 14  
 dealership's sales.

"A potential day cab purchaser might be looking for something between 2005 and 2009. Typically a day cab operator will want something around 400 hp, air ride suspension and 175-inch wheelbase. Those are the usual spec's," says Smith. "The biggest problem is trying to find inventory."

Used dump trucks are always in demand because of their paucity. "We can always use more dumps, tandems and tri-axles," says Altrucks' Burns, "but it's a select market and they're difficult to acquire. A lot of operators buy the truck and contract from someone they know and these trucks don't often make it to the market."

Niche equipment sales are an important segment of the used truck market, but specialization is not every dealer's cup of tea.

"There is some strength in niche truck sales," says Sheehan. "Once people know you have them, they will come back to you. I might buy a funny truck, say something with a crane on it, and it might sit on my lot for six months. But once you find the guy that needs that equipment, he will buy it."

Someone shopping for used big iron should keep in mind that a down payment of 10-15% is usually required by most lending institutions, and that they are reluctant to provide financing on rigs that are much older than five years. Warranty is another important consideration and a variety of different packages are available.

Sheehan advises caution when buying extended warranty packages.

"Everybody wants warranty but they're expensive and the money's got to come from somewhere," he says. "If you're going to spend \$5,000 on a warranty, why not put the \$5,000 aside instead, and save it in case something goes wrong down the road?"

But Smith of SelecTrucks is in the unique position of being able to offer a factory-backed warranty to buyers of used Freightliners and Western Stars.

"Considering the money you save when buying a used truck as compared to a new one, why wouldn't you want a factory warranty?" he counters.

The falling Canadian dollar is a concern to everyone in trucking, and the volatility will eventually ripple into all aspects of truck sales. Sheehan thinks it's too early to tell how much the devaluation of the Loonie will affect the used market.

"Some dealers were going down to the US to get used trucks and I think that is coming to an end," he says. "But new truck pricing will eventually affect used truck prices, too."

Sheehan also expects exports and offshore sales of used truck to "probably pick up slightly because of our dollar being undervalued."

Gupta thinks that a weak Loonie will be a boon to used truck dealers. "We can see it already in the last few weeks - it just happened. New trucks are going to go up in the following months and it will be good for us. Why should (customers) pay \$10,000-\$15,000 more for a new truck? On the flip side, for truck (sales) out of Canada, we're going to see lots of activity on the export market." **TW**

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# In-cab distractions can turn into on-road disasters

**F**ew phrases will sound more familiar to a collision investigator than, "I only looked away for a second." It has been uttered by some of the trucking industry's most experienced drivers as they recalled the final moments before a crash. And there's no shortage of things to distract a professional driver.

Dangerous distractions can come in the form of physical tasks as simple as holding a cell phone, changing a radio station or opening the lid on a cup of coffee, while something like a text message from a dispatcher can easily pull eyes away from the road ahead.

It doesn't matter what form the challenge takes. Anything that draws attention away from the surrounding highway can slow responses involving a steering wheel or brake pedal.

The regulations banning drivers from using handheld devices have introduced an important part of the solution. There is plenty of research to support the approach. *Understanding the Distracted Brain*, a 2012 paper by the National Safety Council, found that drivers making a phone call will fail to "see" about 50% of what they look at. Put another way,

## Ask the Expert

Heather Blackwell Decker

they are far less likely to identify potential hazards. The rules have made a difference, too. Before B.C. enacted its ban on handheld devices, researchers at the University of Victoria concluded 4.4% of drivers had phones to their ears at any given time. The share dropped to 1% after the law was passed. But a ban on handheld devices solves only part of the problem. Even hands-free calls can be distracting. A study completed at Dalhousie University found that talking on a phone of any type will reduce a driver's ability to detect and identify events.

Results published in the *Journal of Safety Research* went a step further, suggesting that drivers using a hands-free device are less likely to compensate for the distractions of a call than those who are using a handheld phone.

The calls cannot be compared to a conversation with someone else in the truck cab, either.

