

TRUCK WEST

Western Canada's Trucking Newspaper Since 1989 • May 2014 Volume 25, Issue 5

Page 22 **A new oil:** A new PC-11 engine oil category is coming. Find out what you need to know about it.

Page 27 **In the know:** Sandy Johnson tackles recent changes to IRP you need to know about.

Page 28 **Changes at the top:** The Alberta Motor Transport Association has shaken up its upper management.

Page 31 **The BIG MATS report:** We bring you the highlights of the Mid-America Trucking Show.

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There's lots of work to be had in B.C.'s forestry industry and truckers are feeling empowered thanks to a shortage of qualified drivers and the ability to pursue lucrative opportunities in other industries.

B.C. port strike comes to an end

VANCOUVER, B.C. - The month of March was a difficult one for B.C. truckers who, fed up with operations at Port Metro Vancouver, walked off the job in hopes to gain the attention of government officials.

The entire strike lasted a lengthy 28 days and gained national attention after it suspended activity at Canada's largest port - an action that left hundreds of millions of dollars worth of cargo grounded at Vancouver container terminals.

Starting in late February, members of the non-unionized United Truckers Association (UTA) parked their rigs and began protesting at Port Metro Vancouver because of excessively long wait times. The UTA also demanded to see pay-rate enforcement as a way to eliminate under-cutting of prices.

After seeing the UTA action, president of Unifor-Vancouver Container Truckers' Association (VCTA) Paul Johal, said, "This morning's protest is just the beginning. Truckers are prepared to escalate job action if the port and both levels of government don't take our concerns seriously."

Frustrated by the lack of progress on negotiations, members of the VCTA

Continued on page 35

B.C.'s logging industry in transformation

Plus, nine pages of Western Canadian forest industry news inside

By Jim Bray

PRINCE GEORGE, B.C. - The mountain pine beetle may be causing a lot of angst in B.C.'s logging industry, but it's only one of the issues threatening to help create a sea change in how the business is done in Canada's westernmost province.

Fortunately, some of the challenges facing loggers could turn out to be very positive as far as their continuing operations are concerned. In fact, it appears that despite mill swaps and "beetle mania" (see the article on page 11 in this issue), things are really hopping in B.C.'s logging community right now. If only the money would follow.

"Our guys are going full bore," said MaryAnne Arcand of the Central Interior Logging Association (*MaryAnne passed away shortly after speaking with Truck West. See Brayings, pg. 38 for tribute*). "But the biggest thing for them, and you'll find this echoed across the board in logging, is that the rates aren't coming up in correlation with increased lumber prices or activity, and the costs keep increasing." In other words, they're working hard, but not getting paid for it. "The common theme is that they're all

busy, busy, busy," she said, "but they aren't making any money."

They're also having trouble finding people to work, though that's hardly unique to B.C.'s logging sector. "There's tons of work," Arcand said, noting that a lot of the jobs aren't in the logging industry per se at all, a happy coincidence that's helping to create many new opportunities. "Our members have diversified into doing stuff like pipeline right of way clearing and road building and all of that as well. They call them early works on all those big projects...and it all has to be logged first."

This fact of logging life has led to an interesting phenomenon of loggers who aren't really logging for lumber anymore - or not just for lumber anyway. "They're still doing the same core activity," Arcand said, "but the wood they're harvesting is to make way for a camp, or a dam, or a mine site, or a pipeline or something like that."

Arcand said the situation is empowering loggers who, even in the face of mill closures in Quesnel and Houston - and possibly elsewhere - are becoming more entrepreneurial and, with the help

Continued on page 5

Charity truck show slated for Steinbach

STEINBACH, Man. - United Driver Training is hosting a charity truck show June 7, at its location just off Hwy. 12 in Steinbach, about 10 minutes south of the Trans-Canada Hwy.

The company is looking to raise money for the STARS (Shock Trauma Air Rescue Society) air ambulance service. It's expected that 14 local trucking companies will be participating, displaying STARS-liveried trucks and trailers. There will also be a trade show, featuring local dealers. Organizers say there'll be kids activities as well.

All proceeds will go towards the STARS Foundation. In 2013, STARS flew 2,686 missions, carrying only critically ill or injured patients, many of them victims of a road traffic accident. Since 1985, more than 26,000 missions have been carried out. An average flight costs \$5,400 and a BK117 medically equipped helicopter is \$5 million, so you can see that every penny helps. **TW**



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Three equipment trends noticed at MATS

Editorial Comment

James Menzies



The last few weeks have been a whirlwind of activity in the trucking industry. In March, I attended the Work Truck Show, Technology & Maintenance Council meetings and the Mid-America Trucking Show. The mood at each of these events was universally upbeat, with OEMs talking about increased demand for new equipment, the likes of which hasn't been seen since record-setting 2006.

When I attend truck shows, I'm always drawn to the equipment. While there were no new model introductions this year, I did notice several equipment-related trends we could be hearing more about in the future.

The 6x2s are coming...but when?: We've been hearing a lot over the past year about the advantages of 6x2 axle configurations, where power is supplied to only one drive axle, providing about 400 lbs of weight savings or fuel economy improvements of 2-3%. But in Canada, several provinces still do not allow the technology. I sat down with Joe ElBehairy, v.p., engineering and quality with Meritor for an exclusive interview and he told me Meritor and other companies have been actively lobbying all the provinces to allow 6x2s. Ontario and Quebec, it turns out, have dug in their heels and provided the most resistance. The concern they have, it seems,

is that in situations where the non-driven axle is lift-able, that drivers could lift that axle while under load and potentially cause road damage. This is new news, by the way, from within the past couple weeks.

The dangers of downspeeding: The other trend we've been hearing a lot about is engine downspeeding - running at lower rpms with faster rear axle ratios to improve fuel economy. The idea is that for every 100 rpm slower the engine runs at 65 mph, fuel savings of 1.5% can be achieved. However, engine downspeeding also increases torque loads on the axles and driveshaft, meaning truck buyers should spec' axles and driveshafts designed to handle the extra torque.

Speaking at a press conference at Mid-America, Steve Slesinski, director, product planning at Dana, noted that moving from a 3.55 to a 2.26 rear axle ratio increases the torque load on the driveshaft and axle by 57%. Even going from a 2.64 to a 2.26 ratio increases torque by 14%.

Meritor's Joe ElBehairy told me in our interview, fleets need to be mindful of this when spec'ing new vehicles. "In order to have acceptable level of start-ability, the engine torque and drivetrain torque increases," he said. "It's really critical to make sure that as (rear axle ratios) get faster, you're not overloading the rest of the system."

The shift towards automation: It's no



secret that more fleets are buying trucks with automated transmissions, but for the first time at MATS I saw some hard numbers that attest to this trend. Eaton announced during its press conference that presently, 20% of the North American Class 8 truck build features automated transmissions. The company expects that to expand to 30% within three to five years. Also announced at the show, in just one year of production, Daimler has taken orders for 17,000 of its DT12 automated manual transmissions. Yes, automation is here to stay. **TW**

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The future of natural gas

How will natural gas shape the long-haul trucking industry of the future? The answer to that question is less clear following the recent Mid-America Trucking Show.

Natural gas has been riding a wave for the past two years as the leading alternative to diesel for several good reasons: It's a mature technology; the engine shares 80% of its componentry with its diesel counterpart; there's a proven return on investment on high-mileage applications; and vast shale formations in North America are keeping price well below that of diesel.

At the Green Truck Summit last month fuel experts were forecasting that natural gas trucks could soon comprise 10% of the Class 8 truck market. The only point of contention was just how long it would take to get there, with some suggesting it could be as quickly as three years.

The waste and refuse sector has been the quickest to adopt natural gas vehicles in Canada.

There are now more than 300 such trucks in use compared to just a handful a few years ago. The highway tractor segment is the second fastest growing in the country with more than 200



highway tractors operating in four provinces.

But the head of Daimler's global truck and bus business poured some cold water on that optimistic thinking with his comments to business leaders gathered for the annual Heavy Duty Manufacturers Association breakfast at the Mid-America Trucking Show.

"My alternative fuel is diesel and we will continue to perfect that technology," Dr. Wolfgang Bernhard, head of the market share leader in North America, told the HDMA, adding that the hype surrounding natural gas as a fuel alternative for trucking is gone and realism is setting in.

The day before Bernhard addressed the HDMA, Martin Daum, president and CEO of Daimler North America, said natural gas seems a more viable option for local delivery applications. Yet medium-duty truck operators may not run enough miles to deliver a sufficient return on the investment when one considers the initial cost of moving to a natural gas engine.

Is there then a future for natural gas in trucking?

Dr. Bernhard himself acknowledged that although "the buzz was bigger last year", natural gas is not going away. Canada's heavy-duty natural gas pioneers such as Groupe Robert and Vedder Transportation Group are continuing on despite the disappointing news about the lack of a 15L natural gas engine.

What may also determine how natural gas will shape the trucking industry is the commitment from Ottawa (and more importantly Washington) to continue to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Natural gas tractors on a well-to-wheel basis, compared to diesel powered trucks, generate 15-25% less emissions.

A natural gas highway tractor that operates 200,000 km per year will produce 65 tonnes less carbon with natural gas than it does with diesel.

A natural gas fleet could make it easier for carriers working with large environmentally conscious shippers to secure their business. And that too will colour the way carriers consider the natural gas option. **TW**

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CLASS 8 TRUCK SALES TRENDS

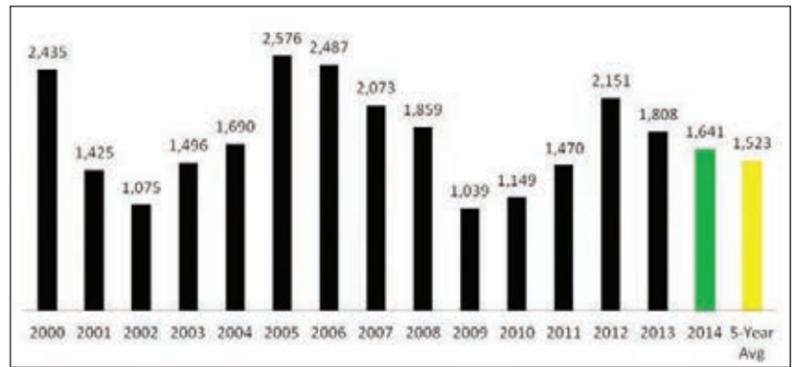
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Monthly Class 8 Sales – Feb 14

Class 8 truck sales started the year on a mildly positive note, surpassing last year's January totals, but February's numbers are disappointing. Not only does February represent the second consecutive month with sales below the 2,000 mark, after 10 straight months of being above it, but the month's total is short of last year's mark. Last year's market leaders Freightliner, Kenworth and International all suffered setbacks in February, falling behind last year's totals.

OEM	This Month	Last Year
Freightliner	347	458
International	159	250
Kenworth	316	360
Mack	146	120
Peterbilt	301	256
Volvo	231	219
Western Star	141	145
TOTALS	1641	1808

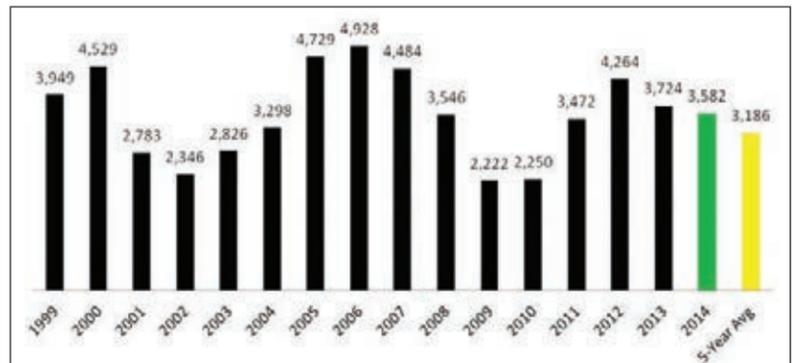
Historical Comparison – Feb 14 Sales



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

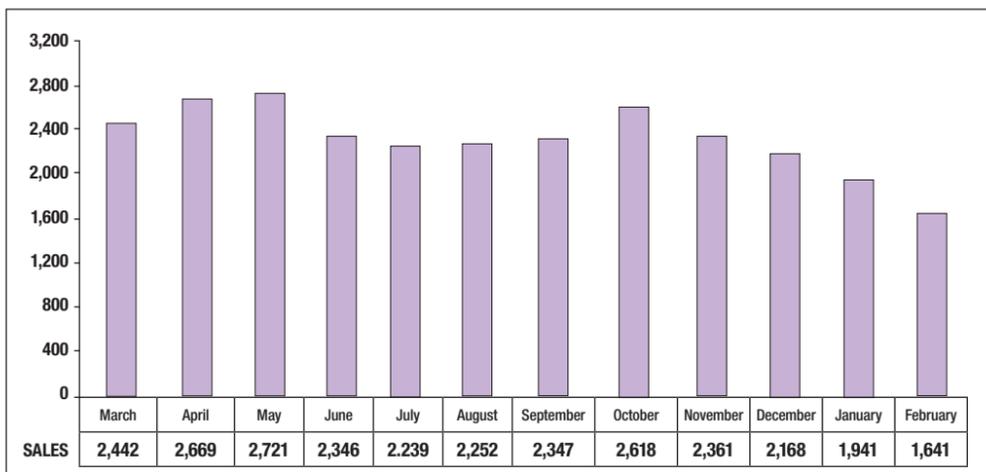
OEM	BC	ALTA	SASK	MAN	ONT	QUE	NB	NS	PEI	NF	CDA
Freightliner	70	135	28	30	335	165	31	8	0	0	802
Kenworth	97	287	44	1	89	83	7	0	0	0	608
Mack	26	41	21	18	118	28	3	6	0	2	263
International	17	97	13	19	244	120	28	6	3	7	554
Peterbilt	87	185	48	18	109	79	22	3	0	0	551
Volvo	63	79	14	27	183	66	17	6	0	0	455
Western Star	64	171	14	6	42	38	4	9	0	1	349
TOTALS	424	995	182	119	1,120	579	112	38	3	10	3,582

