

TRUCK WEST

Western Canada's Trucking Newspaper Since 1989 • July 2013 Volume 24, Issue 7

Page 13 Taking a stand: Jeff Bryan Transport founder says industry must adopt e-logs, and before the US does.

Page 20 No sugar-coating: An Alberta Ministry official told AMTA not to expect weight increases or big spending.

Page 24 For the health of it: More fleets are implementing formal driver health and wellness programs.

Page 30 A new alternative: Volvo is launching a DME-fuelled truck it claims has advantages over nat-gas.

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Shelley Lothian was at a crossroads when she decided to embark on a career in trucking. She says she couldn't be happier with the decision and is looking to transition into a safety-related position.

Alberta's new training standard taking shape

By Jim Bray

CALGARY, Alta. - It's a chance for Alberta to lead the nation, and it just may help make the 'unskilled' career designation annoyance a thing of the past.

If nothing else, it's a first step.

That was the upshot from a presentation by outgoing Alberta Motor Transport Association (AMTA) president Dan Duckering who, aided by AMTA director of safety operations, Brian Bell, fielded a few questions on the association's attempt to help develop minimum commercial driving standards for the province of Alberta.

The topic was discussed during the AMTA's annual Management Conference in Banff, prompting several thoughtful questions from the floor. Bell kicked things off with a briefing on the situation to date, then opened the floor to questions from delegates.

Bell noted off the top there are actually two committees involved, one made up of industry stakeholders as well as an appropriately-named "steering" committee that consists, Bell said, of "industry-specific members as well as other affected industries that we have to consult with... such as oil and gas, busing, driving training, construction and forestry." He said there's also representation from Trucking HR Canada (formerly the CTHRC) and Alberta Transportation.

The initiative, Bell said, began with a Fall 2012, meeting between AMTA board members Duckering, Willie Hamel and Rob Eskins, executive director Don Wilson and Transportation Minister Ric McIver. "The minister asked for a proposal be given to him after consulting as many stakeholders as we possibly can," Bell said, "so we set out to do that."

Bell said the two committees are made up of about 60 people, and have already been at work. "They have discussed at great length the definition of commercial driver and currently we're kind of looking at the definition as defined by Transport Canada," he said. "We've looked at many different things and essentially, what we're trying to establish is mandatory training for commercial drivers."

The "mandatory" aspect is apparently quite a sore spot with some, but Bell and Duckering were quick to note that, while the standards may indeed be compulsory, most credible companies in Alberta are already doing most, if not all, of what may eventually be required.

"What we looked at was things that are already in existence," Bell pointed out, "so the driver would have to have a pre-trip

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Breaking stereotypes

Transport companies are tapping new sources for professionals. And their results are paying off.

By Jim Bray

EDMONTON, Alta. - A self-styled country girl, Shelley Lothian is also a woman in love with her job - and the trucking industry she chose to be part of - after a couple of earlier careers didn't work out. Lothian, 49, now calls Sherwood Park, Alta., home, but her story actually began in nearby Edmonton, which coincidentally is home to Park Paving, the company for whom she's been driving for the past couple of years. She actually grew up in Ardrossan, though, which is about 20 kilometres east of the Alberta capital, and spent time in Fort Saskatchewan before settling in the bedroom community she now calls home.

And while driving is clearly her passion now, her previous careers couldn't have been more different. Lothian used to work in the printing industry, but found it a tad "binding" when everything there got computerized, and that kind of drove her away. So she changed gears and entered a totally unrelated industry: food service.

Ironically, considering the lack of skilled designation for truck drivers, Lothian (who's single and has a grown daughter) got her Red Seal as a cook, and her gig evolved until she found herself working as a cake decorator, undoubtedly hoping that might put the icing on her career. It wasn't to be, however; after about five years this gig also ended.

"One day, I was putting a big carrot cake into a box and a tore all the TFCC's (triangular fibro cartilage complex) in my wrist, so I couldn't do that anymore," she told *Truck West*.

Lothian said the doctors operated on her right hand but they could only clean it up.

"They can't fix it," she said, "so I pretty much had to get a new career." And that's when she started driving, in this case school buses - a business that, like many in the industry, always seems to be picking up.

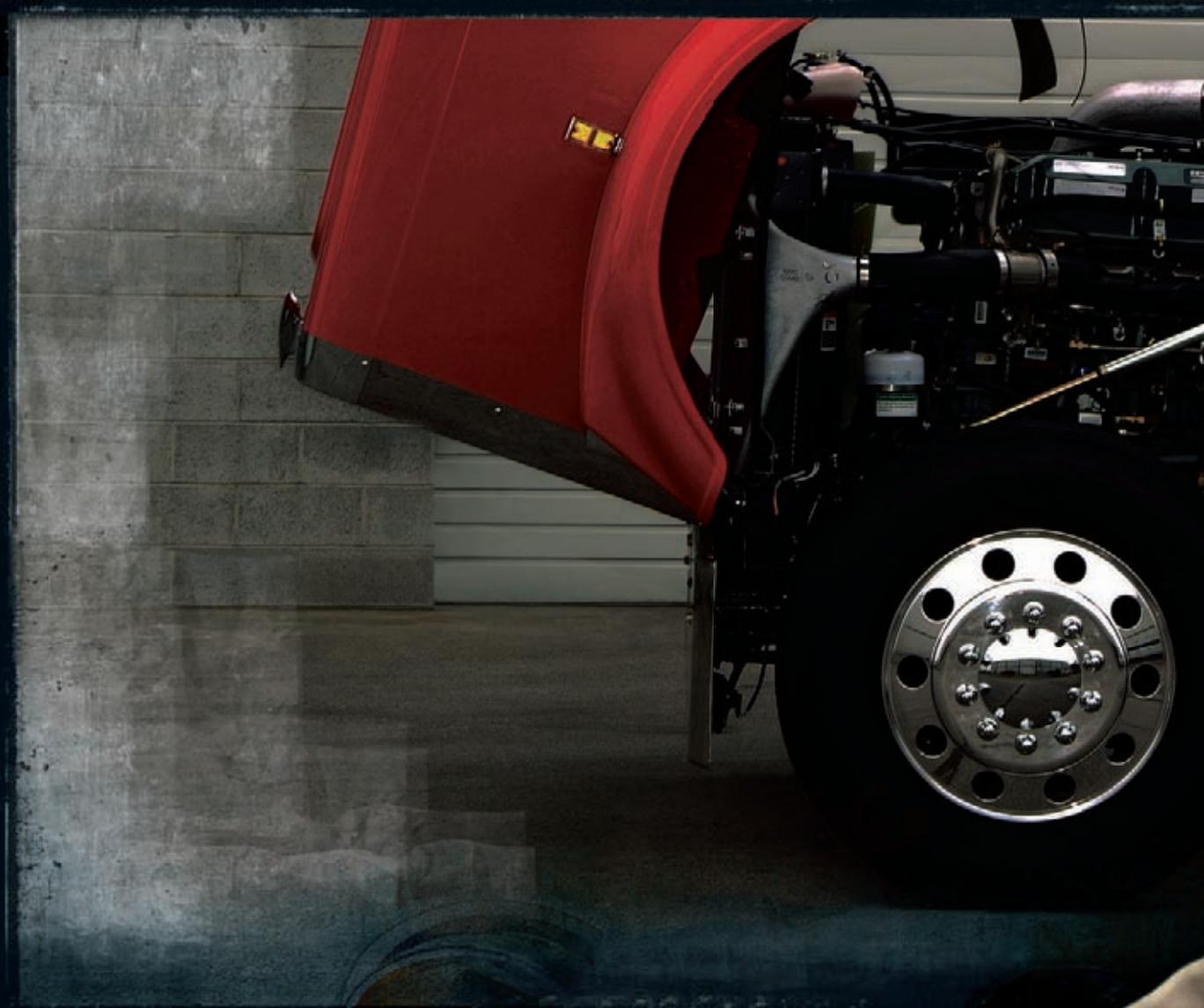
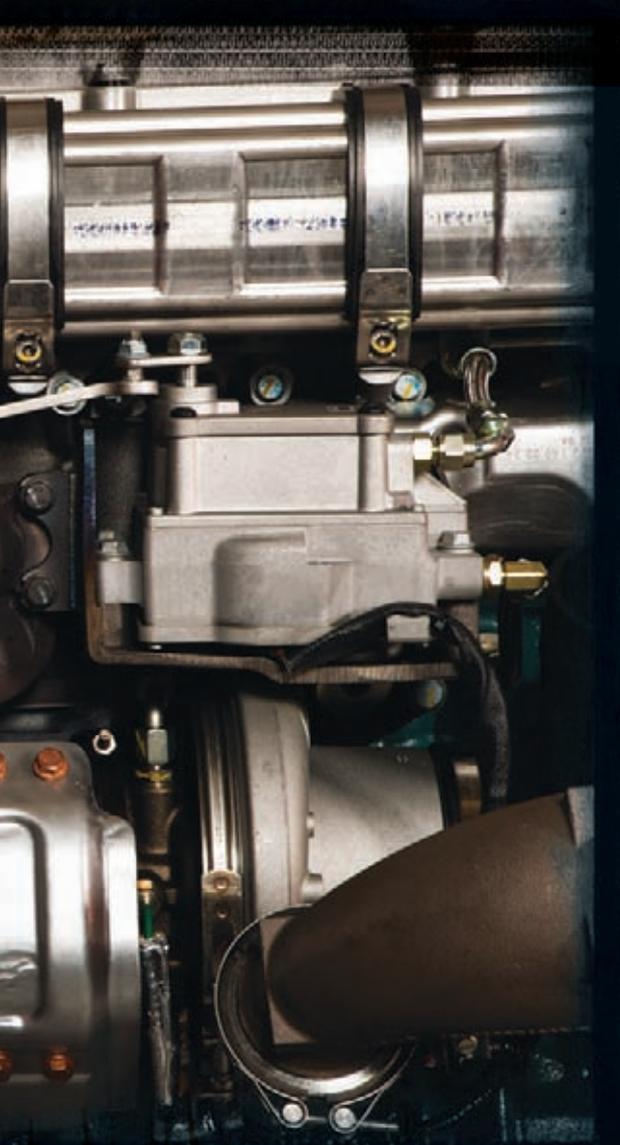
"I got my Class 2 to drive my school bus and I did that for about six months," she said, "and then a lady who drove one of the trucks for Park

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Careers: 7, 17, 19, 25, 27, 29, 33, 38

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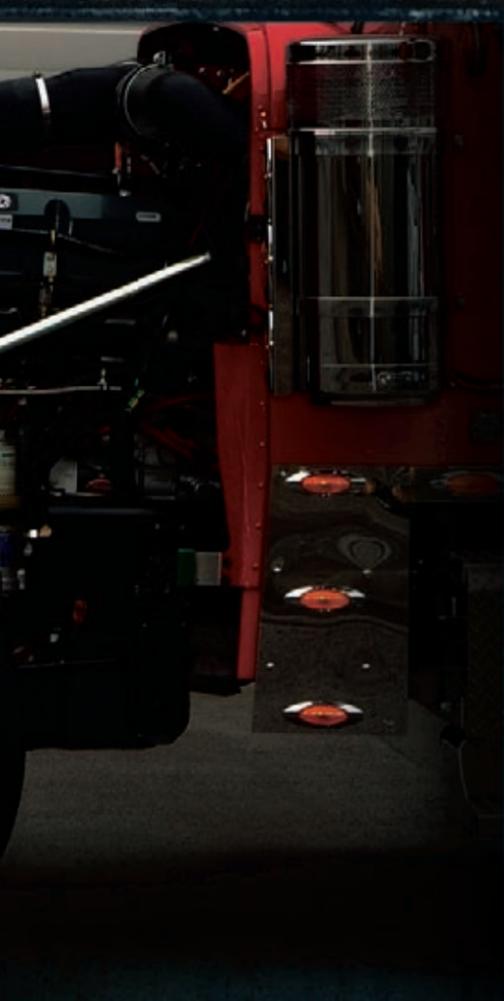


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CLASS 8 TRUCK SALES TRENDS

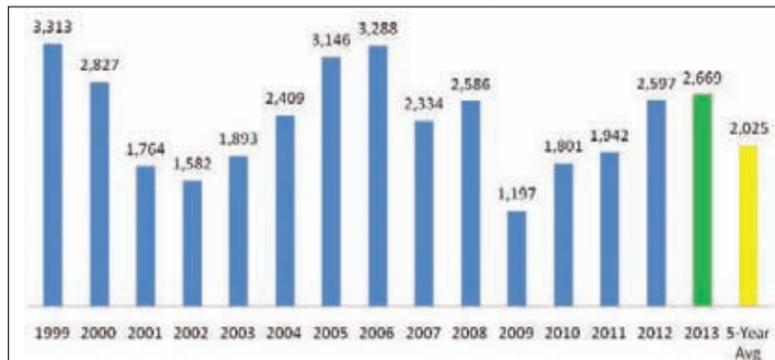
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Monthly Class 8 Sales – Apr 13

OEM	This Month	Last Year
Freightliner	744	556
International	344	400
Kenworth	449	550
Mack	187	228
Peterbilt	371	425
Volvo	384	273
Western Star	190	165
TOTALS	2669	2597

After a disappointing first quarter in which each month's totals trailed behind the previous year's, sales picked up in April to outdistance the sales for the same period in 2012. It was actually the first time in six months that has occurred. Sales were also more than 600 units above the five-year average for the month. Market leader Freightliner made impressive sales gains from the previous year. Western Star and Volvo also beat their monthly totals from the previous year.

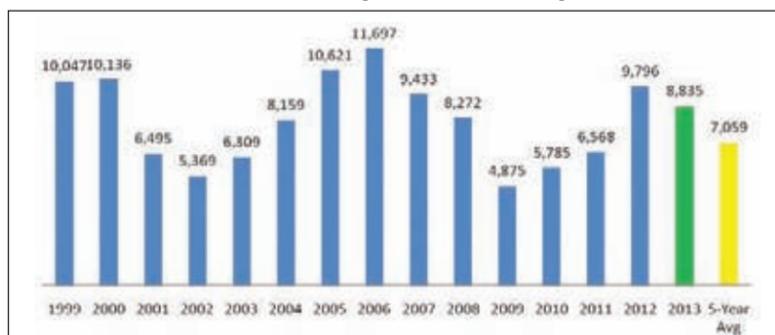
Historical Comparison – Apr 13 Sales



Class 8 Sales (YTD Apr 13) by Province and OEM

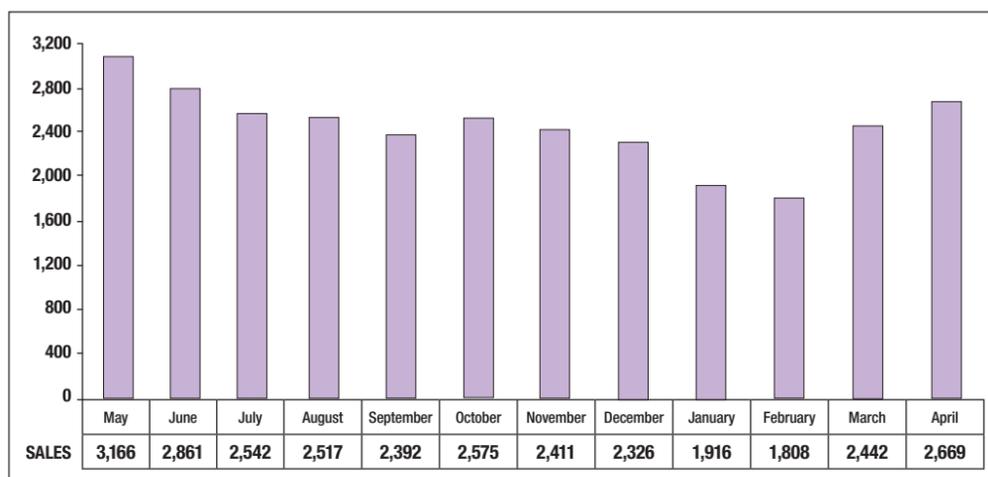
OEM	BC	ALTA	SASK	MAN	ONT	QUE	NB	NS	PEI	NF	CDA
Freightliner	213	278	57	130	1,067	423	109	44	2	12	2,335
Kenworth	335	615	139	41	255	297	50	0	0	0	1,732
Mack	57	118	52	30	205	108	25	13	0	3	611
International	46	237	20	50	535	312	38	11	16	11	1,276
Peterbilt	167	413	91	81	164	233	52	22	0	0	1,223
Volvo	109	68	35	63	403	215	37	31	0	2	963
Western Star	127	229	23	16	120	115	14	37	1	13	695
TOTALS	1,054	1,958	417	411	2,749	1,703	325	158	19	41	8,835

Historical Comparison – YTD Apr 13



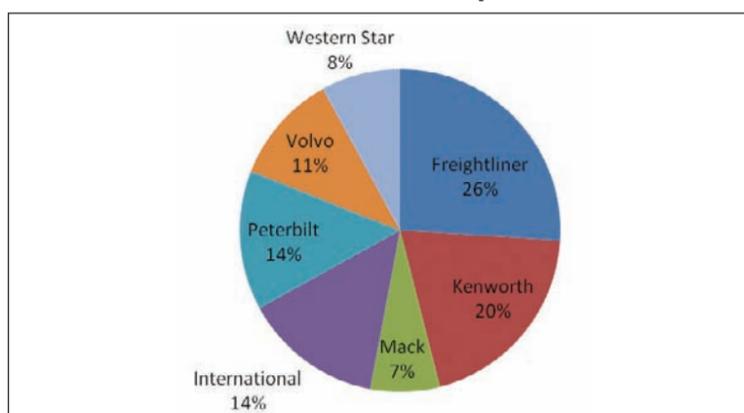
With sales YTD of 8,835 Class 8 trucks, 2013 is almost 1,000 units behind last year's pace but also about 1,800 units above the five-year average. Assuming an 8-year life cycle for Class 8 trucks (a truck could go through several owners during this period), there are more than 35,000 trucks due for renewal in 2013. But reaching such a sales milestone this year is only likely if we have a strong second half, as was the case in 2011. Over the past five years, YTD sales by April have averaged 31% of the annual total. So the most likely scenario is for Class 8 sales to come in around 28,500 vehicles in 2013.