Unlike the disembodied voice com-

ing through a speaker, a passenger will contribute to observations about the surrounding traffic, observes *Passenger and Cell Phone Conversations in Simulated Driving*, published by the *Journal of Experimental Psychology*.

These remaining threats to safety are often tackled through a combination of fleet policies and technology. Dispatchers, for example, might withhold many messages or discussions until trucks reach their destinations. Software is available to disable company-owned electronic devices when a truck is on the move.

For that matter, drivers can also be encouraged to turn off personal phones and send callers directly to voicemail.

Cell phones are not the only potential distractions in a truck cab. Every time a driver views a computer tablet's display, glances at some paperwork or looks at something lying in the passenger seat, they can miss an emerging threat.

It might only take a second, but a truck travelling at highway speeds will cover about 28 metres in that period of time.

The best option is to keep objects like these out of sight whenever possible. A tablet computer stored in a briefcase, for example, is less distracting than a pow-

ered version in plain view.

Drivers who smoke will also be less tempted to light a cigarette if the package and lighter are stored in a sleeper's cabinet. Of course, some of the biggest challenges of all may be more difficult to spot. Drivers can also struggle with cognitive distractions, causing their minds to wander to issues like a sick child or financial struggle.

Challenges like these are hardly unique to truckers. They are a fact of every life. It is simply more difficult to put the issues to rest when travelling for weeks at a time, or when a job takes you thousands of kilometres away from home. Formal employee assistance programs often make a difference here, particularly when matched to an open workplace where drivers feel comfortable discussing their problems with supervisors like safety managers.

Relationships like these are not formed overnight, but they will make a lasting difference.

For their part, drivers can be coached in the value of talking to themselves during their journeys. Simply speaking aloud about oncoming threats like vehicles and traffic signals can help to refocus on tasks behind the wheel.

It shows that no matter what form a distraction might take, an open discussion will be part of the solution to make everyone a little safer. **TW**

*This month's expert is Heather Blackwell Decker, risk services solutions analyst with the Northbridge Insurance Risk Services team.*

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**GOOD**  **YEAR**  
**MORE DRIVEN**

# Trucking conditions favourable in US

If the trucking industry is still struggling, it's not for lack of freight to haul. The American Trucking Associations (ATA) Truck Tonnage Index just concluded its strongest year since 1998. For-hire truck tonnage in the US rose 0.6% in December, on the heels of a 4.7% spike in November, the ATA reported. The increases pushed the index 6.2% higher for the full year of 2013, making it the strongest year for US tonnage in 15 years.

The November gain was sharply higher than the 2.7% increase that was first reported by ATA.

"Tonnage ended 2013 on a high note, which fits with many economic indicators as trucking is an excellent reflection of the tangible goods economy,"

said ATA chief economist Bob Costello. "The final quarter was the strongest we've seen in a couple of years, rising 2.2% from the third quarter and 9.1% from a year earlier."

Costello reiterated his statement from last month: the tonnage acceleration in the second half of the year is pointing to an economy that is likely stronger than some might believe.

"I'm seeing more broad-based gains now. The improvement is not limited to the tank truck and flatbed sectors like earlier in the year," he said. "With manufacturing and consumer spending picking up, coupled with solid volumes from hydraulic fracturing, I look for tonnage to be good in 2014 as well."

Tonnage wasn't the only variable that had a strong showing in 2013; new

truck orders were also up significantly.

Class 8 truck orders finished 2013 up 17% compared to 2012, while medium-duty orders were up 10%, according to ACT Research.

The year was closed out on a high note, with December Class 8 orders up 50%, representing the strongest month for orders since March 2006.

"The US and Canada did the heavy lifting for Class 8 orders in December, while Mexico and non-NAFTA orders moved sideways at low levels," said Kenny Vieth, president and senior analyst at ACT Research. "Strengthening domestic demand has been supported in the second half of the year by improving economic activity that has translated into improved profits for truckers. The softness in December's

Classes 5-7 orders is viewed as a temporary pause following two very strong order months for medium-duty."

