

TRUCK WEST

Western Canada's Trucking Newspaper Since 1989 • April 2014 Volume 25, Issue 4

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trucknews.com



Port Metro Vancouver, vital to the region's trucking sector and overall economy, is dealing with a slowdown after members of the United Truckers Association and Vancouver Container Truckers Association walked off the job to protest poor pay and long wait times. Above, a truck serves the port in better times.



Reach us at our Western Canada news bureau

Contact Jim Bray at: jim@transportationmedia.ca or call 403-453-5558

Trucker strike strangles port

By Carolyn Gruske

DELTA, B.C. - Strike on. Starting early March 10, unionized container truck drivers began walking the picket line at Port Metro Vancouver.

Drivers represented by Unifor-Vancouver Container Truckers' Association (VCTA) weren't alone in their protest, as members of the non-unionized United Truckers Association (UTA) have been protesting at the port since Feb. 26.

Members of both organizations voted on March 8 to reject a deal created with the goal of establishing a temporary labour peace. UTA reported 100% of its members voted against the deal, while VCTA said 98% of its members were against it.

Vincent Ready was appointed by the federal transportation minister, Lisa Raitt, to serve as a mediator in the ongoing labour dispute between drivers and employers at the port. The same day he was appointed, word came that VCTA and UTA would be taking a deal back and presenting it to their members.

The point of the deal was to create a situation where the UTA would go back to work, VCTA

would forego striking (the union was in a legal strike position) and Ready would prepare a report about working conditions at the port and submit it to the federal and provincial governments by May 30.

"We were kind of taken back with how fast things were thrown on the table. We figured there might have been enough there to convince us all to get back to work while Mr. Ready does his report and makes his recommendations, but obviously there were issues with that package and it was rejected," said Manny Dosange, UTA spokesperson for government and public affairs.

"Basically it was a return to work agreement. For two-and-a-half months, they were supposed to stabilize the working conditions so they guys could get back to work and start making a fair living in order to pay bills," he told *Truck West*.

"What happened is they went from their regular income and it dropped by two-thirds to the point where they were struggling. We want to have the terminal services brought up so they were making their full turns, so they'd be delivering five or six deliveries a day. There was nothing

Continued on page 7

B.C. fleet rolls out red carpet for truck inspectors

By James Menzies

DELTA, B.C. - It may seem counterintuitive, but a B.C. trucking company went out of its way to have its trucks inspected by police.

Tim McGee, general manager of Harbour Link Container Services, concluded that inspections would be less disruptive to the fleet if they were to be done at his place, on his schedule. He reached out to the Delta Police's truck inspection unit and asked if they'd be willing to visit his facility to inspect any trucks they choose, ideally on a slower week, in this case, Chinese New Year.

This is the second year in a row Harbour Link has reached out to the inspectors and McGee said there have been many benefits from the collaboration.

"The Delta Police are a great enforcement team and very accommodating," McGee said, adding the inspections took on an educational, rather than punitive, tone. "They went through and showed them what they were looking for."

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CLASS 8 TRUCK SALES TRENDS

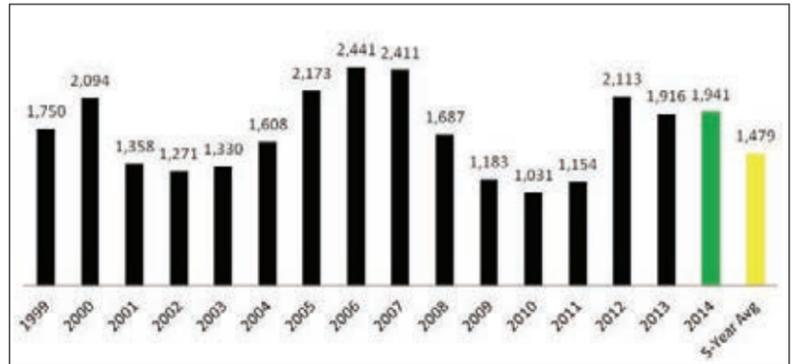
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Monthly Class 8 Sales – Jan 14

OEM	This Month	Last Year
Freightliner	455	503
International	395	338
Kenworth	292	370
Mack	117	121
Peterbilt	250	288
Volvo	224	121
Western Star	208	175
TOTALS	1941	1916

Class 8 truck sales have started the year on a mildly positive note, surpassing last year's January totals. They fell below the 2,000 mark, however, for the first time in 10 months. Last year's market leaders Freightliner and Kenworth both suffered setbacks in the early going of 2014, falling behind last year's totals. Mack and Peterbilt also suffered drops. International surpassed its monthly sales total from 2013, as did Volvo and Western Star.

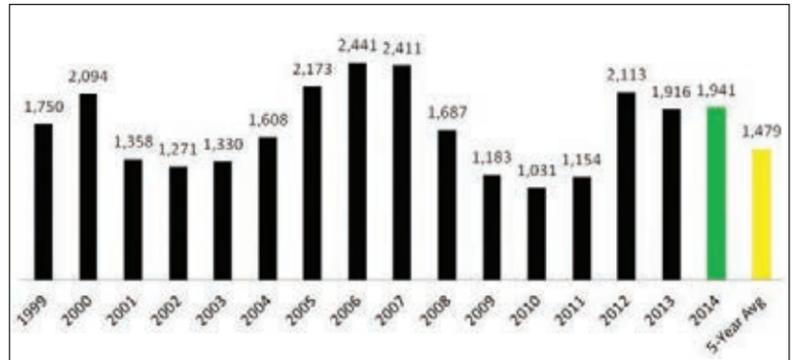
Historical Comparison – Jan 14 Sales



Class 8 Sales (YTD Jan 14) by Province and OEM

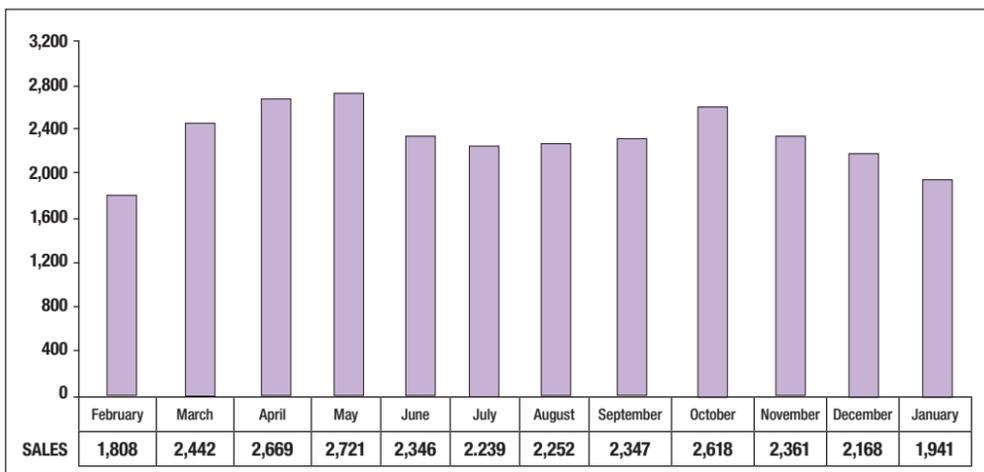
OEM	BC	ALTA	SASK	MAN	ONT	QUE	NB	NS	PEI	NF	CDA
Freightliner	41	82	17	12	183	99	14	7	0	0	455
Kenworth	56	128	23	1	46	32	6	0	0	0	292
Mack	11	21	10	2	56	12	1	2	0	2	117
International	11	70	12	12	182	77	18	5	3	5	395
Peterbilt	54	73	30	9	33	39	10	2	0	0	250
Volvo	31	52	13	8	71	42	5	2	0	0	224
Western Star	40	111	8	4	19	18	1	6	0	1	208
TOTALS	244	537	113	48	590	319	55	24	3	8	1,941

Historical Comparison – YTD Jan 14



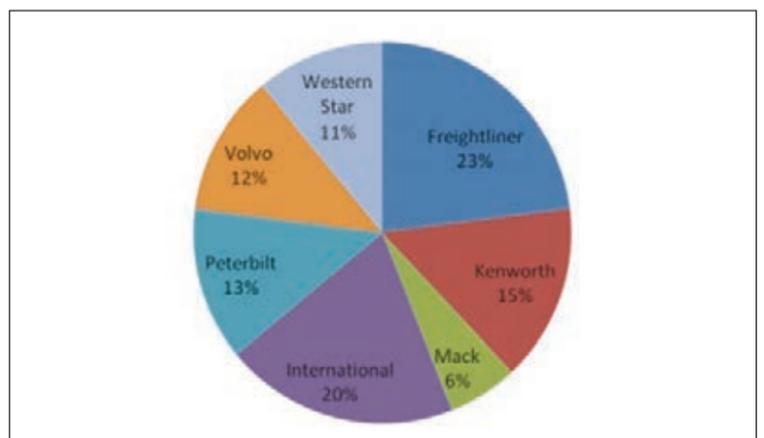
This was the sixth best January total since 1999. Monthly sales were a bit better than 500 units above the five-year average. There is optimism for an improvement in Class 8 truck sales in 2014 after 2013 proved a disappointing year. The first month's results, however, indicate a small improvement over the previous year. The big question is whether Canada's many small fleets are ready to buy new again. Our research shows large and medium-sized carriers are in a buying mood but small carriers are not.

12-Month Sales Trends



After 10 straight months of sales coming in above the 2,000 mark, reminiscent of the industry's capacity boom years of 2005 to 2007, they dropped slightly below 2,000 in January. Yet with the US economy regaining its stride and the value of the Canadian dollar dropping against the US dollar, economic forecasters anticipate exports will lead the Canadian economy in 2014. That may spark increased truck sales as trucking will be the main beneficiary of improved business volumes with the US.

Market Share Class 8 – Jan 14 YTD



Freightliner, last year's Canadian market leader, has started off with a bit of a drop in market share but remains strong enough to have a controlling lead. Kenworth finished 2013 in the number two spot for marketshare, enjoying the fact that its strong western network is able to tap into the stronger western economy. But the company faltered in January and ended up with just 15% market share, surpassed by International which has captured 20% of the market right out of the gate.

Source: Canadian Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association

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A defensive driver is a fuel-efficient driver

Editorial Comment

James Menzies



When the private fleet of Hill's Pet Nutrition – predominantly comprised of straight trucks that average 15 drops a day – implemented a defensive driving program, it couldn't have expected to save a million dollars a year in fuel as a result.

It took the 220-truck fleet six years to save its first million, and now the company saves about that much every single year.

Bill Perry, safety and compliance manager, customer fulfillment with Hill's, shared his success story at the Green Truck Summit in Indianapolis in early March. The company, which leases its trucks from Idealease, began spec'ing more fuel-efficient vehicles in 2006. They adopted automated transmissions and installed electronic on-board recorders. The fleet was divided up by vehicle type and location and drivers worked as groups to improve their fuel economy.

They were trained to drive defensively, using the Smith System for defensive driving. Fuel economy baselines were established and operators were given the opportunity to earn a 2%, 3% or 5% quarterly bonus depending on whether they met or exceeded expectations. Those who didn't got no bonus.

In the fourth quarter of 2013, the company's drivers averaged 8.6569 mpg – yes, Hills tracks fuel economy out to the fourth decimal. Its fleet-wide fuel economy before implementing the program was 7.1 mpg. Its top operator, running Florida, achieved 11.232 mpg. Its top 25 drivers are all achieving greater than 9.75 mpg.

Perry said it's possible to get an immediate one-tenth of a mpg improvement from drivers, just out of modifying driver behaviour. His team rides along with drivers every quarter to ensure they're implementing the skills taught through the Smith System.

Each of its driver trainers are certified Smith System instructors.

Hills spent \$4.5 million on fuel last year, but that's a million less than it was spending before the defensive driving training was provided and the fuel economy incentives were offered.

"With a little bit of training, a little bit of encouragement and a little bit of technology, you're going to see numbers very similar to that without a whole lot of effort," he said. "Get your folks involved and let it be part of their program. Dangle the carrot out there and you'll see some sort of difference in your organization."

We don't always think of fuel-efficient driving and defensive driving as being one and the same. But both types



of training involve similar ideals. Don't follow too closely. Easy on the throttle and the brake. Look far down the road and anticipate stops. Use the vehicle's momentum to reduce braking.

All these things lead to a safer driver but also a more fuel-efficient driver. If you're having a hard time justifying the cost of defensive driving training for your professional drivers, consider the Hills experience and the payback they achieved. They're proof that a defensive driver is not only a safer driver, but also a more fuel-efficient driver. **TW**

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Respect has to be earned

My previous column, "Stop the Stupid Scorpion" seems to have resonated with many of our readers who drive truck for a living.

For those of you who haven't read it yet, I told the fable about the scorpion who asked a frog to swim him across the river. When the frog asked what assurance he would have the scorpion wouldn't sting him halfway into the river crossing, the scorpion replied: 'Why would I do that? I would drown with you.' And yet, sure enough, right in the middle of the river, the scorpion stings the frog, and both die as a consequence.

I used the fable as an analogy of how stupid we have been in trying to solve the driver shortage the past 20 years. I questioned: Can you really call it a driver shortage when driver turnover is so high?

From the e-mails and phone calls I received, it seems many drivers out there know exactly what I'm talking about. As one wrote: "Many companies increase the recruiting staff instead of listening to drivers' needs."