Historical Comparison – YTD Feb 14



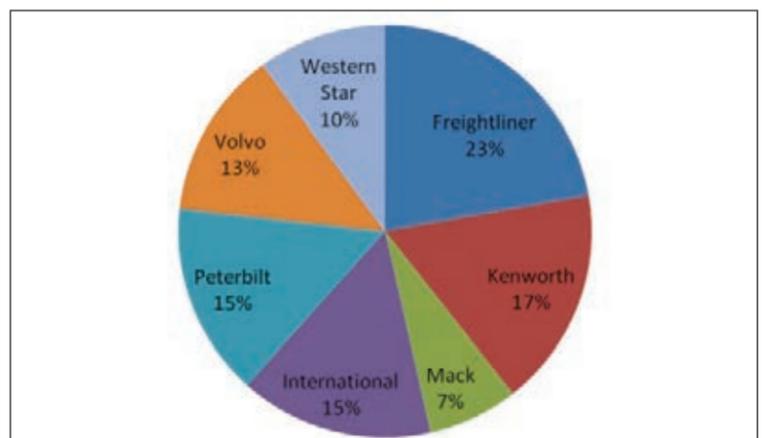
This was the eighth best February total since 1999. Monthly sales were about 400 units above the five-year average. There is optimism for an improvement in Class 8 truck sales in 2014 after 2013 proved a disappointing year but so far the Canadian market is not reflecting that optimism. The big question 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 and considerably further in February. 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 – Feb 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 market share, enjoying the fact that its strong western network is able to tap into the stronger western economy. But the company has also faltered in January and February and currently sits with 17% market share, followed by International and Peterbilt, both at 15% of the market after two months.

Source: Canadian Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association

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Log truck drivers feeling empowered

Continued from page 1

of the CILA and other such groups in the province, holding out for better rates than they may have been able to negotiate in the past.

"For years, the mills have had a way of calculating what they believe is a fair rate," Arcand said, "and we went to KPMG and got a rate costing model built...that can help our guys actually determine what it costs them for different pieces and then when the mill says something is worth a particular rate, we can tell them it's way more than that, and we can show them why."

Not surprisingly, the mills aren't thrilled. "Their strategy has always been to divide and conquer," Arcand said, "but we've had some pretty good successes and as a result more and more contractors are getting engaged in this process."

CILA doesn't do the actual negotiations with the mills, however, acting instead more as a training and facilitating body. "We just sort of bring the (loggers) together, show them how it works, and then it's up to them - and we have independent financial guys that help with that so we don't get accused of being a union."

It's helping to create a paradigm shift from how the business was operated in the past.

"There's a historical sort of animosity when it comes to the negotiation table," Arcand said, "and we're hearing that when (contractors) go to the table and the mill representative tells them something is worth a particular rate, the contractor will ask why - since they have the costs with them - and the mill will just say 'it's our formula,' but they won't say what (the formula) is. And sometimes we know they're just pulling numbers out of the air hoping the guys will take it."

And it's empowering the loggers. "When we had too many contractors back in the day, guys would take (the mills' offer) or there'd be no work," Arcand said. "They were eating each other. Now there's a shortage and the onus of power has shifted to the contractors. The mills know they have to listen or they're going to lose us and that changes things."

Arcand recounted the tale of a session with one licensee in which the contractors were told that, since prices weren't up yet and the company wasn't making enough profits, the contractors shouldn't expect an increase and that - according to the company - "if any of you don't like it say it now and quit. And three of the biggest loggers put up their hands and said 'okay, we're done,' and (the mill) was stunned because that had never happened before. But the loggers have alternatives now, these other industries."

How big is this shift away from kowtowing to the companies? Arcand cited the example of what she said was one of the top three contractors in the province, for whom logging is only 30% of its business now. "They had to diversify in a big way," she said. "They're still logging, but they're logging not for lumber but for other things - and they make better money in the other industries."

Ironically, most of the lumber still ends up at a mill, but through a private sale rather than a contract with the mill as in the past. "When the logger asks the oil guy what to do with the lumber, they don't care," she said. "It's just junk to them, it's in their way."

Which means that these loggers can now get paid by the oil company (or whomever they're contracting with) to haul the logs away, then get paid again to sell them to the mill.

On the other hand, changing how you've done business traditionally is definitely a learning experience. "It's an interesting time to be in this business," Arcand said, "and it's an interesting time for us as an association to guide these guys because they have to change their business model, they have to get more sophisticated in how they manage their business. It used to be you'd ask the old time logger if he made any money this year and he'd say he didn't know - that when the accountant finishes he'll know whether to write a cheque or pay himself. Now they know to the dollar." **TW**



Many in-demand log truck contractors are pursuing opportunities outside forestry to stay busy.



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Logging truck fatality rate on the rise in B.C.

Logging fatalities, including truck driver deaths, have been on the rise. Is it a worrying trend or an anomaly?

By Jim Bray

PRINCE GEORGE, B.C. – For the fourth year in a row, British Columbia's logging industry saw an increase in fatalities last year, a fact that's causing some industry folk to call for stricter standards before people are allowed behind the wheel.

According to the Central Interior Logging Association (CILA), there were 11 fatalities in the industry in 2013, up from a low of four in 2009,

as well as a higher number of trucker deaths (four) than had been seen for several years before that. And while a rebounding economy is part of the reason (more business equates to more problems), part of it is that old bugaboo of less than optimally qualified drivers.

"During the past 12 to 18 months the industry has experienced a significant recovery," explained BCTA chairperson Greg Munden, who also works in the logging industry.

"Forest companies have ramped up idled mills and added shifts and have placed a lot of pressure on their contractors to ramp up to support the mills' consumption demands. Unfortunately, many of the long-time forestry workers left the forest industry in the preceding four years and contractors have had a difficult time finding and attracting experienced workers, particularly given very strong oil and gas and mining sectors in the west."

Munden said the combination of increased overall activity and a lack of experienced workers to take on the recovery has played a role in "making it difficult to achieve the safety goals shared by everyone in the industry."

CILA spokesperson MaryAnne Arcand told *Truck West* that, as bad

as the number may seem, 2013's 11 deaths were still far less than was experienced in the not-too-distant past, and actually indicate success on the part of the industry at being proactive when it comes to safety issues.

"The (improved long-term numbers are the) results of a very concerted effort by the industry," she said, noting that the whopping 42 fatalities experienced in 2005 helped prompt the government to strike a safety task force on the harvesting side of the industry, which she described as "the guys that are in the bush hauling and of course cutting the timber down." It also led to the formation of the B.C. Forest Safety Council and a safety audit program.

It appears to have helped. Arcand noted a couple of years subsequent to 2009 in which there were no truck driver fatalities at all – as compared to the high of 15 in 2005 – but now that it's creeping up again "we're doing a lot of navel gazing, like what worked so well and why are we losing that ground?" she said. She agreed with Munden that operator actions are a big part of the problem, and stressed that it isn't just new drivers who are still wet behind the ears.

"We've brought in new workers to the industry, but we also brought a lot of older guys out of retirement who didn't work through the (recent) safety focus because they had quit, and so they weren't part of the evolution of the safety culture and new way to do things."

In other words, many of the crashes are caused by drivers, and Arcand said that's causing the industry to kind of 're-cultivate' some otherwise experienced drivers who may have been "taking shortcuts or in a hurry" because there's more work to be done than there are workers to do it. She also blamed companies she said that have become somewhat complacent given that the overall stats are still quite good compared to years past.

"As soon as you start to think that way, you're not giving (safety) the same focus that you used to," she said. "And so we're working hard to get back to some of those things that we did around awareness and we are setting ourselves on a path to get back to the mantra we had back then which was 'unsafe is unacceptable' and we're just not going to put up with that."

Two prime areas of concern Arcand cited include speeding and hauling overweight loads, and she said one of the weapons they're using to combat such antics is technology.

"We've been working with a number of our members to actually put tracking units in trucks," she said, claiming that it's proving to be a real boon. "One of our members recently phoned me totally upset (at his driver) because now, with the tracking, he can watch on his computer and see where his trucks are, what the guy is doing. And (this driver) was going 140 km/h loaded in an 80 zone! There's absolutely no need for that."

She said the telematics let the owner see if a driver is hard braking or accelerating, driving

Continued on page 9

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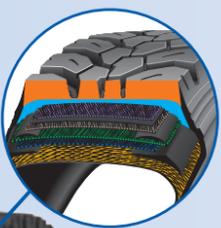
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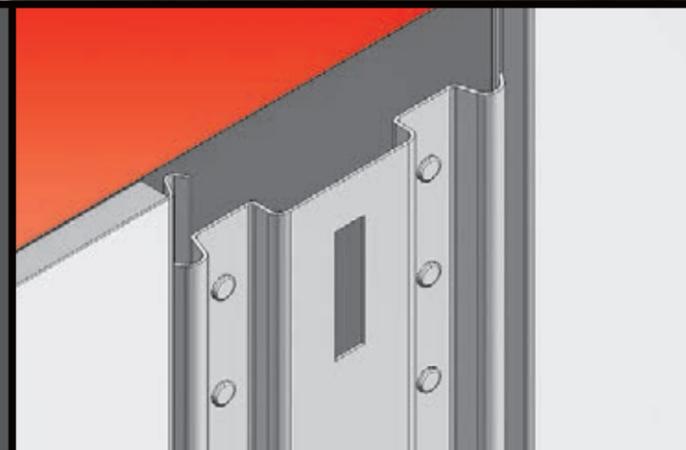
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Forestry industry concerned about uptick in deaths

Continued from page 6

aggressively or “speeding so they can go sit in a coffee shop – because their cycle times are supposedly calculated to the speeds on the road and they shouldn’t have spare time. There’s all kinds of things that are coming out through this data that are just ridiculous.”

Arcand said that, despite initial angst over the ‘Big Brother is watching you’ factor, the use of telematics is catching on.

“Some of the guys are recognizing that as the fleet owner they’re going to be held accountable for the supervision of their drivers and now that the technology exists to monitor that stuff so they can make corrections they’re starting to embrace it quite well.”

She estimated that some 800 trucks have had the system installed over the past few months and believes it’s the way of the future – so much so that she sees it being government-mandated eventually.

Even without forced compliance, however, Arcand thinks such systems are ideal for truck owners.

“You can’t afford all the tickets you get, you can’t afford your trucks being upside down in a ditch,” she said, “and you can’t afford the public outcry in the case of a high-profile accident, which we had a number of in the fall, where logging trucks had interface crashes with people or very visible log loads spilled over public highways that were in the media.”

Arcand said that, to help encourage her organization’s members to embrace the monitoring technology, the CILA is working with several telematics companies to find a reasonably priced system that will work in that particular industry and then to “develop an administration package to help them understand the data and put it into a useful form (with) weekly reports on the drivers so they can see what that person’s habits are.”

As for the overall heavy commercial vehicle industry in British Columbia, BCTA president and CEO Louise Yako said the injury and fatality crash record is good and, in general, improving.

“We have on our Web site stats from 2003 to 2012 and over that time-frame we’ve had a crash rate reduction of 22% and an average of 4% per year,” she said. And while that is obviously a good sign, Yako said what’s also obvious from the stats is that, as with the forestry sector, “the most common cause of those crashes is driver error, so even though generally speaking the crash rate is improving we still think that more can and should be done to try and improve that.”