12-Month Sales Trends



After 15 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 yet again in February. They did rebound to over the 2,000 mark, however, in March but were still behind last year's totals for the month. In April they stayed above the 2,000 mark and also surpassed the previous year's totals.

Market Share Class 8 – Apr 13 YTD



A strong April has kept Freightliner, last year's Canadian market leader, in firm command of the market share lead. Kenworth finished 2012 in the number two spot for market share, its wide western network tapping into the stronger western economy. The company still sits in second place with 20% market share. Navistar International finished the year with 15% market share and is now in a close tie with Peterbilt with a 14% share of the Canadian Class 8 market.

Source: Canadian Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association

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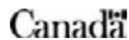
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Creating a healthy workplace

Editorial Comment

James Menzies



The secret is out among the best run trucking companies, that a formal health and wellness plan for drivers and other staff can deliver significant benefits to a carrier's operations. It has often been said that a healthy driver is a safe driver, and there's growing evidence that drivers prefer to work for companies that help them achieve a healthier lifestyle.

This point was hammered home at two separate seminars I attended over the past few weeks. At the Best Fleets to Drive For seminar in Toronto, CarriersEdge president Mark Murrell said virtually all the top-performing fleets in the competition have some form of health and wellness program available to drivers. This is a significant change from when the program started just five years ago, when the topic didn't appear on a single driver survey.

Just one day earlier, I attended the most recent Driving for Profit seminar, which featured a session on health and wellness programs. The session featured Trevor Kurtz, general manager of Brian Kurtz Trucking, Dave Dietrick, vice-president of human resources with Erb Group and Siphwe Baleka, driver fitness coach with Prime Inc. Their success stories were a source of inspiration for anyone who has struggled with attaining a healthy lifestyle and should also motivate fleet managers to take an active interest in the wellness of their drivers. Here are a few dos and don'ts that emerged from the information-

packed session:

Don't assume there's no interest: Kurtz admitted he approached the subject of driver health with some trepidation, unsure how drivers would react to the idea of a company-driven health and wellness program. He broached the subject of joining the Truckload Carriers Association's Weight Loss Showdown during a driver's meeting, and 20 drivers out of 100 immediately volunteered. Kurtz said he was pleasantly surprised at the interest level among the company's driving force and other staff. Even more drivers began showing an interest once they noticed the results of their peers, he pointed out.

Don't think it can't be done: We've all heard the excuses – legitimate excuses, to be sure – from drivers. There's no place to exercise, etc. Baleka has created an exercise program for drivers that takes just 15 minutes and can be done anywhere, any time. You don't need to run 10 miles a day to attain noticeable results, he said. And eating habits don't have to change drastically. For example, a footlong sub can be replaced with an equally fulfilling six-inch with double meat, effectively reducing your cab intake by half. Carbs are often to blame for weight gain. Carbs are energy, which if not burned off, are stored as fat.

Do provide the necessary tools: Some small investments by the fleet can go a long way towards helping drivers achieve their goals. Equipping truck cabs with fridges allows drivers

more options for eating healthy on the road and helps them to avoid the truck stop buffets. Installing bike racks on the cab provides another option for exercising while on the road. Kurtz even pays lumber fees to drivers who choose to handbomb their own freight for those loads that require handbombing.

Do provide ongoing support: Once a formalized health and wellness program has been initiated and drivers have begun reaching their weight-loss



goals, it's important to continue celebrating victories and keep the momentum going. Kurtz said that's one of the biggest lessons learned at Brian Kurtz Trucking. You don't want the success pictures on the bulletin board to get too dated and you don't want drivers reverting back to their old habits, so ensure the program is continuous to achieve lasting results. Kurtz recommends soliciting the help of an office cheerleader to provide ongoing support and motivation to drivers who take part. For many more tips, see pg. 24. **TW**

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Is natural gas a natural fit?

Is natural gas a natural fit to replace diesel as the fuel of choice in trucking? Skip back three decades to the early 80s and Canada was a pioneer in supporting the development of natural gas vehicle technologies.

But the infrastructure issues never got resolved, there were concerns about natural gas reserves, diesel prices were low and people stopped talking about natural gas by the mid-90s.

There are more than 16 million natural gas vehicles worldwide today but, despite the recent efforts of pioneers such as Robert and Bison Transport, you won't find many in Canada.

We are near the bottom of the list with less than 15,000 natural gas vehicles.

Well, as they say, what goes round comes around and natural gas is back in the spotlight as an alternative fuel.

The emergence of large shale gas reserves in both Canada and the US in recent years have been a game changer.

Now I've been accused of being a "tree hugger" more than once in my life and it's a badge I wear proudly. (If you don't believe clean air and water

The view with Lou

Lou Smyrlis



should be a priority, how can I take you seriously?)

Some of my fellow "tree huggers," however, are critical about natural gas exploration. But I am in favour of it. Why? Because in addition to being an environmentalist, I'm also a pragmatist.

Transportation is the second largest sector in Canada in terms of energy consumption and it accounted for more than a third of the spike in greenhouse gas emissions between 1990 and 2008.

By 2020, it's estimated the demand for energy from the transportation sector will increase by as much as 30%. While I don't believe natural gas is the ultimate solution for transportation, I do believe it's a step in the right direction. By using natural gas to power medium- and heavy-duty trucks in Canada we can reduce GHG

emissions by a quarter.

At the same time, natural gas is at least 30% less expensive right now than diesel with plenty of supply available to keep pricing steady, which answers the concern that what is environmentally friendly must also make economic sense.

There are legitimate concerns about the environmental impact of hydraulic fracking (the method by which natural gas is extracted from shale) but as CNN's Fared Zakaria, another tree hugger who is also a pragmatist, points out, the best studies show fracking can be done in a safe manner and most of the riskiest practices have been employed by a small number of lowest-cost producers. In other words, there is simply a need for sensible regulation.

And speaking of sensible, we must also hear more from engine manufacturers about their plans for LNG-powered vehicles, more from fuel producers about planned investments in a natural gas infrastructure and more from government about how and when they plan to tax natural gas. **TW**

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

BCTA partners with high school to develop professional driver training program

KAMLOOPS, B.C. – The B.C. Trucking Association (BCTA) has teamed up with the Kamloops/Thompson School District to help promote careers in the trucking industry to young people and to develop their skills for a career in trucking.

The partnership will result in the creation of a Professional Driver Training Program through NorKam Secondary School's new Trades Centre of Excellence. Grade 10 students will be able to enroll in the new program beginning in September 2014, the BCTA announced.

The program, dubbed the first of its kind in B.C., joins three other technical trades training programs at the NorKam Trades Centre of Excellence, which is currently in the design phase.

"Thanks to the vision of the Board of Education and senior administration, students with the interest and aptitude to pursue a career in trucking will have a head start in high school, mastering a curriculum endorsed by the industry, and they'll be job ready upon graduation," said Greg Howard, district principal, Trades N' Transitions.

Louise Yako, president and CEO of the BCTA, added: "Trucking companies across Canada are facing a shortage of from 25,000 to 30,000 professional drivers by 2020, largely due to retirements in the industry. BCTA has been aware of the shortage for some time, but the challenge was to find a way to engage youth and promote their interest and entry in the industry. We're extremely excited to be tak-

ing part in this program."

For its part, the BCTA will work with School District 73 to develop a training curriculum suitable for youth.

It will include introductory modules for Grades 10 and 11 students, followed by a full semester of driver training in Grade 12, including use of a simulator.

"Increased opportunities for all types of trades training are important for B.C. students," said Howard.

"By offering high school-level professional truck driver training at the Trades Centre of Excellence, we're making training more accessible and affordable for those who want a career in trucking. We're also meeting the needs of B.C.'s industry at the same time. It's a terrific opportunity for both." **TW**

Canada's youth not oblivious to opportunities in trucking: Report

OTTAWA, Ont. – Young people may not be as down on the trucking industry as many thought, according to new research conducted for Trucking HR Canada.

While today's youth are concerned about the prospect of long periods away from home, long work hours, poor working conditions and perceived safety risks in the trucking industry, the travel, independence, challenging work and steady employment opportunities do appeal to them.

This according to the report *Today's Youth, Tomorrow's Drivers: Attracting Canada's Youth to Opportunities in Trucking*.

The report was based on extensive focus groups, site visits, online surveys and interviews with high school students and educators.

Educators who took part noted students are concerned about extended time away from home and safety risks, but said they are aware of the ongoing need for labour.

The educators also expressed concern about low pay rates within the industry.

Other barriers as well were identified by the study.

It found today's youth are less passionate about cars and driving than previous generations, are less likely to have a driver's licence and likely to be inexperienced drivers into their early 20s.

Still, Trucking HR Canada found the study also offered reason for optimism, as many youth do recognize the availability of jobs within the industry.

"The researchers behind *Today's Youth, Tomorrow's Drivers* found that Canada's youth have a relatively positive view of the trucking industry, and are attracted by many of the benefits offered by industry careers," says Tamara Miller, Trucking HR Canada's director of programs and services.

"This data can be used to refine messages which target youth. A related analysis of school-to-work programs can also be used to guide initiatives that will build bridges between the school system and careers in trucking."

The report laid out several key recommendations, including: developing marketing materials and branding elements specifically targeting youth; identifying or creating entry-level career paths into driving occupations, so that youths aged 19-25 can find a role within the industry that may lead to driving careers; developing new industry-education partnerships; and using up-to-date National Occupational Standards, to review the opportunity for high schools and colleges to develop national driving-related curriculum.

To download the full report free of charge, visit www.truckinghr.com. Click Shop Now and then select Reports to find the full report. **TW**



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Best Fleets' surveys show drivers earning more on fewer miles

Change comes quickly in the trucking industry, and nowhere is that more evident than in the data collected through the Best Fleets to Drive For competition, conducted by the Truckload Carriers Association and CarriersEdge.

When the program was first started five years ago, CSA wasn't yet in effect and the word Facebook didn't appear on a single driver survey.

In 2013, the surveys collected from drivers and fleets show that CSA has changed how drivers are evaluated and, in some cases, compensated, and carriers that don't have a decent Facebook page employ drivers who wish they did. Mark Murrell, president of CarriersEdge, recently shared some data from the thousands of driver surveys and carrier interviews conducted under the program, which indicated working conditions are improving for both company drivers and owner/operators; at least those working for the best-placing fleets.

A case in point, company drivers working for the Top 20 Best Fleets have seen their income increase 10.42% since the first year of the program, while their miles have decreased 6.89%, meaning they're making more and driving less. As for owner/operators, they've seen their income increase 12.28% compared to five years ago while their miles driven has decreased 7.97%.

Meanwhile, the top-placing fleets in the competition seem to be improving their driver retention. In 2009, fleets in the Top 20 had an average score (measured across a variety of metrics) of 6.5, which represents turnover of about 45%. In 2013, the top fleets averaged a score of 8.027, representing annual turnover of about 30%.

US tonnage dips in April

ARLINGTON, Va. – US for-hire truck tonnage fell 0.2% in April, on the heels of a 0.9% gain in March, according to the latest data from the American Trucking Associations. The seasonally-adjusted index totaled 123.2 in April, compared to 123.5 in March. The highest ever recording was 124.3 in December 2011. Compared to April 2012, the seasonally-adjusted index was up 4.3%, marking the largest y-o-y gain since January. Year-to-date, compared to the same period in 2012, tonnage is up 4%.

"The slight drop in tonnage during April fit with trends from other industries that drive a significant amount of truck freight, such as manufacturing and housing," ATA chief economist Bob Costello said, noting that in April, compared with the previous month, factory output slipped 0.4% while housing starts plunged 16.5%. "After rising significantly late last year and in January of this year, truck tonnage has been bouncing around a narrow, but elevated band over the last three months. It is also worth noting that the year-over-year comparisons are much better than expected just a few months ago and I'm hearing good comments about freight so far in May." TW

Murrell said program coordinators also examined the safety records of the Top 20 fleets and found fleets scored 0.415 in 2009 and 0.307 in 2013 (based on DoT reportable accidents), representing another notable improvement.

"Among the best fleets over the last five years, pay is up, miles are down, they're safer fleets and they're seeing the benefit of that in terms of lower turnover among drivers," Murrell said. "It speaks to a couple of things; Fleets are continuing to improve, the best of the best are continuing to get better and it also speaks to the fact the bar is raised every year in the Best Fleets to Drive For program." For more information on the Best Fleets program, visit www.BestFleetsToDriveFor.com. TW

New US study shows heavy trucks safer than medium-duty trucks

ARLINGTON, Va. – A new report from the American Transportation Research Institute (ATRI) suggests that combining medium- and heavy-duty truck crash statistics drags down the true safety record of the US heavy truck fleet.

The study separated and evaluated a decade's worth of crashes for medium-duty and heavy-duty trucks, identifying notable crash trends for each vehicle population.

The analysis revealed noticeable differences in safety trends between the two vehicle types, with medium-duty trucks generally performing worse than heavy-duty trucks, ATRI reported.

"In order to continue to make progress in truck crash rates, we must improve our ability to target safety strategies across all segments of the industry," said Keith Klein, COO of Transport America. "This research will enhance our industry's ability to customize safety solutions."

"This research also points out that blending medium-duty crash statistics with heavy-duty crash statistics may unfairly drag down the safety gains made by heavy-duty truck fleets," added American Trucking Associations president and CEO Bill Graves. "When it comes to truck safety, clearly one-size solutions do not fit all scenarios."

The complete report can be downloaded from the agency's Web site at www.atri-online.org. TW

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Why Round 2 of the recession may be coming soon

Everybody remembers too well what trucking companies went through lately, specifically in 2008-2009. How many new enemies would I make by saying I feel strongly that the next wave of the economic slowdown is coming, and soon?

I have no scientific reasoning, just a strong gut feeling, prompted by the appearance of a lot of familiar trends. I've heard nothing but optimism from politicians. The housing market in the US is, apparently, ready to explode. Strange. Our company, and several others we deal with, haul mostly building materials, and none of us have noticed a residential housing-related upswing.

Any increases have been government-funded institutional or municipal buildings. Our company survived the recession by studying our own operation, carefully monitoring customer trends, and adjusting our own business accordingly. We didn't follow the pack mentality of some other companies, and made our own decisions, predictions, and evasive measures. What the market analysts were saying was often completely different than the reality we were witnessing.

At the beginning of the recession, I chose not to replace a departing owner/operator, and sold two trailers. I was initially branded a pessimist. A few months



Small Fleet, Big Attitude

Bill Cameron

later, I didn't have as many critics. I really didn't care either way. I usually consider pessimism to be more realistic than any other attitude. Something told me that what was happening was not going to be over quickly. Appropriate caution won the day. At the time, a lot of carriers combatted the reduction of southbound freight by greatly reducing rates, then increasing rates for northbound freight, sometimes to extremes.

I warned anybody who would listen that this was doomed behaviour. Canadian manufacturers and distributors had not budgeted for huge freight increases. The effects of these behaviours are starting to come home. Since March, northbound freight has quickly slowed down and rates have slipped, because Canadian manufacturers have either slowed down production because of the increased freight costs, or sourced their raw materials domestically. Higher freight may be all it took to equalize costs.

This puts some carriers in the unenviable and unsustainable situation of travelling both directions too cheaply. How

long can you survive in that situation, assuming you have even recovered from the initial shock of the recession? If you are still, as many are, just barely hanging on and waiting for the long-promised economic upturn, you're in deep trouble. There is a lot of old, tired equipment still running, waiting for economic improvement to pay for its replacement.

Lets add another bug in the ointment. Soon after this magazine hits the stands, the new US hours-of-service rules will become law. It has little or no effect on us 500-mile carriers, but how many older, experienced, dare I say unreplaceable drivers will consider it to be the final legislative straw on the proverbial camel's back? What happens to your cost of operation if your safe, qualified staff is replaced by lesser-quality drivers, if you can even find anybody at all to hire? The only hope small carriers have to replace staff is if, like five years ago, a rapid decrease in freight volumes sinks a number of large carriers, leaving some unemployed drivers.

Remember the start of the recession, when it became obvious that many large carriers relied on volumes, because of micro-thin profit margins? Volumes disappeared, and so did the less secure large carriers. Unfortunately, with an aging workforce, more drivers seem to take the demise of their employer as an opportunity to change not just jobs, but the

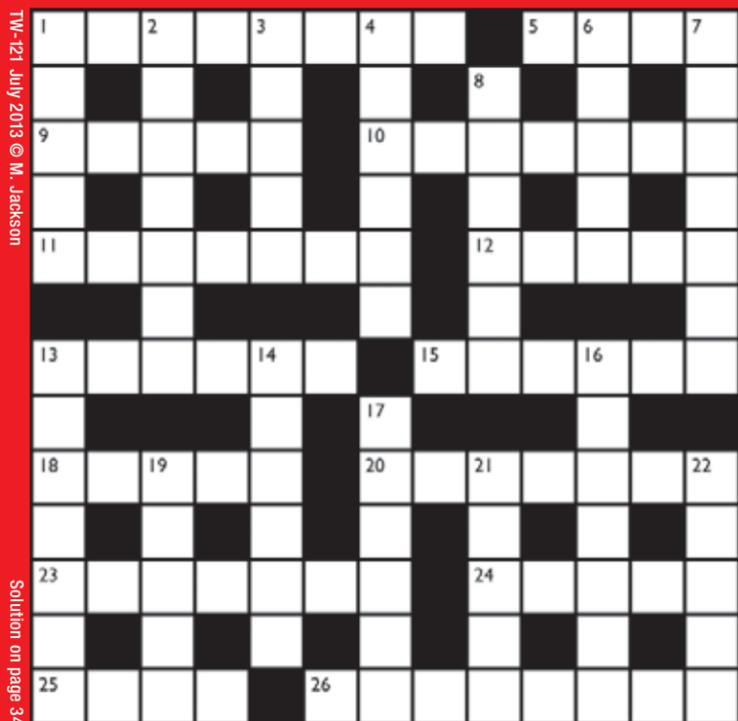
line of work they do, or they just retire.