Another with several years of driving experience, including seven with his current employer, wrote to say he



is looking to get out of the profession altogether. Why? Because after making "the big mistake" of agreeing to become an owner/operator for the company, he finds himself with his savings depleted and having to cash in RRSPs just to keep paying the bills. He's shocked at the difference between what he believes he was promised he would make and what he is actually making – and the lack of response he's getting from his employer.

We do have to be careful not to over-generalize. Research shows driver turnover is much more prevalent among long-haul fleets than in other sectors and that the situation is worse among US carriers than Canadian. And I've come to know many fleet executives over the years who treat their drivers with absolute respect. At the same time, I've met some drivers and owner/operators I wouldn't want on my team.

But the comments shown above are not out of place with industry reality. I hear them all the time. As another

driver mentioned, the scorpion stings the frog because "it's in his nature."

I sure hope that's not true of our industry, but it appears this is not a problem unique to North America. PwC surveyed 1,344 business leaders across 68 countries around the world, including 101 transportation and logistics company CEOs, in the last quarter of 2013. A shortage of talent was one of their top concerns. Transportation and logistics CEOs overwhelmingly agree they'll need to change their talent strategies to cope with future trends, according to the survey. But just 19% are already doing so, compared to a third of CEOs across the overall sample and only 30% believe their HR departments are well-prepared.

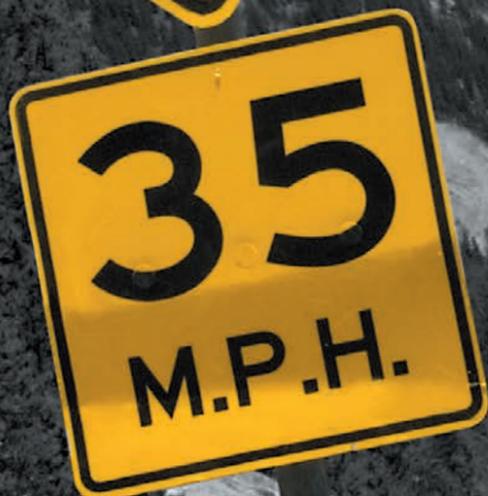
I had a boss a long time ago who informed me one day that he DEMAND-ED respect from his staff. I was in my mid-20s at the time but still had enough pluck to inform him that respect has to be EARNED. That ass of a boss is long gone thankfully and I still abide by what I said to him 25 years ago.

If we want to solve the driver shortage and attract new entrants we have to gain the drivers' respect. Seems we have a long road ahead of us. **TW**

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Tensions rise at the port

Continued from page 1

ing in that language that convinced the membership that was going to happen. Their fear was the drivers would get back to work and things would be nice and easy going for a week or two and after that they'd start playing silly bugger and we'd be right back to square one or even worse."

Speaking to *Truck West*, Gavin McGarrigle, spokesperson for Unifor, described the negotiation process.

"We went in with Mr. Ready. There was a regional director there from Transport Canada and an assistant deputy minister there from the provincial Ministry of Transportation. Mr. Ready outlined the terms of reference and what was going to be covered in his review, which is all positive. We put forward some proposals to deal with the immediate situation and Mr. Ready tried his best to facilitate discussions between ourselves and Port Metro Vancouver," he said.

"Through those discussions it was made clear there was no appetite for immediate changes. There were just protocol issues. But we thought we should take this to our members, just to ask are they prepared to stand down for 90 days until we can hear from this. The overwhelming response from both sides was no, the conditions are too dire, they need to see some immedi-

ate improvement. That's why the result was 98% on our side."

The dire conditions UTA and VCTA object to include undercutting of rates, long wait-times at the port, concerns about fees and licences imposed by Port Metro Vancouver, and truckers not being permitted to have an active part in negotiations or ongoing discussions about port operations.

"These guys, they've been pushed around a lot," said Dosange. "We've been trying to get to the table for seven or eight months prior to getting here. (The drivers) did everything by the book and were gentlemen in doing so, and nobody listened to them. Now the tables are turned, so to speak, and it's a big jump to get everything back to work and get things fixed, and yet there are no solutions. Rather they are putting all their time and energy making backdoor deals with the BCTA (British Columbia Trucking Association). There is no trust towards Port Metro Vancouver or BCTA at this point."

Like Dosange, McGarrigle said the union feels like it is left on the sidelines.

"Part of the problem is the way the federal and provincial government appointed Mr. Ready is they haven't really appointed him with any authority to force a resolution to the problem. We think they need to give him the tools to do that and get every-

body around the table. At our meeting the other day, one of the significant groups wasn't there: all of the employers. And a big part of the problem is there is no single group that speaks for all the employers. On the dock side, there is the BCMEA, which is the British Columbia Maritime Em-

ent employers, different unions, fake unions, you've got associations, it's the wild west out there. Who do you bargain with is the question."

Although contracts and employment agreements exist between the drivers and their employers and not with the port itself, both Dosange and McGarrigle say Port Metro Vancouver ultimately controls the fate of drivers, and nobody – including the various levels of government – has done anything to put that power in check.

McGarrigle said in addition to imposing licensing fees, and limiting who comes into and out of the port through its truck licensing system (TLS), the port also

imposes restrictions on the vehicles the drivers use.

The UTA, which Dosange said has approximately 1,200 registered members and another 200 completing the registration process, has had members protesting both at the port itself and off-docks at sites used to store empty containers. Over the course of the protest, Port Metro Vancouver has accused UTA members of engaging in "highly

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"These guys, they've been pushed around a lot."

Manny Dosange, UTA

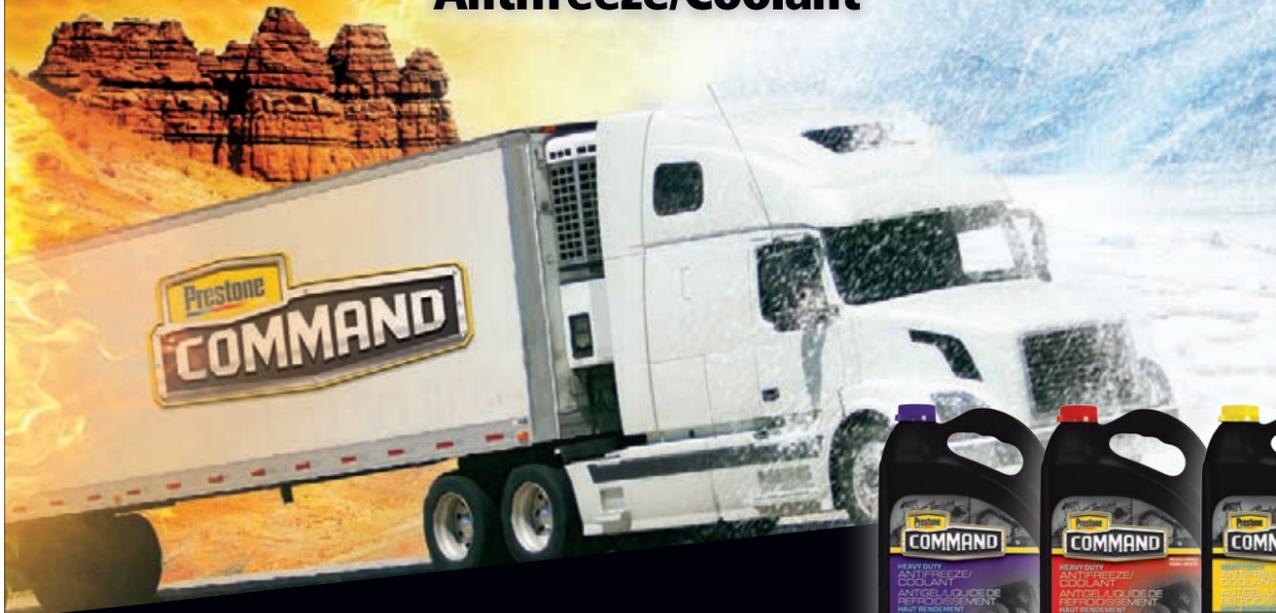
players Association. They bargain with the International Longshore and Warehouse Union [ILWU]. They have their bumps in the road, but they eventually reach agreements. On the rail side you have CN and CP and of course they're unionized, and they have their bumps in the road and they reach agreements.

"But if you look at the container truck side, which is 50% of the traffic, you've got something like over 180 differ-



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B.C port strike causing chaos

Continued from page 7

disturbing behaviour by some protesting truckers, including threats, intimidation and bodily harm towards those with legitimate right to carry on the business of Lower Mainland ports."

The port also claims to have video showing "members of the United Truckers Association stopping and possibly vandalizing a truck that was trying to gain access to the port."

According to the port "law enforcement officials have also taken affidavits from witnesses to threats, intimidation and/or sabotage of trucks and/or property. The port will wherever possible, identify these individuals and their li-

censes to access port property will be terminated."

Port Metro Vancouver said March 10 it had taken steps to "enhance the safety of the port for working truckers."

"Port Metro Vancouver will be seeking continuation and expansion of our injunction to keep protestors off port property. Additionally, we will continue a program implemented last week of placing security personnel in working trucks to record events and assist drivers wanting to access port terminals. Lastly, we will be enhancing the presence of security at key locations and access points for traffic headed to or from the port," the port said. It added the work stoppage was costing the economy about \$885 million per week. **TW**

Harbour Link invites inspections

Continued from page 1

The agency even offered to return to provide some logbook training to drivers who would benefit from a refresher. Most of the defects noted by the police were minor in nature (ie. reflective tape missing from a container chassis). But most rewarding for McGee was that the areas of concern raised last year showed noticeable improvements.

"They were more than happy to come in and see what progress we as a company had made and to see if we had followed up on items raised during the post-mortem last year," McGee said. "For the most part, we did. They were quite happy with some of the items we had improved on."

Since the inspections were done at Container Link's facility, any repairs needed were done on-site, reducing downtime and expense. Drivers were able to start their shift after their unit was inspected, so it didn't eat into their income.

And enforcement officers had a more comfortable environment than roadside in which to work, making it a win-win-win for everyone involved, McGee noted.

The police inspected about 25 trucks, or roughly a third of Harbour Link's fleet, including company trucks and lease-op units, as well as container chassis.

The company's willingness to open its doors to the enforcement agency has led to a stronger relationship out on the road, McGee says.

"The Delta Police work in harmony with CVSE and the New Westminster Police Commercial Vehicle Team and the RCMP, so they can hook up with our drivers anywhere along their routes," McGee said. "They do see our drivers out on the road and when they get pulled over by someone they've had a past dealing with, it's less confrontational. We want to build that relationship with the law enforcement community, and let them know we are taking this seriously."

McGee also invited local media to visit the site and witness the inspections, gaining some positive PR in the process.

"We're trying to portray the image that we're a safe carrier, we do care about road safety and we want our drivers to feel comfortable that if they get pulled in, they're well educated," he said. "It's about being proactive." **TW**



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Infrastructure spending drives development: Ashton

By Lou Smyrlis

WINNIPEG, Man. – Manitoba has “the best opportunity in a generation” to drive economic growth and that can’t be done without significant investments in infrastructure,” Manitoba’s Minister of Infrastructure and Transport, Steve Ashton, told Manitoba Trucking Association’s annual general meeting on March 11.

“Infrastructure doesn’t just follow development; infrastructure drives development,” Ashton told the strongly at-

• More than \$3.7 billion to be invested in Manitoba roads, highways and bridges;

• \$320 million to be invested in flood protection around the province;

• And more than \$1.5 billion to be invested in municipal roads, clean water and other municipal infrastructure to help meet the needs of Manitoba’s many growing communities

Of particular importance to trucking is work on Hwy. 75, Hwy. 1 and Hwy. 10. Ashton said the scheduled work on Hwy. 75, which includes flood control, will bring the roadway up to true highway standards. An increase in the provincial sales tax is helping to fund the plan but Ashton said it will be worth it, pointing out the funds would not have been available with the increase in tax revenues.

Ashton also spoke about the need to address the differences in trucking regulations across the country. He said progress has been made on spring load restrictions and RTAC weights and dimensions, however, much work still needs to be done.

“As Canadians we have to ask ourselves does it make sense to have a patchwork quilt of regulations coast to coast? Canadians should be demanding more consistency. It shouldn’t just be up to the trucking industry (to demand this),” he said. **TW**

‘Infrastructure drives development,’
Steve Ashton

tended meeting, stressing his desire that Winnipeg live up to its geographic potential as a transportation hub.

Ashton said his government has increased the amount it is spending on infrastructure about five-fold with plans to spend \$5.5 billion on construction over five years. Ashton’s plan calls for:

“Invisible industry” needs to better promote its opportunities: Blagden

By Lou Smyrlis

WINNIPEG, Man. – Trucking is an industry large enough and diverse enough to accommodate the interests and skill sets of virtually everyone. However, because it also happens to be “invisible,” those outside of trucking are left unaware of the opportunities within the industry, according to outgoing Manitoba Trucking Association president Norm Blagden.

“No matter where an individual’s strengths lie, there is opportunity in our industry. However, we now see that we, as an industry group, must go out and tell people of these opportunities. As that ‘invisible industry,’ those outside of trucking are unaware of what they can achieve with us...Generally speaking, members of the public don’t often take a moment to consider how various products – computers, printer paper, and coffee in the lunch room – actually make it to those various spots,” Blagden said in his President’s Report, presented at the association’s annual general meeting March 11.