One thing the BCTA is advocating is a mandatory training standard.

“If it’s driver error that is an issue we think that mandatory driver training standard will help to address that,” Yako said, noting that the association has been pushing the Insurance Corp. of B.C. to raise its licensing test standard and develop a mandatory minimum curriculum

for Class 1 driver training.

When asked if such moves could actually frighten away potential recruits, Yako said she thinks the opposite will be true.

“I’ve heard that perspective before and our view is that if you raise the standard you actually make the occupation more attractive,” she said, “because it’s harder to get in, it has more cachet.”

Even if some people might be scared off by higher standards, Yako said, she doesn’t think that’s a reason not to try. “I don’t think that raising for example the standard to get into medical school is going to mean that all of a sudden no one’s going to want to try and get into medical school,” she said. **TW**



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Alberta loggers finding little time to be “board”

By Jim Bray

EDMONTON, Alta. – The mountain pine beetle may be wreaking havoc in the British Columbia interior, but things are a lot less challenging across the great divide in Alberta.

That’s the word from Brock Mulligan, director of communications for the Alberta Forest Products Association. Mulligan told *Truck West* that the forest industry in Wild Rose Country is “pretty stable” right now, with better prices than two or three years ago thanks to a couple of factors. “One is that the US market has turned around,” Mulligan said, “and two is that during the downturn, we put significant resources into developing our alternative markets, particularly in China and Korea. That’s really paid dividends in terms of prices.”

Another factor Mulligan cited was the fact that significant investments have been made in facilities throughout Alberta, to “make them as efficient as possible and to make sure that we’re getting most use out of the fibre that comes into the mill. That’s been something that’s been really positive.”

Alberta even has a response for the mountain pine beetle that’s caused so much trouble to the west. “We’ve had a really productive partnership between industry and government that’s been fairly effective in mitigating the beetle,” Mulligan said, crediting a two-pronged strategy to combat the little buggers. “Level one involves finding individual trees that’ve been affected, cutting them down and burning them before they can get a further spread and a larger infestation,” he said. “Level two, which is where the companies really come into things, involves identifying older stands of pine and harvesting those before the beetle can make an infestation.”

So far, Mulligan said, it’s been fairly effective. “There certainly are spots where the beetle has flared up but we haven’t seen the widespread infestation they’ve seen in B.C.,” he said. “Our industry’s in relatively good shape and we don’t have any mills that I know of that are facing problems getting fibre because of the beetle.”

Mulligan said the beetles have shown up in the Grand Prairie and West Central regions – including the White Court/Hinton and Slave Lake areas, but “so far it’s been in smaller pockets as opposed to a widespread infestation and we think that’s primarily due to some of the mitigation work that’s been done.”

Technology has also ridden partially to the rescue, thanks to investments designed to deal with some of the fibre that’s been affected by the bugs.

“I know Alberta Newsprint company in White Court, to give an example, has made a modification to their paper making process that allowed them to use some fibre that’s been affected by the beetle,” Mulligan said. “So there’s some good news there, too.”

Not all is sweetness and light in Alberta’s forest industry, however, and one of the major issues is one that’s also being experienced elsewhere: finding bodies to fill positions.

“There’s not a more competitive labour market in the country than

Alberta,” Mulligan said, noting that, in January 2011, the association launched a program (called Work Wild – www.workwild.ca) to help his industry find new people. “When we developed the program we really did our homework,” he said. “We brought a public relations firm on board and they went out into five of our communities – four rural forestry communities, and one suburban Edmonton community – and they talked to youth and community leaders about what their impressions of the forest industry were.”

The outreach taught the association a couple of things, including the fact that young people tended to think of the forest industry as being in its twilight years. They also learned that “young people aren’t looking only for careers that would pay them the most money,” Mulligan said.

“They were looking to work in industries that are environmentally sustainable and would give them careers that would had a good lifestyle – they could spend time home with their families.”

And that could be forestry’s ace in the hole. Mulligan said the Work Wild program “gets out into our communities, particularly at the school level, and talks to youth about the careers that are available in our industry. Our messages are that this is a great industry to work in, we’re environmentally sustainable, we can offer lifestyles where you can live in a small rural community and have lots of time at home with your family.”

He also pointed out there’s more on the menu than driving logging trucks, too. “There’s a real diversity of careers in forestry; it’s not just the traditional

logging contractor or production personnel jobs, there’s also a lot of jobs in the trades, in research and innovation, in sales and accounting and all sorts of different disciplines, so no matter what your career path is there’s a spot for you in our industry.”

But forestry faces a fierce fight for new folk from such competitors as the Alberta oilpatch, though Mulligan doesn’t think the competition from the high-paying patch is having as much of an effect as one might think.

“It’s a bit of a two-way street,” he said. “Alberta obviously is a really competitive labour market and there is definitely some mobility, so we do lose some people on that, but we also find that some people come back to our industry from other sectors because of the lifestyles we offer. They get sick of three weeks in, one week out in the camp and decide that maybe a job in their community where they live in isn’t such a bad thing.” **TW**

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Beetle-based timber swap splits logs in B.C. interior

By Jim Bray

QUESNEL, B.C. – Blame the mountain pine beetle for throwing a big, buggy monkey wrench into B.C.'s logging biz. Or blame global warming – that's always a handy bugaboo. Or maybe it's Murphy's Law?

In reality, it could actually be a combination, but the lion's share of the finger pointing for the province's dwindling lumber supply is being aimed at the pesky pine beetle, whose stubborn refusal to die over the cold winter months (as it does traditionally) has led to a significant reduction in the annual cut over the next few years. And that in turn had led forest giants Canfor and West Fraser into consummating a marriage of corporate convenience that'll see plants closed in Quesnel and Houston, B.C., with each company tak-

ing over the timber of the other in the town where their own respective mill remains open.

In other words, they're doing the ol' switcheroo with each other, as a way to stay in business.

According to West Fraser, the goal is "to ensure the viability and competitiveness of its B.C. operations in response to the lack of available timber supply following the beetle infestation."

The plan includes exchanging "certain timber rights which will help maintain the competitiveness and viability of several of West Fraser's B.C. interior mills." It also calls for the shuttering of West Fraser's mill in Houston and "the announcement of significant investments" in two major mill upgrades in Smithers and 100 Mile House.

The Houston mill is scheduled to join the history books as of Q2 this year and

its shuttering will affect 225 employees, though West Fraser said it'll do what it can to help employees move to other company operations in the two westernmost provinces. For its part, Canfor announced it will close its Quesnel mill and turn its lumber over to West Fraser, which means there'll be a plant closure and accompanying job losses in each centre.

And this "mill swap" could just be the tip of the iceberg. "There are probably a couple more closures pending," said MaryAnne Arcand of the Central Interior Logging Association (CILA), though she also noted she doesn't know where such shutdowns could happen.

On the other hand, it may not happen at all. That's because it appears this initial consolidation between Houston and Quesnel may not be going off as its corporate partners wished. "This par-

ticular swap is under investigation by the Competition Branch and the Ministry of Forests," Arcand said, "because apparently the mills didn't ask (government) permission before they did it."

Muddying the woody waters is the issue of what's called "quota" and "non quota" lumber, a situation Arcand said is leaving some contractors scrambling.

"The idea is that there would be timber swapped from each licensee to meet the quota demands," she said, "but then, because they have contractors on both (quota and non-quota) sides, they're moving some of the contracts, which are called evergreen guaranteed wood, from one to the other in order to meet the obligation."

What this means is that, if you have a quota you're guaranteed your wood but, according to Arcand, "non-quota is just whatever they have available. So if they have quota and they're working through the mill that's shutting down, then the mill is obligated to give them the equivalent of the quota (in money or wood)."

That could leave those who've been getting non-quota lumber as bridesmaids when it comes to getting product. "If they didn't have quota the mill has no obligation to renew that contract," Arcand said, "and so what they've done is for some of the quota contractors for the mill that's shutting down, they're taking the non-quota wood from the contractors from the mill that is staying open and giving it to the quota guys with the mill that isn't staying open. So even if you're working for the mill that's staying open, there's no guarantee you're going to have wood or a job unless you're a quota person."

Bottom line: some people who have been logging for a particular licensee for 30, 40 years could end up with nothing. Fortunately, as these wooden doors are potentially being slammed in their faces, other windows of opportunity are opening.

"The flip side is that we have a tremendous shortage of workers, truckers and even of logging contractors," Arcand said, "and so with the shifting and moving around or relocation to a different mill from that same licensee, there's actually not many of them who aren't going to have work."

And, as noted elsewhere in this issue, B.C.'s forest industry is also changing in ways that could see loggers newly empowered, thanks to competition for their services from industries that, while not concerned with logging, still require that logs be taken away to open up their land.

As for the mill swap, Arcand thinks it may have been a trial balloon from the companies, designed to see how government and the logging community would receive it, so "they could push farther from there. I do know that their economic reasons for doing it are valid and we can't argue with that."

She also noted that the forestry companies' actions are perfectly legal within the context of their contract with the province. "We all knew it was going to come, we just didn't expect it to come quite this way," she said.

Canfor and West Fraser have refused to comment further on the issue, according to a Canfor representative, "while the competition review is underway." **TW**

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B.C. loggers fighting for off-road ABS exemption

By Jim Bray

PRINCE GEORGE, B.C. – They may be a boon on the highway, but that doesn't mean anti-lock brakes are a panacea off the beaten path, a fact that's causing a bit of a dust-up in Canada's westernmost province as a logging association there ramps up its fight for exemptions from the computerized safety systems.

The issue has cropped up again despite an exemption being allowed a couple of years ago for trucks that operate primarily on industrial roads. According to MaryAnne Arcand of the Prince George-based Central Interior Logging Association, that pesky ABS warning light showing up at inspection sites on the highways is causing serious issues – and costing serious cash – for some operators.

"A guy will go through the scale and his ABS light will be on, so he gets a ticket," she said. "So he stops at a garage at the nearest point and gets his ABS lights corrected and by the time he has his next trip to the scale it's on again."

Making the situation worse, Arcand noted, is the fact that if a carrier has enough repeat incidents at inspection stations, it can trigger an audit.

"All of a sudden it's (up to) \$20,000 to reinstate that system and they'll spend that money and the first trip out of the bush the thing's not working again."

Greg Munden, BCTA chairperson and principal of Peak Forestry Limited, explained "while the OEM systems are satisfactory for over-the-road trucking, although not without their maintenance challenges at times, systems on trucks used regularly off-highway are being damaged routinely due to mud, rocks and rough terrain."

He said it isn't uncommon to fix an ABS problem one day only to encounter a new problem within the next couple of days.

"Regularly malfunctioning ABS systems not only create a maintenance nightmare for trucking companies," he said, "but they also create an unsafe condition for off-highway drivers when these systems fail unexpectedly (and regularly) on one unit while remaining functioning on the other."

Munden said that in the extreme driving conditions such as those faced by B.C.'s log haulers, a balanced braking system is "critically important to navigating the steep and tight roads that they do," and that most companies and drivers hauling off-highway would prefer to have "only their traditional braking system that works consistently and reliably rather than the unpredictable and unreliable ABS systems that do not stand up to those conditions."

Part of the problem, Arcand said,

Continued on page 14



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B.C. loggers say ABS causing problems in the bush

Continued from page 12

is that there are long wires that aren't always attached properly, "so you'll have eight- to 10-foot long wires running along the driveline and with the boulders and sticks and all that sticking up - and potholes, deep snow and ice and mud that's frozen - it just tears them off. It just doesn't work in our application in the bush."

Arcand said another concern with ABS-equipped trailers is that, on certain configurations used commonly by loggers, the system is designed so that when one unit fails they all fail - something with which anyone who's messed with old fashioned Christmas lights will be familiar - cutting off all the brakes on the trailer.

"We're seeing the situation now where trailers will fly across a road coming down a hill and for some drivers it's a real issue," she said. "We've seen crashes, we've seen people hurt."

Auto slack adjusters are also problematic.

"They get packed with snow and ice and mud and they go out of adjustment and the auto slacks aren't able to do what they're supposed to do," said Arcand.

The situation has caused the industry to seek an exemption until, as Munden put it, "a more robust ABS system for off-road conditions is developed and available."

Arcand noted the issues aren't only specific to the logging industry, but spill over to other off-road environments as well.

"The oil patch guys are having the same problem as us," she said, "because it takes 150 semis to move a rig and they do hundreds of rig moves every year - but it's all in the ice and

across the west and has begun an outreach to other provinces to help get natural resource vehicles exempt across the entire region.

"That'll be our campaign going forward over the summer," she said, noting that the association has also scheduled a meeting at a logger's shop, hosting both ABS brake manufacturers and Ministry folk, to hopefully outline the problems to them.