Smaller shippers rarely have carriers under contract, because their requirements and destinations are not consistent. However, prior to the recession, they would use the same carriers all the time. The higher level of service and product familiarity was worth the added expense. At the beginning of the recession, some shippers utilized huge, multi-national load brokers in an effort to trim freight costs. These working relationships were rarely successful, so after the initial recessionary panic subsided, the brokers were often dumped, and the carriers had their jobs back. I've seen this trend toward the use of brokers emerge again lately. It is usually unsuccessful, and is therefore short-lived, but the fact that it is even being attempted again tells me that Canadian manufacturers are still not seeing the proper economic signs to encourage confidence.

So, am I crazy, or psychic? This is the one column I've written that would please me more than you can imagine, if a year from now I'm flooded with e-mails reminding me how wrong I was. Right now though, my gut is telling me it's gonna get ugly. **TW**

Bill Cameron and his wife Nancy currently own and operate Parks Transportation, a four-truck flatdeck trucking company.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



TW-121 July 2013 © M. Jackson

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Performance reviews enhance driver behaviours

Every driver's seat offers the promise of an open road, but it can still be an isolated workplace. Ask any long-haul trucker who leaves a fleet yard for weeks at a time, receiving little or no feedback other than e-mails, text messages and the words on a cab's satellite display. No news from the home office may even be seen as good news, especially when feedback is limited to reports about customer complaints.

But ongoing performance reviews and constructive feedback help to enhance the behaviours of every employee. While most companies have established annual performance reviews to discuss changes to compensation packages, those fleets that commit to quarterly reviews and other forms of regular feedback are in a better position to identify emerging problems before they become bad habits. It all helps reinforce the best behaviours that will prepare employees for success.

And it can be the difference between a corrected problem and a lost safety bonus. The tone of the regular feedback is just as important as the topic itself. I once worked with a major carrier that committed to offering four types of positive reinforcement for every single constructive criticism. This is the cornerstone of a process that supports behaviour-based safety principles, which applies the science of changing employee behaviours to solve real-world problems such as higher collision rates or poor fuel economy.

Positive feedback certainly makes a lasting impression. By encouraging a driver who is seen maintaining three points of contact while entering a cab, for example, a manager promotes the specific activity so it is repeated time and again. The same comments help to promote the organization's broader commitment to a safety-focused culture.

Changing behaviours through more formal feedback can be based on information collected through several sources. Electronic Control Modules and telematic systems deliver data that can identify everything from average speeds to the number of hard-braking events, which can help identify drivers who tend to speed or tailgate. But the comments from shippers and receivers can be equally valuable as long as fleets adopt processes to capture positive behaviours along with any complaints. After all, something seen as a broad problem may be confined to a relationship with a single customer, or involve challenges with a specific traffic lane rather than reflecting an overall approach to business.

Regardless of the topic, feedback that also reflects clearly defined behaviour benchmarks and expectations will be the most effective of all. Any expectation or goal has to be seen and understood before it can be achieved.

Of course, there are times when corrective action will be required. Mistakes are made. Collisions happen. But the information can still be delivered in a constructive context, complete with solutions, as part of the journey to lasting behavioural change.

Ask the Expert

Albert Zimbalatti



Berating a driver for being late, for example, is not enough. A better approach explores why schedules are not being met in the first place.

Drivers who play a role in establishing related solutions such as enhanced trip planning or support from a mentor will be more likely to see the corrective actions as a positive experience rather than a penalty. Some system-wide solutions designed to minimize risks may even involve personnel from other com-

pany departments.

The choice of a setting in which to offer this feedback is as important as the message itself. The best areas offer a safe environment where a driver can speak openly, such as an office that has a closed door, rather than opting for an open cafeteria or cubicle farm. Documents relating to the review can then be signed and accepted by the driver, demonstrating that the information was received, and offer a chance for everyone to add related comments.

Once added to a driver's file, the documents begin to offer a clear picture of how mindsets evolve from one review to the next.

And the formal process is only part of the equation. Ongoing discussions with

drivers can help to reinforce a positive safety culture as long as they involve more than a simple pat on the back or the generic comment of "good job." Specific examples which illustrate the positive or negative actions can be used to enhance performance and reach goals.

The ongoing reviews even play a role in driver recruiting and retention. Everyone wants to feel appreciated in the workplace, and happy drivers are always eager to spread positive messages about the corporate brand. It's just another example of the way ongoing feedback will support corporate goals. **TW**

Albert Zimbalatti is an executive risk services consultant for Northbridge Insurance.

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OTA chair on e-logs, technology, respecting drivers

Future is bright for small fleets that focus on what they're good at, Jeff Bryan says

By James Menzies

Don't let his age fool you. Barely in his 40s, Jeff Bryan, president and founder of Jeff Bryan Transport has been around the block. He leased his first truck at the age of 19, using it to haul pallets and topsoil across southwestern Ontario.

From there, he slowly built the fleet, negotiating finance deals with bankers on pay phones along his routes and hanging tarps on the sides of trailers over portable heaters to create make-shift shops where and when they were needed.

Bryan was featured in the popular How They Did It session at the most recent Driving for Profit seminar, moderated by *Truck West* editorial director Lou Smyrlis. The seminar series is hosted by NAL Insurance and sponsored by *Truck West*, Dalton Timmis Insurance and Daimler Truck Financial. Today, Jeff Bryan Transport operates about 50 power units and Bryan himself is chair of the Ontario Trucking Association (OTA).

Bryan told attendees at the Driving for Profit event that he has built his company as a cost-focused organization.

"I'm not a sales-focused business owner," he said. "I'm operations-focused. We manage our expenses and our operations and the sale will follow behind."

Among the changes Bryan has witnessed over the years is the evolution of the shipper-carrier relationship. It's still important to establish trust with the customer, but fancy dinners and late nights out are no longer required or expected, he noted.

"Relationships are different than they used to be," he said. "Spending time with (customers), even on the phone is necessary but you don't have to take them out for fancy dinners or to hockey games."

Bryan suggests doing your homework, determining what issues are troubling your clients and then bringing solutions to the table. "Look for things in their business that are causing them grief; that's an opportunity for you to capitalize on," he suggested.

Playing the antagonist, Smyrlis is pointed out that it's peculiar for a small fleet owner to head an organization that's perceived to primarily represent the interests of large carriers. Bryan said that perception is a myth, and that all 70 board members have an equal vote on industry issues, regardless of fleet size. He also pointed out the interests of carriers big and small are often aligned.

Take, for example, technology. Bryan said it's a myth that smaller carriers can't afford the latest safety systems and equipment and that not investing in them could prove more costly in the long run.

His fleet spec's automated transmissions, stability and collision mitigation systems and disc brakes. All those systems cost money, but Bryan said the benefits are real.

"How do you put a dollar figure on accidents you haven't had?" he asked. "We notice the front ends of our trucks are not getting banged up and the corners of our trucks aren't getting smashed up. You save a ton of money when you're not fixing a truck."

Bryan is also a big proponent of electronic logs and supports an industry-wide mandate that would require their use by all carriers.

"We want to be safe," he said. "We don't want our drivers driving over their hours, because we need to stay compliant and we don't want to see anybody get hurt."

Jeff Bryan Transport is using e-logs, but Bryan admitted it's frustrating when not all carriers are playing by the same set of rules. As an example, he spoke of a recent incident in which a truck sat waiting to be loaded at a customer dock until it was no longer legally possible to make the delivery on schedule. Within five minutes, he said, the customer found another carrier willing to meet the original delivery time.

"We could have done it too, but it was illegal," he said. "Electronic logs will fix that problem. It will make it

okay for everyone to be compliant and it will make it okay to tell the customer the truth."

Drivers stand to benefit as well, Bryan added. He said he'd like to eventually pay his drivers an hourly wage with the help of electronic on-board recorders, but it's difficult to do so when some companies are still exceeding legal driving limits.

"I want to go to e-logs and pay drivers by the hour for their driving time. That way, when the guy's in Drive, he's getting paid by the hour whether he's in a traffic jam or not. But we have to make sure we can financially do that in the environment we're in," Bryan said.

He said he's confident a mandate is coming and wants to see Canada develop its own rather than waiting to adopt the US standard. "We need to make sure we have the right plan for Canada," Bryan said.

He also would like to see more respect paid to professional drivers. Otherwise, Bryan said, there will continue to be a shortage of qualified drivers.

"It can be a thankless job," he admitted. "I understand that. A lot of times customers can be rigid and hard to deal with, the border can be difficult to deal with and they leave their family on Sunday and come home Fridays. It takes a special person to be a driver and that's why we have a hard

time finding guys."

Recognizing the profession as a skilled trade will result in better-trained drivers, will re-inject some pride into the workforce and ultimately will also drive increases in driver compensation, Bryan contended.

Asked about the future for small fleets, in an era of consolidation and high costs, Bryan said he remains bullish about the future.

"Not everybody is going to sell out to the large carriers and not every customer is going to want to hire large carriers," he responded. "Focus on what you're good at, be good at what you do and make sure you look after your customers and drivers. There is not one large carrier out there that wasn't a small carrier one day. People don't drop out of the sky with 5,000 trucks. There's lots of room in this marketplace for good carriers of all sizes."

Even if the economy ramps up and freight demand surges, Bryan said he'll be very cautious about adding capacity.

"It's really easy to borrow money when things are going good, and really difficult to pay it back when things are not so good," he said. "We're not going to grow without some good business backing behind it. We're not going to grow for the sake of growing. We're not counting the number of trucks and we're not counting top-line revenue." **TW**

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Incorporation: A tale of two circles

Whenever I'm asked to explain what a corporation is, I start by drawing two circles on my notepad. In one circle, I write the person's name, in the other, I write "corp." It's a simple way to illustrate the point that the individual and corporation are separate legal entities.

Maybe it's better to think of these circles as electrically charged wires that should never touch, or pools of chemicals that shouldn't mix. Because maintaining the distinction between the corporation and the individual is one of the biggest challenges an incorporated owner/operator will face.

Why incorporate?

Incorporation encapsulates all the financial and legal aspects of a business, walling them off from you, personally, and limiting your liability should the company go sour.

For example, a corporation can claim bankruptcy without requiring the owner to do the same himself. Of course, the opposite is also true: the owner can claim personal bankruptcy without it affecting the corporation.

As a separate entity, the corporation conducts the business transactions. It signs the contract with the carrier, load broker, or customers. It makes money, showing income from trucking and other services, and spends it, paying expenses incurred while running that business.

Money made by the company belongs to the company, not to you (remember the two circles). Likewise, the company can reimburse you for business expenses you pay on its behalf. But when you draw out money for personal use - let's call this "management wages" - it moves into your circle and becomes your income.

Tax planning

Incorporation brings the potential for tax savings. Again, think of those two circles.

The corporation pays tax on the money inside of its circle (bank account), and you pay tax on whatever money moves into your circle from the corporation. The company can expense your management wages just like it does fuel, maintenance, and insurance, deducting it from earned income.

After expenses, what's left inside the corporate circle is taxed at a corporate rate, which is a much smaller tax rate than we real people have to pay.

Think back to the client I wrote about last month, the single guy who nets \$80,000 after all of his expenses, but only spends \$30,000 personally. He lives in Ontario, where the tax rate for Ontario corporations is 15.5%. Individuals pay 25% tax on income over \$10,000 and our tax rates climb to 35% and higher as we earn more.

His tax calculation works like this:

Tax Talk

Scott Taylor



the company has \$80,000 in income after expenses and spends an additional \$30,000 on a management wage. The remaining \$50,000 net income is taxed at 15.5% in Ontario, for a corporate tax bill of \$7,750. If the owner/operator remained a sole proprietor, the \$50,000 would have been taxed at Ontario's personal tax rate and generated additional personal tax of \$16,600. By incorporating, he and

his business saved \$8,850 in taxes.

The best choice for you

For me to calculate potential income tax savings from incorporation, one of the biggest factors is how much money you need to run your home (mortgage payments, groceries, utilities, insurance, property taxes, and, of course, all the extras like clothes, haircuts, home maintenance, eating out, kids' sports, and other activities).

If there's nothing left in the corporate circle after you draw your management wage, the corporation would have no income left to be taxed at the lower rate. Your situation would be no

different than when you were a sole proprietor.

For many owner/operators, incorporation is a great way to maximize their earnings, reduce their tax obligation, and keep their business and personal finances separate. However, what works for one person may not apply to you. Talk to a qualified accountant to find out how to make the right choice. **TW**

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



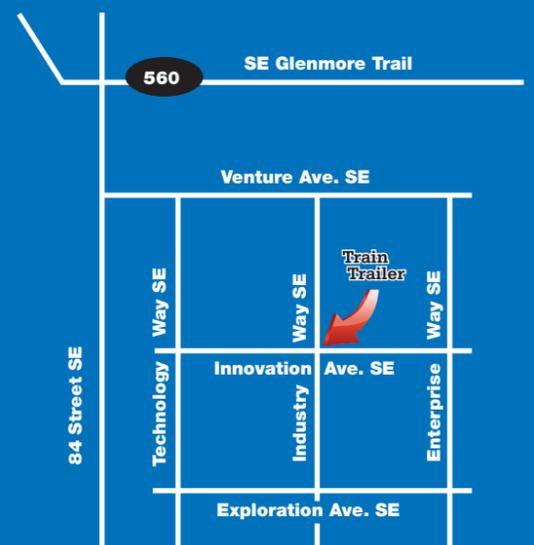
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Drivers need to actively participate in the rulemaking process

We're now into our sixth year since the amended Canadian hours-of-service regulations came into effect on Jan. 1, 2007. Remember

those heady days? I remember being impressed by the sleep research that had been done leading up to those changes.

I felt at the time they were much needed changes and they made a lot of sense. A driver would be able to operate based on their circadian rhythm and reduce fatigue by getting a better quality of sleep/rest. It was a good plan on paper.

But even though the intent was to benefit the driver, I can remember twisting myself in every direction that first year to accommodate the movement of freight.

It fell to drivers (and safety departments) to adapt the new rules to the existing business model. I can remember the general sentiment being, "Well, you can't expect shippers and receivers to change how they do business overnight. They're our customers after all."

As a consequence of how these rules were implemented, we drivers continue to love to hate them. The one-size-fits-all application doesn't work for all drivers. The rules often hinder the efficient use of a driver's time, which ends

Over the road

Al Goodhall



up adding to their level of fatigue. Is it fair to say we were victimized by a piece of legislation that was originally proposed to make life better and safer for the commercial driver and for the public we share the roads with?

I think it probably is. In fact, more and more drivers are endorsing the use of electronic on-board recorders to enforce these rules in order to bring the rest of the industry in line. Now this is only my opinion, based on my experience and feedback from other drivers – but I think it paints a fairly accurate picture.

So what happened? Why did we not benefit from all the years of research focused on the driver? Why do we continue to struggle with this legislation today? I think it is because of the lack of driver feedback at the planning stage.

For the last three years or so, I have been participating in a couple of transportation health and safety groups. I've been attending monthly meetings as much as I possibly can and offering a driver's perspective on the topics being

discussed. One thing quickly became obvious to me: I am often the only driver in the room.

So, when it comes to raising driver concerns about pending legislation or rule changes that affect them, drivers are often represented by proxy only, in the form of a company's safety and compliance department.

Despite the best effort and intentions of all the other parties involved in putting forward and implementing rules that affect drivers, those rules usually come up short in the eyes of the commercial driver.

There are over 300,000 active commercial drivers in Canada. That's a big number. With so much at stake, am I the only one who finds it unusual that drivers are grossly underrepresented when it comes to how they are governed?

How would the hours-of-service rules look today if drivers were represented in the planning stage in the same proportion they are represented in the industry? I think things would be different in a very positive way. But we'll never know. What a shame.

By being involved in the planning and implementation process, people usually take ownership of the final product, which helps to ensure a positive outcome. By standing apart

from the process, people tend to feel the final product has been foisted upon them. So it's not surprising that rules originally intended to empower drivers have left them feeling victimized.

So what is going to happen as the collection of data is expanded to in-cab monitoring? Is this the direction telematics is headed in? Is this how high-risk drivers will be identified as technology rolls out?

How will it affect the morale of the existing driver pool and does it matter to the next generation of drivers, or will monitoring technology simply not be a big deal to a new generation of drivers brought up living openly online?

I think it's very important to the industry as a whole that we find a way to include a high level of driver feedback about data collection. If drivers don't buy into this expanding technology that monitors their behaviour, it could present another roadblock in the recruiting and retention of professional drivers.

I don't have a ready-made solution to resolving this communication problem, but it is becoming more important than ever that drivers be involved in the planning process. If drivers truly want to feel like partners in the process rather than victims of circumstance, they need to step up and take a seat at the table. **TW**

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

Making better use of the drivers we have

First of all, I want to say hello to my first ever fan! I was in Regina waiting for a truck to pull off the dock so I could back in and get my load off. The driver of that truck, a

flat-top Lowmax Western Star from B.C. came over and said he was almost finished. On noticing my accent, he asked if I was the guy that had the magazine column and when I confirmed that, he told me that he enjoyed my column and to keep up the good work. So, I know that at least two people read this column – the other one is my mother!

Now to business; I want to continue with my theme of common sense in regards to the recruitment and retention of drivers. This subject has far-reaching consequences if we don't address the problems we face.

As I've mentioned before, money is not the real issue. I do believe we are all underpaid, but I also believe that even a doubling of rates and wages wouldn't have a major impact on the profits of the companies that we haul freight for. I also have enough common sense to realize that, no matter what I think, it will never happen as long as we have an apologetic attitude to what we do.

So we have to make changes to the way we do things, while at the same time, still doing the things we do. For

You say tomato I say tomahto

Mark Lee



starters, do we actually have a driver shortage? Trucking companies say we do, but I disagree.

We have 70 hours a week for work. Pre-trips, fuel-ups and checking in at shippers and receivers takes up, let's say, five of those, so that's 65 hours of driving time per week. At an easy to achieve average speed of 50 mph, a driver can make 13,000 miles in a four-week cycle. However this is trucking and there's always something, so let's drop that to 12,000 miles. Easy enough, don't you think?

So how is it that I constantly hear drivers complain that they can't get 10,000 miles in a month? Why do I hear drivers complain that they spend days waiting for a load? If there aren't enough miles to get the drivers we have working to capacity, why do we need more drivers?