Blagden pointed out the MTA’s Careers Committee is involved in several efforts on this front.

It has forged stronger ties with a number of organizations, including Apprenticeship Manitoba, the Cana-

dian military, and other recruitment organizations, such as the Winnipeg Transition Centre.

“All of these organizations have people looking for jobs but until we started to promote the trucking industry, most of them were unaware of the opportunities available in our industry,” Blagden noted.

The MTA is also calling for mandatory minimum training for commercial drivers in the province. It is looking to have the existing national occupational standard reviewed and confirmed by the province.

Blagden also pointed out that with the help of Manitoba Public Insurance, the Entry Level Professional Truck Driver Training program is flourishing. Last year almost 100 funded participants were part of the program.

“That is almost 100 well-trained, qualified drivers joining our fleets to keep freight moving. We continue to see interest in this program not only in urban areas but also from rural parts of the province, which is a target audience we plan to pursue,” Blagden said.

Blagden warned that the driver shortage is going to heat up as the industry taps into the same labour pools as does construction and manufacturing. **TW**

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Obama passes Phase II fuel economy regs

By Carolyn Gruske

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Following up his State of the Union address in January, US President Barack Obama has detailed the changes he expects the trucking industry to adopt to improve the fuel efficiency of medium- and heavy-duty vehicles.

In a plan the White House says is designed to bolster energy security, cut carbon pollution and spur manufacturing innovation, Obama has given the industry a March 2016 deadline for developing the next round of fuel efficiency standards for medium- and heavy-duty trucks. This round of fuel efficiency standards is expected to build upon the ones set for 2014–2018 model year vehicles.

The president expects the new fuel efficiency standards to come about in a number of ways, including:

- Having the EPA and National Highway and Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) work with manufacturers, labour, states, NGOs, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) and other stakeholders to “develop standards that provide long-term certainty and promote innovation.”

- Having the EPA and NHTSA “assess advanced technologies that may not currently be in production,” including engine and powertrain efficiency improvements, aerodynamics, weight reduction, improved tire rolling resistance, hybridization, automatic engine shutdown, and improvements to accessories such as water pumps, fans, auxiliary power units, and air-conditioning.

Obama’s announcement also referenced the government’s SuperTruck program, which was launched in 2010 and created to improve freight-hauling efficiency of Class 8 trucks by 50% by 2015. According to White House figures, while working with the program Cummins and Peterbilt have demonstrated a “20% increase in engine efficiency and a 70% increase in freight efficiency, reaching over 10 miles per gallon under real-world driving conditions.” Other participants in the project, Daimler and Volvo have also seen engine efficiency gains of 50% and 48% respectively.

In addition, Obama asked the US Congress to end subsidies for oil and gas producers and to create an energy security trust fund to pay for research into new vehicle technologies.

In response to the announcement, organizations quickly issued statements reflecting their own positions.

Reaction from the trucking industry was mixed. Some companies like Cummins, whose participation in the P3 program was cited by the White House, were very supportive of Obama’s approach.

“The first phase of these regulations provides a strong foundation that recognizes the needs of business while offering clear direction to create innovative technologies. With the announcement today, it is clear that the government will again take a collaborative approach. We look forward to working with regulators, our customers and others on the next phase of standards that will lead to even greater reductions in greenhouse gases

Continued on page 14

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New fuel economy standards

Continued from page 12

and fuel consumption," said Rich Freeland, Cummins vice-president and president of the engine business.

The Diesel Technology Forum broached the proposed changes more cautiously by emphasizing its past accomplishments.

"Today's announcement sets up the next challenge for clean diesel technology to further improve efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from commercial vehicles including medium and heavy duty trucks and buses," said Allen Schaeffer, executive director of the Forum. "Engine and vehicle makers have all met the first set of Phase I standards for higher fuel efficiency in the current 2014 products that are now certified and for sale. Driven by customer's fuel efficiency demands, OEMs made improvements which enabled them to meet requirements of Phase I."

American Trucking Associations (ATA) executives counselled that a careful, thoughtful and cautious approach is needed to Phase II changes.

"We stood shoulder-to-shoulder with the President and his administration in 2011 when the historic first fuel efficiency standards were set for heavy-duty vehicles. As we begin this new round of standards, ATA hopes the administration will set forth a path that is both based on the best science and research available and economically achievable," said ATA president and CEO Bill Graves.

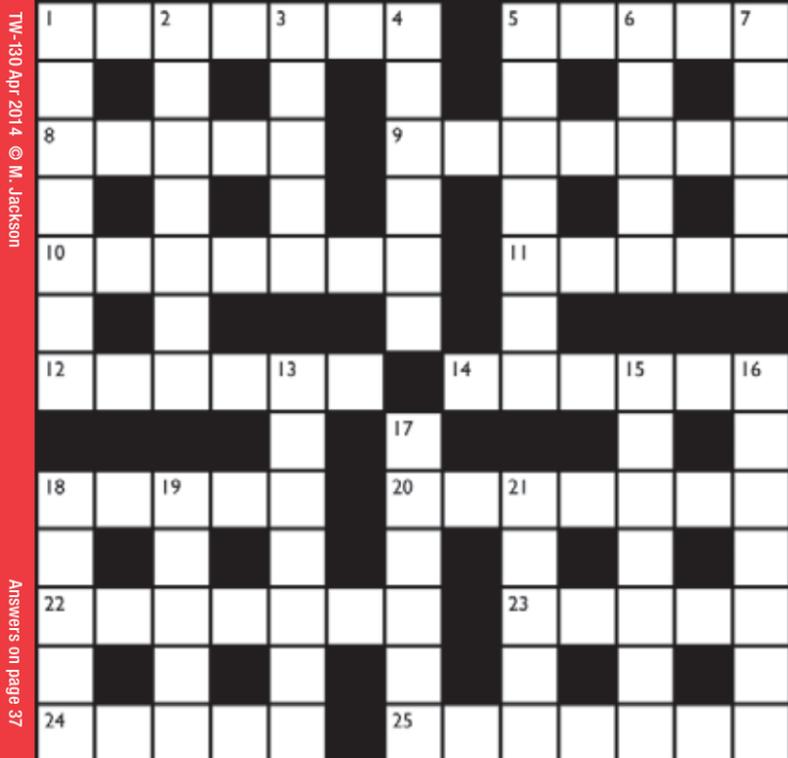
"Fuel is one of our industry's largest expenses, so it makes sense that as an industry we would support proposals to use less of it. However, we should make sure that new rules don't conflict with safety or other environmental regulations, nor should they force specific types of technology onto the market before they are fully tested and ready," he added. ATA chair Phil Byrd, president of Bulldog Hiway Express, in Charleston, S.C. also offered his thoughts.

"Trucking is a very diverse industry, and as such, whatever standards the administration sets should reflect that diversity and whatever tests are devised should accurately reflect what drivers face on the roads every day."

Sandeep Kar, the automotive and transportation global research director for research firm Frost & Sullivan, offered his perspective on Obama's plan.

"The president's decision to elevate fuel efficiency standards for medium and heavy-duty trucks is definitely a strategic move. While it presents short-term pain for the industry, it will indeed deliver long-term gain both locally and globally. Trucks featuring better fuel-efficiency and economy will cost higher than the current breed of trucks, but will deliver reduced fuel expenses for fleets thereby reducing life-cycle costs and hence total cost of ownership, while simultaneously reducing freight transportation's carbon footprint." TW

THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD PUZZLE



TW-130 Apr 2014 © M. Jackson

Answers on page 37

Across

- 1 Partial payment on new-truck order
- 5 Airtronic bunk-heater brand
- 8 Breakdown-warning device
- 9 Repo-truck sale, sometimes
- 10 Automotive lingerie (3,4)
- 11 Flowers on Alberta plates
- 12 Truckmaker Volvo's homeland
- 14 Volvo auto-manual transmission (1,5)
- 18 Cargo-restraint type
- 20 "____ Everywhere," Hank Snow song (3,4)
- 22 Goods trucked into Canada
- 23 GST component
- 24 Flexible coolant

Down

- 1 Truck-recall reasons
- 2 Saskatchewan scenery
- 3 Axle or tire type
- 4 Winnipeg-based ____ Group of Companies
- 5 Oversize-rig companion vehicles
- 6 Tire-construction layers
- 7 Piston jewelry
- 13 Goods trucked to USA
- 15 Temporary far-north highway (3,4)
- 16 Takes on fuel (5,2)
- 17 Certain slapshots
- 18 Simcoe, ON-based Bruce R. ____ Ltd.
- 19 Trucks reclaimed by lenders
- 21 International ProStar trim level



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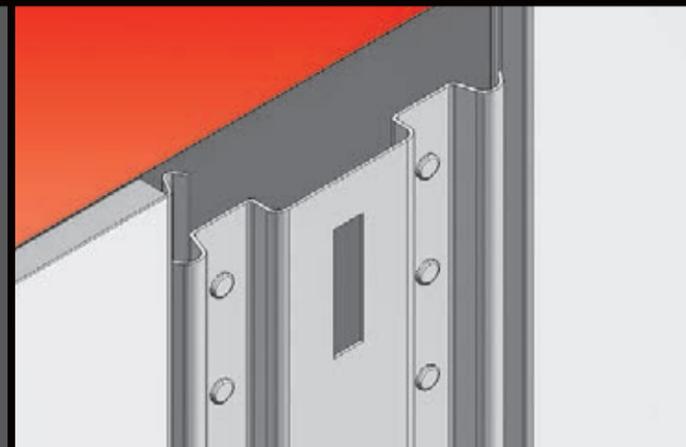
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US to see stronger economic growth, slower freight growth in 2014, FTR predicts

By James Menzies

BLOOMINGTON, Ind. – The US economy will be slightly stronger this year than last, but freight growth will weaken. That's the prediction of industry forecaster FTR, which held a Webinar Feb. 13 entitled *State of Freight: Trucking Outlook for an Uncertain Year*. Noel Perry, senior consultant with FTR, said there's an upside scenario for 2014 that could see a capacity crisis.

Capacity utilization in the US currently sits at about 98% and will reach 99% – levels not seen since the boom period of 2004 – by the end of the year. However, unlike in 2004, Perry said the build-up to that level has been very gradual, so there may not be a repeat of the capacity shortage that industry struggled with 10 years ago. This also explains why pricing hasn't fared better in light of near record-high capacity utilization levels.

"In 2004, that jump to 99% capacity utilization came out of nowhere," Perry said. "Industry had great difficulty adjusting to that. But we've been at over 96% for three years now."

US truck pricing actually softened slightly in 2013, Perry noted, even though capacity utilization was high

and freight volumes strong.

But while the industry has learned to walk the tightrope of near 100% capacity utilization, Perry said it wouldn't take much in this environment to create a capacity crisis. Currently, the economic drag on capacity is modest, but the regulatory drag significant.

If the FMCSA continues to impose tighter restrictions on the industry – as it did with hours-of-service reductions in 2013 – the US trucking industry could find itself seriously short of drivers and trucks.

"Regulatory drag is becoming the long-term issue here," Perry said. "We don't know if the FMCSA is actually going to do what they say they're going to do, but if they do, it will throw this capacity issue into entirely new ground."

The FMCSA, however, has a habit of postponing implementation deadlines for its various initiatives and with that in mind, FTR is forecasting trucking rates to climb only about 4% in 2014, well below the double-digit growth that was seen last time capacity utilization hit 99% in 2004.

If everything goes right for the trucking industry this year, Perry said rates could climb by as much as 8-9%.

Perry also shared some insight into how the brutal winter weather has impacted capacity. He said about half the country has been hammered by winter storms and it's the Eastern half, which handles about 60-70% of US freight. Over the past month, weather reduced trucking's productivity in the East by 2-5%, resulting in a nationwide capacity loss of 1-3%.

"We're at 98% capacity utilization now. You add 2-3% to that and you get up around 100%," Perry noted. "That puts you in a situation where the industry has great difficulty in providing adequate capacity. This has had a short-term effect. We'll likely have a make-up period of two to three weeks."

For the economy in general, FTR's forecast is consistent with projections from other prognosticators, that US GDP will grow a little less than 3% in each of the next three years.

This pace of growth is significantly slower than in past economic recoveries.

The good news for carriers is that fuel prices are projected – in the US, anyways – to remain steady at about US\$3.90 per gallon for several more years without volatility.

Perry characterized FTR's economic forecast as "conservative." He advised carrier executives to "stay flexible," noting a capacity crisis equal to or greater than the one seen in 2004 is still possible.