"He's (the logger) full of failed parts and demonstrations of how they fail and what the issues are," she said, stressing that "the ABS guys right now say it isn't possible that they don't work, so we're going to show them.

You can argue till you're blue in the face, but a guy who has ABS brakes and doesn't pass an inspection because the light's on, he gets the violation and all the rest of it and then he loses his exemption and has to wait two inspection cycles to re-apply again."

To help support its case, the CILA conducted a survey of its members in the fall of 2013, asking them if they

have maintenance issues with ABS systems, how much failure they experience, how many times a month they have to fix them, and what it cost them over the past year to maintain the systems.

"There were a lot of anecdotal stories about failures," Arcand said, "so we're trying to work our way through that, getting that first-hand information from the truck owners, the guys who have to fix them all the time, and then taking that information to the brake manufacturers and regulators so it's fact-based and not just whining loggers."

Arcand said the next step is to collate the information and then to eventually make a presentation to the federal regulators.

Before sallying forth to Ottawa, however, the CILA wants to take the data to their counterparts in other provinces and the oil patch, the goal being to create a critical mass of support for the exemption.

"Someone has to do it. We have a lot of members for whom this whole issue just about breaks their business, because it's too costly and time consuming and nobody makes up for the down time. As an association, our job is to try and help them stay profitable and able to do business sustainably and this is something that's affecting a lot of them; I hear about it all the time." **TW**

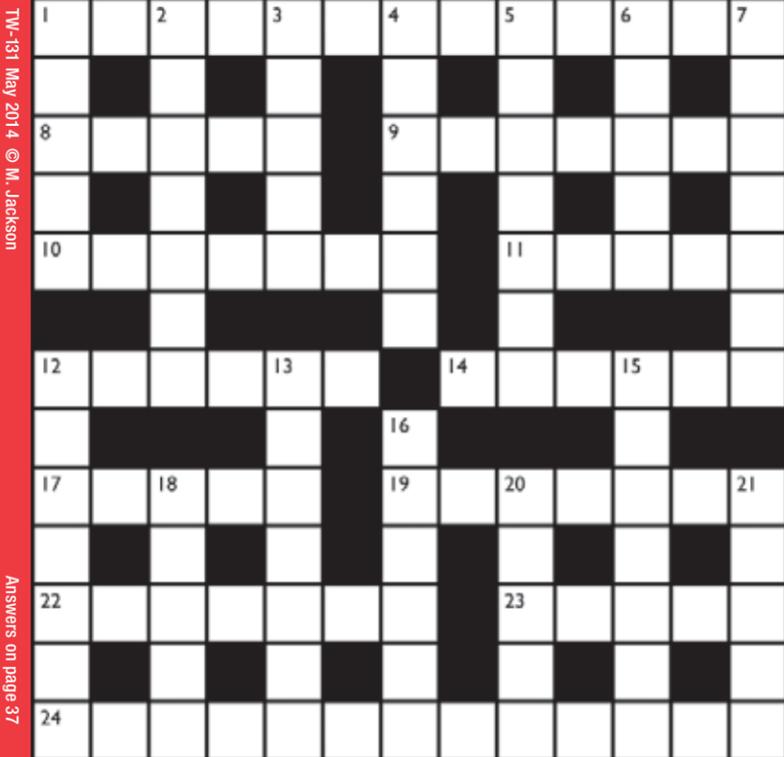
'We have a lot of members for whom this issue just about breaks their business.'

MaryAnne Arcand, CILA

the snow and the mud. And so we want to get a blanket exemption for the resource industry's heavy vehicles. We're arguing with Ottawa that our operating parameters and environment is very similar to lowbeds, so with lowbeds exempt from ABS brakes, even at manufacture, why can't we have that, too?"

The CILA is also trying to promote some consistency of regulations

THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD PUZZLE



TW-131 May 2014 © M. Jackson

Answers on page 37

Across

- 1 Unfinished truck type (3,3,7)
- 8 Windshield trim
- 9 Shell engine-oil brand
- 10 Former ON home of Navistar plant
- 11 Trip-odometer button
- 12 Rush-hour snarls (3,3)
- 14 Parts and _____, truck- repair costs
- 17 Aluminum-wheel brand
- 19 Truckmakers' sales incentives, sometimes
- 22 Factor in operating costs (4,3)
- 23 Body-work tool, _____ grinder
- 24 Cab-roof danglers, often (1,1,11)

Down

- 1 Palindromic Honda sedan
- 2 No-go street section, sometimes (3,4)
- 3 It's up on the map
- 4 Bumper or air-horn finish
- 5 Medium-duty Sterling
- 6 Truck-showroom transactions
- 7 Key-activated component
- 12 Vehicle volume
- 13 Ubiquitous modern-truck material
- 15 Traffic-stopping shape
- 16 Western Canada truck show
- 18 Truck-stop coffee additive
- 20 Dune-buggy terrain, perhaps
- 21 Truck buyer's requirements, briefly

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Anatomy of a rollover

Understanding what causes rollovers can help drivers prevent them

By Jim Bray

PRINCE GEORGE, B.C. – It's not uncommon for a driver to flip over a great new set of wheels. Alas, it appears increasingly common for the trucks themselves to flip for their drivers – and not in a good way – putting them into a situation in which their load is on the bottom, where the wheels should be.

Such situations – rollovers – can be dangerous and expensive, and they're probably one of the last things a driver wants to happen. Yet rollovers appear to be a growing problem in the B.C. Inte-

rior, especially in the logging sector, an unfortunate fact that prompted the B.C. Forest Safety Council to host the first in what it plans to be a series of presentations aimed at helping affected companies identify rollover causes and risks, and to hopefully prevent them from happening in the first place.

"We saw a need and an interest in getting the message out there in terms of the dynamics of a rollover and some of the things to look for, some tools to use to help avoid them," Dustin Meierhofer, director of transportation and northern safety for the Council, told *Truck West* in a recent interview. Meierhofer said that, while the number of rollovers isn't large compared to the number of vehicles working out there, it's still a big deal because "we're looking at 30-50% of the serious incidents resulting in rollovers."

While admitting that the term "rollovers" can be a bit deceiving – in that it doesn't necessarily mean the truck and its load end up tires toward the sun – Meierhofer explained that "for lack of a better term (it means) the log truck ending up on its side or rolling onto its side and spilling its load."

He also noted that in the past three or four months there's been "a higher number than usual of these incidents," and that's causing the industry as a whole to sit up and take notice, and to try finding ways to reduce them.

Hence the first 'Anatomy of a Rollover' presentation, held on Feb. 22 at Prince George, B.C.'s Esther's Inn. The Council called on Advantage Fleet Services president Grant Aune to be the presenter, a man Meierhofer described as an "accomplished speaker" who has under his belt more than 32 years of commercial vehicle incident investigation and accident reconstruction. Aune identified and described the five main causes of rollovers, explained terms such as "rollover threshold" (the likelihood that a vehicle will flip), and how to calculate it for individual vehicles.

That "individual vehicle" aspect is important because conditions change with each load. "Any time you load a vehicle, particularly a logging truck, the weight distribution's never the same twice," Meierhofer said, "and in a lot of cases that has resulted in instability at speeds that were not deemed at the time to be unsafe or outside the bounds of safe truck management."

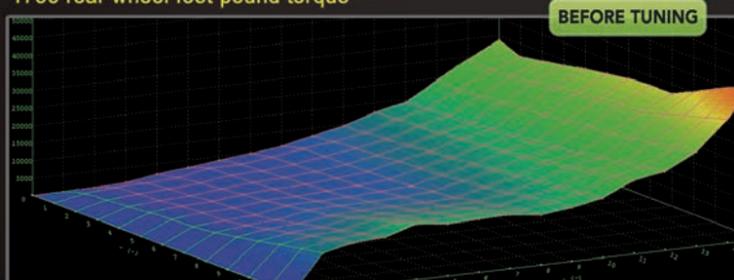
Continued on page 18

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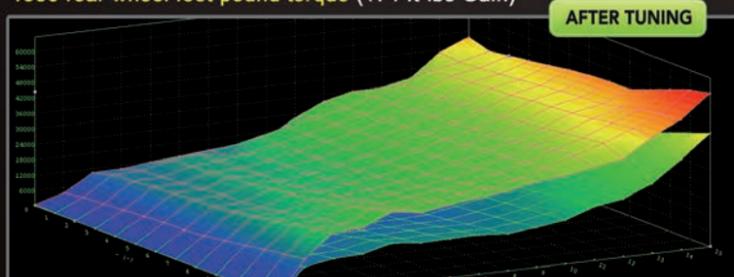
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Popular safety presentation addresses root causes of log truck rollovers

Continued from page 16

The problem is that the unique nature of each load of logs means the logging vehicle's handling will be slightly different each time, which Meierhofer said can lead to drivers "not being fully aware or prepared to address the issue."

As for the five main causes for rollovers that Aune named, they are: load, tire or suspension failure; "tripping," or taking a corner too tightly or too wide (in which case the trailer basically pulls the truck into the ditch and then out again so that it actually "trips" the side of the trailer into instability); driving onto a soft shoulder (getting too close to the side of the road and then being forced into the ditch because the soft shoulder basically draws the vehicle in); steering induced (for example, trying to avoid a road hazard, unsuccessfully – or recognizing that you're in an unstable situation and overcorrecting, thereby creating a situation in which you actually increase the instability); and excessive speed while negotiating a curve.

Meierhofer noted that speed, perhaps surprisingly, was the least of the top five factors involved in causing rollovers, hence its placement at the bottom of the list.

"It's interesting because there were quite a few incidents that (Aune) had been involved with where speed wasn't an issue," he said, "and (instead) it really was a result of some type of mechanical failure or that the weight distribution of the load was different."

The presentation was adapted from a full-day session, distilling the subject down to cover the key factors. "Grant did a very good job identifying what's causing (rollovers) to happen out there, and what is the likelihood of

'There were quite a few incidents... where speed wasn't an issue.'

Dustin Meierhofer

these things occurring depending on what activity you're engaged in – log hauling, or over the highway trucking, things of that nature," Meierhofer said. The session also focused on ways to assess whether or not drivers are putting themselves at a moderate to high risk of having a rollover during their daily operations and, if they are, how to mitigate the effects before – or as – they happen.

Aune, said Meierhofer, gained his expertise in the subject through 25 years of experience in commercial transport accident investigation for the RCMP, followed by years working in different areas of transportation safety.

"A lot of (the presentation) was drawn from his experience visiting crashes,

looking at the causes and the factors that led to them," he said, "and a good chunk of that was specific to log trucks."

Meierhofer said a "pretty diverse group" showed up for the presentation, including log truck drivers and forest industry licensees' representatives, log truck mechanics, safety and regulatory agencies, individual owner/operators, and that "the feedback was very good. I think people overwhelmingly felt that it was relevant and provided valuable insight into the issue."

He said Aune delivered the material from a technical perspective, but in a way it was also practical and understandable. The reaction was positive enough that they're planning to continue the presentations, with two more scheduled already, for May 2 in Adams Lake and May 10 in Vernon. Meierhofer said if the demand's there, they'll do a half-dozen or so across the province. As for why there's been an increase in rollovers over the past few years, Meierhofer said it's hard to pin down specific reasons, but it isn't that they aren't trying.

"That's something we're trying to get a better handle on," he said, noting that the information is "all driven through data that typically comes from the incident investigations that take place." He

said there's a push to improving incident investigations across the board because "in many cases what we're finding is that you have different agencies investigating these (rollovers) and they all have a different take on the information they collect. The RCMP's objective is criminal, whether or not there's criminal activity related to the crash or if charges can be laid due to criminal negligence, and ICBC has their specific focus, so what it's resulted in is an array of data and in some cases there's gaps."

Getting all the data into a useable form is somewhat like herding cats, thanks to the various bodies involved.

"It's a bit of a process," Meierhofer admitted, "because it requires careful coordination between the groups out there that are collecting data and that's a vast array: RCMP, ICBC CVSE, the logging contractors themselves in many cases, the licensees that do the data collection as part of their safety programs."

Meierhofer said the industry is trying to fine-tune the process so "we are getting the data we need that allows us to really look at these things in a fashion that leads us to (identifying) contributing factors and allows us to make a meaningful decision as to why they're happening and what we can do to...ultimately avoid them altogether." He said they're currently in the process of trying to coordinate that effort and "get some consistency in data collection so that we can have better answers in the future." **TW**

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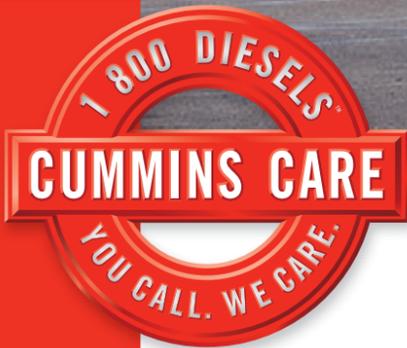
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A new career as an owner/op

In my brief absence from these pages, I have been quite busy. Not my usual kind of busy, but busy expanding my knowledge of our industry. I have been doing it from the other side of the desk too, in a poacher-turned-gamekeeper kinda way.