December saw medium-duty truck orders fall month-over-month, but for the full year Classes 6-7 truck orders were up 20% compared to 2012 and Class 5 orders down 16%.

And 2014 started strong as well, with FTR reporting preliminary Class 8 net orders of 34,403 units, marking a 56% year-over-year improvement and the first time the industry has seen back-to-back months in excess of 30,000 units since 2006.

"Orders were way beyond expectations," said Don Ake, FTR's vice-president of commercial vehicles. "This is another great order month to kick-start 2014. Order strength was broad-based among manufacturers and countries. This is a very positive signal for the industry. The strong orders are consistent with the tightening of capacity in the marketplace. Fleets and dealers continue to display confidence in the freight market."

Trailer orders also closed 2013 on a high note, rising 14% in December, with six of 10 trailer categories posting positive results, according to ACT.

For the full year 2013, a total of 231,700 orders were booked, down 2% from 2012. It marked the third consecutive year of annual orders greater than 230,000, ACT reports.

"All trailer categories had single-digit cancellation rates, which is a positive for the industry," said Frank Maly, director, CV transportation analysis and research at ACT. "In addition to indicating that existing fleet commitments are solid, low cancellations also simplify material flow and order planning by the original equipment manufacturers."

FTR noted in its most recent Trucking Conditions Index, that conditions for trucking companies were still favourable, though they softened in November. The November reading of 7.01 was 20% lower than the month before, but still reflects a positive environment for truckers. The regulatory drag from hours-of-service changes is reducing capacity, FTR noted, adding the upside economics have yet to translate into real market tightness, mitigating a rise in the index.

"While we did see a slight dip in the (Trucking Conditions) index, the absolute level is still suggesting a relatively healthy trucking environment," said Jonathan Starks, FTR's director of transportation analysis. "We have also seen several positive indicators being reported in the industry during December and January that are making us slightly more bullish about the direction in the market as we enter 2014. Some of the recent data suggests a significantly tightening capacity situation in trucking. While some of the tightening is due to the storms that have plagued the US, it appears that the recovery in the manufacturing market, coupled with the hours-of-service regulations changes, are finally impacting the truck market as we have been predicting for several months. If this tightening continues it would be a significant boon for truckers, as they will finally have the ability to raise shipping rates." **TW**

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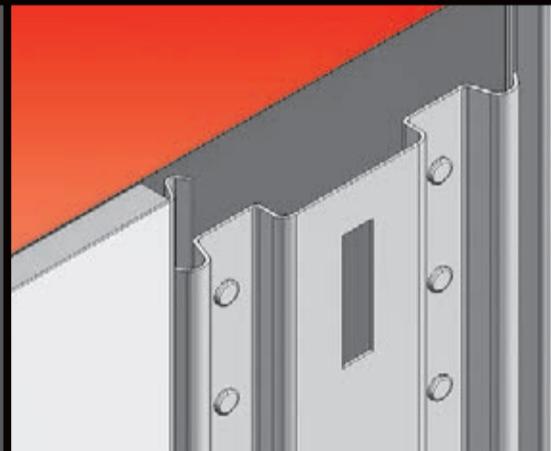
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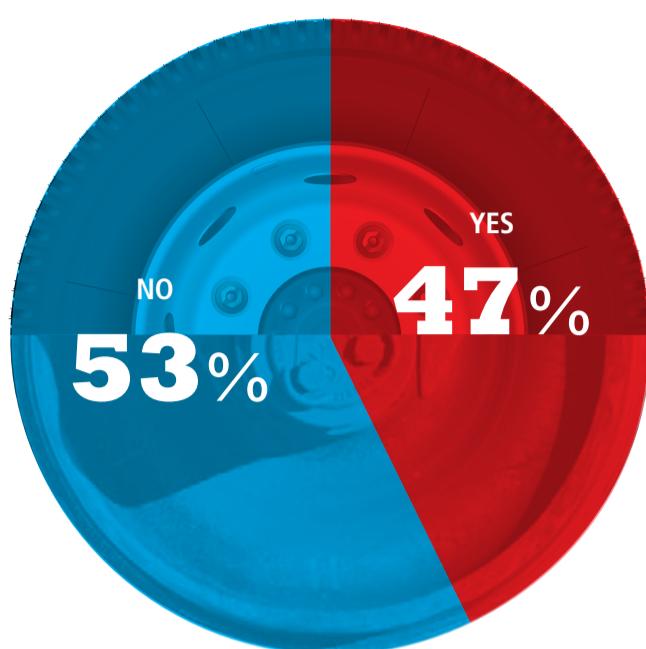
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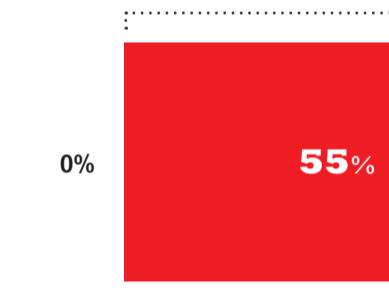
# MODE SHIFT