There are a number of reasons; the drivers themselves could be all talk and no action. We all know drivers who do more miles at the lunch counter than they do behind the wheel. It could be that dispatch is not forward planning. It could be that the customer is making demands that put trucks

into the wrong places at the wrong times. Every one of these situations can be addressed without resorting to throwing more drivers at the problem.

In the current climate of a 'driver shortage,' drivers can get away with a bit more; something that would get a driver fired in quiet times will often be overlooked in busy times. Now as much as I campaign for the better treatment of drivers, at the end of the day a driver is in essence nothing more than part of the machine. We should all want the best machine possible, so underperforming drivers are a part of the problem and should not be tolerated.

Dispatchers are also part of the machine; if they're not doing their jobs properly it can have a massive impact on fleet availability. They need to be proactive in finding the next load, so that trucks are not sitting. The standard reply to that situation is that they won't take cheap freight, but sometimes that cheap freight is nowhere near as cheap as sitting for a day or two.

In areas that are notorious for low freight volumes, the sales department needs to step up to the plate. These areas need more products than they produce, so charge the job from pick-up to delivery and then on to an area where there is freight available, or partner up with a company that does have freight in that area and work out a reciprocal arrangement with that

carrier, or even factor in the deadhead back to an area that does have freight and charge accordingly.

The world has changed; our industry needs to take a long, hard look at itself and start making some changes. Quite often we still do things the way we used to back in the day. Well, it doesn't work that way anymore and we need to face up to that and deal with the problems we face. In times like these, there is a huge opportunity to really make some serious money and the companies that realize this and work out a way of taking advantage will go from strength to strength, while others will fall behind blaming the driver shortage for their lack of success.

The company I drive for has a philosophy, which I describe as: 'Traditional values, modern methods.' They now use this as their motto. The traditional values part of it means they are a very good company to drive for and the modern method part of it means that I don't sit around waiting for loads and I'm more than happy with my miles. We also don't have a driver shortage and that is definitely not a coincidence. **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. You can read his blog at www.brandttruck.com/blog.

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Alberta is hoping to set a new standard for entry-level drivers.

Photo by Wowtrucksalendar.com

A stronger standard

Continued from page 1

course, hours-of-service course, fatigue management, cargo securement, WY-MIS and/or Transportation of Dangerous Goods, weights and dimensions. These are all things that commercial drivers are already required to have on their file."

Ongoing learning appears to be a large focus of the committees as well, "so that commercial drivers are always maintaining the knowledge required to operate commercial vehicles effectively and safely," Bell said.

As for where things stand right now, Bell pointed out that "the committees have much more to discuss before a proposal can go to the Minister. We try to meet once every three weeks."

Duckering said the big thing for him "is for the committees to continue to meet" and noted they also need to start putting their members' thoughts down on paper, so "we can start to tweak it a little bit, because where we're at right now is, we've covered most of the basics in broad strokes and now it's just getting down to looking at other angles."

Duckering admitted the mandatory aspect of any new standards could be a stumbling block, one of a few he can see, and noted that at least one industry sector thinks the answer isn't to add more government regulation.

"One of the things the oil and gas people brought up was that this is all well and good but the industry should really be managing itself," he said. "We shouldn't have government involved every time we want something to happen."

It's mostly stuff the government wants to see already, anyway, Duckering pointed out. "When Alberta Transportation pulls a carrier profile or does an audit on a carrier, they're going to look for a majority of those courses in a driver's file already, so it really is mandatory," he said. "The difference is that right now we can have a lot of one- or two-truck operators, guys that... go and buy a truck that (maybe) no good anymore and hang their shingle out and then they can get a satisfactory unaudited safety profile. And that could potentially

go on for years. And we heard from the driving schools that these guys get audited and then say 'Hey, I need (this certification) and I need it now' and they're trying to kind of rush that process."

The AMTA past president also said that, by enacting a mandatory standard for commercial drivers, "this would formalize it a little more. When Commercial Vehicle Enforcement pull him over, we don't have to wait for a flag to go off before he gets audited; as soon as he gets pulled over they're going to look and see he doesn't have what he needs."

Duckering noted that he worries there may be drivers on the road who "don't have the training to even know the regulations they're required to operate under. There are rules they're required to abide by and they don't even know."

Duckering promised that for the large percentage of people who already follow the rules, "this should be a transparent, seamless change," though he also warned that "for the people who aren't, they're going to have to pull up their socks a little bit and I don't think that's bad for us."

The committees want any commercial driving standards to cover as many professional drivers as possible. "We're talking about commercial driver as defined by Transport Canada," Duckering said, "so Class 5 guys driving the straight truck or Class 3 guys would be affected. I strongly feel that this proposal needs to affect everyone that drives commercially, regardless of class."

Duckering noted that the committees had talked about taking one step at a time, starting with Class 1 drivers just to get the ball rolling, and he admitted that Alberta Transportation may very well decide it wants to phase in any new standards. He thinks all classes should be included, though, because "if you're a commercial driver, you should know the rules you operate under."

The fact that any new regulations may involve continuing education doesn't mean they'll come at the annoyance of experienced drivers being forced to take the same courses over and over again.

"What I think (continuing education) does is ensure they're continuing to grow as a professional driver," Duckering said. "The big thing for us is that, by continuing to have that continuing education/professional development component, it increases the driver quality all around."

To help ensure a lack of redundancy, Duckering said, they're hoping to have a mechanism in place so whatever training programs are already being offered by companies can be recognized – that drivers will come in at a basic level and then, as the driver continues a commercial driver career, "training can be siloed in many different ways specific to whatever he's doing. And that will be recognized for that; the big part is that he's continuing to grow."

One of Minister McIver's concerns, Duckering said, was that a driver can get a Class 1 under the current system and not do anything with it for 15 years, then apply for a Class 1 job and not be up to speed with current requirements and conditions.

Any new standards are hoped to be a step toward getting commercial driving considered as a skilled profession – the current lack of which has galled many in the industry for years. Duckering expressed his frustration at the feds and provinces passing the buck on the issue, with the feds saying that since there's no entry-level training required, the profession truly is unskilled in their opinion.

"I think a big thing for our federal carrier partners is that once we can start to point to our industry requiring training on entry, we potentially have the ability to affect change in some of those other

areas that have been struggles for a long while," Duckering said.

As for when that recognition might come, Duckering admitted he didn't know – but he thinks the proposed minimum standards could help push that recognition.

"What I can tell you is that every time we've met with (government), they've said 'Show us the entry-level training requirements and if you can't show us that, we can't change the unskilled designation.' If we can address that part, that takes that part of the argument away."

Duckering stressed that any new standards shouldn't be onerous to most credible carriers. "All of these things we're talking about aren't new for the majority of us," he said. "It's already happening voluntarily and to me that's why it's not a real big jump."

He also assured the audience that the committees are committed to making any transition as painless as possible. "We want to put forward a proposal that's as seamless as possible for all of the stakeholders, to take away as much of the pain as possible," he said.

The AMTA hopes to have its proposals ready for the Alberta government later this year, the idea – according to executive director Wilson, being "to see the province recognize commercial truck drivers with a special designation on their licence."

Wilson also noted that all Albertans will benefit from minimum commercial training standards for commercial drivers, because such standards "will enhance road safety across the board and make driving a more attractive occupation for career seekers." **TW**



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No sugar-coating from Alberta official

By Jim Bray

BANFF, Alta. – The Alberta government's new austerity initiatives mean the trucking industry shouldn't expect the province's highway challenges to be taken care of in the near future.

That was one of major takeaways from an address to the Alberta Motor Transport Association's 75th annual Management Conference, held in Banff. Speaking on behalf of Minister Ric McIver, director of transport engineering Kim Durdle outlined some of the challenges the industry can look forward to over the next few years, as well as how the province proposes to approach them.

Durdle's address wasn't all fiscal doom and gloom, however. She also noted the significant contributions the transport industry makes to Alberta's economy, noting that it's "one of the lifelines of this province," and that without it, the province's goods and services wouldn't move. "Albertans depend on our transportation network to get them to work, to school on time and to get them home safely and their products to and from market," she said, adding the government also realizes that "your industry depends on the transportation network to deliver the goods Albertans use every day."

It's a network that's getting a tad long in the tooth in places, however, and Durdle's sobering message was that the province's current lack of fiscal resour-

ces means it's not only going to be a while before all the roads are dragged into the 21st century, but that anyone hoping for such innovations as super-single tires to be allowed widely across the province shouldn't hold their breath, either.

"Budget 2013 is about responsible change," Durdle noted, saying that her department has made – and is prepared to continue making – the tough

its infrastructure plans. "Improving market access for Alberta and focusing on our core transportation system is an investment in our economic future. This benefits all Albertans regardless of where they live and is smart use of taxpayer dollars."

Looking in the rearview mirror to happier financial times, Durdle outlined some of what she referred to as

"significant investments in major new road projects in recent years," saying they've benefited the trucking industry. "In fact, we've invested nearly \$73 billion in transportation infrastructure in the past 15 years to build what Albertans need and support the economic growth and quality of life we enjoy."

That, of course, was then. "Unfortunately, you're not going to see that level of activity both in new construction and rehabilitation in the next few years," Durdle warned, noting that "the Department has had to make some pretty difficult decisions. However, we will maintain our core programs for municipalities and for safety and continue to improve market access for Alberta."

Durdle said it's important for the industry to understand that despite any belt-tightening, the province will still be investing more than \$9 billion dollars over the next three years, \$6 billion of which will go toward "capital plan commitments" that include new and continuing construction and highway rehabilitation projects.

"We're also putting \$3.3 billion into operating investments for highway and bridge maintenance and preservation and transportation safety programs," she noted, claiming that the province is investing 1.4 billion loonies into the provincial highway network this year alone "which has far-reaching, long-term benefits for all Albertans. And we will continue to partner with municipalities to invest in roads, bridges, public transit and water and waste water infrastructure."

Over the next few years, Durdle said, projects like Hwy. 63 (the twinning of the route to Fort McMurray), Stoney Trail and Anthony Henday (Calgary's and Edmonton's ring roads, respectively) and the Canamex Corridor will be completed. None of these projects are new, however, but Durdle did promise that the province will also incorporate new technologies and better designs to "improve efficiencies, reduce operational and maintenance costs, and improve how our transportation network serves Albertans."

Whatever does manage to get funded going forward, the current financial reality is that "for the next few years, we won't have the luxury of being able to do all the projects we'd like to see done," Durdle said. On the other hand, tight money could force creativity, in that it "gives us the opportunities to take a good look at what we currently have and what we will need in order to support Albertans in the future." Durdle promised that the province will work with its industry partners to find innovation and "take

those ideas forward where they make sense. We'll be looking at how we can do things better, more efficiently, effectively, smarter and always with the focus on public safety."

Durdle also touched on issues such as alternative fuels and the driver shortage. "We're working with you on alternative fuels, which will give you some economies of scale," she promised, saying that while "Alberta Transportation supports the use of compressed and liquefied natural gas as alternative fuels," any conversions will have to be done in accordance with the Canadian Standards Association's principles.

Shifting gears to the overall topic of vehicle weights, Durdle had some potentially bad news for the industry.

"We will not be permitting additional gross vehicle weight because of the need to protect our infrastructure from heavy loads," she said, citing Alberta's aging road system and bridge limitations on some primary routes. "They have a weight limit design of 55,000 kgs, and of course our current maximum is 62,500 kgs," she explained, "so already our current loads exceed bridge capacities in a number of areas."

Durdle also poured cold water on the "super-single" tire issue.

"We're still looking at the damage," she said. "We're concerned about the increased wear and tear and increased damage to the road surface from the wide-base single tires. We can't put more stress on roads than they can handle."

One of the industry's biggest concerns is the shortage of drivers, and Durdle promised the province will continue to work with the industry to help address it.

"We're also working with (Alberta) Enterprise and Advanced Education to ensure that (we can facilitate the move of) any new drivers coming into the province or from out of the country," she said, "and we're looking to industry to support that program."

Durdle had kudos for the work the AMTA has begun on developing commercial driver training standards, but noted that, while the province is interested in professional driver status, "It's not on our regular radar now...it's something that will have to be done at the national level."

As far as electronic on-board recorders are concerned, Durdle said the province thinks they should be industry-driven rather than government-mandated, and promised that Alberta will work with "national and international groups to come up with broad standards that we will encourage, as opposed to legislating in that area."

The province is also against mandating speed limiters. Durdle claimed they would add to safety concerns on two-lane, undivided highways "because trucks move slower than the posted maximum speed. We feel that other motorists will be waiting to pass them and this does nothing but create an unsafe situation."

Durdle closed her remarks by mentioning the province's new 511 Traveler Information Service, launched in February as Alberta's official provincial road report service. Accessible by phone, mobile device or computer, the 511 system replaces the Alberta Motor Association's road reports.

Motorists can access the system 24 hours a day to learn more about the road and weather conditions. **TW**

'We will not be permitting additional gross vehicle weight,'

Kim Durdle, Alta. Transportation

decisions necessary. "In the next three years, we'll focus on protecting our valuable investments in infrastructure, smart spending and innovation, connecting Alberta to international markets and increasing safety on provincial highways."

That means the province will make "wise, planned investments and borrow when it makes sense to continue building the province," Durdle said, in reference to the Redford government's decision to pile up more debt to pay for

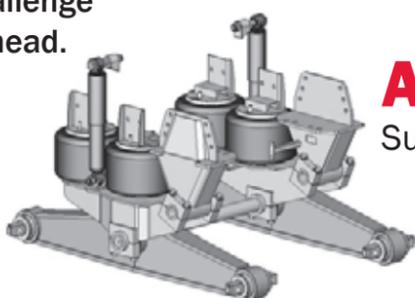


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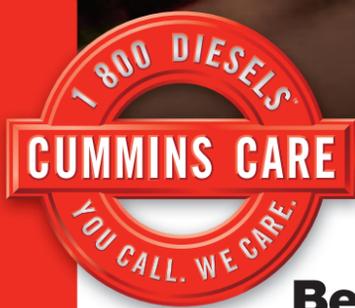


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10 Largest Border Crossings for Trucks (volume in million movements)

1 Windsor-Ambassador Bridge, Ont.
2.57

2 Sarnia-Blue Water Bridge, Ont.
1.56

3 Fort Erie-Peace Bridge, Ont.
1.21

4 Pacific Highway/Douglas, B.C.
0.74

5 Niagara Falls-Queeston Bridge, Ont.
0.70

6 Lacolle, Que.
0.60

7 Emerson, Man.
0.36

8 Lansdowne, Ont.
0.33

9 Coutts, Alta.
0.31

10 North Portal, Sask.
0.19

National Highway System in Western Canada (kilometres)

	Core routes	Feeder routes	Northern/remote routes	Total
Manitoba	982	742	368	2,092
Saskatchewan	2,432	—	238	2,671
Alberta	3,994	216	197	4,406
British Columbia	5,855	447	724	7,026
Canada	27,601	4,492	5,917	38,010

Length of Public Road Network in Western Canada (two-lane equivalent thousand km)

	Paved	Unpaved	Total	Share of Total
Manitoba	19.3	67.3	86.6	8.3%
Saskatchewan	29.5	198.7	228.2	21.9%
Alberta	61.7	164.6	226.3	21.7%
British Columbia	48.2	22.9	71.1	6.8%
Canada	415.6	626.7	1,043.30	100%

Medium- & Heavy-Duty Truck Statistics - Western Canada

	Medium-Duty Vehicles (thousands)	Heavy-Duty Vehicles (thousands)	Medium-Duty Vehicle km (millions)	Heavy-Duty Vehicle km (millions)
Manitoba	11.2	17.3	160	1,529
Saskatchewan	38.9	30.9	529	1,224
Alberta	131.4	87.4	2,617	5,421
British Columbia	96.3	16.7	1,891	585
Canada	438	317.2	8,294	21,417

It's an unfortunate reality in Canada that unless roads and bridges are completely crumbling, it has proven difficult to make infrastructure spending a priority. When the business outlook is strong but future economic expansion is dependent on efficient transportation, this is a reality that is particularly hard to swallow. Addressing gaps in infrastructure spending is particularly important in Western Canada where the economy has been much stronger than the rest of the country and so requires an infrastructure that can measure up. Is it?