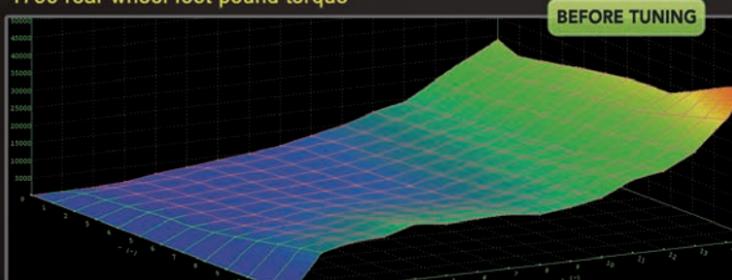
Much of that depends on if and when the FMCSA implements the 27 new regulations currently in the works that will have an impact on trucking productivity and whether industry is able to find the manpower to keep up with the regulatory drag these new regs will create. **TW**

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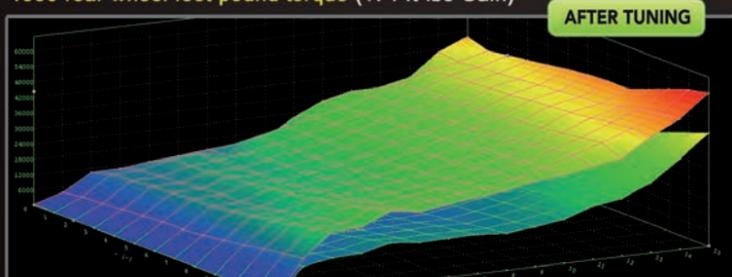
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Why every professional driver should want a dash cam

Last month in this space I put forward the opinion that fleet executives and enforcement officials were missing the boat in regards to adopting social media to tap into the deep knowledge base that professional drivers possess. This month, let's take a look at a couple of performance monitoring technologies that are being widely adopted in the cabs of today's commercial vehicles and how we (drivers) are reacting to them.

The first is the electronic on-board

Over the road

Al Goodhall



recorder (EOBR) and the second is the dash cam. In the broadest terms, both of these platforms do the same thing: they measure driver performance. The other common thing they share is that neither one is currently required by law, but both are being widely adopted. The EOBR is seen by many drivers

as being an invasive technology since it is installed by the carrier to monitor individual performance.

The benefit to the driver is not always clear. If only a portion of the total driver pool is monitored this way, the playing field is not level so a sense of unfairness results from its use. Dash cams, on the other hand, are being adopted by drivers – not just carriers. Dash cams are seen to balance the playing field, because they not only measure the performance of the individual driver but also the performance of every other driver on the road that

the driver comes into contact with.

Let me make full disclosure here, and say that I have been using an EOBR for the past five years. So I've been subject to the performance monitoring that goes along with the full-featured EOBR that my carrier uses. Besides tracking my on- and off-duty time, it also measures hard brakes, rollover prevention, idle time, percentage of time spent on cruise control, percentage spent over speed, etc. This software allows the carrier to track individual trucks and drivers in all of these categories. At this point I have not installed a dash cam in my truck, but I don't see myself making it through 2014 without doing so. There are just too many benefits to having a dash cam as well as an EOBR.

As a driver, I don't think you need to make a choice between an EOBR and a dash cam. I believe these two technologies complement one another and your best option is to have both.

Let's say you're travelling down a two-lane highway and I'm approaching from the opposite direction. As I approach, my rig drifts a foot over the centre line and forces you to take the shoulder to avoid a collision. Your dash cam records this, you're ticked off, and so you contact the authorities and report this dangerous driving. The images from your dash cam allow authorities to track me down.

Another dangerous driver will be brought to justice. But when records from my EOBR are pulled, they show that I have a stellar driving history. My driver's abstract is also squeaky clean, along with my CVOR. What comes to light is the fact that I'm human and I screwed up.

The EOBR provided some context to the incident recorded by the dash cam. Of course, there are two sides to every coin. The EOBR could have shown the opposite. I may have rarely been in compliance with hours-of-service laws, my driver's abstract may have read like a novel and my CVOR could have been its sequel. In that case, I'd deserve to have the book thrown at me.

So the dash cam captures driver error at any point in time but it doesn't always provide context.

Many times, a driver's poor performance is the result of negligence – but not always.

Using both monitoring technologies provides balance and can give us the big picture. It would not surprise me if all vehicles are equipped with video recorders as standard equipment a few years down the road. I would not want to be without an EOBR if this should come to pass.

Neither dash cams nor EOBRs can prevent collisions. But can they improve safety? They definitely provide a record that we can use in training, educating, and mentoring drivers to improve safety on our public roads – not just for commercial drivers but for all drivers. That should be our goal rather than simply going after everyone that makes a mistake.

Legislation imposing the use of EOBRs is still pending, but will in all likelihood come to pass. Will legislation in regard to video recorders in commercial vehicles be far behind? **TW**

Al Goodhall has been a professional long-haul driver since 1998. You can follow him on Twitter at @Al_Goodhall.

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All SuperTruck projects on target

By James Menzies

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind. – The Green Truck Summit overcame some adversity March 4, when its keynote speaker was unable to attend due to a snowstorm in D.C. Not to be deterred, organizers piped in Patrick Davis, director of the Department of Energy’s Vehicle Technologies Office by video and his address went off without a hitch – and with a smaller carbon footprint, to boot.

Davis provided an update on the DoE’s SuperTruck program, noting each of the four projects is on pace to achieve its goal of increasing efficiency by 50%. The Peterbilt/Cummins project has received the lion’s share of the attention of late, even earning the companies a recent commendation from US President Barack Obama, because it’s the first of four projects to be completed, Davis said. The Class 8 tractor-trailer has achieved 10.7 mpg. But Davis said similar projects spearheaded by Daimler, Navistar and Volvo are also on pace to hit their objectives. The SuperTruck program looks at Class 8 trucks grossing 65,000 lbs and challenges them to improve their efficiency by 50%.

“If you were to take a Class 8 vehicle that currently gets 6.5 mpg, a SuperTruck would be approaching 10 mpg,” Davis said. Some of the technologies being employed include: improved aerodynamics, reduced rolling resistance, waste heat recovery, hybridization of auxiliary compo-

nents and engine downsizing.

Davis also said the green truck industry is benefiting from advancements in battery technology. He noted the cost of batteries has come down by more than 50% over the past five years, to a rate of about \$325 per kWh (kilowatt/hour). Davis said a cost of \$200-\$250 is achievable in the short-term, and the DoE has set a long-term target of \$125 per kWh.

The trucking industry must continue to develop green technologies, to lessen its dependence on foreign oil, Davis noted. Transportation continues to account for two-thirds of US petroleum usage, and over 80% of that is consumed by on-road vehicles. Heavy-duty trucks alone account for 18% of US oil consumption.

“This is an issue of economic security, environmental stewardship as well as national security,” he said.

The fact that fleets now have more vehicles to choose from presents both opportunities and challenges, Davis said.

“It’s a challenge because of infrastructure and the availability of those fuels, making sure we have the fuels where they need to be to service our fleets,” he said. Davis said there are presently 25 heavy-duty tractor models available, powered by alternative fuels. “Frankly, it’s hard to keep up,” he said.

Today, more than half of all new refuse trucks being sold are fuelled by natural gas. The fuelling infrastructure in the US is rapidly expanding as well. Davis noted there are now 1,334 CNG stations in the US and 90 LNG stations. **TW**



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Training helps maximize potential of technology

There was a time, not too many years ago, when trucks essentially vanished from view after pulling out of a fleet yard. Updates about an ongoing trip were limited to calls from payphones in truck stops, or maybe the reports from passing motorists who responded to a sticker which asked, "How's my driving?"

An ever-growing list of available technology has changed this forever, offering fleet managers insight that once would have been the exclusive domain of those sitting in the cab. Cell phones, satellite tracking and Global Positioning Systems can certainly help to locate a load at any moment in time. And reports about fuel economy and idling are regularly downloaded from engine electronics to support commitments to fuel-efficiency.

As valuable as this information is, many fleets have yet to scratch the surface of what available data can accomplish – proving that even the most advanced technology still needs to be supported by related training in how to use it. Those who recognize the need to monitor a truck's number of hard-braking events or hard lateral moves can spot high-risk drivers who are too aggressive behind the wheel and might benefit

Ask the Expert

David Goruk



from some added guidance to help prevent collisions. And the reports which match vehicle speeds and selected gears tell another story.

A driver who regularly allows engine speeds to run up to the governor could be shortening equipment life; someone who travels at highway speeds while in neutral is likely missing gears when heading down large hills.

Sometimes the added insight comes from knowing how to look at the same data in a different way.

For example, the same system which tracks a shipment can be used to sound an alarm when a vehicle strays too far from its scheduled route. This "geofencing" has been used to track stolen equipment, but one Customs officer also showed me how a driver who repeatedly strays into a crime-ridden neighbourhood might actually be involved in an illegal activity. Matching the vehicle location to police data about known sources of drugs could certainly raise a few questions.

Drivers who see such technology as an invasion of privacy – complaining that Big Brother is watching them – would benefit from training that shows how the data protects their interests, too.

The electronic on-board recorders (EOBRs) which track compliance with hours-of-service rules will certainly discourage operations teams who always offer a dismissive "see what you can do" while available hours tick away. And dash-mounted cameras can prove a driver was right as easily as it can spot a mistake. The view through the windshield will prove without a doubt that someone cut in front of the truck just seconds before a crash, or even give insurers the information they need to settle claims more quickly and cheaply than ever before. Like every other piece of technology, however, the quality of the tool can make a difference.

High-definition cameras are needed to catch the letters and numbers on licence plates, which will be crucial when investigating a collision. The systems equipped with two-way cameras – filming drivers and roadways alike – also give safety teams a way to prove someone was focused on the road rather than dozing behind the wheel. But the need for technology-related training hardly ends with data-storing devices.

An automatic transmission offers a good example of how vehicle technology can be maximized by a skilled user. These transmissions allow a driver to keep both hands on the wheel whenever a gear needs to be changed in the middle of an intersection.

But the equipment has also been known to change gears when a truck is heading down a hill.

Drivers who are trained in the related features will know how to select a manual mode that will hold a gear while maintaining control down a long grade.

Adaptive cruise controls, which automatically maintain specific following distances, could also give under-trained drivers a false sense of confidence when they should be reducing speeds in bad weather. And as helpful as blind spot detectors may be, the drivers who have them will be safest when they realize the blind spots that still remain and use the detectors as simply another tool at their disposal.

Fleets that embrace emerging technologies will always have the chance to enhance operations and build a competitive edge. But the gains will always be maximized when those technologies are put in the hands of trained professionals. **TW**

This month's expert is David Goruk. David is a risk services specialist and has served the trucking industry for more than 25 years providing loss control and risk management services to the trucking industry. You can visit them at www.nbins.com.

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Trucks aren't immune from scrutiny over crude hauling

Last summer's tragedy at Lac-Megantic has added some urgency to the debate over which mode should be used to ship crude oil. How this plays into the decisions on the Keystone XL, Northern Gateway or Trans Mountain Expansion pipelines, remains to be seen. The safety performance of the railways has never been under greater scrutiny. But, the trucking industry is also not immune.

Trucks are major haulers of crude oil in Canada. In fact, during the mid-stream stage of product development – where crude oil emulsion is shipped over short distances from the wellhead to the battery where it is “cleaned” and/or “treated” – virtually all of it is handled by trucks.

At these distances the rates between truck and rail are comparable. Trucks are more reliable in terms of delivery times. After being treated, if the battery is a pipe-connected facility, the crude is moved by pipeline to the refineries and trucks are no longer involved. However, if the battery does not have a connection to a pipeline, trucks are used to transport the crude (again over a relatively short distance) from the battery to a pipeline or to a trans-



Industry Issues

David Bradley

load facility where it is transferred to a rail car.

The long-distance transportation of crude oil to refineries is handled by one of two modes – pipeline or rail – primarily due to their ability to handle large volumes. Trucks are really not an economical option for such movements and will never displace pipelines or rail in that market. Even if truckers wanted to, there are not enough roads, trucks or drivers to handle the traffic. As such, crude isn't viewed as a growth area for truckers the way it is by the railways.

Notwithstanding, it is also unlikely an incident of the magnitude of Lac-Megantic could occur where trucks are involved. The amount of product being shipped by truck in a single shipment is small compared to a train of tank cars. A train of 80-120 rail cars would carry the equivalent of 160-240 truck tank trailers.

Using 2012 data, the frequency and severity of dangerous goods incidents

involving trucks is extremely low – about 1.64 incidents per 10,000 shipments and 56.4% were minor (less than 500 litres). The frequency of incidents caused by accidents on the highway (where the public is most at risk) is also extremely low – 53 incidents (16.2% of total incidents) for a frequency of 0.27 per 10,000 shipments. Almost 68% of the accidents involved Class 3, flammable liquids (mainly crude oil), but 93.6% were minor incidents.

Overall, this suggests the trucking industry and the dangerous goods regulations are doing an effective job of incident prevention. Still, the trucking industry will come under scrutiny over the next few months during the House of Commons Standing Committee on Transport hearings into safe transportation of dangerous goods by all modes. CTA will be representing the industry's interests. The industry uses the country's roads and highways, and therefore shares its workplace with the public. With this comes a responsibility to ensure that our drivers and vehicles are operating safely – whether the trucks are hauling dangerous goods or not.

CTA will re-state its strong support for a universal EOBR man-

date; a manufacturing standard (in lock-step with the US) for roll stability; mandatory activation of truck speed limiters at no more than 105 km/h and mandatory entry-level training for truck drivers.

With regard to the TDG regulations, enforcement of shipper responsibilities is weak and needs to be beefed up. Too often, carriers and drivers are getting nailed at roadside for violations that rest with shippers who do not provide proper documentation; or don't have the requisite knowledge of the regulations or sometimes even their own product.

The regulations also compel carriers to certify drivers receive dangerous goods training. CTA believes consideration should be given to making sure those who provide training (whether in-house or third-party) are qualified to do so. Finally, CTA feels it is contrary to the public interest to allow clauses in freight contracts that exempt shippers from liability brought about by their own negligence.