WHAT MAKES WESTERN CANADIAN SHIPPERS CONSIDER IT

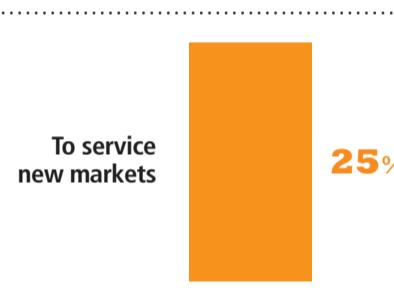
**Higher rates and/or surcharges have affected modal selection**



**Percentage of current trucking shipments Western Canada shippers consider rail a viable alternative**



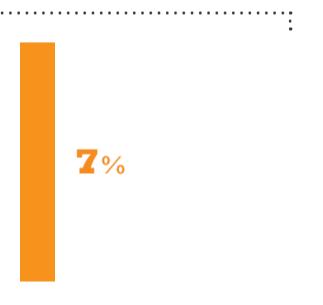
**Main reasons Western Canada shippers divert freight from truck to rail**



**Percentage of current rail shipments Western Canada shippers consider trucking a viable alternative**



**Main reasons Western Canada shippers divert freight from rail to truck**



If motor carrier executives can agree on one thing it's the need to raise rates. Western Canadian fleets have generally had a better time at the negotiating table the past five years than their Eastern Canadian counterparts. But is there a ceiling to how high rates

can rise? Our annual Transportation Buying Trends research, conducted in partnership with FMAC and CITT, shows that there is. Forty three percent of Western Canadian shippers responding to our survey noted higher prices and/or surcharges have caused a change in their modal selection for at least some of their shipments. Increasing truck prices is the

main reason shippers will switch from truck to rail, with one third noting that as their reason for a modal switch. Conversely when Western Canadian shippers shift from rail to truck it's primarily due to service issues with the majority (40%) blaming poor rail service or coverage, followed by a third who do so to attain faster inventory times. **TW**

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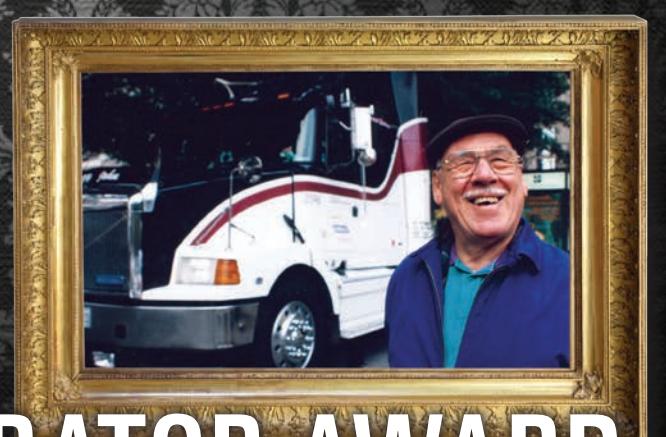
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# Canadian Freightways restructures operations

By Carolyn Gruske

**PRINCE GEORGE, B.C.** – In a move that came as a surprise to employees, Canadian Freightways shut down four of its British Columbia terminals. Operations were halted at the company's Prince George, Smithers, Terrace and Prince Rupert locations on Jan. 17.