My goal was to find out as much as I could about how it all works so I could decide which way to go in the next stages of my career.

Although I enjoyed my time in the office, the diesel fuel still pumps through my veins and it was only a matter of time before I got myself back where I belong, looking at the world through a windshield. That time has now come and my view from the windshield will be somewhat different than what I am used to.

I'm the one who will be picking up the bills from now on, so my love for the classic long-nose large car has to take a back seat to economics. However, choosing a truck wasn't the first thing on my list; my main priority was choosing who was going to be paying me for my services.

Obviously rates were important, but not just a dollar amount, turnaround times and frequency of runs were also a priority. An extra few cents per mile can soon be swallowed up by a day sitting

**You say tomato
I say tomahto**

Mark Lee



around waiting on the next dispatch.

I did a lot of research and finally settled on a carrier from my hometown. Not only do they meet my criteria for good miles, minimal downtime, a decent rate and a good reputation, I will also have zero bobtail miles as the yard is less than two kilometres from my house. I have spoken to many people who are leased on with them and they seem to offer a very good deal for the owner/operator, so I put pen to paper and signed on with them.

Next step was to buy a truck. Here, a little knowledge can be a dangerous thing. Regular readers of my past columns will have no doubt about my feelings towards the unreliability of the newer engines, or rather some of the stuff that is bolted on to them in the name of emissions control.

Things have improved recently, so things are not as bad as they once were, but there is still a lot of stuff to go wrong and this all has to be taken into account when making the choice. The other consideration is, would it better to go for an older pre-emission truck and

have nothing to worry about?

If only it were that simple. A pre-emission truck will have done a lot of miles, many parts will need replacing, in fact over time you could end up rebuilding the truck one part at a time. Going down this route does allow you start off cheap and you can also upgrade components as they need replacing and end up with a very efficient truck, but did I really want the hassle?

No, I didn't, and my chosen carrier didn't want that either. They have a 'five years old or newer' policy, so I was faced with a choice between nearly new or new. Now my thought process on this was that if somebody has a decent, reliable truck less than five years old, why on earth would they be selling it? I didn't want to take a chance on someone's cast off, so my decision was to buy new. Again, I did a lot of research. I also looked at what the larger carriers were operating and I kept being pointed in the direction of one manufacturer in particular.

My fellow trucking industry writers also pointed me in the same direction, as the vehicle in question has been awarded prizes by my colleagues. Dealer service was also a priority.

The truck that doesn't break down has yet to be invented, so that was high on my list too. Once again, my decision

was reinforced by my local dealer being an award-winning service provider.

So I went to the dealer, cut them a cheque for the deposit and ordered my new truck. I've gone for a full warranty package that pretty much covers everything from the bumper to the rear mud flaps. Hopefully I will not have to have reason to use it, but if I do, then everything is taken care of. Obviously I won't be earning money while this is happening, but I won't be getting a big bill handed over on completion of any work that is done.

Reading through what I've just written makes it all sound so easy - if only that were true. I have spent the past six months asking questions, doing research and calculations.

I wasn't starting out from scratch either. I ran my own small fleet before I came to Canada, so I had an idea of how it all works, but the main thing that I knew was that I needed to plan and not just jump in feet first.

This industry doesn't take prisoners, so getting it right the first time is very important. There are no guarantees that I have gotten it right of course, but I've increased my odds of success by doing the research and making considered decisions. Time will tell if those decisions turn out to be correct. **TW**

A fourth generation trucker and trucking journalist, Mark Lee uses his 25 years of transcontinental trucking in Europe, Asia, North Africa and now North America to provide an alternative view of life on the road.

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PC-11 oil category promises to bring fuel savings

By James Menzies

The development of a new heavy-duty engine oil category (HDEO) is an expensive undertaking, the cost of which is generally reflected in the price tag and passed along to end users. The good news about Proposed Category 11 (PC-11), set to roll out in April 2016, is that customers will most likely see noticeable fuel savings as well as better performance out of the new oil.

PC-11 has been necessitated by the engine developments aimed at improving fuel economy and reducing greenhouse gas regulations in accordance with recent standards imposed by the US government.

Reflecting a slow-moving migration towards low-viscosity engine oils, PC-11 will be a split category: one will address traditional 15W-40 engine oils and the other will apply to lower-viscosity engine oils, such as 10W-30s.

Fleets will still be able to choose their preferred grade of oil, but by 2016, when the new category takes effect, most engine manufacturers will be recommending the lower-viscosity oils, predicts Dan Arcy, global OEM technical manager with Shell Lubricants.

"Those will probably be the primary recommendation for all 2016 engines when they come out," Arcy said of low-viscosity engine oils. "Those oils will provide better fuel economy than what we get out of current 10W-30s and much better than what we see out of current 15W-40s."

But the new category may also present challenges. Fleets will likely have to stock two motor oils: PC-11 for new engines built in 2016 and beyond, and today's CJ-4 oils for existing equipment. Whatever the split, it's likely 15W-40 engine oils will take up less shelf space as the industry warms to the idea of running lower-viscosity engine oils.

Even fleets that have already transitioned to lower-viscosity engine oils in the pursuit of fuel savings will see further benefits when the new category is rolled out. This is because the PC-11 10W-30s will feature improved high-temperature high-shear properties – basically a thinner film – than seen in today's 10W-30 oils.

"Most OEMs are already factory-filling with 10W-30," said Len Bedal, commercial sector manager with Chevron Lubricants. "Today, you have a traditional film thickness for 10W-30 and we will give that 10W-30 a little bit narrower film thickness, so it gives better fuel economy performance, even above a traditional 10W-30."

Shell's Arcy says fleets moving from a 15W-40 to a 10W-30 today can achieve fuel savings of about 1.6%; going from a 15W-40 to a PC-11 grade 10W-30 will provide even greater fuel savings, though it's too early to give specifics.

"What fleets and owner/operators should be excited about, is the

Continued on page 24



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PC-11 to push low-viscosity oils closer to the mainstream

Continued from page 22

potential for fuel economy savings," added Barnaby Ngai, category portfolio manager, transportation oils, Petro-Canada Lubricants. "That alone can offer quite a bit of benefits. It's a fact that fuel makes up a good portion of the expenses as it relates to the trucking industry, so any savings around that would be quite beneficial. But also, when you move towards a lower-viscosity, higher-performing product, you're going to get additional performance benefits from protection, cold temperature properties and things along those lines."

While OEMs are factory filling with lower-viscosity engine oils and some large fleets have made the switch, many operators still wonder about the thinner oil's ability to protect the engine and its internal components. But all oil manufacturers claim their 10W-30s offer pro-

tection equal to their 15W-40 products. Chevron at the Mid-America Trucking Show took it a step further and performed an engine teardown on a Detroit Series 60 engine with 412,000 miles on it, to highlight this point.

"People want tangible proof," explained Chevron's Jim Gambill.

He said the fuel savings that can be achieved today by switching from a 15W-40 to a 10W-30 amounts to about \$900 per year.

While the lower-vis engine oils may cost slightly more, he added, "they're not a lot more expensive relative to what you save."

So, how do lighter-weight engine oils save fuel? Gambill explained it this way: "Fundamentally, it's the thickness of the oil. If you think about pumping oil around that engine 2,000 times per minute, that's a parasitic load. If the oil is a

little bit heavier, that parasitic load is a little more than if it was lighter. If you have a little less energy going to pump that oil around, you have a little more energy that can push through to the drivetrain or (provide) fuel savings."

Or, as Ngai said, "It's like swimming in a pool filled with water versus molasses. You're going to expend a lot less energy getting from Point A to B."

With a new category and OEMs collectively ushering in the more widespread adoption of low-viscosity engine oils, J.P. Soucie with Castrol distributor Wakefield Canada, says it's a great time for truck owners and maintenance managers to re-evaluate their traditional decision-making processes.

While he acknowledged adopting a 10W-30 oil today or in 2016 will bring some fuel economy benefits, that change alone just scratches the surface of an oil's

ability to drive fuel savings.

"As a fleet operator or owner/operator, if you are looking for fuel economy, synthetics are designed to accomplish that specific goal," Soucie said.

"If you're looking for fuel economy, you need to get a fuel economy synthetic or semi-synthetic."

Most 10W-30s currently on the market provide some fuel savings because of their thinner composition, but weren't designed to deliver this benefit, Soucie explained.

"I think if you're going to make the change (to lower-viscosity oils) anyhow, if you're going to make that paradigm shift in your head and in your fleet to go to a 10W-30, why not take advantage of the technology we as oil manufacturers need to (develop) to keep up with the OEMs and go to the next step? Semi-synthetics lower your total cost of ownership and have a significant impact on your cost per mile."

While OEMs increasingly have green-lighted the use of low-viscosity engine oils in their products, Lilo Hurtado, applications engineer for ExxonMobil, warned at the Technology & Maintenance Council meetings in March that a switch to lighter-weight oils should only be made in consultation with OEMs.

Fleets should still check with engine manufacturers to find if the low-viscosity oils are a fit, particularly when working with older engines and severe duty cycles, Hurtado said.

"Be very specific," Hurtado said of requests for low-viscosity oils.

While the new PC-11 category will undoubtedly push low-viscosity engine oils closer to the mainstream, it won't likely fully displace 15W-40 oils anytime soon as the predominant formulation used in the trucking industry – at least not by 2016.

"I still believe 15W-40 will be the bigger volume grade, however I think you're going to see segments of the market – like the large- and mid-sized fleets – completely converted over to 10W-30 or in the process of doing it," Chevron's Badal said. "If you look at the smaller fleets and owner/operators, who sometimes run older equipment, it could take another 10 years or so before all of them come over."

But when faced with the prospect of managing two different engine oil viscosities, Soucie said he anticipates more fleets will make the wholesale switch to 10W-30 oil when 2016 rolls around.

"Lots of fleets have challenges just managing one viscosity, and making sure it's not topped up with a different brand," Soucie said.

While it may be premature to speculate on the need for future HDEO categories beyond PC-11, the US government's push for greater fuel economy from heavy-duty trucks is not likely to abate. US President Barack Obama has already announced further standards for model years 2018 trucks and beyond.

Asked if the next set of fuel economy standards/GHG reductions will require the creation of another new engine oil category, Shell's Arcy said it's too soon to say.

"If you go back and look, historically every time we had a change in emissions standards with the exception of 2010, we always had a change in engine oil formulation in order to protect the new engines," Arcy said. "What's going to happen in 2018-2020? We're not sure yet." **TW**



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Big changes you need to know about coming to IRP in 2015

Today, establishing a new prorated fleet involves paying licensing fees based on your best guesstimate of the distance you expect to travel in various jurisdictions during a 12-month period.

Guess wrong – say you licensed in Jurisdiction A and B but not Jurisdiction C, where you now have a load – and you have to go back to the prorated office, make another estimate, and have the new jurisdiction added to your cab card.

As of Jan. 1, 2015, that's all going to change. Last October, members of the International Registration Plan approved what's referred to as a "full reciprocity plan," or FRP. Nearly 20 years in the making, it's designed to take the guesswork out of IRP in two ways: by granting full reciprocity for all apportioned vehicles in all IRP jurisdictions, and eliminating any provisions related to estimated distance.

New cab cards

That means when you register a fleet under IRP, your base jurisdiction will

Guest Column

Sandy Johnson



issue a cab card that lists all 58 IRP member jurisdictions.

You will no longer need to select the states or provinces in which you intend to operate: once your fees are paid to your base jurisdiction, your apportioned vehicles are approved to travel in any IRP jurisdiction during the license year.

No more distance

Full reciprocity will also eliminate the need for estimated distance requirements. When you renew, you'll pay fees based on actual mileage in the jurisdictions you traveled to during the previous year (from July 1 to June 30 of the preceding year).

For renewals of registrations expiring November 2014 or earlier – thus with a new expiration date November 2015 or earlier – the old rules will continue to apply through your expi-

ration date in 2015.

Changes for new fleets

Existing carriers renewing their fleets for a registrant year beginning on or after Jan. 1, 2015, will report actual distance accumulated during the distance-reporting period.

When a fleet is considered new, or it didn't accumulate any actual distance during the distance-reporting period, fees will be calculated using the base jurisdiction's "average per-vehicle distance" chart.