As witnessed in the Lac-Megantic case, dangerous goods incidents can be particularly severe and the claims enormous. It is imperative that the negligent party or parties bear the liability for claims. Coordinated action is required by the federal and provincial governments to annul such clauses. **TW**

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



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There's more to life than trucking

It goes without saying that a Tax Talk column in April should be about personal income tax returns.

Of course, I dedicated my last two columns to tax tips and ideas about how to reduce the tax you owe.

And so this month I find myself turning to recent conversations with clients for inspiration.

While most of the tax questions I get are related to trucking, clients have a lot more going on in their lives than hauling freight.

We do tax returns for clients' spouses and children. We pretty much see everything.

Consider the topics I've talked about with clients in the last few weeks:

Can I deduct my...?

Textbooks: Textbooks are not a stand-alone deduction. They are part of the education deduction for students of qualified institutions and there is a set amount per month based on the number of months the student is part-time or full-time. So those textbooks your kids bought at the school book store are not deductible, and nor are the books your wife bought for that course she took. If you don't have a T2202 in your hand, there is no textbook deduction.

Tax Talk

Scott Taylor



Parking at the hospital: Yes, it's expensive; yes, you're stuck with the hospital lot unless you want to hike a mile; and no, parking is not an allowable deduction. That is, unless you had to travel at least 80 kms one way from your home to obtain medical services. If that's the case, then accommodations, meals, and your vehicle expenses are deductible as well.

Cell phone: Unless your employer completes form T2200 verifying that you are required to have a cell phone, you cannot deduct this expense.

Commuting and uniforms: Driving to the truck, yard, or office is a personal expense and is not deductible whether you are an employee or self-employed. Additionally, as an employee, you cannot deduct the cost of special clothing you wear or have to wear for your work.

Meals: Let's not forget that there are two deduction rates for meals eaten while you're on the road.

All meals claimed using the simplified method (ie. your logbooks) are calculated at \$17 per meal. You can

claim 50% of that amount unless you qualify as a long-haul truck driver, in which case you can claim 80%.

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

Basically, if you're home every night, your meal expense deduction is 50%.

Even then, you must have been away for 12 consecutive hours from your municipality or metropolitan area in order for the expense to qualify.

I'm late...

Two years ago, we helped an owner/operator file GST/HST and income tax returns for 2005 to 2007. Recently, he came to us about preparing his 2008 to 2010 returns. While reviewing everything he sent to us, I found Notices of Assessment for his GST/HST account for 2005 to 2007. Everything had zeros on it. CRA had denied his claims for GST/HST paid on expenses because they were more than four years old.

We warned him that this could

happen.

This guy does a lot work in Canada and he was eligible for almost \$12,000 in claims if only he had filed sooner. Now, as we start work on his claims for 2008 and 2009, we're going to have to tell him that they're too old as well.

CRA doesn't mess around when it comes to deadlines. The last day to submit your 2013 personal income tax return is April 30.

If your return is late, there's a minimum 5% penalty on the balance owing plus 1% per month for a maximum of 12 months.

If you have filed late before, the penalties may be higher.

Even if you can't afford to pay the balance, filing your return on time can save you penalties and fees. You'll also be in a better negotiating position with CRA regarding a payment plan.

Preparing your personal tax return may be a once-a-year thing but tax planning and managing your finances takes constant effort. It's not most peoples' idea of fun.

However, the commitment is worth it. We all work too hard to give up opportunities to reduce the amount of tax we owe. **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 or call 800-461-5970.

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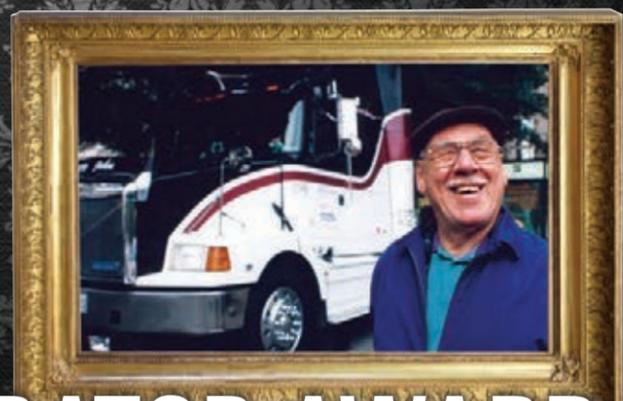
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Don't be blinded by the fuel surcharge

When I started our business in late 1999, 'fuel surcharge' was a term I had never heard used. During my previous time in the freight business, fuel prices had not fluctuated so much that the increase wasn't covered by regular increases in the freight rate.

Since early 2000, however, the fuel surcharge is a term that has rarely gone away. It's also probably the source of the most confusion in this industry, from owner/operators all the way up to ship-

Small Fleet, Big Attitude

Bill Cameron



pers and receivers.

A lack of consistency in the way they are administered has everybody baffled, and in the case of the shipper/receiver, it's often suspected to be a spineless method of increasing rates.

Many large carriers base their fuel surcharges on an index published online by

the Freight Carriers Association, or other such groups. Two problems arise from this. First, these surcharges are based on average freight rates from several years ago. Why? Please don't tell me that none of you have increased your base freight rate since 2006.

The second problem is that, again, we are dealing with averages. I've whined repeatedly at what I feel are the ridiculous and insulting freight rates being offered by the dry van sector.

There are a lot more vans in circulation than flatdecks, tanks, or specialized trailers, so they, by sheer numbers alone, pull the average down.

The suggested fuel surcharges online only distinguish between LTL, TL, and heavy TL. There is no distinction between trailer types. On the surface, using this method to calculate your surcharges seems to be a lazy and ineffective system. Your primary source of increased revenue, in this case, is the

surcharge. As equipment and maintenance prices increase, you can still end up running cheaper if fuel prices decrease.

In our case, we have devised a formula that realistically reflects a fair fuel surcharge, based on our own freight rates. When submitting rates - either to a new customer, or revised rates to an existing customer - the rate list clearly states the local fuel price upon which the surcharge was based. Shippers may, if they wish, call the local fuel supplier for the current diesel price to verify what we are charging is realistic.

They may then - although none seem that ambitious - calculate their surcharge on the rate, and see that the increase is a net dollar figure that only covers our increased fuel costs for that trip. It's a fair and transparent surcharge. This honesty has caused headaches for some of our competition in the past.

One US customer, using our trucks as well as several American trucks, asked me what price diesel would have to reach for the fuel surcharge to disappear. Apparently, I was the only one who could answer the question, so ours was the only company that didn't have any problem collecting. A Canadian customer once phoned to ask for an explanation of how our surcharges were calculated.

Assuming I was on trial, I explained the entire process, even using the freight rates to a common destination, explaining typical fuel economy figures and showing that the surcharge covered our increased costs and little or nothing more.

He then asked what the online 'national average' was all about, so I explained. His final question explained this whole line of questioning: 'So how come your surcharge is 10% and your competitor's went from zero to 30% this month when he claims to be using the national average?'

Several years ago, a shipper we dealt with was bought out by a larger manufacturer. The new shipping supervisor from the parent company informed all carriers that individual fuel surcharges would not be allowed; he would provide weekly updates as to what the accepted surcharge would be. Our freight rates were only one year old. He used the national average, and unwittingly handed us a 10% raise. Genius.

The fuel surcharges also can feed the fallacy among some owner/operators that their revenue is lower at a small carrier. Those who have a firm grasp of the numbers, and good enough math skills to be a successful owner/operator, figure out the truth quite quickly. Others never quite understand. I had one applicant ask what our fuel surcharge was. At the time it was 10%. He angrily lectured me about how my business was being run, stating he was currently paid a surcharge of 18%. When I asked him what his base rate was (a question he hadn't even asked me yet), he responded with a rate that was about 40 cents per mile less than I paid. I told him he should do the math instead of lecturing me. The end result on the owner/operator's paycheck was going to be 30 cents per mile more with us than at his current job, so the difference in the surcharge rate wasn't as critical as he thought. **TW**

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

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How to talk to drivers about IFTA/IRP compliance

Garbage in, garbage out. Whoever came up with that old saying could easily have been talking about fuel and distance tax reporting.

A fleet's ability to file timely, accurate reports for IFTA, IRP, and vehicle sales tax is entirely dependent on its ability to get timely, accurate information from its truck drivers. Bad or missing information will only raise the risk of mistakes and red flags that will draw an auditor's attention.

Drivers provide two types of data that are vital for tax compliance: fuel receipts and trip sheets. Often, it isn't until a company is audited that they find out why it's so important to talk to their drivers about their role in reporting this information. If you're looking for a driver-meeting topic that can save your business money, talk to your drivers about IFTA and IRP compliance. Here's where to start:

Fuel reporting for IFTA: Every carrier must maintain records of all motor fuel purchased, received, and used - bulk and retail. Each purchase must be supported by a valid receipt.

A valid receipt documents the amount of tax paid when the fuel was purchased, and you need it in order to claim a credit. Without a receipt, your claim will be disallowed.

It can be a costly mistake. Say your driver does a 500-litre fill in British Columbia, where fuel tax is 22.67 cents a litre, and "files away" the receipt somewhere in the sleeper. Without a receipt, that's \$113.35 in fuel tax that your business can't claim. On top of that, you'll have to pay the tax again when your company files its return with the government.

All told, that one lost receipt cost your business \$226.70. Misplace one receipt a month and that's \$2,720.40 a year.

If your drivers are tired of hearing you nag about turning in fuel receipts on time and in good condition, educate them instead. Explain the financial impact of a lost receipt so everyone understands the importance of staying organized and turning in their fuel reports and other paperwork on time.

Distance reports: Both IFTA and IRP require carriers to maintain detailed distance records that report operations on an individual-vehicle basis.

Not only is distance used to calculate fuel tax, it establishes the prorated registration percentages on your vehicle plates. If the distance you report is incorrect, it can affect the entire fleet in terms of cost. The situation is magnified in the event of an audit, as the auditor can go back current-plus-three years, assess an error factor based on the missing distance, and apply that charge to the entire fleet. Plus penalties, plus interest. Sales tax, too.

Guest Column

Sandy Johnson



If you didn't claim enough distance and your percentage was lower than the distance you actually travelled, the jurisdiction will assess the missing tax plus penalty, plus interest. If you short a trip or forget to report a trip in a place where they charge mileage tax - hold on to your hat! The cost

of non-compliance is even greater.

Collect good data: Compared to manual trip records, GPS is quickly gaining acceptance as a way to collect distances for IFTA and IRP reporting. As regulators move closer to the requirement of tracking hours of service electronically, using GPS for tax reporting is destined to become commonplace.

Right now, rules about distance records produced by vehicle-tracking systems vary depending on the jurisdiction. If you run a fleet under IFTA or IRP, make sure the method you use

(meaning manual trip records or data from a device that uses GPS) will satisfy whatever jurisdiction would be auditing you. As always, accurate data and on-time paperwork are the keys to tax compliance.

No one wants to pay more tax than they're obligated to and no one wants to spend time sorting through the garbage looking for the right information. Clean up your act now, before you're audited. Train your drivers to collect good data - and appreciate the role they play in the process. **TW**

Sandy Johnson is the founder and managing partner at North Star Fleet Solutions in Calgary. The company provides vehicle tax and license compliance services for trucking operations ranging from single vehicles to large fleets. She can be reached at 877-860-8025 or northstarfleet.com.

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Daimler eyes even bigger slice of truck market

By Lou Smyrlis

CABO SAN LUCAS, Mexico – Enjoying a strong uptick in market share in 2013 and its strongest orders this January since the heady days of 2006, Daimler Trucks North America (DTNA) is cautiously optimistic about the rest of the year and further extending its market dominance.

“When we are looking at the economic environment, a lot of things are lining up,” David Hames, general manager, marketing and strategy for DTNA told transportation media journalists gathered here in February for a briefing on the company’s outlook.

DTNA enjoyed a market leading 38.2% share of the Classes 6-8 NAFTA market in 2013, and a 4.2% increase in its share from the previous year.

The numbers look even better to start off 2014 with a 39.3% share of truck orders.

That left Hames wondering if market share numbers couldn’t be pushed to the 40% threshold in 2014.

DTNA’s numbers also look good on the vocational side, noted Hames. The truck maker finished 2013 with a 31% vocational market share.

Despite the optimistic outlook, Hames was careful to note no one is considering a return to the aggressive new truck purchasing plans experienced prior to the Great Recession.

“For the last few years we have been counting on a significant upturn in the market. But more and more we are now seeing that this is a different market. We may not see the great booms we saw in the past. That’s a reflection of the discipline

of fleets not to get over-extended,” Hames said. “We will see more disciplined purchases based on what business requires. We won’t see the speculative kind of purchases we saw in the past.”

Hames stressed that “vehicle” integration (rather than “vertical” integration) will be a large component of DTNA’s future growth plans. He described “vertical” integration as internally focused, creating vehicles that are best from the manufacturer’s standpoint but not necessarily placing the customer first. “Vehicle” integration, according to Hames, does place the customer first when it comes to product development.

“You want customers wanting your solution because it’s a better offering than what they could get by combining separate brands,” Hames said. “Do

it right and they will want your product because it is going to give them the lowest total cost of ownership.”