Prince Rupert had been operated by an independent owner/operator on behalf of Canadian Freightways.

According to Heather Lee, vice-president, combined units for the Canadian Office and Professional Employees Union (COPE) Local 378, which had members employed at the Prince George terminal, the closures came swiftly.

"On Friday afternoon the union business rep that provides services to members at that company got a call from HR and was told that a notice of closure was coming. Within half an hour, they were served with the notice of closure for Prince George," she said.

She added that receiving the closure notice left her "quite disappointed. Companies operate on long-term business plans. I don't think they made a decision in half an hour to close down."

According to Ken Enns, senior vice-president at Canadian Freightways, there was one key reason behind the decision to close the terminals.

He told *Truck West* that it was "strictly a financial decision to change the operating structure."

Enns added that Canadian Freightways' customers in those areas would continue to receive service due to a new business partnership with Richmond, B.C.-based Bandstra Transportation Systems.

"(There will be) no changes in the service matrix. In fact, this will improve the service, providing overnight service to Smithers from Edmonton and Vancouver."

In total, 30 employees were affected by the closure. The vast majority worked in the Prince George terminal.

According to Enns, at its now-closed locations, Canadian Freightways employed workers who were part of two unions, COPE and the Teamsters and "the company opted to pay working notice to the employees as per the collective agreement."

He added that the company had a four-year agreement in place with the Teamsters (originally signed in 2013), and was entering contract negotiations with COPE.

Lee explained that transportation workers fall under the auspices of federal labour laws and not the province's labour code, and because of that, "provisions for workers are quite minimal...We're doing what we can. We're having conversations with the members to find out what the impacts are for them and to examine what we can do to help them," she said.

While Enns couldn't say whether

there were more closures on the table, he did say "we will continue to review the market and our operating structure to ensure we remain competitive and profitable. We have made some positive changes to address our operating costs and improve service. Canadian Freightways will continue to aggressively sell our North American coverage and technological advancements to our customers."

One of the major changes at the company happened at the executive level.

Former president Ralph Wettstein retired in December 2013.

Enns is currently in charge of operations. **TW**

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By Edo Van Belkom

He'd felt the first tickle in his throat back in Saskatoon. He'd thought nothing of it then, just coughed a couple of times, sucked on a Halls and stopped for a tea at the first Timmies he saw. But the tickle had grown into a scratchy, irritating sore spot deep in his throat and now there was a chill aching its way through his body.

He slipped on his jacket and cranked the heater controls to the maximum, but it wasn't doing any good.

His whole body was shivering and he found it harder and harder to guide Mother Load down the highway.

All he wanted was to pull over, climb into the bunk and wrap himself up in every sweater and blanket he had.

"This c-can't be happening," Mark said aloud, his teeth chattering as he spoke. "I'm Mark Dalton. I don't get sick. I c-can't get sick." But the more he said it the more he knew he was wasting his breath.

Back in Lethbridge he'd picked up a load of used farm machinery headed for Winnipeg. The shipper had covered the equipment with a tarp, but had done a poor job securing the thing and by the time he got to the Alberta border the tarp was flapping in the breeze like a flag in a hurricane and its grommets were putting dents and scratches into the machinery metal.

Sure, it was used stuff but that didn't mean it didn't deserve to be shipped properly and with care.

He'd stopped by the side of the Trans-Canada to tie down the tarp and thinking the tarp would be an easy fix, he left his hat and jacket in the cab. But what should have taken a couple of minutes took 20 and by the time he was done he was chilled to the bone.

Now, whatever virus had invaded his body was taking over and despite the gallant fight he was putting up against it, it was a battle he was ultimately going to lose.