Western Canada accounts for 48% of the heavy-duty vehicles in the

country, almost 60% of the nation's public road network (two-lane equivalents) and 43% of the national highway system, as shown above from data gleaned from Transport Canada's annual Transportation in Canada report. Yet Western Canada also tends to have harsher winters and hotter summers, which wreak havoc on roads and it allows heavier weights in many respects. There are also northern communities which are requiring increasing investments in infrastructure as they look to seize the opportunities presented by mining and energy exploration and development as well as to address population growth. In many cases however, provincial

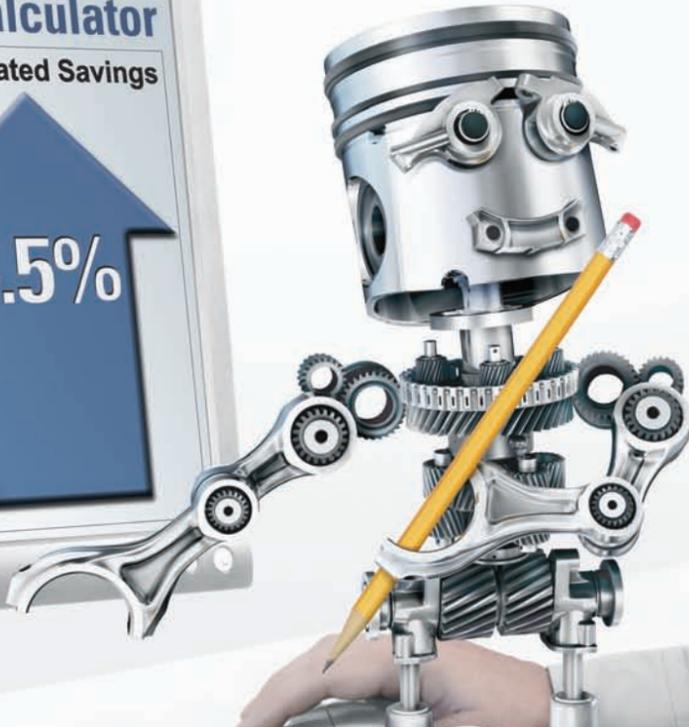
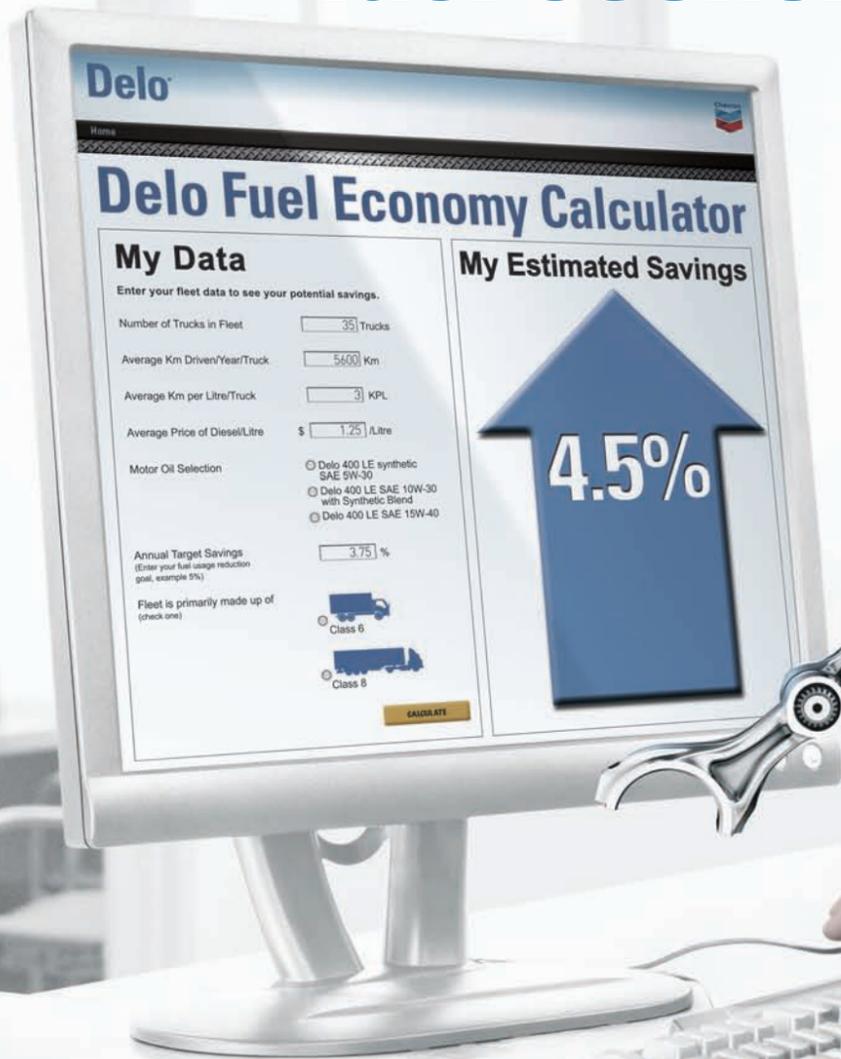
governments are struggling to keep up even with maintaining the status quo. Even in Manitoba, where the government has committed \$4 billion over 10 years to infrastructure, it may not be enough to address the damage caused by years of neglect. As the Manitoba Trucking Association's Bob Dolyniuk points out, Manitoba has somewhere between 3,000 and 4,000 bridges with hundreds if not thousands of those bridges reaching the end of their life span. Yet some of them haven't been inspected in over a decade and the longer you allow something to deteriorate the more it costs to repair it or you may get to the point where you have to tear it down and start all over again. **TW**



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For the health of it

Progressive carriers are seeing the benefits of offering drivers and office staff a formal health and wellness program.

By James Menzies

Siphiwe Baleka was a world-class athlete before deciding to embark on a career as a professional driver with Prime Inc.

"I'd never been overweight," he recalled, when speaking at a recent Driving for Profit seminar on health and wellness. "I put on 15 pounds in the first two months. I got scared. I realized if I didn't take responsibility for my health, I was going to end up like the statistics say: overweight."

Baleka began developing a health and fitness plan specifically designed for professional drivers like himself, reflecting all the challenges drivers face, including an inconsistent schedule and nomadic lifestyle.

"I had to figure out what was the most effective, least time-consuming way to stay in shape on the road. I spent three years developing a program that any truck driver could do. I'm not asking you to grill asparagus in your truck," he said.

Baleka's fitness regimen can be done in as little as 15 minutes per day. Prime drivers are given a DVD outlining the workout and are also offered the opportunity to participate in a 13-week health and wellness program that teaches them how to exercise and eat well while on the road. There's a \$300 cost for the program, which drivers pay up-front and is reimbursed by the company upon completion.

The program, said Baleka, was built with the realization that drivers wouldn't be prepared to radically adjust their eating habits. For example, drivers who like to eat a footlong

sub are advised to order a six-inch with double the meat; it's just as filling with half the carbs. Carbohydrates are a major culprit in weight gain for truckers, Baleka said. Carbs are energy, which if not burned off immediately is stored as fat, leading to "trucker gut."

The best approach to healthy eating is to start with a breakfast and eat small portions of high-protein foods frequently throughout the day, Baleka said. Avoid carbs whenever possible unless you'll be exercising soon after.

Truck drivers are predisposed to gain weight because of the nature of their jobs, Baleka noted. A sedentary lifestyle causes hormonal changes that disrupt the body's ability to regulate hunger, meaning drivers often

the driver population ages, progressive carriers realize they need to help their drivers stay healthy. Asked why companies should take an interest in the health of their workers, Dave Dietrick, vice-president of human resources with Erb Group said simply: "It's the right thing to do. We have to be involved. We have to provide programs for them to become healthier."

Erb has had an employee health and wellness plan for nearly five years, which started after company founder Vernon Erb suffered a heart attack and began discussing driver health with hospital staff during his stay at St. Mary's Hospital. Upon his release, Erb partnered with the hospital to develop an employee health program.

Brian Kurtz Trucking became proactive about driver health when the Truckload Carriers Association announced its first Weight Loss Showdown. The program involved support from the Lindora Clinic, which provided a weight loss blueprint and then gave personal advice and support to drivers and office staff who participated in the 10-week challenge.

General manager Trevor Kurtz admitted he was initially wary of broaching the subject with drivers, unsure of how they'd react.

"I wasn't sure how it would be received," he said. "I threw it out there during a driver meeting. There were 100 guys sitting there and more than 20 put their hands up right away; some guys I didn't expect. They knew we cared and there was an overwhelming response."

Interest in the TCA Weight Loss

'I'm not asking you to grill asparagus in your truck.'

Siphiwe Baleka, Prime Inc.

feel hungry all the time or never, with both scenarios leading to overeating and, ultimately, weight gain.

"The average person will say (truckers) eat too much and are lazy," he said. "That's not true. There are biochemical and hormonal changes as a result of the occupation they are not even aware of."

In the US and Canada, more carriers are beginning to offer health and wellness programs for their drivers. As

Showdown was so high, that Kurtz formed two teams of 10: an official team that took part in the competition and another that participated internally. Brian Kurtz Trucking ensured the drivers had the tools necessary to succeed, including fridges in all the trucks.

"Every truck has a fridge in it and our guys fill the fridge before they leave. We have to cross the border, so that became a hurdle we had to work on. They'd leave a little earlier so they could stop at a grocery store when they cross the border and fill their fridge," Kurtz said. The competition built camaraderie among drivers and before long, Kurtz said, they could be heard at the terminal comparing shopping spots along their routes.

It's also possible to eat healthy at truck stops and restaurants, Kurtz noted.

"It's picking healthy choices," he said. "There's always something on the menu that's going to be good for you. If you ask them not to deep-fry the chicken breast, they don't have to."

Erb is currently compiling a healthy cookbook of recipes that can be prepared before or during a trip. Those 150 recipes are now being evaluated by a team of University of Guelph nutritionists, who'll rate their nutritional value.

"It provides them with some options," Dietrick said. "Our goal is to have that out to all employees this year, so they can make those recipes to take out on the road."

Baleka said drivers are advised to eat breakfast, and small meals every three hours when driving, which may seem counter-intuitive. But Kurtz and Dietrick said they've both followed the advice themselves and found it worked, eliminating late-evening food cravings. Eating well is important, but so too is exercising. In developing his workout regimen, Baleka said he realized it had to be fast and simple if truckers were to buy in.

"The further you have to go from your truck, the less likely you will be to work out," he acknowledged. "The longer it takes to clean up afterwards, the less likely you'll be to work out. And it can't be the kind of thing where you have to do it every day at 7 o'clock. I learned you can get the benefit of a one-hour workout in 15 minutes. Fifteen minutes is long enough to be effective for weight loss, but short enough and portable so you can fit it in anywhere, anytime. As a driver, you don't know when you'll have time, but you know you'll have time."

The 15-minute workout is vigorous, Baleka admitted, and Kurtz pointed out the word "vigorous" has different meanings to different drivers.

"Vigorous for one guy may be walking from the back of the truck stop parking lot to the front. We have guys who, by the time they've hooked up and done a circle check, you'd think they'd run a marathon. As long as they pick it up week by week - park a little further away, walk a little faster, walk around the truck a few more times," Kurtz said.

The company also encourages drivers to get in shape by paying lumper fees to the drivers themselves if they choose to handbomb their own freight.

Equally important is to have a "cheerleader" in the office to offer support and encouragement. Kurtz keeps



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Park at far end of the parking lot and walk

Do laps around the truck on breaks

Exercise vigorously at least 15 minutes a day

Keep truck fridge packed with healthy choices



WHAT FLEETS CAN DO

Encourage participation

Celebrate, recognize achievements

Install bike racks on trucks upon request

Equip trucks with fridges

Provide incentives

Solicit an office "cheerleader" to provide support

Pay lump sum fees to drivers who handbomb own freight

Work with local schools, hospitals to develop exercise/nutrition programs

Extend program to office staff, drivers' families

a scale by the door. When drivers who are participating in a weight loss program return to the terminal, they hop on the scale and their results are entered into a spreadsheet.

Dietrick said getting drivers' families involved is also important. Erb offers the programs to drivers' families and Brian Kurtz Trucking sends home information packages for family members. Fleets also can help out by ensuring the necessary tools are available. Kurtz said his company has installed bike racks on some drivers' trucks. Prime offers foldable bikes that can be carried in the cab and encourages drivers to log their miles using a smartphone app. Some of the most avid cyclists in the fleet have biked close to 350 miles in a single month during their travels, Baleka said.

Once a health and wellness program has been initiated, Kurtz said it's important to keep the program going. Continue to celebrate achievements well after any formal program has concluded, he stressed.

"You've gotta stay on top of it," he said. "A big mistake we learned is when the program runs out, you need somebody to keep it going."

At Christmas time, Kurtz said drivers who kept the weight off that they lost through the formal TCA program were given monetary rewards.

If you don't know where to start in developing a wellness program, Dietrick suggested turning to local experts at nearby colleges, universities and hospitals. Often, student groups will be available to provide expertise and guidance at no cost.

All three panelists at the Driving for Profit seminar said they've seen many success stories. But what defines a successful health and wellness program varies. Kurtz said "We've seen 20% of our staff lose more than 5% of their body mass and keep it off for a year so far."

Five employees have reduced in half – or completely eliminated – the medications they were on, he added.

"Keeping it front and centre is the biggest hurdle right now," he said. "We couldn't be happier with the way our

staff has responded."

And it's not just drivers. Kurtz said 50% of the company's operations staff has collectively lost 10% of its body mass. Erb's Dietrick admitted it's tough to measure a return on investment. However, he said 40% of Erb's employees have participated in the programs it offers.

At Prime, in 10 months, 130 drivers have enrolled in the program and 63% completed it and are in compliance, meaning they wear monitoring devices to prove they've stuck to the program and they log their food intake.

"Ninety per cent of those drivers lost an average of 19.3 lbs in 13 weeks," Baleka said, noting that equates to 1.6 lbs/week, which is better than the fitness industry average of 1.3 lbs/week.

"This whole idea that you can't do it in the truck – we're smashing that, we're doing better than the average," he said.

In addition to those who've enrolled in the full program, another 500 drivers have used the workout DVD and they've lost 5,000 lbs – or 10 lbs per driver. Prime has set up an athletic division that helps drivers get to fitness events they wish to participate in. Baleka said the target at Prime is for participants to shed 7% of their body weight in 13 weeks. Those who succeed are offered the opportunity to become mentors for others, and they're paid extra to do so. While there's no shortage of individual success stories, Baleka agreed it's difficult to define a return on investment. He said Prime is studying data to see if there's a correlation between body mass index and preventable accidents.

"We know there are soft returns, but it's going to take another two to three years to have Prime-specific data on results from our program," he said. He encouraged carriers to look at their fleet's BMI profile and see if it correlates with slips and falls and other lost-time injuries.

"If a disproportionate amount is coming from obese drivers, then obesity is costing your company," he said.

Kurtz said a wellness program can be implemented without a lot of cost.

He estimated it to be about \$300 per driver, using the Lindora Clinic/TCA formula. He also suggested finding a cheerleader within the office to administer the program and provide support.

While it may seem that living healthy on the road is impossible, driv-

ers who've made the lifestyle changes report they now find it easier to live healthy on the road than at home. "They go home, and they say they can't wait to get back in the truck," said Baleka. "They're losing weight when in the truck because they have the opportunity to focus on themselves." **TW**

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Newcomer to industry has sights set on safety career

Continued from page 1

Paving came on the bus with her daughter and said Park was looking for a tandem driver." The Good Samaritan suggested Lothian get her air brake ticket because she was sure Park would hire her. "So that weekend I went to get my air brake ticket and they hired me right that day," Lothian said, "and I've been there ever since. I love it there; I love driving my truck."

Despite that love for what she's doing, Lothian has her sights set on targets beyond simply being behind the wheel of her truck – not that there's anything simple about driving.

"I have three more courses as a construction safety officer and then I'll have that ticket too," she noted proudly, admitting that pursuing a safety career was the real reason she threw her hat into the construction gig ring in the first place.

"I'd tried to get on as a flagger before that and they wouldn't hire me," she

this year once construction season begins, "what I'm hoping to do is eventually get into safety with the company that I'm with," she said.

Lothian bit the fiscal bullet to pursue her goal, paying her own way through the courses and, while she admits that funding her own education caused quite a hit on her pocketbook, "it's so worth it and I think I'll get it back over the years. Besides, I work so many hours driving my truck – like we work like 11, 12, 13 hours a day, sometimes seven days a week – so you know I'm good (financially) for the season. Pay's pretty good in trucking too."

As for whether she has contemplated taking the leap to pursuing her Class 1 so she can drive the bigger trucks, she doesn't see it happening.

"I'm not strong enough," she said, noting that she has been offered the chance. "My company said I can learn to drive one of the big trucks here and I could

drive with someone who had a licence and I could use their truck to go and get my Class 1, too. They like me, I'm a good worker and I love my job – I'm one of the few people (in the working world) who loves my job. But it's just too much on my wrist."

Though Lothian loves her job now, it wasn't always that way. When she was just starting out, she was intimidated by

some of the more experienced drivers. Yet, perhaps surprisingly, she doesn't think it had anything to do with her being a woman.

"It was just because I was a new driver," she said. "Maybe I was too slow, I've dumped a couple times – so has everyone, though – but then I got the hang of it right quick and now I just love the crews. They're great to me and all the drivers are great to me."

As for the double X chromosome issue, "I think people are realizing that it's a changing world and women are doing these jobs," she said. Lothian credits the lack of hassle over being female to some trail blazing women that went before her.

Lothian also credits her positive attitude for being warmly received in the trucking industry. "I went in there with no attitude at all, just wanting to learn, so I think they got that and it made a difference," she said. Lothian would like to see more people look at truck driving as a career, and encourages young people to investigate the industry.

"I don't see very many young people driving," she said, "and I know that this is a time where the older (drivers) are retiring so there are many positions available." She bemoans the lack of a skilled profession designation, and thinks that could be why some potential newcomers look elsewhere for their careers.

"I think maybe it's stereotyped as a job (rather than a profession) and it's not getting as much recognition as it deserves. I feel for the truckers who actually drive the big trucks because no one understands how heavy these are and how instantly they could kill them, so people don't have that respect that they ought to for truck drivers." **TW**

'I'm one of the few people (in the working world) who loves my job.'

Shelley Lothian

said, "but they hired me as a trucker and I did that so I could go into safety. Now I am almost done my courses."

Lothian hauls asphalt in one of the two tandems Park Paving operates.

"We hire the rest out, so lots of time we'll have 12, 14 trucks," she said, "but it's the Park trucks that have the most opportunities. If I want more hours, or need more hours, they'll give me more hours hauling gravel or anything to all our construction sites."

As of the date of her conversation with Truck West, however, she wasn't in the truck at all, despite opportunities to do so. "(Park) did phone the other day and said (they) had some work for me right now if I want it," she said, "but I'm going to finish these courses first and then I'll go back to work."

The safety courses Lothian is taking are through the auspices of the Alberta Construction Safety Association, but she has also studied with Edmonton's Transcom Fleet Services.

"I saw the dispatch course and it looked interesting – and I had free time on my hands – and so I went to it and it was just an amazing course," she said. "(Transcom's Roy Craigen) is so passionate about the trucking industry and the whole course was just great; it was just uplifting and it made me feel good about being a truck driver." Lothian said she learned a lot under Craigen's tutelage, including "all the legislation in the construction field."

This is obviously a woman serious about advancing her career toward the safety side of the industry's ledger, but she's also realistic about what – and how long – it will take to reach that goal. And while she'll be driving her truck again

Trouble filling those vacancies? Start by throwing away the old playbook

By Jim Bray

CALGARY, Alta. – If you can't find enough white male bums to fill your organization's vacant seats, you may be chasing the wrong people.

That was the upshot from Sher Zaman, senior director, HR, safety and compliance, for Supply Chain Management (SCM), in a presentation he made to the Van Horne Institute's *Engage: Women in Supply Chain* conference in Calgary. Zaman pointed out that there's a whole world of diversity out there waiting to apply for gigs; it's just a matter of learning how to reach out to it.

"If your referrals or your network that's being referred are of the male or white majority," Zaman told the conference's audience, "then you're really not tapping into other pools out there."