That's the new name for the "estimated distance" chart. Each jurisdiction will come up with an apportioned percentage by taking the total of all the vehicles it licensed under IRP and dividing that number by the total number of vehicles licensed in that jurisdiction.

Sound wacky? Not really.

It makes much more sense to have all jurisdictions on your cab card than to try to buy a permit or to have to add a new jurisdiction to your cab card at the drop of a hat.

Under full reciprocity, you'll have the operational flexibility to travel

to any jurisdiction any time without trip permits and pay apportioned fees after the fact based on actual distance.

Full reciprocity will eliminate the guesswork for new carriers, eliminate estimated distance on renewals (which can be very costly), and more fairly assess fees based on actual operations.

When people get their cab cards, I think the question that will be asked the most will be, "I don't even go to those jurisdictions. Why am I paying for them?" It's really just the price of admission to the prorated program. If you're a carrier with a prorated fleet already established, this will be a non-issue for you.

Get ready now

While full reciprocity won't take effect until 2015, take time now to get familiar with it, especially if you're running multiple fleets under IRP. Your base jurisdiction and the IRP Web site will have general information, and a qualified tax and license expert should be able to provide specifics about how this change will affect your business. Don't hesitate to ask. **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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AMTA shuffles the deck

By Jim Bray

CALGARY, Alta. – A bombshell personnel change at the Alberta Motor Transport Association (AMTA) has installed a new face in the organization's centre seat and kicked off some serious soul searching about the group's direction going forward.

The move, which came at the end of February, saw the association part ways with executive director Don Wilson, replacing him – at least temporarily – with trucking industry veteran Richard Warnock. Warnock told *Truck West* about a week after assuming his new duties that he's planning to occupy the corner office for a short time only and that, in the meantime, the status quo reigns supreme.

"Business as usual, and that's the truth," Warnock said, "and I'm not just saying that to make everyone happy. The AMTA is strong, the AMTA plans on getting even better and the AMTA will be looking for new leadership in the future."

Warnock said it was the AMTA's board that decided to make the change at the top and the reason he was brought in was to ensure the group's profiles and programs continue as usual while he evaluates the situation, meets and consults with the staff and then "makes an alignment to move the association forward."

In other words, he's tasked with reviewing the status quo and decid-

ing what, if anything, needs fixing and where, if anywhere, the board should change direction. The move means Warnock had to take a leave of absence from his position on the AMTA board and, while he said he has a timeline in mind for easing himself out again, he's keeping it close to his chest for now.

"Technically, I'm the acting executive director until the position is filled," he said. Warnock said he doesn't intend to throw his own hat into the ring, but admitted that anything is possible.

In Warnock, the board chose a person with wide-ranging experience in many – if not all – aspects of the trucking industry in Alberta, including many years with the association itself.

The hunt for a new head – which may or may not include the use of professional head hunters – will look both inside and outside the AMTA, but Warnock said that whoever the board chooses, it wants someone who can guide the AMTA on a "different path, a stronger path. Responsibility to the board is important in the AMTA because (it's) our members who drive this organization. Members want to be heard and timely action taken on their concerns," he said.

Warnock noted that a lot has changed in the industry, and people involved in the trucking world today look at it differently than folks did

30 years ago. He also noted that "because of my expertise and my knowledge and my past positions...I'm hoping to drive the AMTA profile and set up a path so that the new executive director can come in and go to work and not have to build an organization or a management team."

Warnock said he's already received calls from people prepared to pursue the position, but advises them to hold off a bit.

"I'm not going to stop anyone from sending a resume or a letter to the AMTA, but because what's on your resume today may not be what's on it four months from now – you're early," he said. The position will be posted internally first, so current AMTA employees have a chance to apply.

Outgoing executive director Wilson, who was in the position for about three years, drew praise from Warnock for the great things he did for the association. "I'm sure he'll be recognized for that," he said, adding "we're not bad-mouthing Don at all. We're just going in a different direction and therefore (the change) was necessary."

Warnock is a native Calgarian, who has been involved in the industry for the better part of 50 years. "I started very young," he joked, noting that "I only worked for two employers before technically being (in the current job)."

He spent about 25 years with the original Orlick Transport before the

company was closed and "everyone was looking for a job," and then he went over to WestFreight – which he said was very small at the time – and spent 22 years building it into "a fairly good company."

After WestFreight's owner retired and sold the business in 2007, Warnock was named president and "stayed there till I technically retired," he said. When his current gig runs its course, Warnock would like to continue as a spokesman for the industry – something he said he was planning to do anyway before the AMTA board came calling.

"I have done a lot in 48 years," he said. "When I was a young man, I was in dispatch and back in that time frame, a 50-year-old truck driver would not take any orders or direction from a 21-year-old kid."

The situation made him decide that, if he was going to earn their respect, he had to be their peer – so he went on the road and drove a truck. And his strategy seemed to work.

"When I went back into the office I was much more versed and of course it was a lot easier to get their respect because I stayed with the same company, worked with those same people, and never looked back after that."

As for his new focus of looking forward on behalf of the AMTA, Warnock said "technically, if there's a focus, it's to look at the operations of the AMTA and give guidance to the board if change is necessary. It may not be. I may get in and say we're good to go, let's just build and move on." **TW**

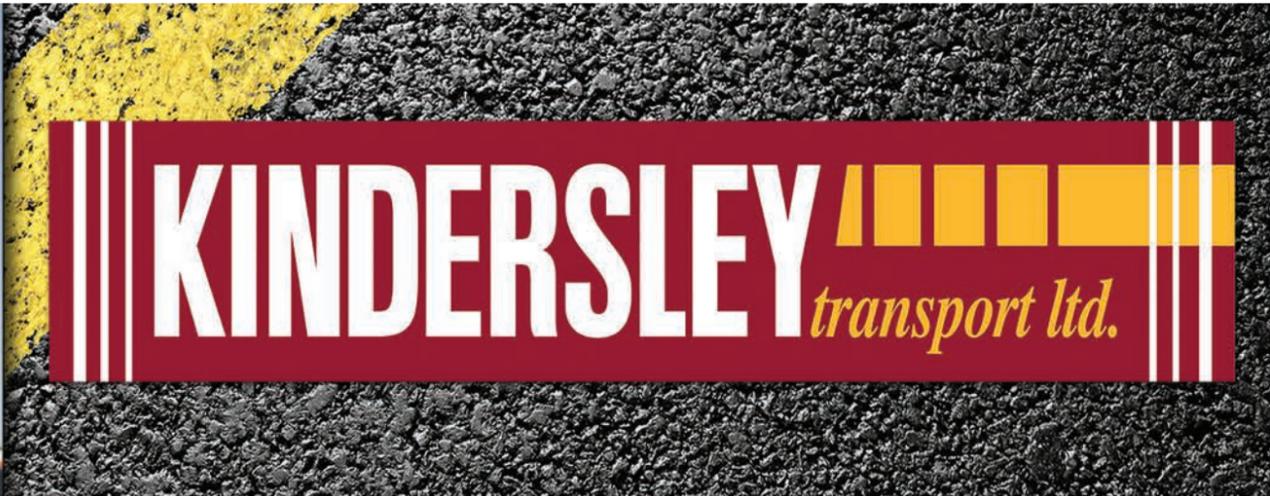


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The BIG MATS report

A round-up of news from the Mid-America Trucking Show

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – Couldn't make the Mid-America Trucking Show this year? That's alright, we've got you covered. Our team of editors was on-hand, collecting information and checking out the new wares from all the OEMs and suppliers. From industry forecasts, to what's new in trucks, trailers, wheels, tires and axles – read on for all the highlights. And if that's not enough MATS coverage for you, visit Trucknews.com where you can find all the news from the show.

The outlook

In addition to serving as the venue from which to launch new and updated products, Mid-Am also provides a good place to catch up with supplier and manufacturer CEOs and to pick their brains on the general health of the industry. The mood at this year's show was universally upbeat.

Though it's unlikely the heads of various truck and equipment manufacturers compared notes prior to the show, they were remarkably consistent when projecting Canada/US Class 8 volumes this year will total between 210,000-240,000 units. If demand comes in at the higher end of the spectrum, 2014 could equate to one of the best years for Class 8 retail sales – ever.

Gary Moore, general manager of Kenworth and Paccar vice-president, noted 2013, at 212,000 Class 8 units sold in the US and Canada, turned out to be the fifth best year on record. He said there's potential for 2014 to represent the third largest truck market in history if early activity holds up.

Martin Daum, president and CEO of Daimler Trucks North America (DTNA), projected Class 8 demand to increase slightly in Canada (+2%) and more noticeably in the US (+13%).

"I'm very bullish that we should end with a higher market than in 2013," Daum said.

The overall Class 8 NAFTA market (including Mexico) could be 11% stronger than last year, Daum predicted, and when factoring in Classes 6/7 trucks, about 8% stronger. For its part, Daimler has been "quietly" boosting production, bringing on 1,200 employees since last year, Daum reported.

Joe McAleese, president and CEO of Bendix, says data he has reviewed indicates the trucking industry is very healthy and on the brink of a "ramp-up."

"As I sift through the facts and figures, it is clear we are on the verge of a fairly robust industry ramp-up," he said. "Class 8 production, in 2014, will be up 15% from 2013. And expect 2015 production to be up another 5-15%. When we move on to look at the Class 8 data, we see a pretty rosy picture. Truck tonnage is relatively robust. Truck tonnage is in good shape. Most importantly, the operating margins of the fleets who publish data is pretty good. Obviously we have the factor of the driver shortage out there, but fleets have kept capacity under control, to the point where they are getting their rate increases and are making those stick, which has been good for profitability enabling them to afford new truck purchases."

The average age of the North American Class 8 truck fleet continues to rise (we heard figures discussed at the show ranging from six-and-a-half to eight years).

Many truck and engine manufacturers have improved fuel economy since just last year, meaning it's a good time to replace aging equipment, contended Jeff Jones, vice-president, North American engine business for Cummins, who claimed an ISX15 engine today is 7% more fuel-efficient than the same engine ordered four years ago.

"If you've got a four-year-old truck and you're contemplating trading it in, the

new truck you're putting into service will be at least 7% more fuel-efficient," Jones said. "That is a big deal."

Jones cited industry studies that estimate the cost of running a Class 8 truck in the US grossing 80,000 lbs is about \$1.65 per mile. Fuel costs about 60 cents per mile, making it the biggest single expense.

"A 7% improvement on what's more than a third of the operating cost of a vehicle goes straight to the bottom line," Jones said, adding it could save a fleet about \$4,000 per truck each year. "If you think about fleets that operate hundreds or thousands of trucks, the

math is pretty easy to justify in terms of the ROI on a new truck," he added.

The trucks

Moving on to product announcements, specifically trucks, most of what we saw at the Mid-America Trucking Show involved subtle enhancements to existing models with the aim of improving fuel economy. Several OEMs were touting fuel savings achieved since GHG14-complying measures were imposed in January. Goran Nyberg, president of Volvo Trucks North American Sales and Marketing, said he was surprised at how much better the GHG14 equipment is performing for fuel economy.

"I'm happy to announce today, that we have been able to exceed our expectations in fuel efficiency," Nyberg announced at the show. "The new greenhouse gas (certified) 2014 engines are delivering up to 3% extra fuel efficiency, bringing value, bringing dollars

Continued on page 33

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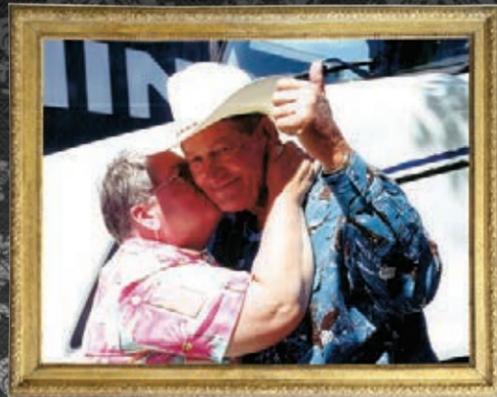
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Optimus Prime, the lead truck in the upcoming Transformers movie, was showcased at MATS. Western Star said design cues seen in the truck will be incorporated into a new aerodynamic model to be released later this year.

Fuel economy, uptime the themes at this year's show

Continued from page 31
to our customers."

Mack Trucks president Stephen Roy echoed these findings, claiming GHG14-compliant Mack trucks are getting 2.4-2.5% better fuel economy than last year's models.

Fuel economy was the theme of this year's show, with OEMs announcing new packages to improve upon the performance of their existing models. For example, Roy said Mack offers an aerodynamic fairing package that can improve fuel economy by 2-7%.

Kenworth introduced a fuel economy package for its T680, which the company says makes the truck 5% more fuel-efficient than the same model ordered last year. The savings came in the form of: powertrain optimization; the mating of the Paccar MX engine to the new Eaton Advantage Series automated transmission; improved aerodynamics and more efficient drive axles.