Mark reached over to the center console and picked up his cell phone. Two touches of his thumb against the screen and he was being connected to his dispatcher, Bud.

"Hello?"

"Bud, it's Mark."

"Mark?" Bud said like he didn't have a clue. "Mark...Mark McLaren?"

"No," Mark sighed. "Mark McDalton."

"Hey, Dalton. How are you doing?"

"Lousy. Terrible. Awful."

"You don't sound so good."

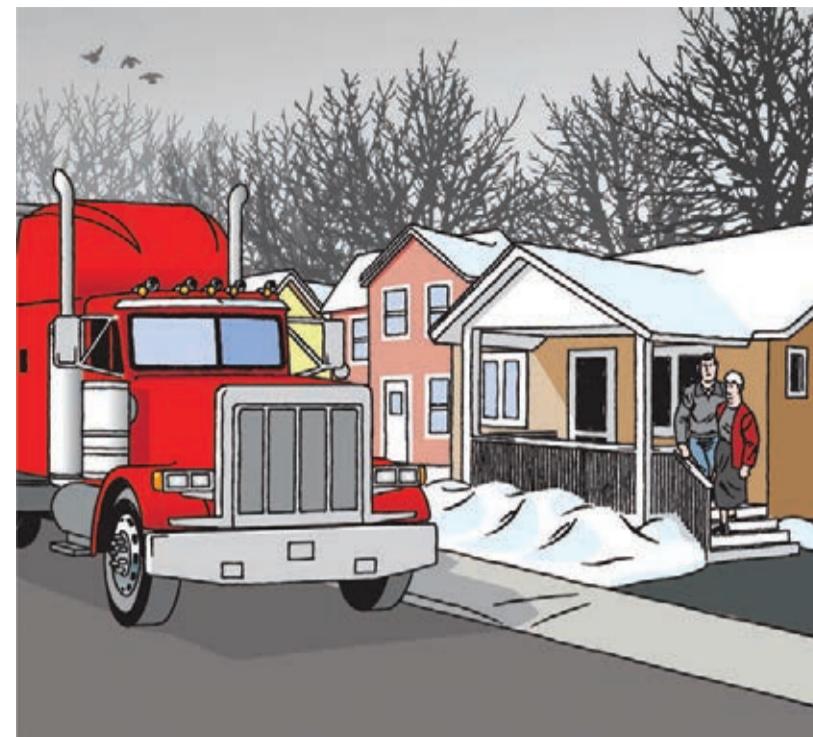
"I don't feel so good, either."

"You sick?"

"Yes."

"How sick?"

"I need you to find a driver for me."



# Mark gets well soon

PART 1

"You mean to drive your truck for you."

"Yes."

"And what are you going to do while he's driving your truck?"

"Be sick in the bunk."

A pause. "Wow, you must really be sick."

"What part of sick didn't you get?"

"Okay, I'll see what I can do. How close to Winnipeg are you?"

"About an hour."

"I'll see if I can get someone to meet you in the yard."

Somehow Mark reached Winnipeg in time and was able to get the trailer placed just right in a very tight yard.

But when he was done, he set the parking brake and climbed into the bunk, not even bothering to set the trailer down and disconnect the fifth wheel.

The new guy could do that when he got there, Mark thought as he crawled under the blankets and curled up in a fetal position.

Later - Mark didn't know how long - there was a knock on the driver's door.

"It's open!" Mark said.

"Hey, how you doin'? You Mark?"

"Yes, and terrible," Mark said, especially now that he saw who Bud has sent. The kid couldn't be more than 18 with a newly minted CDL in his pocket.

"My name's Garth and don't you worry about

a thing. I'll get the load ASAP and we'll be on our way in no time."

"Load? What load?"

"When Bud called me, he told me about a load headed for Toronto."

Mark nodded. Okay, so at least he was headed in the right direction.

The kid had the trailer down without a problem and they were on their way in minutes.