He was quick to note that looking beyond traditional gender and ethnic roles to find new blood isn't meant as a kind of reverse discrimination; rather, it's just a way to fill positions in a workforce that's facing severe personnel shortages in the near future, thanks to an aging workforce and burgeoning business.

"This isn't a women's issue," he said, "it's a talent issue, and that's how we approach it at SCM."

SCM is working actively to address its talent shortage, Zaman said, and he outlined some of the company's strategies and experiences, using them as practical examples of how a company can cast a wider net than it may have traditionally in its attempts to fill holes in the organization.

Adding women, young people and visible minorities to the workforce has to start with a commitment and a strategy, Zaman said and he noted that, while SCM is still new to such things, the company has definitely jumped into the fray with both corporate feet. As with so many other things, however, the strategy started small.

"Back in October we launched our first women's workshop," he said, "and it was really just to start some dialogue and discussion around the business."

Zaman said the company discovered plenty of diverse viewpoints during that dialogue, some positive, some indifferent, and "some not really understanding what the challenge was and why we would even look at developing programs to tap into other recruitment sources."

But from that beginning, they've either begun looking into or actually kicked off programs based around diversity management and inclusion, including a focus on women.

To ensure their message got out to a broader range of potential new hires, Zaman said, SCM started to use some outside-the-box thinking.

"Traditionally, we would place an advert in the mainstream media and hope that would attract the talent that we needed to come into our organization," he said, "but we're now more specific and segmented in our approach, so we look at the market in different levels, different channels."

This includes reaching out through community centres and through broad-

er advertising tactics – including taking out ads in different languages. Zaman said they're also tailoring those ads more for the desired audience, in that "we've (pictured) people within our own organization that reflect the broader community."

The company also expressed publicly its commitment to diversity and inclusion in ways that are "visibly clear" when you enter their Web sites, read the president's statement or see their advertising.

It seems to be helping. Zaman told the audience about the company's operation in Cornwall, Ont., which not too long ago was struggling to find talent.

"It's an aging population," he explained, "so we really tried to reach out further. We expanded our search into the Montreal area, we started tapping into visible minorities, forming alliances with immigration groups, we offered our building as a language school to teach English as a second language to some of those community agencies."

And within about a year, he said, "we increased our visible minority hiring by about 17% and those individuals in turn are bringing good people into our business."

Another factor Zaman said has traditionally worked against recruitment in the supply chain management field has been the fact that few people grow up aspiring to such a career.

"I think we have a moral responsibility within our profession as well as a business responsibility to operate with the best talents," he said, "but I think traditionally supply chain business hasn't been something that people have discussions with their parents about."

Zaman thinks that should – and can – be changed, not only by supply chain careers being focused on more in educational institutions (which is starting to happen) but by today's supply chain professionals becoming role models who can illustrate to others the benefits of such careers and help mentor them once they enter the profession.

Some new thinking is also in order. "We as a business tend not to take risks," Zaman said. "We're looking for someone with 10 years experience in supply chain, ideally within the systems that we operate. And that has worked to a certain degree; those people are successful for the most part, they contribute to our business. But we need to change that model. We're looking for competency across a broader spectrum of softer skills such as leading teams, developing others and managing chains."

Once you've found that great new hire, you need to develop and retain that talent. There are probably as many ways of doing this as there are people, and Zaman highlighted some of the things SCM has learned when it comes to helping such employees flourish in the company.

One is to challenge your managers to look at things differently, to shatter biases and stereotypes. For example, "women are more likely to be stereotyped as being family focused and unwilling to travel," Zaman said, noting that "it can be an unconscious barrier to women being successful in broader

roles: do I want to invest all this time (in a female employee) when I think they're going to have a baby in the next few years?"

Another lesson SCM has learned is to be more flexible when it comes to its expectations. "As recently as three years ago, mobility had been a factor in some of our high potential development programs," Zaman said. "That is changing as we realize mobility shouldn't be a factor if you've got strong candidates who may be settled in a certain area."

Flexibility can also mean making accommodations for people's career and life needs, for example taking into account the fact that women, thanks to that pesky thing called biology, tend to take time off at some point in their career.

"Men can't have babies at this point," Zaman said, "so there's a natural gap for people who wish to take an opportunity to have children."

He noted that, during his research, he found there's actually an impediment to careers for women in developing further and "that one-year career break really impacted women in a fairly profound way, both in terms of career development and the pace of that development. And also salary, which is disturbing from a moral perspective."

Allowing more flexible working hours can also help encourage good people to join – and to stick around. And that could even make a company change how it looks at productivity itself.

For example: "we were having a succession planning meeting last year," Zaman said, "and we got onto the topic of a particular individual. This person leaves a little bit earlier than everybody else, maybe around four o'clock, and that seemed to be the hang up for the succession planning group in discussing whether or not we were going to invest in moving this person forward."

Then someone suggested that, instead of looking at when the person goes home, perhaps they should look at what that person actually got done while at work.

"The whole dynamic of the group changed and our succession planning meetings changed drastically from that," Zaman noted. "So it really wasn't about the fact that this individual left (early) because they had family commitments, it was about what they got done during the time they were here and how they managed their business – and they managed it effectively, very effectively."

Likewise, Zaman said, another individual was described by some of the succession planning committee as being a little bit meek and mild-mannered. "But again, who cares?" he asked. "What were the results? How did they deliver? This individual is incredibly talented, gets results, has a great, fantastic relationship with the client. So again, if it's a question of just a person's style, why should we be using that as a negative against individuals?"

It turned out to be a real eye-opener, Zaman said, which helped SCM learn to think differently about how it evaluates people and measures the results of their work. And of course this can be applied to any employee, regardless of ethnic background or sex – including white males.

Zaman said this focus on flexibility extends beyond looking at the number of hours – or years – the various bums are occupying the seats; it also requires

For women in transportation, wage gap still wide, but opportunities for change are coming

By Jim Bray

CALGARY, Alta. – There's a gender divide in Canada's supply chain management field, one that sees women's salaries tending to lag behind men's.

That's the bad news – and of course it isn't unique to the supply chain. The good news, according to Cheryl Paradowski, president and CEO of the Purchasing Management Association of Canada (PMAC), is that the supply chain management field is actually more equitable to women than some other sectors.

Speaking to the Van Horne Institute's Engage! Women in Supply Chain conference at the University of Calgary's downtown campus, Paradowski outlined the results of an annual survey her organization conducts in conjunction with some key trade publications.

"We have some trends from at least as far back as 2008, so we can see how (things) are progressing in the sector," she said, noting that one of the primary areas into which they look include wages, where "currently the gap stands at just over \$16,000 (per year) or about 17.7%."

That's a pretty significant chunk of change going unpaid and, according to Paradowski, that gap hasn't changed significantly in the past few years.

"Salaries have progressed for both (sexes)," she noted, "but the gap in 2008 was 17.2%, so while salaries have grown, they've grown by 11.2% for men and only 10.6% for women."

Not only that, but the cash chasm – which doesn't loom large when the worker is starting out – gets wider the longer women stay in the workplace.

"The split starts to come after 15 years in the industry and it gets even wider after 25 years or so," Paradowski said.

As for the good news, "When it comes to the gender gap, supply chain management doesn't look so bad," Paradowski said, citing a 2010 Globe & Mail report, "because the over-

all gap across Canada in all sectors is 29.2%."

Reasons for the disparity between the salaries of men and women include education, or lack thereof. "The gap is generally narrower the higher the level of a woman's education," Paradowski said.

Another fly in women's ointment could be a reluctance to toot their own horns.

"Whether it's a lack of confidence or that we want to be sure we're (qualified) 100% before we're ready to go," Paradowski said, "there's a feeling that that factor plays into things."

Still, Paradowski said, there are good demographic reasons for confidence that things are looking up for ladies in transportation.

"We are in a period of time within supply chain management that presents a number of opportunities," she said, "and now's the time to be thinking about how we capitalize on them."

Paradowski said the Supply Chain Sector Council estimates there will be 66,000 positions that will have to be filled every year for the next five years, so there should be plenty of room for new bums in new and not-so-new seats.

On the other hand, many businesses may actually be quite clueless about how to deal with the coming crunch.

"The scarier statistic to me," Paradowski said, "is when those numbers were posed to the companies who responded to the survey and they were asked how they were dealing with those skill gaps as a company, over a third said they were going to steal them from other companies. I'm a little bit worried about the sustainability of that. It's a bad strategy."

Paradowski also thinks women in the industry need to stay ahead of the curve to help ensure there are enough women snagging gigs. Supply chain careers can also be attractive to women because the field is seen as allowing for some flexibility, some work-life balance. **TW**

looking at different ways of getting the job done, whether through such strategies as allowing someone to work from home or through some broader accommodation.

"We've looked at more part-time schedules for our shift workers," he said. "We also do a lot of sabbaticals because we have a diverse population; lots of people want to take pilgrimages or extended leaves of absence to go home."

SCM also incorporated a culture of inclusion into its values, and celebrates its multiplicity through a "diversity week" held each May.

The company also commemorates such things as Black History Month, Chinese New Year and International Women's Day.

To Zaman, a more diverse workforce isn't just great for business and for succession planning in a time when more and more vacancies come open; it's just plain good.

"What's good practice for women in supply chain or any organization is generally good practice for the broader business," he said, "and while gender diversity is incredibly important for SCM...it is only one facet of the journey that we're taking around diversity and inclusion. We are challenging our businesses to think differently and to challenge the way we've done things in the past."

That doesn't mean just leaping blindly onto the diversity train, however. "Be realistic about what you want to do," Zaman advised.

"We're not going to change the world overnight but we are building a migration path we can build upon to get us to a result where we have a culture that's truly inclusive." **TW**

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Providing work-life balance

Not just a retention tool, it's just good policy

By Jim Bray

CALGARY, Alta. – Don't bring your work home with you! That, or similar, advice has been said by loved ones to bread winners since time immemorial, but can one really leave work at work? And does one even want to?

Balancing work and home life is a topic increasingly on the minds of workers and employees as an aging workforce looks toward retirement and recruiters scramble to find ways to help make their organizations attractive to new workers.

This work-life balance was also a major topic of discussion at the 'Engage! Women in Supply Chain' conference 'Meeting the Talent Challenge,' held in Calgary, where a session on the topic offered some advice and examples of just how such a balance can be achieved in the real world.

"Work-life balance means different things to different people," noted Ruth Amarilla, manager of strategic spend management at Supply Chain Management for ConocoPhillips Canada. She told the crowd of some 140 attendees the term can also mean different things to the same person, at different moments throughout life. And it isn't something you just decide to do and then do. As Amarilla put it, "Work-life balance isn't a destination, it's a journey, so it doesn't finish. It's there with us all of our lives."

Amarilla said there are two basic reasons why it's important to create a workable balance between job and home: to have a satisfying life and to create a better version of yourself. Of course a satisfying life, like work/life balance itself, can be different depending on the eye of the beholder.

"Sometimes we think that satisfaction is when we have everything we want," Amarilla said, "but sometimes we have everything we want and we are (still) not satisfied. So the basis of satisfaction is in our structure of values, in our set of priorities and in getting to align those priorities and those values to our behaviours – how we're going to get there."

As for the self-improvement aspect, "Life will be about saying 'yes' to those things that are going to help us become a better version of ourselves

and saying 'no' to those things that don't." Fortunately, she said, "it's up to us. We have the power to do that and that is awesome."

Balancing act

Achieving work-life balance doesn't mean you should be trying to keep those separate planes of your existence completely distinct from each other.

"You can't separate work and life," Amarilla said. "Work is part of life. When we have a great day at work, we go home and we feel energized. If we don't have a very good day at work, we get home and we're tired, we really don't want to do anything else." And, of course, what happens to us (or our loved ones) at home affects us when we go to work as well, in that "we're not going to be focused on our work in the way we would be any other day."

Finding the right balance will let you work more productively and get more accomplished, Amarilla said, and therefore give you greater career satisfaction as well. On the other hand, you'll also improve relationships with family, friends and co-workers and have "better physical and mental health and make choices about priorities, instead of (making) sacrifices," she said.

An intimidating concept, perhaps, but as the old saw says, a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. Fortunately, Amarilla came to the event equipped with several small steps she said can help one achieve that workable work-life balance.

The first step is to create an inspiring vision for your life, a roadmap of sorts. Then, once you know the path you want your life to follow, you have to decide what your priorities are, making sure they're aligned with your personal values. Amarilla said they should also align with your current life situation, in which you might not hold some things to be as important as they were 10 years, or even two months, ago. "Things change," Amarilla noted. "They change because of our objectives, our families. There are a lot of factors in our lives that can make things change."

Your roadmap drawn, it's time to set the specific goals, the steps forward



Providing employees with a work-life balance can result in a more positive workplace and go a long way towards addressing a skills shortage.

you need to take on life's journey the way you want to. And don't bite off more than you can chew.

"When we set goals, it's good to do it in short steps instead of long steps," Amarilla said, "because when we do it in short steps, they are more manageable, and we can reward ourselves when we achieve them."

Amarilla also stressed the importance of striving for excellence in everything you do, "no matter what you do, no matter where you are, because at the end, we all want to do the right thing," she said. "And when we do it right, we are happy. It doesn't matter what you're doing."

It doesn't hurt to be doing something you love, either – because, as Amarilla said, "you will do it better and that will make you happier. And you will get where you want to get faster, too."

Managing time

Not surprisingly, Amarilla raised the issue of time management – or mismanagement – as a way to help reach your goals. "Manage your time and energy," she advised, noting that one should avoid procrastination. "We have something we don't like to do, that we don't want to do, and we leave it for tomorrow because we can do it then. But then we have to do it tomorrow, added to all the other things we have to do tomorrow already, so that increases our anxiety, and it is not healthy."

Try to keep your energy levels up, and keep your eye on the prize. "If we think about increasing our energy, we can think about having a healthier life," Amarilla said, "eating better, we can change our diet, we can think about working out, which are all very important things." Keeping your focus is part of this. "If you keep focused, then you're going to try to finish what you start, you're going to try to be more efficient at what you're doing," she said.

Amarilla also said one should maintain a positive attitude, combatting negative thoughts and replacing them

with positive ones. That includes taking time to laugh. "Laughter is good for each of us when we do it and it's also contagious, so it's a win-win," she said.

Spread the load, too. "Share responsibilities," Amarilla suggested. "Try to have open communication, try to understand what the expectations of the other parties are. It can be family, your spouse, a friend – it can be a co-worker. Help them share responsibilities and even beyond that, maybe it's time also to delegate responsibilities."

Don't be afraid to seek help from others, either, whether friends, family or co-workers. "We all need help sometimes," she said, "and it's good to seek that help when we actually need it."

And don't forget to give others their due. "Express appreciation," Amarilla advised. "Sometimes we underestimate how important and powerful this is. It has such a strong positive effect on all of us." The goodwill goes both ways, too. "It's as nice to do it as to have someone express appreciation for you," she said. "It does work."

Other tips include simplifying your life, getting rid of complicated or complicating things that don't get you anywhere – the stuff that makes you wonder why you're doing it. And you should stop periodically to think about your progress.

"Reassess when needed," Amarilla advised. "We are always changing our priorities, so we need to be reassessing these things all the time. If we identify the outcome we are seeking, then we can drive our behaviors to get to that outcome."

It takes discipline, of course – but what good things in life don't, other than perhaps winning lottery tickets?

The important thing to remember is to "decide what's important for you, how are you going to set your priorities and what will make you happy, not only today, but in the long run," Amarilla said. "Having a balanced life isn't easy, but it is worth it. And if we have a process, we can make it. It's up to us." **TW**

Achieving work-life balance: Some real world examples

By Jim Bray

Also speaking at the session was Rauchelle Outtrim, category manager, electrical power, for ConocoPhillips Canada, who outlined the changes through which her life has gone, as well as some of what she's done to create and maintain her own work-life balance.

"When I'm not in the office, I go by the name of 'Mommy,'" she told the crowd, noting that when she started with the company she was neither married, nor a mother. "My work-life balance began to change in 2006, in the middle of the ConocoPhillips takeover," she said. "I was getting married in the same month as the takeover and decided to get right on having a baby, so needless to say, my work-life balance was no longer a one-person team."

Outtrim said that she and her husband realized how their lives were about to be transformed and that, "to achieve work-life balance and sanity, we would need to make some changes."

They both worked full-time jobs, which, like so many gigs, occasionally spilled into evenings and weekends. They also had a long commute and a growing concern that their little tyke wouldn't have a good school in the new community in which they lived.

"We didn't want to see our little guy at five years old sitting on a bus and spending his quality time sitting with other children on a bus," she said, "so we reassessed our family needs and priorities and decided to make some changes for the better."

They decided to move into an older community that was not only closer to work for both of them and had "an amazing day home" within two blocks of their house, but which also had two well-regarded schools within walking distance.

That took care of home life. But how about work? "In 2011, I moved within the company to a new role that gave me the ability to work flexible hours," Outtrim said. "I get to work about 6:15-6:30 a.m. and stay till 3:30-4 p.m., depending on traffic and weather, and my husband takes the other shift. And the company was fantastic; as long as you were there during the core hours and you got your work done, it doesn't really matter what your hours are."

Now, her husband takes the family's morning routines and she bats clean-up.

"Lucky for us, our day home takes (their child) to and from school daily," she said, noting proudly that "as a family, we set our priorities now. Our son understands that, Monday to Friday, Mommy and Daddy both work and we both really enjoy our careers - and for him, school is his job at this point. When we are together in the evenings and weekends we try to enjoy every minute and not to overschedule our lives. We're already busy enough!"

Outtrim also noted that, like any goal or priority set, "we need to continually review them to ensure they work for everyone in our family."

Sue Tomney, CEO of the YWCA Calgary, who also sat on the panel, be-

lieves a person can have it all, just not at the same time - and "it won't all be perfect. Realizing that really helped me."

Tomney spent most of her working life in the corporate sector and thinks childcare is a huge, ongoing concern with women in the workplace today - and that it's something more women should be speaking out about.

"Imagine if you're a woman who's making maybe minimum wage or holding down two jobs; the childcare piece (of the work-life balance puzzle) is gigantic, not just for their safety but it tugs at the heartstrings for any parent," she said, admitting that "the most stressful moments of my career were always around childcare, and when you find it, it's fantastic."