Even Western Star, which is known for its long-and-tall, classic-styled truck designs, announced at Mid-America that it will be introducing a fully aerodynamic new model, the 5700, later this year. Those looking for a sneak peek of what a slippery Western Star might look like were treated to an appearance by Optimus Prime, a Western Star-built truck that'll play the lead role in the upcoming Transformers movie.

Uptime was another theme that came up throughout the Mid-America Trucking Show. Volvo and Mack executives both spoke of an Uptime Center being constructed in Greensboro, N.C., which will bring together under one roof all employees who have a role to play in reducing downtime.

"Uptime has become as important as fuel efficiency," Volvo's Nyberg said. "I would say it isn't a customer meeting if we don't talk about the importance of turnaround times and uptime and vehicle performance."

Remote diagnostics – the ability to remotely monitor engine fault codes and advise the operator on the best course of action – is one way OEMs are looking to improve uptime.

Navistar demonstrated at the show its new OnCommand Connection remote diagnostics platform and Cummins said it was getting into the game as well. Cummins – which also announced a made-for-Canada 585 hp rating for its ISX15 – launched Cummins Connected Diagnostics, which will go into full pro-

duction next year. It will be integrated with the telematics programs fleets are already using, with no need for additional hardware.

Also talked about this year was the ongoing shift towards automation. Daimler announced its Detroit DT12 automated mechanical transmission has sold 17,000 units since its introduction only a year ago.

Eaton expanded availability of its newest, lighter-weight Fuller Advantage Series automated transmission, announcing it can now be mated to Paccar MX engines and to Cummins engines in Volvo trucks. Eaton officials at Mid-America noted 20% of the North American Class 8 build currently runs automated transmissions, and the expectation is that'll climb to 30% within three to five years.

In-cab driver coaching systems were also introduced at the show. Both Kenworth and Peterbilt announced systems integrated into the driver display that provide real-time feedback on a driver's coasting and braking performance.

The trailers

Great Dane attracted a crowd, showcasing a trailer designed as part of Wal-Mart's WAVE concept tractor-trailer. The trailer was made of composite fibre materials, reducing weight by 4,000 lbs compared to trailers on the market today. The trailer also featured a unique suspension, which raises one of the axles as the load on the trailer diminishes, further reducing fuel consumption. The trailer, while futuristic in appearance, is DoT-legal, Great Dane's Adam Hill told *Truck West*. However, he admitted it's also cost-prohibitive at this time.

"One of the biggest disadvantages is just the extreme cost of it," he acknowledged.

Another interesting trailer introduced at MATS, but not likely to haul much cargo, was Utility's legacy trailer, a sort of rolling museum that pays tribute to its 100-year history. Utility is marking its centennial this year, which the company says makes it the industry's longest-running trailer manufacturer. The trailer will go on the road, appearing at various events throughout the year to showcase the company's history.

Craig Bennett, senior vice-president of sales and marketing, said the ongoing challenge for the trailer industry is to reduce weight and improve productivity

for carriers who are facing productivity headwinds in the form of government regulations (ie. shorter hours-of-service for drivers and increasingly expensive and heavier power units).

"Tractors have gotten heavier and the 80,000-lb gross load has not changed," Bennett said. "Everyone is wanting the trailer guys to get lighter so they don't have to sacrifice cargo. That's our challenge. It has always been our challenge, but even more so the last 10 years."

New trailers introduced at the show included an all-aluminum centre frame step deck from Trail King, which the company says offers improved corrosion resistance. The TK80AACS will enter production later this year.

And for you tanker-yankers, Heil Trailer announced it will once again begin building stainless steel tanker trailers.

The tires and wheels

It took 10 years for Michelin to sell its first million X One wide-base tires, and just three years to repeat the feat. The Michelin Man himself took the covers off the two millionth X One tire produced by the company.

Michelin estimates it has helped customers save 150 million gallons of fuel with the introduction of the X One. It offers up to a 10% improvement in fuel efficiency and 740 lbs of weight savings per truck, according to Ted Becker, vice-president of marketing for Michelin Americas Truck Tires.

While announcing the milestone, Michelin also introduced a new wide-base single tire: the

X One Line Energy T trailer tire and its corresponding X One Line Energy T Pre-Mold Retread. Becker said a new compound maintains a constant footprint regardless of the weight of the load, reducing irregular wear and improving removal mileage by 15%.

Goodyear had news at the show as well: the launch of a new tire program that gives small- and medium-sized fleets the same tools and treatment enjoyed by the big guys. Goodyear's Smart Fleet program will come to Canada later this year. It offers consistent, nationwide pricing for tires, retreads and other services.

"We conducted some research with the smaller guys and they told us they want a program from Goodyear. We asked them what they would like and they answered, 'We would like, first and foremost, that there are no surprises.' So that became our slogan: No surprises," Jose Martinez, digital and solutions manager for Goodyear, told *Truck West* at the show.

The program also eliminates for members, the \$25 dispatch fee small fleets had to pay for service.

"At the end of the day, what we do is we help them control the costs of their operations with a safety net. Everything is published. There is nothing that will take them by surprise, even if it's on the road," Martinez said.

Smart Fleet will come to Canada when all the Canadian laws, taxes, regulations and languages have been sorted out, likely later this year. **TW**

Full coverage of MATS can be found at TruckNews.com

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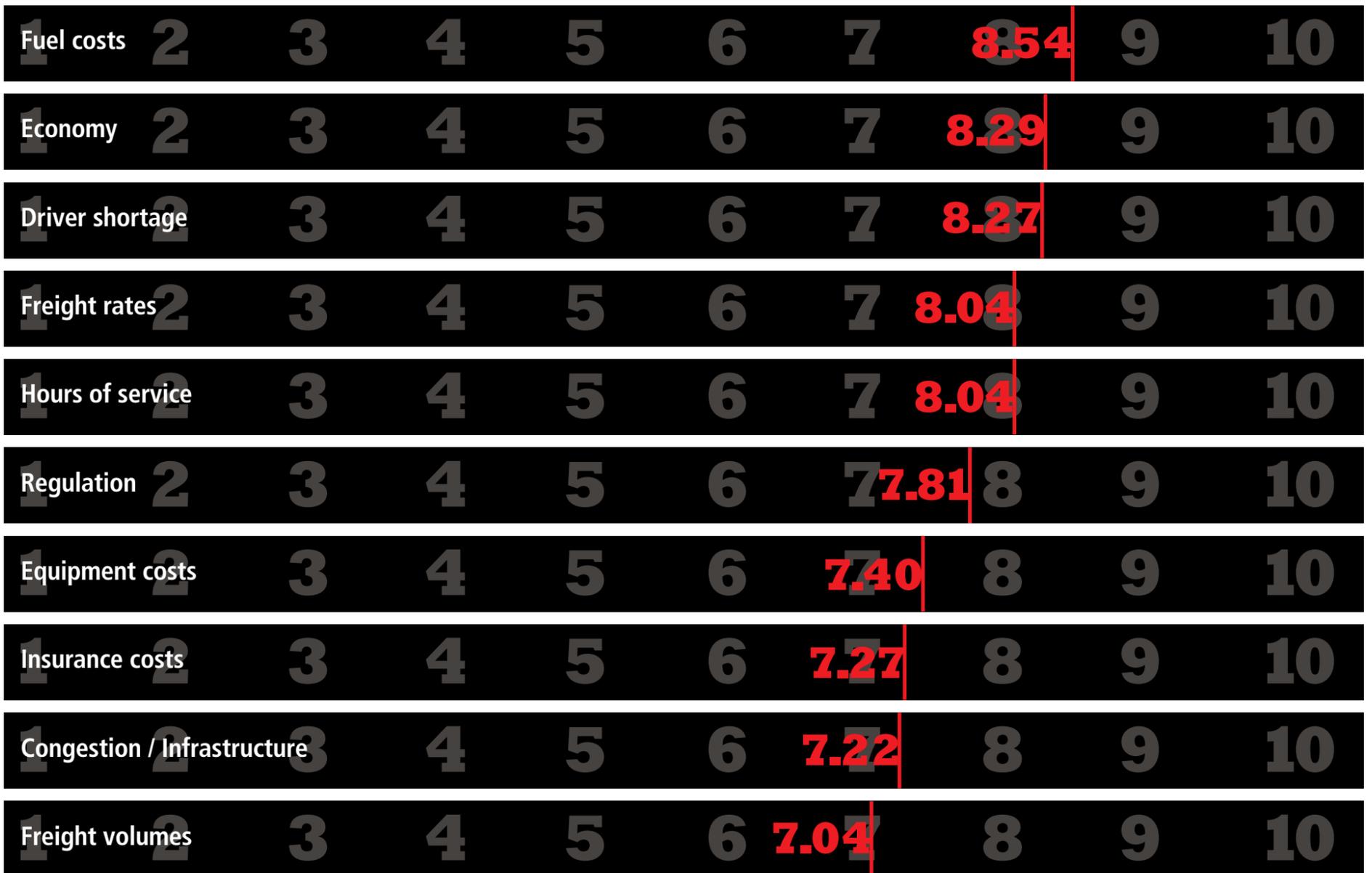
Tailwinds or headwinds?

WESTERN MOTOR CARRIERS REVEAL THEIR OPTIMISM FOR 2014

Level of optimism for company growth in 2014



Top 10 areas of concern for Western motor carriers



Equipment purchasing plans for Western motor carriers



Western Canada carriers are the most optimistic across the country when it comes to freight volumes (see Inside the Numbers, April *Truck West*) but with rate increases expected to be below 4% on average, the level of optimism for growth in 2014 is an acceptable but not particularly exciting

6.41 on a scale of 1 to 10. In fact, freight rates remain one of the top areas of concern, along with the economy, fuel costs, the driver shortage and hours of service. More than half of Western Canada carriers, however, are optimistic enough about 2014 to have purchasing plans for new heavy duty

trucks. All the data is from our Annual Transportation Buying Trends Survey, completed in February.

We have been conducting these surveys for a decade in partnership with the Freight Management Association of Canada, Cormark Securities and CITT. **TW**

By Edo Van Belkom

Mark comes down with a virus and is too sick to drive. Bud arranges for a replacement driver to take over for a week while Mark spends some time at his parent's home getting better.

Mark spends time at his parent's home and begins to feel better. However, that he needed his parent's help and a young inexperienced driver replacing him has left Mark feeling a little insignificant.

It only took four days for Mark to completely recover, but it seemed like it had taken forever. His mother had hovered over him constantly during that time, taking his temperature and pumping him full of fluids until it felt like all he was doing was sleeping and going to the bathroom.

Now he was well enough to take a shower, get into his own clothes and watch television in the living room with his father.

"Good to see you up and about," his father said.

"Feels good too."

His father leaned over in Mark's direction. "You know," he said, almost in a whisper, "if you want me to drive with you as a team for a while, I'm ready to go."

"You're not going anywhere," his mother commanded as she came into the room with a cup of tea in each hand. She gave one to Mark and kept the other for herself. "Not even to go along for the ride."

"Feh," his father said, waving a hand in his mother's direction. "The boy needs help."

"You need help. He needs to get better."

"I am better."

"I'll be the judge of that." She put a hand on his forehead. "Two more days," she proclaimed, then exited the room.

His father shook his head. "Your mother's just impossible sometimes. I don't know how I've lived with her for so long."

Mark smiled.

He knew exactly where his father was coming from because he didn't know how he had lived with both of them for so long.

Four days had been like an eternity and now that he was feeling better all he could think about was getting out of their house...either back on the road or into a place of his own. "Sometimes I feel that way about my truck."

"What do you mean?"

"I've lived out of it for so long, I think it might be time to get a place...you know, to call home."

His mother charged back into the room as if propelled by a slingshot.