Mark tried to stay awake, but it only caused him to cringe at every hard shift the kid made.

Despite his concern over the way the kid was driving, the bouncing of the clutch and the rocking of the truck ultimately had Mark falling into a fast and deep sleep.

And before he was even aware of it, they were approaching the outskirts of the GTA.

"Anywhere specific you want me to drop you off in the city?" the kid asked when he saw Mark was awake.

"Drop me off?"

"Bud said I would be driving this rig for at least a week. I wouldn't have taken the job otherwise."

Mark wasn't happy about Bud taking liberties with his truck, especially allowing a stranger to drive it for a whole week. But Mark had to believe Bud wouldn't hire just any driver, and he was really in no position to argue... especially now. "You'll take good care of her?"

"Yes."

"Treat her like your own?"

"Of course."

Mark nodded, then gave him the address of his parent's home in Oakville. It wasn't the best situation, but he needed a place to be sick and that was the only place he could go.

But even as sick as he was, he wasn't worried about himself as much as he was about his truck.

He couldn't remember the last time someone drove Mother Load when he wasn't around to watch them do it.

And as he drifted back to sleep, he wondered if this was how fathers felt when their teenage daughters went on their first ever date with a boy. TW

*Mark Dalton returns next month in Mark Gets Well Soon, Part 2.*

**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).**

Illustration by Glenn McEvoy



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## Manitoulin opens new Saskatchewan terminal

CORMAN PARK, Sask. — Manitoulin Transport has added to its Western Canadian shipping capacity by opening a new terminal in Saskatchewan. The facility sits on 8.4 acres of property located in Corman Park, Sask. It has 16 dock-level doors, and is equipped to support oil and gas, forestry, mining and agricultural businesses. It is designed to replace the company's existing terminal operations in Saskatoon. Employees at that location will be transferred to the new building. The terminal was officially opened during a ceremony attended by local politicians, including Judy Harwood, reeve of the Rural Municipality of Corman Park.

"Getting shipments from A to B quickly and reliably is an essential part of doing business. As such, we are thrilled to welcome a company of the calibre of Manitoulin into our community. We believe the services Manitoulin provides will help take our businesses to the next level of competitiveness that they so deserve," she said.

Manitoulin's president, Don Goodwill, said the terminal should help provide local customers with improved service.

"This terminal benefits local businesses by providing easier access to distant markets they may not otherwise be able to reach," he said.

"Now they have a reliable full-service transportation partner right on their



**Judy Harwood, reeve of the Rural Municipality of Corman Park, Don Goodwill, president of Manitoulin Transport and Corey Tochor, MLA for Saskatoon Eastview cut the ribbon at the opening ceremony.**

doorstep that can help them drive success at home, and on a global scale."

Gord Smith, chief executive officer, of the Manitoulin Group of Companies said offering clients better customer service is a key business driver.

"This is the latest of several significant investments we've made recently to benefit our customers," he said.

"We are constantly investing in infrastructure and developing new supply chain services to meet the ever-evolving requirements of our customers. Now local businesses can rely on a single-source provider for ground transportation, freight forwarding, customs brokerage, warehousing, global time critical delivery, crating, heavy-haul, oil field services, logistics and supply chain management." **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...

**H**ad enough snow and cold yet? Okay, you folks on the Lower Mainland probably haven't – well, any snow's too much there, judging by how citizens freak out at the first sign of white stuff – but if you're anything like me, living far away from the fleshpots of Vancouver and the Island, you've shovelled, plowed and/or blown (including your nose) enough for two winters.

And here I was looking forward to buying some cheap beachfront property on the Arctic Ocean when "Gore-bull warming" finally hits.

Winter, of course, brings even more challenges to driving safely than the more pleasant times of year – especially if, like me, you live in Calgary – where the city's snow removal policy is abbreviated WHTACS, which stands for "We Hope There's A Chinook Soon."

Needless to say, though it always seems necessary to say it over and over again, it's more important than ever to stress safety at this time of year, a topic that just happens to be a prime area of focus in this month's issue. Check out our cover story on WCB rates, for example.