He noted that DTNA’s Detroit DD15 diesel engine was installed in 51% of all new Freightliner Cascadias in 2013. A challenge in moving towards “vehicle” integration is breaking old habits in equipment spec’ing.

“In our industry when you get a solution that works, you don’t want to change it. But product design is changing quickly and it’s incumbent on our salespeople to challenge the status quo to continue to lower total cost of ownership. We still see a lot of sales come in that are, frankly, based on the truck of yesteryear,” Hames said. That is starting to change, however.

“Customers used to give us the spec’s. Now the conversation is starting to turn to where they are asking us to provide the solution. That’s a pretty major shift,” he said, adding it’s time to leverage all the engineering knowledge available within the company in properly spec’ing vehicles. **TW**

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Trailcon buys Hubs Trailer Service

CALGARY, Alta. – Trailcon Leasing has announced the purchase of Hubs Trailer Service, significantly expanding its Western Canadian presence.

“Hubs is well known for its ability to serve customers quickly and with a ton of expertise,” said Trailcon president Al Boughton.

“They have an impressive shop for doing major repairs and safety inspections and they’re open seven days a week. Add to that our own fleet maintenance services, plus our long-term leasing and local rental business, and you see how we can offer a whole new level of service.”

Trailcon was founded in 1992 and now employs more than 100 people and owns about 6,500 trailers. Its maintenance division looks after an additional 8,500 or so units across Canada, according to the company. Boughton said customers of both Trailcon and Hubs will benefit from the acquisition.

“Our customers shipping across Canada used to have to find their own support in the various markets they travelled through,” added Hubs owner Mitch Hancock. “Now they’ll be able to access a much larger service and repair network when they need it. This is one of those ‘one plus one equals three’ kind of deals. Trailcon will benefit from the hard work Hubs employees have done in recent years to establish a great reputation for service, and Hubs will benefit from being part of a larger picture that includes fleet leasing and rental.”

Boughton hinted further expansion could be in store.

“Trailcon is blazing a new trail – a trail of acquisitions,” Boughton said. “We’re in growth mode, with our sights set on further expansion across Canada.” **TW**

How SmartTruck's UnderTray device was developed

By Daniela Piteo

GREENVILLE, S.C. – The end result of a new product seldom resembles the initial design; through trial and error, modifications are made until the best possible outcome is achieved. That process at SmartTruck Systems proved that a meticulous eye could uncover further advantages.

“Production designs are always going to be a little bit different,” said Steve Wulff, the chief operations officer at SmartTruck.

After the initial production design had been completed, trial runs of the product began. It was imperative the team of engineers working on the components of the UnderTray system didn't damage the performance with the production model.

Tests revealed that performance went down.

“As it turned out, in order to get these parts out of the moulding, they need a draft angle. They needed a little bit of an angle so a part would pop out of the tool. So when the tool designer went ahead and did it, he put a little angle on it,” Wulff explained.

He wasn't sure what his constraints were, so instead of widening the top, he narrowed the bottom. “We lost area along the bottom of the UnderTray and we lost some performance.”

The result was disappointing to the team, but they went back to the drawing board to iron out the kinks.

“We rattled it out with the group and we finally figured out we needed to poke it back out and make the thing wider, run it and see what happens. We re-ran it and the performance came back. Then we thought, ‘How wide can we actually make it?’ so we went a step further and put a little more width in it,” said Wulff.

“The production, at the end of the day, had better performance than the prototype,” Wulff determined.

The vehicle is more stable, it drives easier and there is less driver fatigue, according to drivers.

“It's more stable because the wake that is coming off the back of the trailer, which we don't eliminate but reduce, pulses from side to side,” said Wulff. “The wake from behind the trailer is moving from right to left and when you reduce the wake, you reduce that pulse. It takes out some of the wag of the tail and it reduces some of the driver input and it drives more stable.”

The team has established that optimal performance comes from looking at the system as a whole, and not just in terms of all the parts.

“In order to be consistent with what you're testing, you have to be at operating temperature for the units because everything in there grows and contracts with heat and cold and so bearing temperatures change, oil viscosity temperatures change – all these things stack up on top of each other and add to the overall drag on the vehicle – and not just from an aero perspective, but from a power perspective. It takes a lot more power to drive it when it's cold,” Wulff said. “Temperature is a big variable. Fuel mileage deteriorates in the winter – everything gets cold, systems take a lot more power to operate, fuel blends

change. We definitely learned more as we went along.”

The group devoted a significant amount of time to component placement. A series of tests were conducted moving the axles back and forth. All the certification testing was done at 40-feet from the axle, according to the California standard rule.

“But we also wanted to know, what is the impact as you move the axles fore and aft and is there a better place to put our component to maximize its efficiency based on where it is relative to the axles?” said Wulff.

A specific series of testing was launched – with each run taking approximately 40 minutes to complete and every time a change occurred, a new run was made – even when it is something as simple as moving an axle

one foot forward or backwards.

Each test was then backed with a secondary run.

“What we found was our UnderTray component actually worked a little better further forward than what we had tested at originally,” Wulff said.

The rear bracket works optimally when mounted 23 feet from the back of the truck, but the first tests were done with the bracket at 19 feet.

The work atmosphere is very collaborative and the team welcome new ideas. But the primary idea was developing a technique to manipulate the flow of air in an effort to optimize fuel efficiency.

“Our methodology is to guide the air, not block it,” said Wulff.

While the obvious tests would include monitoring airflow, the team also

worked to test the system's impact on brake temperatures.

“We wanted to know, with a kit on the front, what happens to brake temperatures,” Wulff said. “We did the tests with just a standard unit – no kits, no skirts, nothing. We drove it and collected all the data and then at a pit stop we popped a kit on it. We ran the brakes way up in temperature and got them real hot and then we let them coast at a constant 50-60 miles per hour and didn't touch the brake to see how quickly they cool. We found the brakes cooled better with this kit than with any other kind of treatment.”

The test results have been largely favourable and in the cases that revealed less-than-optimal outcomes, the team worked to restore the units to outcomes that met high quality standards. **TW**

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New Mack president vows to take bigger bite out of Class 8 truck market

By James Menzies

ALLENTOWN, Pa. – Stephen Roy, the newly installed president of North American sales and marketing for Mack Trucks, knows there's work to be done.

Mack's market share isn't where he'd like it to be, and a recent focus on product and customer support has taken attention away from Mack as a brand.

But he also feels the pieces are in place to revitalize one of the oldest brands in trucking. This effort officially commenced with a re-launching of the Mack brand at the ConExpo construction show in early March (see story, opposite page).

And you can also look for Mack to aggressively grow its on-highway presence in the months and years ahead.

"If we are going to improve share, we need to have a larger presence in the on-highway market," Roy said during a recent meet-the-press-type roundtable discussion with truck journalists.

The last five years have seen Mack dealers invest more than \$300 million into their facilities to better serve customers.

They've increased bay capacity by 40%, added 50% more technicians, and trained those technicians so that now one in four are top-certified Master Technicians.

Dealers also have increased their hours of service, and 60% now forward after-hours calls to Mack's call centre, so that customers can receive support around the clock.

Last year, Mack launched its GuardDog Connect remote diagnostics program, which allows Mack to remotely monitor engine fault codes and advise operators on the best course of action.

Included in that service is dealership geofencing, which will notify Mack when trucks have been in the shop too long.

"With GuardDog Connect, we have a geofence around every one of our dealerships," Roy said. "Starting this year, we'll know when a truck comes into a dealership and when a truck leaves a dealership. To assist a dealer, we'll call the dealer and say 'We notice this truck is in, what can we do to help you get the product in and out the door as soon as possible?'"

Mack officials working out of a new three-storey Uptime Centre, to be built at the company's Greensboro, N.C. campus, will be able to intervene when trucks are down for repair too long.

This may mean directing them to a less busy dealership nearby or expediting delivery of the required parts.

Later this year, Mack will also be teaming with Telogis and PeopleNet to stream its remote diagnostics data to those telematics providers, who will then convert the data into useful information for fleets.

"We're never going to be the gu-

rus of telematics, there are too many good companies doing that," Roy said. "But since we put GPS on the trucks standard, we're able to transmit this information to other companies to provide all the things fleets need from a productivity standpoint."

Mack continues to be strong in the vocational segment, which has seen double-digit growth in each of the past few years. But its overall share of the North American Class 8 truck market remains just under 10%. Roy hopes to change that as early as this year.

"With our backlog and the amount of activity we see now, there's no reason Mack can't be above 10% this year, with a vision to being much greater than that," Roy said.

Having spent the last five years bolstering its customer support, Roy said the time is right to make a push in the on-highway market.

"We're known for our vocational side, but my focus is to make sure – because we now have the network support, which is key – that we get back in front of our customers and let them know we do have a value proposition for them," Roy said. "The timing is right but it's not going to happen overnight."

Mack's dealer network, meanwhile, is continuing to strengthen, with another 40 projects currently underway.

"Our dealers are re-investing and the company is re-investing in research and development for new product as well as for infrastructure and support," Roy said. "We feel Mack is very well positioned with products, we're continuing to invest in R&D and we're well positioned with our dealer network."

Roy cited the recent World of Concrete show as evidence the vocational truck market has been revitalized.

"The activity at World of Concrete was as high as we've seen since 2006," he said. "Customers were not looking at two or three trucks, they were looking (to buy) 25-50 trucks, which is great...We've seen double-digit increases the last few years. Housing starts, GDP – everything points to improvements on the vocational side."

Roy is projecting about 250,000 Class 8 truck sales this year in Canada and the US, which would represent a slight uptick in demand from 2013, when close to 235,000 units were sold.

Roy demonstrated the passion and exuberance for the Mack brand that industry observers have come to expect from people holding senior positions at that company.

"I'm passionate about the Mack brand and where we can go," he said. "I'm 50 and I plan to do this for the next 15 years." Asked what customers and industry observers can expect to see over the next year, he said "We're going to execute better than we've ever done." **TW**

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Daimler says 'si' to growth in Mexico

By Lou Smyrlis

CAB SAN LUCAS, Mexico – Canada's market share leader, Daimler, is now setting its sights on dominance of the Mexican truck market.

Daimler Trucks North America executives shared their ambitious plans for a Mexican market full of potential at a special press briefing here in February. Daimler Trucks has been operating in Mexico for more than 40 years and runs two plants and more than 90 sales points across the nation, believed by many economists to be the one with the most growth potential over the next decade. Daimler Trucks Mexico is already the largest commercial vehicle manufacturer operating in Mexico, pumping out about 60,000 trucks per year.

"We are driving to become the undisputed market share leader in Mexico but that is easily said and you don't just decide to be the market leader; you earn it," said Stefan Kurschner, president and CEO of Daimler Trucks Mexico.

One of the ways to "earn it," according to Kurschner, is to concentrate on building a product portfolio that specifically addresses Mexican requirements rather than pushing products initially designed to serve American needs.

"We don't want to just copy American products. We want Mexican products for the Mexican market," he said.

Daimler Trucks Mexico currently covers the market with options from Classes 4 to 8, which Kurschner said was the widest product range for all applications. The Saltillo plant in the state of Coahuilla was built in 2009 with a gutsy \$300-million initial investment during the heart of the Great Recession and is one of the most modern in Daimler's worldwide line-up. It has produced more than 136,000 Cascadia trucks since its opening. The Santiago Tianguistenco plant in the state of Mexico had a \$45-million up-

grade last year, aimed at process improvements. About 300,000 Freightliner models have been churned out at this plant.

But one of the challenges for Daimler, and any truck manufacturer trying to grow in the Mexican market, is Mexican fleet owners' penchant for hanging on to old iron. There are fewer than 150,000 commercial trucks less than 10 years old in the Mexican market. In contrast, there are almost 118,000 aged 11-20 years and almost 155,000 that are more than 21 years old.

"I don't have to tell you what that means from a safety and environmental perspective," Kurschner said, adding that's a problem that can best be solved by placing restrictions on the age of used trucks that can be imported into Mexico and/or incentives to purchase new. **TW**

Mack launches new logo, tagline

LAS VEGAS, Nev. –Mack Trucks has given its 114-year-old brand a touch-up, debuting a new logo and slogan at the ConExpo construction trade show.

In the biggest event ever held at the Las Vegas World Market Center, Mack revealed a new tagline: Mack Trucks... Born Ready.

It also introduced a sleeker, more modern logo, which features the Mack Bulldog symbol, poised above the Mack word mark.

"We're extremely proud of our 114-year legacy as the American truck you can count on," said Stephen Roy, president, Mack Trucks North American Sales and Marketing. "It gives us credibility in forging a very bright future for Mack, our dealers and our customers. We believe the refresh of our brand embodies what we've stood for in the past and continue to stand for

today. We're confident and passionate about our trucks and our customers. We have a great history, great momentum and the conviction that our best days are ahead of us. The brand work we're rolling out here in Las Vegas clearly communicates the strong position Mack holds today."

Mack officials say the company has injected \$64 million into its Hagerstown, Md. plant since 2010, and its dealers have spent more than \$300 million upgrading their facilities.

"We've got a very solid foundation," said John Walsh, Mack vice-president of marketing. "It's time we told our story in a way that captures both the essence of the brand – what has always made Mack great – as well as all of the exciting things happening with Mack today. That's really what the new work we're debuting today is all about." **TW**

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Shell says test proves Diesel Extra saves fuel

Shell Canada says independent testing of its Shell Diesel Extra fuel proves it delivers fuel savings of greater than 2%.