Then there's the issue of workplace support for work-life balance among the employees.

"We are very lucky in Canada," noted ConocoPhillips Canada's Ruth Amarilla. "We have great programs, companies often give you a Friday or other time off. There are also plans that focus on health; there are companies with fitness facilities and there are others that help support your family so people can feel better if they have problems. We can take advantage of them. And we do need to use them."

Company-implemented programs aren't available everywhere, however, which gives workers an opportunity - indeed, the requirement - to challenge their employers to enact some. "I think it's really important that we make the stand (at work) that there needs to be some balance and put that into perspective," said Tomney. "You have a voice and that voice matters."

Amarilla agreed. "Talk to your employers and mention what your needs are, and how your needs affect work also," she said, noting that she used to work for a company that didn't have a lot of programs in place, but that they've implemented many in the past five years because employees pushed for them.

Of course, there's a difference between pushing and demanding.

"It's not pushing like going on strike," Amarilla said. "It's more just saying what you really need and trying to be reasonable and trying to mention the needs and how that will affect the company at the end."

It's important to keep in mind the effects of such strategies on a company, too, to make your push more palatable - or at least more understandable - to the corporate mindset. To Tomney, that means it isn't enough to merely point out a problem; you need to show up with a potential solution as well.

Her recommended tack, since businesses exist to make money, is to "take a look at things like productivity or what are the issues that are holding your company back - or what things need tweaking - and draw a line (from problem to solution) and state your case. It may be a lot of work but...find a way to state your case in business-like terms."

In other words, state your case so its influence on the bottom line is



clear, because otherwise the message might not get through.

"We'd all love to think that everyone has a big heart and they just want to do it because it's the nice thing to

do," Tomney said, "but at the end of the day you have to be able to show that there's an incremental value to the organization for whatever the issue might be." **TW**



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A new alternative

With all the buzz about natural gas, could it be that a lesser known alternative fuel holds even greater promise? Volvo thinks so.

By James Menzies

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – Driving along I-80 just outside Sacramento, I've got the window down and my ears strained. I'm in a Volvo VNL day cab belonging to Texas-based Martin Transport with a DI3 engine under the hood, mated to an

I-Shift automated transmission. I've driven this truck before – or a reasonable facsimile – but this time something's different.

The tanks mounted to the frame will tell you this truck is fuelled by dimethyl ether (DME). But try as I might to prove otherwise, from behind the wheel the

truck drives, pulls and sounds just like a diesel. And that's what Volvo loves about DME, and why it has been publicly pounding the DME drum since as far back as 2005.

While the North American trucking industry has come to equate natural gas with going green, along comes

DME, which is in many ways cleaner, and potentially more energy-efficient than natural gas. DME is a manufactured fuel, which can be produced using virtually any methane-containing feedstock, including cow manure, grass clippings, organic food waste and even natural gas itself. On a molecular level, because there are no carbon-carbon bonds, the fuel burns exceptionally clean, producing absolutely no soot. This eliminates the need for a diesel particulate filter (DPF) and even cooled exhaust gas recirculation (EGR), as well as its associated EGR valves and coolers.

Volvo has been testing DME in Sweden and North America – but mostly Sweden – for several years now and has accumulated 650,000 miles of real-world testing. But it's safe to say the industry's trade journalists were surprised when it was announced June 6, in front of the California State Capitol building, that Volvo will bring to market a DME-powered truck in North America as early as 2015.

DME, commonly used today as a propellant in aerosol sprays, including asthma inhalers, is not yet widely available as a vehicle fuel. However, the impetus for Volvo's announcement was a proprietary new, small-scale DME production method, developed by Oberon Fuels, which could produce DME at a customer's own facility at a price that's competitive with diesel. That got Volvo's attention.

"Our small-scale process enables the utilization of regional feedstocks to produce DME," said Rebecca Boudreaux, Ph.D., president of Oberon Fuels. "Cost-effective, regional fuel production addresses the distribution issue, and offers the potential to bypass the need for a national fuelling infrastructure, while reducing the carbon footprint associated with transporting the feedstock and the fuel produced."

Oberon, whose co-founder and chief operating officer Elliot Hicks hails from Saskatchewan, is planning to build skid-mounted production units that can be delivered to customer sites for the production of DME using locally available feedstocks. The company's business model involves building, owning and operating the production units, which will be available in 4,500 and 10,000 gallon per day versions, able to produce enough DME to fuel 60 or 150 trucks, respectively. The first of these sites are going online in Brawley, Calif. and Chicago, Ill. this month. A 4,500 gallon per day site would require about 100 tonnes of food waste daily, but it's capable of producing smaller volumes, Boudreaux noted.

Oberon's ability to cost-effectively produce DME for road transport was just what Volvo needed to take the next step towards commercializing DME-powered vehicles. Goran Nyberg, president of North American sales and marketing with Volvo, declared at the Capitol that "In 2015, Volvo will begin commercial production of DME-powered Volvo trucks in the US. This is a first for North America and a first for

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Dimethyl ether (DME) is an alternative fuel produced from methane-containing feedstocks such as cow manure, grass clippings, food waste, etc. Volvo is commercializing a DME-powered truck that performs much like diesel, except cleaner. Martin Transport is currently running DME-fuelled Volvos in Texas.

Volvo Group. Volvo is a pioneer in developing and testing DME as a viable fuel for heavy trucks and we feel very positive about the commercial potential in this market."

Ed Saxman, marketing product manager, alternative fuels with Volvo, said the engine adaptation required to run off DME is actually quite simple. The D13 base engine doesn't change drastically, with the exception of a new fuel system that will operate at much lower injection pressures.

"DME doesn't make any soot, so we won't need that very high fuel injection pressure," Saxman said. "This engine design gets us back to basics. We are confident we can produce a reliable, durable engine out of the box with this low pressure injection."

Customers won't be sad to see the elimination of DPFs and EGR coolers, either. The DME design also does away with the seventh injector and could eventually eliminate selective catalytic reduction (SCR), though the early versions will likely be SCR-equipped.

Current DME prototypes being run by Texas-based Martin Transport - including the one I drove - have a range of 600 miles, which Saxman said was the target needed to commercialize the vehicles.

"We're easily capable of putting enough fuel on the truck to do 600 miles, which we feel is the needed range," Saxman said. The first DME-powered D13s will be rated at 425 hp and 1,750 lb.-ft. of torque, which is currently Volvo's most popular rating. A 500-hp version will follow.

Comparisons to natural gas will be inevitable, since the trucking industry has been gravitating towards compressed and liquefied natural gas as the alternative fuels of choice. Fuel price and availability will continue to favour natural gas - and Volvo has no plans to abandon its natural gas product development - but DME addresses some of the shortcomings of CNG and LNG.

CNG and LNG-powered trucks can cost \$30,000 to \$90,000 more than

their diesel counterparts, and much of that is attributed to the cost of the fuel tanks. CNG is stored on the vehicle at 3,600 psi and LNG at temperatures of -260 F. Both scenarios require heavy and costly double-walled tanks.

DME is stored at ambient temperatures at 75 psi, requiring a less expensive steel tank that's similar to a propane canister. For that reason, coupled with the simplicity of the base engine adaptation, Volvo is confident it will be able to sell DME-powered trucks

'DME doesn't make any soot, so we don't need that very high fuel injection pressure.'

Ed Saxman, Volvo Trucks N.A.

at roughly the same cost as conventional diesels.

With 69,000 BTU per gallon, DME has energy density comparable to LNG (about half that of diesel and twice the punch of CNG) and doesn't boil off over time, like LNG.

"We can package DME on a truck with a shorter wheelbase and still have a greater range than either of the other two popular alternative fuels used today," Saxman said.

DME may be the ultimate clean fuel. After all, Oberon's manufacturing process takes methane emissions that would otherwise be released into the environment and locally converts them into an ultra-low-emission fuel. But even if both the

truck and fuel are priced competitively with diesel, most fleets will want to see how DME can benefit their bottom lines, which is what makes natural gas so appealing, with fuel prices about 30% lower than diesel.

Saxman said there are many benefits to DME that could pay back over time. For starters, the price of DME won't be tied to crude oil, so users will be protected from the volatility of diesel prices. Fleets that make their own fuel won't have to worry about how

wars in the Middle East - or for that matter, refinery fires in Alberta - will influence their access to fuel.

DME may also appeal to fleets - private or for-hire - that want to run the cleanest fuels possible to reduce their environmental footprint. However, the biggest bang for the buck may go to carriers that have ready access to feedstocks.

For example, a fleet that transports municipal waste to a landfill or a grocery chain that de-

livers product to stores where there's an abundance of expired food that can be converted to fuel. Dairy fleets in rural areas, cattleliners delivering to feedlots, refuse trucks in major cities - there really are plenty of applications where DME makes sense from both an economical and environmental perspective.

In the US, grocery giant Safeway has already agreed to pilot the next batch of DME trucks Volvo builds, using fuel that Oberon will produce for it at locations in the San Joaquin Valley.

Jonathan Mayes, senior vice-president of government relations, public affairs and sustainability for Safeway, said, "Our company continues to look for innovative ways to reduce our carbon footprint.



Fuelling trucks with DME is simpler than natural gas. This propane-style pump retails for about \$25,000.

Converting to a cleaner burning, renewable fuel such as DME presents a good opportunity. We are pleased to be working with Oberon Fuels and Volvo Trucks on this first-of-its-kind trial in North America."

Because it has been thoroughly tested in Sweden, DME has been run in Canadian-type conditions and Volvo officials said it thrives in cold weather, with no gelling. And Saxman pointed out that bacterial growth and algae formation, occasionally problematic in diesel storage tanks, aren't an issue either.

There's a lot to like about DME, including from the driver's seat. On my drive around Sacramento, it lived up to its promise of delivering diesel-like performance, sound and feel, both at highway speeds and in stop-and-go traffic. I was grossing about 55,000 lbs with a gravel-filled belly dump in tow. **TW**

Watch video about Volvo's DME truck at TruckNews.com

Reloaded

International's back in the game with a revamped 13L MaxxForce with SCR.

By James Menzies

LISLE, Ill. - Navistar International has started a new chapter in its long history, rolling out the very first MaxxForce 13 engines with selective catalytic reduction (SCR) in its best-selling ProStar tractor.

In doing so, the company is eager to put behind it the last few years, which have been marked by missteps in its pursuit of achieving the

stringent EPA10 emissions standards without urea-based SCR, which is used by all the other North American engine manufacturers. Navistar CEO Troy Clarke said he's confident Navistar's engine reliability issues, which resulted from overtaxing the MaxxForce 13 with too much exhaust gas recirculation (EGR), are behind them and promised the company is now back in the market with products capable of winning back customers.



Navistar's MaxxForce 13 engine with SCR is now available in the International ProStar.

"We're excited to be back in the market with an even bigger product portfolio than we had at this time last year," Clarke said during a recent ride-and-drive event for the trucking press. "Our next challenge is to regain momentum in the marketplace. We don't want to miss the selling season for major fleets, which takes place later this calendar year, so re-establishing our sales momentum is really important."

For that reason, it was deemed essential that Navistar hit all its self-imposed deadlines when rolling out its SCR product line. That began with the International ProStar with Cummins ISX15 last December and continued with the early (by days) launch of the ProStar with International MaxxForce 13 in April. Bringing Cummins back into the fold gave Navistar instant street cred with customers and seems to have reinvigorated its dealer network. But the company's ability to regain some of its former glory - it previously wrestled with Freightliner for a leadership position in Class 8 market share - will hinge largely on the success of its new 13-litre MaxxForce.

Navistar has opted not to, as of yet, offer the 12-litre ISX, meaning its ability to prosper in this growing smaller-displacement engine segment will depend on the performance and reliability of the previously maligned MaxxForce 13. Adding the proven Cummins SCR aftertreatment system to the MaxxForce 13 will allow it to be a better engine, so you can throw away any preconceived ideas you had about this engine. Without SCR, the MaxxForce never had a chance to perform to its full capabilities.

So, what do we know about the MaxxForce with SCR? We know it's a better engine than its predecessor, as it's not choking on copious amounts of its own exhaust gas. We also know it has been married to the Cummins aftertreatment system, which is as proven and reliable as any other aftertreatment system in the market.

I recently chatted with Shane Spencer, director of integrated reliability and quality with Navistar, as we cruised along in an International ProStar with MaxxForce 13 engine along the highways and country(ish) roads just outside Navistar's world headquarters in Lisle, Ill. His enthusiasm for the new MaxxForce was palpable. This gearhead notices a difference in the performance before we even exit the parking lot.

"When you let the clutch out on the old 13L, you might have to nurse it a little bit and feather the clutch," he recalled. "This thing just goes. Getting

that EGR out of there wakes the engine up."

Clarke said improved responsiveness is one of the first things customers will notice with the new MaxxForce. "The pedal tip-in feels significantly different than the pedal tip-in did previously," he said. "That responsiveness means a lot as to how the driver feels. It's easier to shift and there is no lag at any point in the cycle when letting up on the pedal to put it into gear."

When you dial back EGR flow rates, good things happen within an engine. Spencer, who has tested the SCR-equipped MaxxForce engines extensively, in all manner of climates and duty cycles, said one of the greatest benefits is that the engine is more predictable than its predecessor, which had its own, let's say, quirks.

"It always does the same thing every time, which is something we struggled with in the EGR engines," Spencer admitted.

It also looks as though it will perform better in cold weather. Having tested the new engine in Alaska this past winter, Spencer said there was a remarkable difference in how the new engine handled the low-density fuel used there.

"The light-density fuel drives the fuel system nuts, trying to get the right amount of fuel in at the right time," he said. "That creates a stumble on most engines and it did on all of our engines. I was in Alaska in the February timeframe and we did all kinds of maneuvers trying to make this thing stumble and we couldn't get it to stumble. We worked for three to four years trying to get our other engines not to stumble under those conditions."

By adapting an existing engine to utilize SCR exhaust aftertreatment in nine months, Navistar made it look easy. But the process was anything but. For starters, Navistar had to figure out how to get its engine control module (ECM) to speak with the aftertreatment control module (ACM) found on the Cummins aftertreatment system.

"Our guys knew right up-front that would be a challenge, because we've never talked to an ACM before," Spencer said. "There were a lot of late nights with our controls and electronics people and Cummins' controls people to understand how (the systems) were going to talk to each other."

Another concern was to ensure the SCR system would be mounted to the vehicle in such a way that it would withstand the rigors of on-road trucking without falling apart. Rather than reinvent the wheel, Navistar adopted

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Navistar CEO promises improved product quality, increased market share

By James Menzies

LISLE, Ill. – In a meeting with trade press journalists last month, Troy Clarke, head of Navistar International, spoke candidly about the company's recent challenges and the reasons he thinks it has turned the corner.

"We don't have any false pretensions as to where we might be," he admitted. "Our (Class 8) market share is low right now; it's neighbouring at 14.5% and it was about 18% last year and higher than that the year before. Truthfully, it's been tough selling products this year. People know we're making this change (to SCR), they know we've been working through some quality issues and they have had every reason to stand on the sidelines and say 'We're going to wait and see how Navistar has done.' But now we're back in the market, we have products to sell, we believe we've addressed any number of our quality issues and the products we're building today are far better than anyone has seen from Navistar since prior to 2010 and maybe even prior to that."

Clarke, who has steered Navistar through its difficult restructuring – shedding non-core businesses and re-focusing on product quality – said he's optimistic about where the company now stands.

"I believe we've got a shot at demonstrating we can begin to gain market share by the end of this fiscal year," he said, without giving a specific target. "We will go up."

Clarke noted he took the helm at Navistar in the midst of a "perfect storm." The North American truck

market started 2012 strong, but saw sales decline in each subsequent quarter. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan were wound down, reducing the need for MRAP military vehicles produced by Navistar's lucrative defense division.

"That was an important part of our business. Especially with the recession that started in 2008 in the trucking industry, (the military business) did a lot to buoy our results," Clarke said. Exacerbating the situation, "We had some higher than expected warranty costs," Clarke admitted. "Most of those warranty costs were associated with the big bore engine we had introduced just before 2009 and we really had a significant number in the field at that particular point," he said.

At that time, Clarke recalled, "it appeared problems were showing up at our door as fast as you could put name tags on them."

Still, the company enacted a bold restructuring plan that would see it through the turmoil.

"We began systematically making changes," Clarke explained. "We decided to embark upon using SCR as opposed to EGR and began our path to put Cummins' SCR system on our 13-litre engines. We needed to do it on a very aggressive timeframe."

The ISX15 was rolled out in the International ProStar ahead of schedule last December, and the MaxxForce 13 with SCR was also deployed just ahead of Navistar's self-imposed deadline in April. Meanwhile, Navistar was eliminating projects that weren't core to its business (ie. the Mahindra joint venture in India and its RV and electric truck businesses) while other projects,

including development of its own natural gas engines, were put "on pause."

Clarke said the company has cut its costs by more than \$200 million.

It is now offering the popular International ProStar with the Cummins ISX15 and the MaxxForce 13L with SCR – an engine it remains bullish about.

"We're dedicating ourselves to things like quality; not how we define it, but how our customers define it," he said.

Clarke's tone may have been absent the bravado of his Navistar predecessors, but it certainly wasn't lacking confidence. He noted the MaxxForce 13 with SCR has accumulated more

than a million miles of testing. Over the past 10 months, the company has racked up more than 4.5 million miles in testing on its vehicles; more than in the two previous years combined.

"I think that is one indicator of how we look at our business differently (than before)," he said, adding

that it surpassed its own field-testing targets because the trucks were more reliable than expected right out of the gate. Clarke's confidence is based on the faith he has in the Navistar team and also the conversations he's had with customers. He said he spends Mondays and Fridays in the office, and the rest of the week meeting face-to-face with customers. So far, he has met with about 250 customers, and has even closed deals for about 1,000 trucks himself. TW

Truthfully, it's been tough selling products this year.'