In the meantime, best of luck keeping all those wheels on the road and let's hope we can have an early spring.

We've earned it, whether we've been driving or just shovelling and shovelling and shovelling.

On the other hand, the snow's been great for doing donuts in parking lots, though I'm not sure I'd want to try

that in an LCV.

## Ex-PIC person promotes policies

I ran into Lorri Christensen, who used to lead Alberta's Partners in Compliance program until deciding late last year that it was time to pursue new pastures. Turns out she's still involved in the industry, thanks to her new gig with Rogers Insurance.

Lorri now wears a senior account representative hat with Rogers and she told me over a recent lunch that it's a fantastic place to work. I suppose that shouldn't be surprising since Rogers, according to Canada's Top Small & Medium Employers, is one of Canada's Top Small & Medium Employers for 2014 (how do they know that? Do they have a crystal ball?). So if you're looking to catch up with Lorri, give her a holler at Rogers.

## AMTA names Rice replacement

From Don Wilson comes word that the AMTA has found someone to replace – or at least take over from – Bud Rice (hard to replace Bud) after the association's long-time former manager of compliance and regulatory affairs decided to retire last year.

David Brunet takes over the gig, with responsibilities including helping member companies comply with transportation legislation and regulations.

Working out of the AMTA's southeast Calgary office, Dave brings an extensive background in compliance and regulation to his new duties.

Dave's previous life saw him as an investigator with Service Alberta, where some of what he did included ensuring driver examiners, driving schools, and registry offices met government licensing standards. He began his career with the Alberta Highway Patrol, then later worked for Calgary Transit (a business that's always picking up! Or is it dropping off?), before returning to the provincial government and stints with Commercial Vehicle Enforcement and Service Alberta. A law enforcement grad of Grant MacEwan College in Edmonton, Dave also holds a certificate in Security Management from the University of Calgary.

## Alberta workforce info for employers

If you're an evil capitalist with his/her boot on the throats of poor down-trodden workers and you want to find out what's up as far as labour force initiatives in Alberta are concerned, you can now sign up for Alberta Workforce Information at [ABWorkforceinfo.com/subscribe](http://ABWorkforceinfo.com/subscribe). Doing so will put you on an e-mail list, in this case one that supposedly provides "up-to-date and useful workforce information and resources to share with your members," according to the [AlbertaCanada.com](http://AlbertaCanada.com) Web site.

Your subscription provides you with information and resources to help you:

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Big year for Manitoba infrastructure spending.

The Manitoba Trucking Association is applauding its provincial government after the "provs" announced the largest single year investment in infrastructure for 2014.

The government outlined plans for 50 new projects this year, including paving, culvert replacements, grading, bridge work and spot road improvements. The news prompted Terry Shaw, general manager of the MTA, to proclaim that "investing in our highways means investing in the trade conduits that connect us to all of North America. These projects, and the other significant trade routes this government has committed to upgrading, are essential for us to do our job of connecting Manitoba wholesalers, manufacturers, contractors and farmers to markets across the continent." **TW**

*That's it for this month. As always, if you have an item you think your peers would be interested in reading, fire me off an e-mail to [jim@transportationmedia.ca](mailto:jim@transportationmedia.ca) and I'll do my best to include it in an upcoming Jim's Brayings column. Obviously, timeliness, space, taste and legality also affect what can be included, but we certainly do our best to include everything we get. See you next issue!*



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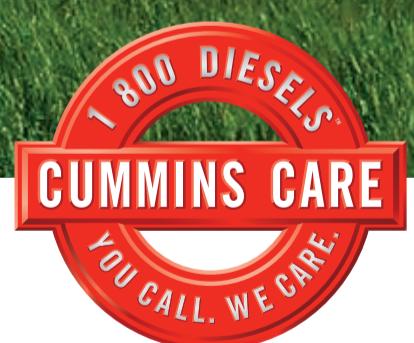
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