Shell Diesel Extra was tested by FPInnovations' Project Innovation Transport in June and September 2013. Two tractors (plus two control tractors) were used in testing, with one showing a fuel savings of 2.18% and the other coming in at 2.61%, for a combined average fuel savings of 2.4%.

Shell says its Diesel Extra fuel provides fuel savings of up to 3% by preventing the accumulation of carbon deposits in the injector nozzles. It also claims operators will lower their maintenance costs, since the engine is kept clean from deposits and the corrosion they can cause. **TW**

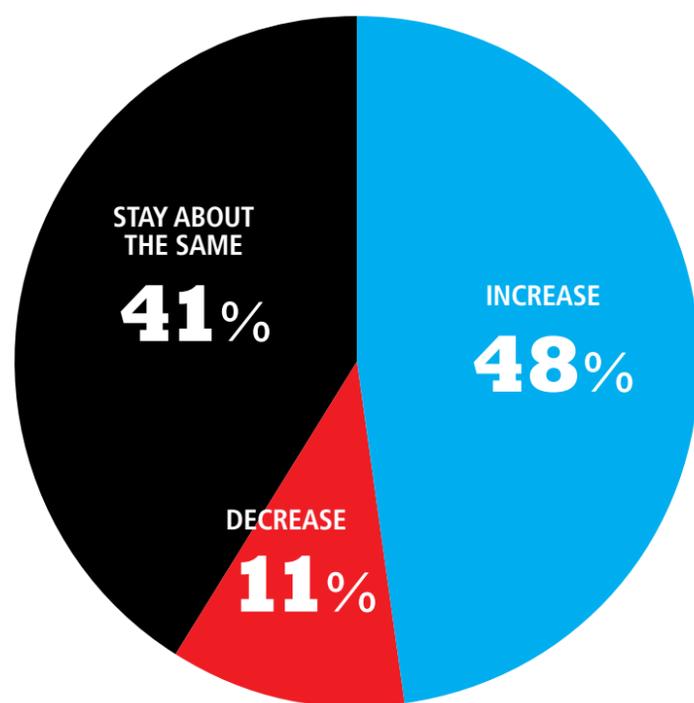
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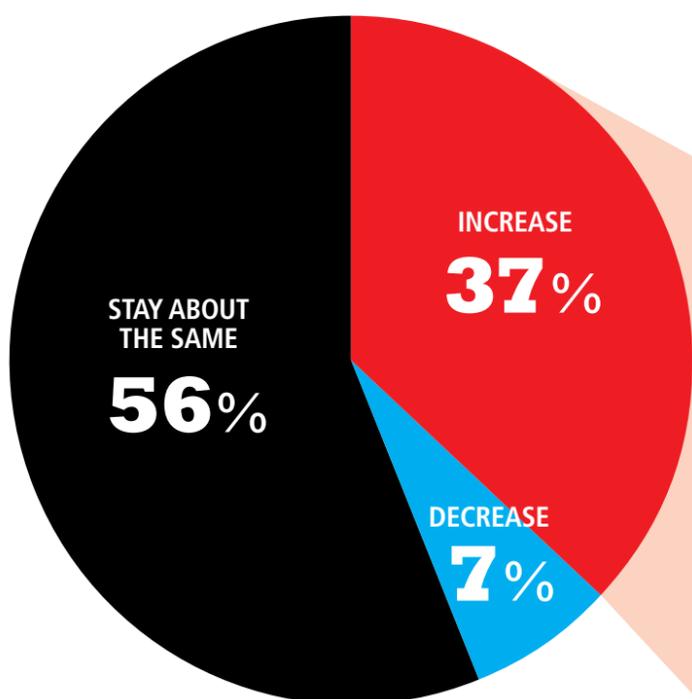
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All charts are a percentage of respondents.

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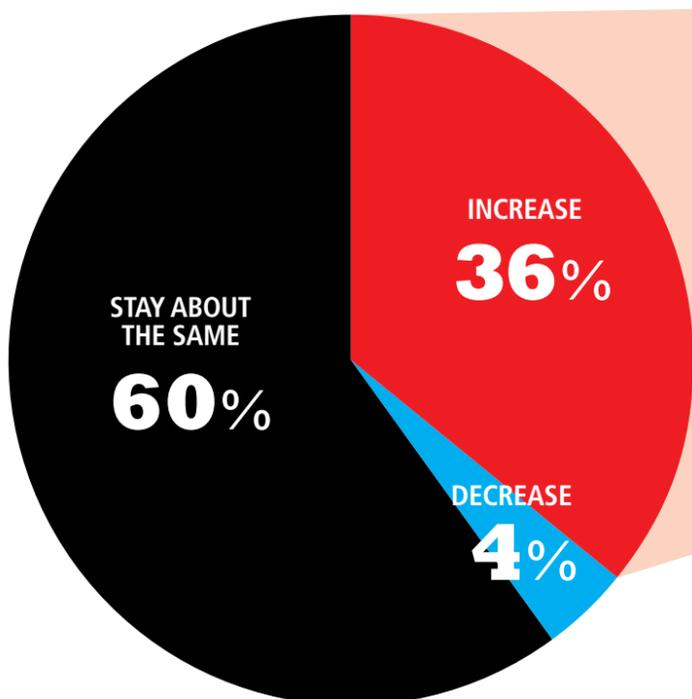
Carrier expectations for direction of core rate pricing in 2014



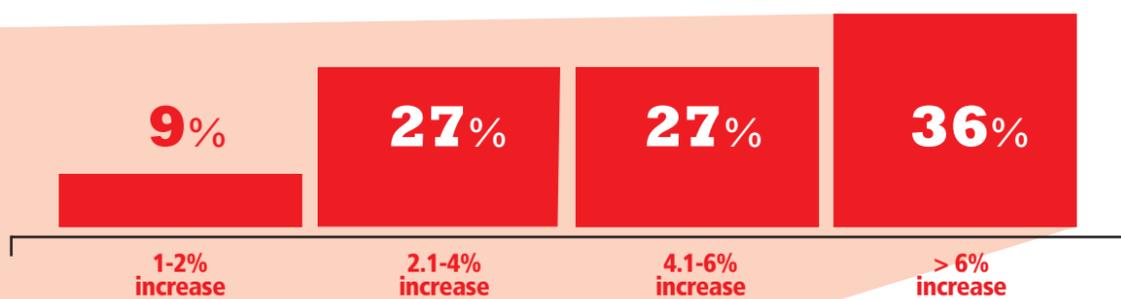
Carrier core rate pricing increase projections for 2014



Carrier expectations for direction of fuel surcharges in 2014



Carrier fuel surcharge pricing increase projections for 2014



Carriers across the country are growing more optimistic about freight volume growth but nowhere more so than in Western Canada where 48% of carrier executives indicated in our annual Transportation Buying Trends Survey they expect an increase this year. In comparison, only 40% of Eastern Canada fleet executives and 33% of Central Canada fleet executives said likewise. The greater optimism from Western Canada fleet executives is compatible with the outlook of Western Canada shippers. (see Inside the Numbers in your February issue of Truck West). Despite the expected increase in freight volumes, however, only 37% of Western Canada fleet executives expect to push through an increase in core rate pricing this year. The majority expect an increase in the range of 2.1-4%. Our Transportation Buying Trends Surveys have been published for a decade and are conducted in partnership with the Freight Management Association of Canada, Cormark Securities and CITT. **TW**

Maxim Truck & Trailer hires fluid and filtration specialist

WINNIPEG, Man. – Maxim Truck & Trailer has hired a fluid and filtration specialist, to help customers in Manitoba and Saskatchewan to better understand these requirements.

Kevin Webster, who has spent 17 years in industry sales and customer service roles, has been named Maxim's first fluid and filtration specialist. He'll focus on oil, antifreeze, DEF,

windshield washer fluid and various additives.

On the filtration side, his expertise will include medium- and heavy-duty truck filters as well as heavy construction equipment filters, Maxim announced.

"We created this new position because we wanted to provide more focus on this important but often under-served area of our parts business," said Steve Young, vice-president of parts at Maxim. "Fluids and filters are essential to so many of our customer segments including fleets." Webster can be reached at 204-790-8158 or at kwebster@maximinc.com. **TW**

Prestone publishes white paper on cold weather coolant maintenance

LAKE FOREST, Ill. – Prestone Products has published a white paper designed to educate fleet owners and maintenance managers on the importance of cold-weather anti-freeze/coolant maintenance in heavy-duty vehicles.

"If the cooling system is unable to satisfy the essential requirements put on it by the heavy-duty engine, the vehicle's horsepower, fuel efficiency, emissions and overall durability may be compromised," said Colin Dilley, director of technology, Prestone Command Technology Center.

"Selecting the highest quality AF/C products and replenishing at the recommended interval will ensure operating efficiency and optimal performance."

The white paper focuses on testing essentials for coolant concentrations and the important role they play in winter engine management.

Because glycol and water are naturally corrosive, coolant manufacturers add inorganic and/or organic salts and other chemicals, known as corrosion inhibitors, to the glycol/water mixture in order to prevent the cooling system components from corroding.

It is imperative to test for these corrosion inhibitors to ensure engine metal protection, the white paper outlines.

"Having the ability to proactively initiate testing on any engine coolant system is imperative to making the right decisions for maintaining the correct levels of coolant concentrations," said Dilley.

"The new Prestone Command test strips and kits offer the ability to test a wide range of important variables from basic glycol concentration to the level of inhibitors for corrosion protection."

The white paper can be downloaded from the company's Web site at Prestone.com. **TW**

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THE SMART MONEY IS ON

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By Edo Van Belkom

"That must be her," the kid said after they'd been stopped in front of Mark's parents house in Oakville for a couple of minutes. "And your dad."

Mark didn't bother getting up to look. He could already imagine what it looked like... his mother coming down the driveway with a bowl of chicken soup in her hand and his father following behind with his cane in one hand and a bucketful of advice about how Mark should be running his business in the other. Garth opened the door and hopped out of the cab. He could hear the kid say hello to his parents, then feel his father climbing up the side of the truck. "Why the hell did you get a kid like that to drive your truck for ya?" was the first thing he said.

"Hi dad."

"I could've driven for you for a week. I was a driver for 40 years, you know."

"But you don't have your licence anymore," Mark said.

"So, you're shutting me out on a technicality?"

"Leave the boy alone," said the voice of his mother. His father disappeared from view and his mother appeared inside the cab.

"Sick as a dog and you're hounding him for work." She turned to face Mark, a broad smile on her face and a travel mug in her hand.

"Are you strong enough to get into the house? If not, there's some broth for you that'll give you strength."

"I can make it mom."

"Good, then let's get you out of the cold and into your bed."

Mark rose up and pulled the blankets off his body. A sudden chill washed over him and the inside of Mother Load seemed to spin clockwise. A few deep breaths and he was able to slip on his coat and shoes. Meanwhile, his mother pulled a toque tightly over his head.

"Drink this," she said, handing Mark the travel mug. Mark didn't feel like having any soup, but he had to admit it tasted pretty good going down. As he crawled out of the truck, he could hear his father giving Garth the third degree. "How many years you been drivin'? You got your FleetSmart certification? What about SmartWay? Ever drive a Peterbilt?..." The questions rattled off his father's tongue like bullets out of a machine gun, but Garth had the right answer for every one.

"C'mon, son," his mother said, wrapping him in a blanket. "I'll get you feeling better."

Mark trudged up the driveway, wondering what the scene must look like to the neighbours. Probably like Mark was knocking on death's door and had come home to die. 'Let'em think that,' thought Mark, 'because that's just how I feel.'

"Take these," mom said, putting a cold hand across his forehead. "They'll take the edge off your fever and allow you to get some sleep."

Mark took the two pain relievers and washed them down with some water.

"Get some sleep. I'll be around in a couple of hours to check up on you, and I'll have some fresh broth for you at supertime."

"Thanks, Mom."



Mark gets well soon

PART 2

"You're not getting enough mileage out of your fuel," his father said as he entered the room. "I checked your truck and you're only getting..."

"Hush now and leave the boy alone," his mother said, blocking out his father before he could reach the bed. "The last thing he needs is you harping on him. How many years does he have to drive a truck before you can acknowledge that he does it as well as you ever did?"

His father considered the question, then lifted his cane. "When he's driven 45 years, then we'll talk."

"You'll be dead by then," his mother said, pushing his father out of the room. "Now give the boy some peace. There'll be plenty of time to talk later."

His father gave a 'harumpf!' and exited the room. His mother turned at the door and said, "It's good to have you home. Even if it's for just a little while."

"It's good to be home, mom."

She shut the light and closed the door and Mark took a moment to let his eyes wander around the room. It was his old room, just as it was when he'd first left home. There was a Wendell Clark poster on the wall and a Bachman-Turner Overdrive album cover hanging over his bed. There were a few minor hockey trophies on the dresser and a high school graduation photo on the desk. There were even a few truck models scattered around the room, including one of a Peterbilt rig just like the one he ended up driving for a living.

He took a deep breath and let out a sigh. It was great to be able to come home again, and it was wonderful that he had two loving parents who would always take care of him no matter what, but he couldn't help feeling he was of an age where he should be able to take care of himself.

And that's when he got to thinking that perhaps he should have a home of his own, where he could be sick...or just unwind on his days off.