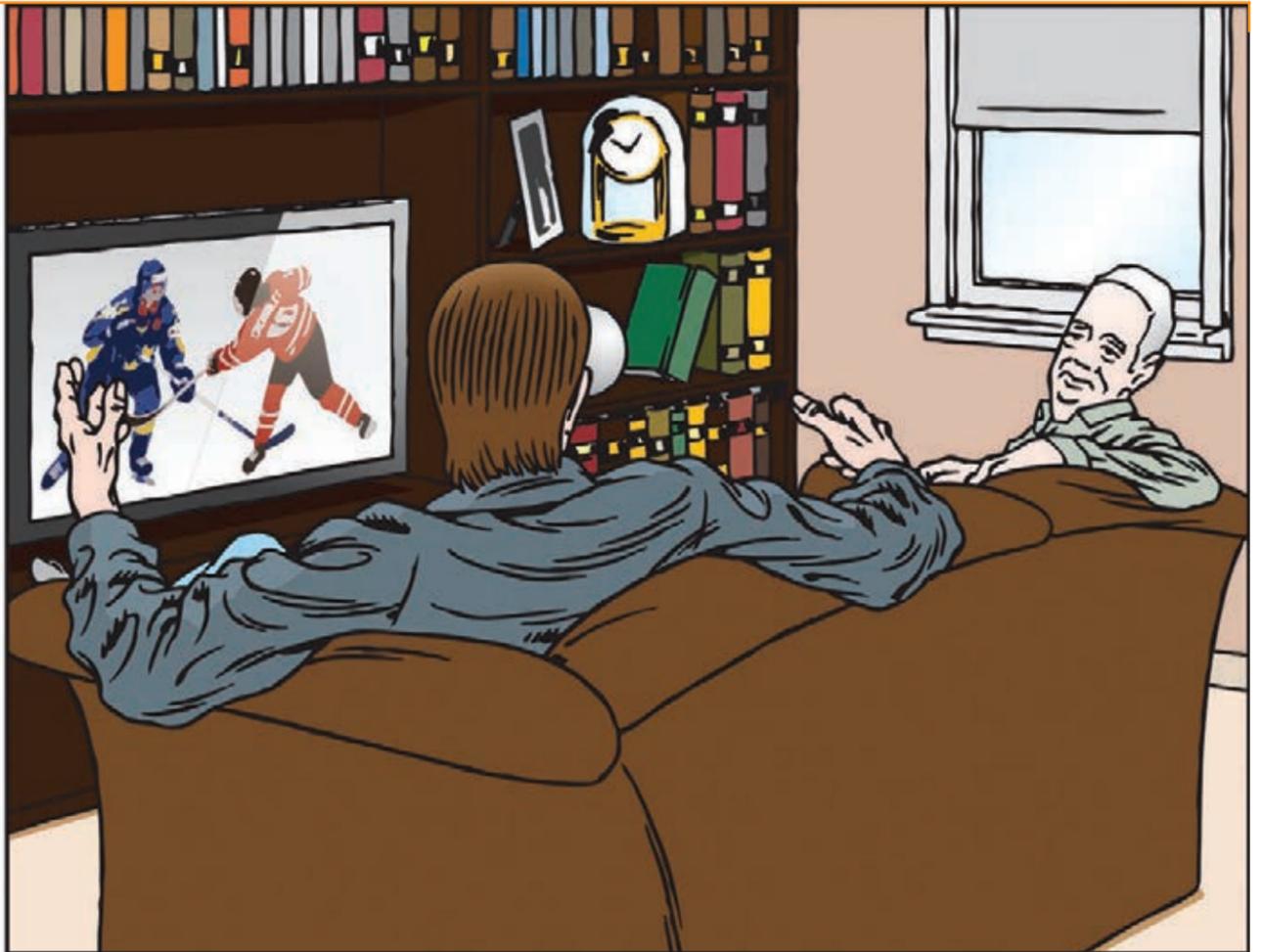
"Are you going to buy a house?"

"I've been thinking about it."

"That's wonderful," she said as if he'd just told them he was getting married or having a baby. "Now don't go buying anything for the inside of it. We've got all kinds of furniture in the basement and I can make whatever curtains or pillows you need."

"That's good to know mom, thanks."

"Don't get anything in the city," his father said.



Mark gets well soon

PART 3

"Why not?"

"You'll need a place to park your truck and if you're buying a house it doesn't make sense for you to rent a place for your truck. If you get something out in the country... say, outside Bradford or Stouffville, you'll be able to park your truck in your driveway and claim a lot of your household expenses on your tax returns."

Mark nodded, thankful to know there were kernels of wisdom amid all his father's bluster.

"Thanks, that's good advice."

"Just let us know when you want to start looking and we'll help you find a place."

Mark stared at his father for the longest time thinking that he'd like to take a look around by himself before he brought his parents into the mix. "Sure," he said. "I'll let you know."

That afternoon Mark called up Bud to find out where Mother Load was and when he could get back on the road.

"Hey Bud, it's Mark."

"Hi Mark. How are you?"

Mark was taken aback. No "Mark who?" or anything like that. Just a proper greeting from a friend. Something had to be wrong.

"What happened?" Mark said.

"What do you mean, what happened? Why do you think something happened?"

"C'mon, what is it?"

Bud sighed. "Your truck. Garth had a bit of an accident."

"How bad?"

"Not too bad. It was a fender-bender in a yard in Sherbrooke. Your truck was the only one with any damage and it's only a few grand to fix."

Mark said nothing.

"You're not sore are you?" A smile broke over Mark's face. "No. Why would I be angry?"

"Because I made you take on a replacement driver and I found him for you and he ended up banging up your truck wiping out all the money he made for you while you were recovering from your illness. That's why."

That was a fair summation of the situation, but it only made Mark laugh.

"What's so funny?"

"You don't know what this means, do you?"

"Um, that I need to do a better job screening drivers?"

"No," Mark said. "It means that I'm not just another truck driver. It means that I, Mark Dalton cannot be replaced by just anybody with a licence. It means that I matter."

"Oh, yeah, right," Bud said. "That's what I was going to say next." TW

- Mark Dalton returns next month in another adventure.

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

Illustration by Glenn McEvoy



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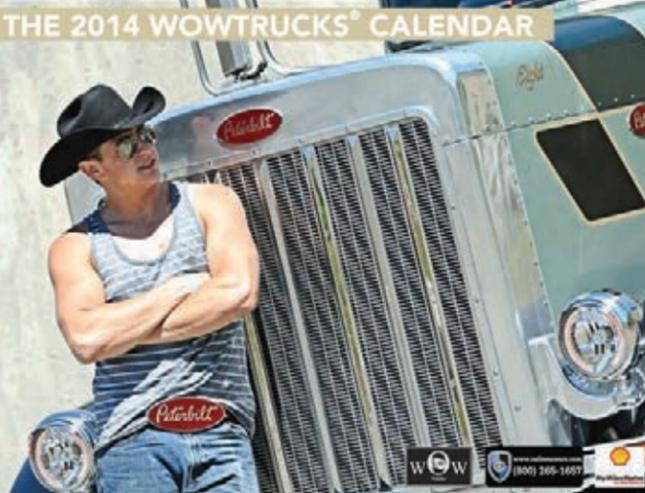


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JIM'S BRAYINGS



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...

Heckuva spring, eh? Well if that was what passes for spring I guess we've had it, at least here in southern Alberta - a couple of weeks of weather nice enough to melt the big pile of snow at the end of my driveway to a level where I can now toss the new snow on top of it without having to stand on a box.

Gotta love that global warming.

In memoriam...

First off this month, it's my sad duty to pass along the news of the passing of MaryAnne Arcand, a longtime industry figure who the B.C. Forest Safety Council called "a strong voice for safety" in their announcement of her death.

MaryAnne was having a rough 2014, and she passed away after a short illness. I spoke with her a few times this year and she told me she was struggling with pneumonia, which obviously either got worse or led to something even worse than that. It's a shame.

MaryAnne was not only the executive director of the Central Interior Logging Association, she was also a member of the BCFSC's board of directors and a former employee of the council. She was a champion of forest safety and had a positive impact on the lives of many of those she touched. As for my own experience with MaryAnne, who I had the pleasure of interviewing numerous times over the years I've been in this gig, I always found her professional, helpful, knowledgeable, and likeable.

Obviously, she will be missed, and on behalf of my colleagues here at *Truck West*, I'd like to extend our condolences to her family and friends.

Speaking of logging

From the Central Interior Logging Association's newsletter comes word that the current round of the FIRST Logger training program has wrapped up, with the final two students involved having headed out to the training site to kick off their Heavy Equipment Operator training.

FIRST Logger was designed as a way to help the forest harvesting industry combat its worker shortage and eligible participants were helped to get training first, followed by possible job placement assistance as well.

CILA proclaimed the program a great success and said they're hoping more government training dollars soon so they can keep providing trained workers to their sector. The program trained and helped place 51 heavy equipment operator graduates and 36 Class 1 drivers since its launch, all of whom now have jobs in the forestry sector.

Members and other interested parties (like you, the readers of this rant, er, column) are encouraged to help promote the program and, if you're in B.C., to tell your local MPs and MLAs how important it is to help supply much-needed skilled labour to the forest sector.

It sounds like a tremendous idea that deserves to be branching out. Hopefully the government won't leave a lack of funds as the root cause of its curtailment. And perhaps other sectors might get the seed of an idea for how to grow such a program in their own backyards?

Manitoba trucking update

The Manitoba Trucking Association held its 82nd Annual General Meeting on March 11. The meeting kicked off with an infrastructure update from the Honourable Steve Ashton (I never understood why politicians, of all people, are given that title!), who's the province's Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation. Guests then were treated to a presentation on Transportation Trends for 2014 by this year's keynote speaker, our own Lou Smyrlis, publisher and editorial director, trucking group of Transportation Media properties.

Yeah, that's my boss, a wonderful human being and probably the best speaker they could have chosen.

(What a suck-up, eh?)

Once the presentations were out of the way, the assembled multitude elected a new board of directors and executive committee. The (un)lucky

folk are:

- Greg Arndt, Jade Transport Ltd., (president)
 - Gary Arnold, Arnold Bros. Transport Ltd., (1st vice-president)
 - John Erik Albrechtsen, Paul's Hauling Ltd., (2nd vice-president)
 - Ed Dillon, Kleysen Group LP, (executive member at large)
 - Bernie Driedger, Portage Transport Inc., (executive member at large)
 - Doug Witt Gardewine Group Inc., (executive member at large)
 - Jas Brar, 4Tracks Ltd.
 - Ron Cram, Cheval Transport Ltd.
 - Bruce Danylchuk, E.B.D. Enterprises Inc.
 - Jason Dubois, Len Dubois Trucking
 - Darrin Fiske, Kleysen Group LP
 - Borden Hadley, Smooth Freight Ltd.
 - Tobi Hadley, Smooth Freight Ltd.
 - Kyle Harris, Harris Transport Ltd.
 - Scott Kinley, Gladstone Transfer
 - Derek Lachaine, TransX Limited
 - Marc Meyer, Meyer Bros. Trucking Ltd.
 - Rick Ottenbreit, Searcy Trucking
 - Jeff Odway, Prairie International Container & Dray Services Inc.
 - Doug Siemens, Siemens Transportation Group Inc.
 - Kevin Smal, Agri-Tel Transport
 - Dave Tyrchniewicz, Turk Enterprises Ltd.
 - Tom Van Dam, Big Freight Systems Inc.
 - Pauline Wiebe-Peters, Payne Transportation LP
 - Steve Zokvic, Bison Transport
- Congratulations to all you guys and/or gals! And good luck riding herd on the MTA. The organization also thanks this year's event sponsor, BFL Canada Insurance Services, as well as Norm Blagden of Searcy Trucking, who spent the past two years dedicating himself to serving as the MTA's president.

"Driving the Future"

I got this from the MTA's Laura LaPalme, but it doesn't apply specifically to Personitoba: Trucking HR Canada, the Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA) and provincial trucking associations have joined together in a project to establish benchmarks for

mandatory entry level driver training across Canada, an issue we've covered in these pages extensively - and will undoubtedly continue to cover, since it's a very big deal for the future of trucking.

The three-year project is being supported with \$1.2 million from Employment and Social Development Canada's Sectoral Initiatives Program and will be spearheaded by Trucking HR Canada. It'll kick off by "clearly defining the skills and abilities that today's carriers expect entry level drivers to have," and a related focus on more experienced drivers will take a step toward a national "apprenticeship-like" program. Once that's done, they'll outline the steps an entry-level driver needs to follow to get certified, stuff like what they need to know in written tests, performance standards for road tests, and "minimum requirements for experiences such as time behind the wheel." Sounds kind of like the stuff Richard Warnock of the AMTA outlined elsewhere in this issue.

According to Trucking HR Canada's CEO Angela Splinter, "this work will take us beyond the steps needed to earn a license" and she promises they'll identify clearly the skills and abilities drivers will be expected to demonstrate when hired. "This will guide the schools who develop training programs, make graduating drivers more employable, and better meet the trucking industry's needs," she said.

For more information contact Angela at 613-244-4800 or info@truckinghr.com.

Good luck! This has been a long time coming! **TW**

That's it for this month! And not that you're all dentists, but by now you know the drill: if you have an item you think your peers would find interesting or important, fire me off an e-mail to jim@transportationmedia.ca and I'll move Heaven and Earth to get it before those peers for you. Okay, I may not work quite that hard (one of the reasons I became a writer was so I could sit on my duff all day!), but I do promise to do my best to get your message out. Until then, have a great month and I'll "see" you next issue.



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