"How are you doing?" his mother said, barging

into the room. "Comfortable?"

"Yes, very."

"How can you be when your head's not even on a pillow?"

She put a hand on his head and lifted it so she could slide a pillow beneath it. "There! Better?" It wasn't really, but he said yes, anyway.

"Good. Now get some rest."

Mark closed his eyes. 'Yeah,' he thought. 'A place of my own. That would be good.'

He awoke later thinking he'd slept a couple of hours, but a glance at the Blue Jays clock on the wall told him he'd been sleeping for almost 10 hours. It was dark outside and the room was lit only by

the night light that he'd had since he was in grade school.

And although he didn't move, his mother somehow knew he'd awakened.

"There's my sleepyhead," she said, fluffing his pillow and straightening the bed covers. "Your father wanted to talk to you when you came around, but you outlasted him and he fell asleep on you."

Mark could hear his father snoring out in the living room and it reminded him of years gone by. "Nothing's changed."

"Not much. If you're hungry I've got soup for you in the kitchen."

Mark nodded. "I'll be down in a minute. I just want to check in with Bud."

"Don't be too long. My soups are full to the brim with love, but they still get cold."

When she was gone he grabbed his cell phone off the nightstand and dialed Bud's number.

"Hello?"

"Bud, this is Mark Dalton," Mark said, not giving Bud the chance to play any games.

"You still sick?"

"I'm feeling a bit better."

"Why you calling?"

"I just want to know what's going on with Garth and my truck. Everything okay?"

"Excellent. He's delivered his load on time and undamaged, and he was early picking up his next load so he's already a couple hours ahead of schedule."

Mark sighed. "That's great."

"Yeah, so don't you worry about a thing. Your truck's in good hands and you can take a week or two off without anyone even knowing you're gone."

"Terrific," Mark said, the word sounding three times as long as it really was.

"Get well soon," Bud said. "I got to go." TW

- Mark Dalton returns next month in the conclusion of *Mark Gets Well Soon*.

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.

Illustration by Glenn McEvoy



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 Home Tel _____ Cell _____

BEST WAY TO CONTACT ME: Home Tel Cell E-Mail Other _____

WORK PREFERENCES: Owner Operator Local Hwy Team Hwy Single/Company Driver
 Lease Purchase Moving Driver Trainer Other _____

OWNER OPERATOR? Manufacturer _____ Year/Model _____ Engine/Size _____

Preferred Trailer Type (check all that apply): Flatbed Heavy Hauling/Specialized Moving Van Tanker Straight Truck Super B Reefer Van Other _____

Trailer Type Experience (check all that apply): Flatbed Heavy Hauling/Specialized Moving Van Tanker Straight Truck Super B Reefer Van Other _____

CURRENT DRIVERS LICENSE: Do you have a Commercial License? Yes No

License# _____ Prov/State issued _____ Type _____ Exp Date _____

Total Truck Driving Experience _____/yrs Has your license ever been suspended? Yes No

Last Employer _____

Name _____ Company City _____ Prov/State _____

Tel _____ Start/End Date _____

Job Description _____ Reason for Leaving _____

CERTIFICATION / TRAINING: Can you lift 50lbs? Yes No Doubles/Triples

Name of School _____ Air Brake Adjustment

Name of Course Completed _____ Over-Size Loads

Prov/State _____ Start/End Date _____ Hazmat

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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. We can't run everything, of course, but we'll try to get in as much as space permits...

Did March come in like a lion where you live? After this past winter, how could it? The whole darn winter was like a lion here in Calgary, so much so it'll probably take until Stampede (the other of our two official seasons) for the snow (and ice) to melt! So a little bit of a "lamb-like" weather is definitely in order. Maybe it can make us feel a little less, well, baaaad?

Anyway, by the time you read this, spring will have sprung finally, and with the grass now supposedly rizzing, and with luck driving conditions shouldn't be a major issue for the next few months - flooding, construction and the like notwithstanding. So as the old saw goes, it's time to make hay while the sun shines. Or at least haul it.

Speaking of hauling (nice segue, eh?) I'd like to encourage you to surf on by your provincial trucking association's Web sites (bctrucking.com, amta.ca, sasktrucking.com and trucking.mb.ca, from west to east) to find out when they're scheduling their annual drivers' championship. They're always interesting events - and if you haven't entered before, why not think about doing it this year?

I've been to a couple of these (not as a driver; more as an interested oaf!) and they're a lot of fun - and

you can hang out with "the best of the best." Even if you don't enter, drop by and support your buddies! And don't forget the banquet!

It's just another way to express your love of and support for the industry. Speaking of which...

They love trucking!

From Laura LaPalme at the Manitoba Trucking Association comes word of a song in praise of the trucking industry that you can see on YouTube.

"Incredibly talented MTA members Cruise Media Group created this awesome ballad to help us share our love of this great industry," she says via the MTA Web site, which also advises you to "sit back, turn up your speakers and sing along!"

It may not be a real show-stopping multimedia production, but its heart is definitely in the right place and the tune's not bad at all! So as the MTA says, "be sure to share and like it, and maybe 'we'll honk the horn for you!'"

You can find the video at <http://youtu.be/fK4GiZdJCbW>.

Penner makes a difference

Truck West's associate publisher Kathy Penner is putting her love of life on the line to help Manitobans and their families who live with cancer.

She's joining the CancerCare Manitoba Foundation 2014 Challenge for Life 20K Walk and, of course, she's also looking for support.

From Kathy's page: "This year, more than 6,000 Manitobans will be diagnosed with cancer. That's 500 friends, family, colleagues and neighbours every month. It's a staggering number! The CancerCare Manitoba Foundation is the only organization exclusively fundraising for CancerCare Manitoba's comprehensive team of researchers and health professionals as they provide outstanding care for all Manitobans and their families living with cancer."

Kathy has committed to raise at least \$1,000 (talk about a grand total, although she has since revised her goal up - way up) in support of the cause. She is also committing to help reduce her own personal risk of cancer.

Kathy also notes that, while there are many organizations in the community fundraising for cancer, the CancerCare Manitoba Foundation is the only one committed to ensuring that 100% of all the money raised stays in Manitoba.

CancerCare Manitoba Foundation's Challenge for Life 20k Walk is scheduled for June 7. If you'd like to help support Kathy and her "kause," visit her web page at www.cancercarefdn.mb.ca. From there, just search for her name.

Kathy sincerely appreciates any support you can offer and thanks you for your consideration!

Truxpo expands to include heavy equipment

Don't forget to drop by our Truxpo booth this September to say hello to Kathy in person (and me, too! Look for the guy with the paper bag over his head as a defense mechanism). And while you're at the Abbotsford, B.C., event - scheduled for Sept. 19-20 at the Tradex Centre, next to the city's airport - you'll be able to take in a newly combined show, one the organizers say will not only fill the indoor venue its 80,000 square feet of outdoor space but will also feature three more acres of outdoor exhibits.

The extra elbow room allows for the amalgamation of the Pacific Heavy Equipment Show (PHES), which means there'll be even more neat stuff to see as heavy equipment owners, operators and purchasers (who represent construction, trucking, public works, utility and aggregates and road building companies) join the hostilities, er, festivities.

It should be a good match. According to organizer Master Promotions' national show manager, Mark Cusack, "it is a well-known fact that the heavy equipment and trucking industries have a great deal to do with one another. Whether you are talking about a small vocational operation or large forestry contractor, you will find trucks, trailers and heavy equipment. The cross-over in audience and exhibitors is the recipe to make this show a huge success."

So start planning your trip to the lovely city of Abbotsford.

The weather there's been great for the past couple of the biennial events, so as long as Mount Baker doesn't decide to blow its top (and there are no signs of this so far, which is a damn good thing!), it should be a great couple of days.

Calling Alberta safety professionals

From the AMTA comes word that its second annual gathering of "men and women responsible for overseeing safety in Alberta's transportation

industry" will be held in Red Deer on April 17.

The theme this year is Innovation and Training and the one-day event features guest speakers, networking opportunities and access to enforcement officials in what's described as "a relaxed atmosphere" (less nitrogen than usual?)

The program was developed with input from a committee of industry members and has been structured to help you glean helpful information you can take back to the terminal with you.

According to Doug McFayden, the AMTA's injury reduction and training manager, "the feedback we received confirmed (last year's) event was well received and fills an information-gap among those responsible for transportation safety."

He also noted a name change for this year, calling it a conference instead of a workshop "to better reflect the depth and breadth of activities we want our program to encompass."

What's in a name, eh?

This year's bash is scheduled to include: Creating Engaging eLearning - with Alexis MacMillan of Christie Communications; Sleep Apnea: It's More Than Just Sleep, featuring George Handley, Healthy Heart Sleep Company; Social Media and the Business of Safety, in which social media guru Joe Whitbread will speak to why training professionals should not overlook social media as a new tool to deliver safety information.

The AMTA also promises there'll be a bunch of informal (no tie required!) networking opportunities and round table sessions regardless of the shape of the tables.

You'll also be able to buttonhole representatives from Alberta Transportation, senior AMTA staff and members of the AMTA Road Knights Team.

To register, go to: www.amta.ca.

I was at last year's event and it was definitely an interesting and worthwhile day. **TW**

That's it for this month. As always, if you have an item of interest you'd like to share, fire off an email to me at jim@transportationmedia.ca. We try to include everything, but there's only so much space (and I have no intention of getting the magazine sued!), so get your item in early. Oh, and don't forget my contact phone number (403-453-5558) either. If I don't answer, please leave a message and I'll get back to you ASAP, if not sooner. Email's better, though. Cheers!

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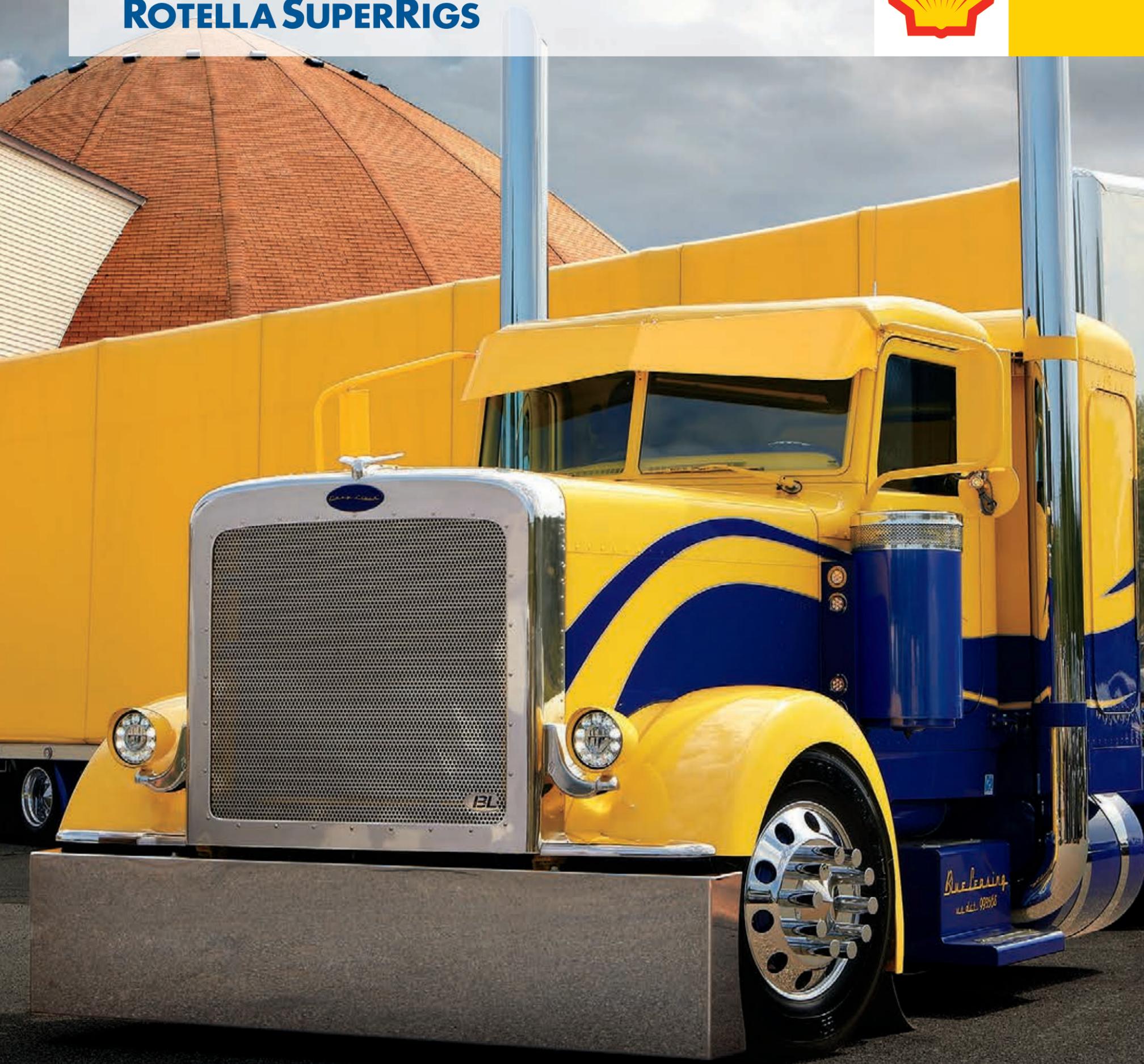
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