Troy Clarke, CEO, Navistar

"We have been able to dial down the EGR and rely upon SCR to clean up the exhaust and we have found the engine is far more responsive," Clarke said. The company feels very positive about its revamped product line, and for good reason. It's quick to point out the International ProStar and Cummins ISX engine were once a formidable combination that enjoyed industry-leading market share. Still, Clarke is quick to add that customers will ultimately determine whether Navistar has returned to its past glory.

all the hardware, mounting brackets, etc. that were already used on the Cummins aftertreatment system paired with the ISX and then applied them to the MaxxForce-equipped ProStar.

"It's been very robust," Spencer said of the hardware associated with the SCR system.

Spencer credited Cummins with helping make the transition to SCR as painless as possible and noted Navistar benefited, in some ways, by adding SCR later than other manufacturers, when all the bugs had been worked out.

The MaxxForce 13 we drove was rated at 450 hp and 1,550-1,700 lb.-ft. of torque, though it can be had with as little as 400 hp and as much as 550. It's a versatile engine that is strikingly quiet to operate, thanks in part to a compacted graphite iron (CGI) block that's also lightweight and durable. Navistar says the CGI block can reduce weight by as much as 500 lbs compared to gray iron, yet it also boasts 75% higher tensile strength and nearly twice the fatigue strength as the more commonly used gray iron.

Contributing to the engine's responsiveness is its dual sequential turbochargers, the smaller of which provides immediate response upon throttle activation with the larger, secondary turbo providing peak power at higher speeds and on steep grades.

But while International customers and dealers have plenty to be

excited about regarding the performance of the new MaxxForce 13, it is reliability that will ultimately define the success of this engine in the long run. Navistar's advertising an ambitious 1.2 million mile B50 life, meaning half the engines it produces will still run strong without any significant overhauls at 1.2 million miles. That kind of reliability will go a long way towards winning back customers who may have been victims of the "higher than expected" warranty costs that burdened the previous EGR-only MaxxForce. With 13-litre engines comprising such a large, and growing, segment of the Class 8 on-highway market, and with the MaxxForce 13 the only such 13L engine on offer from Navistar, it's vital that the new engine not only perform well, but perform well for a long, long time.

It's not that engine noise, responsiveness and fuel economy are unimportant – they're vitally so. But Navistar needs to definitively leave in its wake the quality issues that have plagued its products in recent years. Fortunately for them, they believe the new 13L MaxxForce is up to the task.

Clarke acknowledged customers will have the final word on the quality of the new MaxxForce.

David Majors, vice-president, product development with Navistar is optimistic this engine is up to the task. "These are the best trucks we've ever built," he vowed, referencing quality metrics tracked by the company. TW

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Maxim Truck and Trailer charity BBQ raises more than \$16,000



Visitors to Maxim Truck and Trailer's annual charity barbecue brought with them a healthy appetite, and a lot of generosity.

WINNIPEG, Man. – More than 600 people dropped by Maxim Truck and Trailer May 29, contributing a total of \$16,500 for charity.

Maxim said this year's barbecue set a new record for funds raised in a single event.

"This year's large selection of raffle prizes really helped us attract more people and raise more funds for charity," said Steve Young, vice-president of parts at Maxim Truck and Trailer and chief organizer of this year's event. "We owe a great deal of thanks to our vendors and suppliers for their generous support."

All funds raised will go to CancerCare Manitoba's Challenge for Life program. A seven-member team from Maxim has now raised more than \$48,000 for this year's campaign, which culminated in a 20-kilometre walk on June 8. **TW**

Largest retread plant in Canada opened

GRANBY, Que. – Groupe Robert Bernard has inaugurated the largest retreading plant in Canada, boasting 70,000 sq.-ft. of floor space.

The retreader is the eighth in Canada and the 80th in North America to use Michelin Retread Technologies (MRT), the companies announced. Groupe Robert Bernard has invested \$3 million into the facility.

"We have full faith in the technology offered by MRT and we have a strong relationship with the Michelin family going back 45 years," said Jocelyn Bernard, vice-president of Groupe Robert Bernard. "Our new plant provides us with a larger shop floor of 70,000 sq.-ft. This will facilitate better production and storage. This will also help us reduce wait times for delivery."

Harold Phillips, chief operating officer, Michelin Canada, added: "Although MRT Canada now has eight plants across the country, Robert Bernard MRT is the only hybrid facility, which means it can manufacture high-quality retread tires using Pre-Mold and Custom-Mold processes. With this expansion, Robert Bernard MRT is the largest retread plant in Canada. This will help the company meet the increasing demand for the highest-quality MRT retread tires in Quebec."

Michelin says its retreads incorporate new technologies, offering "incomparable treads and the most stringent quality standards." **TW**

Navistar brings R&D activities together at revamped Melrose Park facility

By James Menzies

MELROSE PARK, Ill. – Navistar International has nearly completed the integration of all truck and engine product development activities at its Melrose Park Test Center and Engine Plant.

The company has invested \$90 million into the facility, while bringing activities previously conducted in Fort Wayne, Ind. to the location. Here, engineers and product developers work together under one roof, just a short shuttle ride from Navistar's global headquarters in Lisle, Ill.

Navistar has retained the test track at its Fort Wayne property but other engineering activities have been centralized in Melrose Park, Navistar officials said during a press tour of the facility in late May.

The Fort Wayne facility is now on the block but many of its former employees have made the move to Melrose Park.

Steve Nash, operations director, IPD, product integration and validation, said the company is realizing improved efficiencies as a result of the cohabitation of its engineering

workforces.

The facility now offers: 50 engine test cells; a corrosion lab with full vehicle chamber; a hot and cold chamber, capable of putting vehicles through their paces at temperatures ranging from -40 F to 130 F; a body development lab to test frontal impact and roof strength capabilities while also testing the durability of everything from cab doors to steps; a shaker test lab to simulate the punishment a truck will experience over its life-cycle; and development and build bays, where new vehicles and engines can be developed and prototypes built.

Phase 2 of the expansion will include the installation of a wind tunnel, noise/vibration/harshness testing capabilities and even a museum and cafeteria.

The site is also home to the manufacturing of Navistar's inline 6 engines, including the MaxxForce DT, MaxxForce 9 and MaxxForce 10. The plant is currently producing about 70 engines per day while running one shift.

The manufacturing section occupies 1.5 million sq.-ft. of space. Cer-

tain components, including blocks, cams and cranks are also built here and shipped to the company's Huntsville, Ala. big bore engine plant.

Nash said one of the greatest advantages of the revamped Melrose Park facility is the ability to work on engines and vehicles concurrently under one roof. **TW**

Ocean Trailer opens new B.C. dealership

DELTA, B.C. – Utility Trailer has announced the opening of a new Ocean Trailer dealership here, which will sell a full line of Utility's dry van, flatbed and Tautliner curtainside trailers.

Ocean Trailer, founded by the Keay family in 1981, is one of more than 100 Utility dealers across the Americas, the company announced. The new dealership sits on a 40-acre site.

"We purchased the land over seven years ago, but struggled with land and environmental permits," said Sid Keay, president of Ocean Trailer. "We finally had clearance and now opened up in a very strategic location in Delta. This area is progressively in development with a new highway system and direct access to Vancouver's largest port."

The new facility is 75,000 sq.-ft. and now also serves as Ocean's headquarters. The company employs more than 200 people and operates locations in Calgary, Edmonton and Winnipeg. The newest location is located at 9076 River Road in Delta, B.C. **TW**



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Cummins offering diesel, natural gas engines for refuse market

NEW ORLEANS, La. – Cummins today announced availability of a full line of diesel and natural gas engines for the refuse truck industry.

The company says its diesel engines will offer up to 2% better fuel economy than previous versions.

As diesel engines go, Cummins

will offer the ISX12 and ISL9 to refuse truck customers.

All engines will share a common electronic control unit (ECU), which will manage both the engine and the aftertreatment system, for improved overall combustion efficiency, the company announced at Waste Expo.

The engines meet the 2013 EPA emissions standards as well as 2014 greenhouse gas regulations.

On the natural gas side, Cummins Westport will offer the ISL G and ISX12 G engines, utilizing the same base engine and key components as their diesel counterparts.

The ISL G will be available with ratings from 250-320 hp while the ISX12 G will be available with 320-350 hp.

Customers can choose either an automatic or manual transmission with the ISX12 G. Full production of the 12-litre gas engine begins in August.

Like their diesel counterparts, the ISX12 G and ISL G are EPA13 and GHG14 compliant.

“Cummins is committed to providing refuse customers a complete lineup of clean diesel and natural gas engines that will deliver better fuel economy, reliability and durability, with lower operating costs,” stated Jeff Jones, Cummins vice-president, North American engine business.

“Cummins and Cummins Westport remain focused on continually improving our proven technology to provide products that best meet the unique needs of our customers.” **TW**

Bendix awards seven Canadian distributors

ELYRIA, Ohio – Bendix has honoured 37 distributors, including seven from Canada, for reaching its highest rank of platinum in its Premier Distributor Program (PDP). Distributors reaching platinum status represent the top 10% of companies in Bendix's distributor network, the company announced. They are evaluated based on six key measurement areas, including more than just volume, meaning all distributors have an equal chance to win recognition, the company says.

Canadian platinum distributors include: Bogar Truck Parts & Service, Windsor, Ont.; Buy-Rite Truck Parts, Mississauga, Ont.; CBS Parts, Surrey, B.C.; Fort Garry Industries, Winnipeg, Man.; Macpek, Quebec City, Que.; Quinte Truck and Trailer, Belleville, Ont.; and Ressorts Maska, Saint Hyacinthe, Que.

“The newest platinum members of the Bendix Premier Distributor Program continue our tradition of developing strong partnerships to provide

the heavy-duty aftermarket with the highest levels of performance, safety, value, and post-sales support,” said Tom Otter, Bendix vice-president of sales and marketing. **TW**

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Detroit's Virtual Technician onboard diagnostic system wins Edison Award

PORTLAND, Ore. – Detroit's Virtual Technician onboard diagnostic system has won a Silver Award in the Applied Technologies/Smart Systems category at the Edison Awards.

Established in 1987 and named after inventor Thomas Alva Edison, the Edison Awards honour excellence in product and service development, human-centred design and innovation. Evaluated by a panel of 3,000 judges, award winners represent game-changing products, services and excellence.

Detroit's Virtual Technician technology is designed to help reduce downtime and decrease maintenance costs by providing a technical snapshot of the engine's status as soon as the Check Engine light comes on. The Detroit Customer Support Center then relays the information to the provided contact to determine the exact issue, recommended service, how soon the engine needs to be serviced, and supply the closest authorized Detroit service location. Trained technicians are then alerted in advance of the customer's arrival, so they can line up the parts, arrange for service and repair the problem.

“Being recognized with an Edison Award is a significant honor, and we are proud that Detroit Virtual Technician has earned this achievement,” said Richard Shearing, general manager of sales for Detroit. “Virtual Technician is a ground-breaking technology that underscores our unwavering commitment to providing our customers with the most advanced tools to increase productivity and efficiency.” **TW**

OPINION

Good times, good causes

Every two years, associate publisher Kathy Penner and I strap on our lobster bibs and head east to the Atlantic Truck Show. It represents a great opportunity to get reacquainted with our East Coast friends as well as to sample some of the world's best seafood. We've just returned from this year's edition and I'm happy to report that despite Ma Nature's best attempt to keep the crowds away with torrential rain, Noah was able to pull his Ark up to the Moncton Coliseum and drop off enough people to set a one-day record for attendance. The event's Lobster Night raised \$16,000 raised for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation. Congrats to all!

Another great event held in June was the annual *Truck News/Chevron* Charity Golf Tournament. I may be just a bit biased, but this tournament has turned into one of the industry's best.

Money raised supports a charity that is dear to our hearts, the Make a Wish Foundation. This organization grants the wishes of children who have life-threatening medical conditions. One hundred and forty four golfers enjoyed a near perfect day and early indications are we raised over \$20,000!

As always, these events don't just happen. I'd like to recognize and thank the staffs of *Chevron, Truck News/West* and our good friends at NAL Insurance

Publisher's Comment

Rob Wilkins



for their time in organizing the day. A special thank you to the sponsors who help make this day truly special. And to our participants, the money you donated will make more than one child's dream become a reality. (A quick side note, there were certain individuals that night whose generosity was off the charts. I won't embarrass you by naming names, but words cannot describe our gratitude!)

We all know there are a number of well deserving charities. Unfortunately, unless you're Warren Buffet or Bill Gates, we all need to be selective in who we donate money to. It's not an easy decision and in a perfect world every legit charity would be well funded. (Then again, I suppose in a perfect world there would be no need for charities!)

Either of the above charities are excellent choices for your hard-earned donation budget. It's not always possible to donate money, but if you want to give, consider volunteering your time. You may be surprised at just how good it feels to give back. **TW**

Rob Wilkins is the publisher of Truck West and can be reached at 416-510-5123.

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By Edo Van Belkom

His adventure as a livestock hauler over and done with, Mark gave Bud a call, looking for a new load.

"Hello?" said Bud.

"Hey Bud, it's Mark."

"Mark who?"

For Pete's sake, Mark was getting tired of this. "Market Value, the driver against whom all others are judged."

"Wow, aren't you full of yourself today?"

"Did you hear how I saved a lamb on my last haul?"

"Yeah, I did actually. The company was pretty impressed and they'd be happy to have you back."

"That's nice to know, and I'm thrilled that it all worked out, but I don't think I'll be carrying animals again any time soon."

"Why not?"

"It's a lot of extra responsibility that I'd rather not have. I've got a hard enough time getting my loads to their destinations on time without having to keep them alive."

"I hear ya."

"Besides, I really don't want to have to think twice every time I stop into Harvey's and order an Angus burger."

"Alright, then," Bud said. "How about a load that's big, dumb and heavy?"

"Big, dumb and heavy," Mark said. "What are you gonna give me, a busload of dispatchers?"

"Oh, you are sooo funny. What you need is to take your act on the road."

"But I already am on the road."

"Then don't quit your day job."

Bud called back a couple of hours later. "Dalton?" Mark couldn't resist giving him the business. "Yeah, who's this?" He could hear Bud let out a sigh. "It's Bud."

"Bud who?"

"Bud Light."

"Sorry, the only Bud I know is heavy. Three-hundred pounds or more."

"You want this load or not?"

"What you got?"

It turned out that the big, dumb and heavy load was a trailer of reinforcement steel bars that needed to go from a steel mill just outside of Hamilton to a bridge under construction near Winnipeg. It was a nice load, a bit on the heavy side, but Mother Load had more than enough power for it. As long as he kept his speed at or below the limit, he'd be fine.

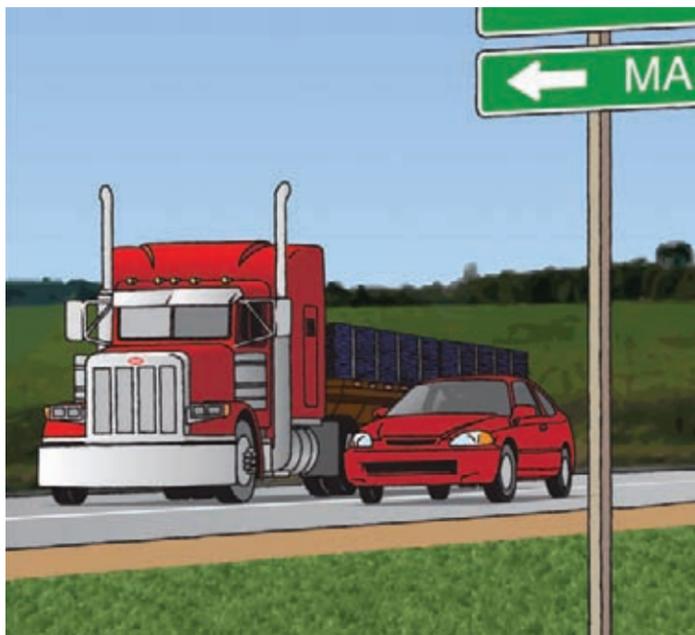
At the yard, Mark saw several trailers that were already loaded and awaiting their rides. Obviously there was plenty of work here for a driver who wanted it. However, the condition of the trailers themselves was a bit more telling. The rigs looked to be older models, with plenty of rust on the steel and an overall appearance that said "old and tired."

Still, a company that produced steel wouldn't be this busy if they didn't have a track record of producing a quality product delivered on time, right? Mark parked Mother Load and went into the shipper's office to collect the paperwork.

"You Dalton?"

"That's me."

"Your dispatcher told me to say, 'Dalton who?' Does



The Blame Game

PART 1

that mean anything to you?"

Mark had to force himself not to smile. "Not a thing, other than that guy is crazy."

"I don't know," the shipper shrugged. "Seemed alright to me."

"You got a bill of lading for me?"

"Yeah, sure."

Because of the condition of the trailer, Mark took his time doing his circle check. Sure everything was worn, but it was all in perfect working order and everything looked right. There were eight bundles of rebar on the trailer, four up front and four behind. Each bundle was banded by steel straps and the bundles were held down by eight heavy-duty straps, four straps over each set of four bundles. He tugged on each of the straps a couple of times and couldn't help but feel like a car buyer kicking the tires at a dealership.

Mark didn't have a lot of experience with such heavy loads, but he did have plenty of years on the road and with that experience as a guide, everything appeared to look right. And, this company had been shipping steel for years themselves, surely they knew what they were doing when they sent a load out. Mark made some notations in his log book, then hooked up the trailer. All the connections came easily together and locked up tight. With six hours of drive time still left in his logbook, he could still get a lot of miles under his belt before the day was over.

Getting through Toronto was tough. Traffic was stop and go and with such a heavy load it wasn't easy to do either. Mark tried to keep Mother Load moving slowly so he wouldn't have to use the brakes or use first gear so often, but keeping a gap between himself and the vehicle in front of him seemed to be an invitation for everyone to cut in front of him – even when it wasn't especially safe to do so. Later, north of the city on the open highway, Mark was careful with his speed. He kept the needle of the speedometer right around 100 km/h and the entire rig seemed to be happy at that speed.

But the rest of the drivers on the highway were another matter completely.

One hundred kilometres an hour was just too slow for the majority of drivers, even those with 18 wheels under their control. Mark understood that he was moving slower than most, and that people would want to get by him, but no one seemed willing to wait for a break in oncoming traffic. Drivers of cars, vans, and even small trucks were constantly risking lives to pass him and gain a few feet of highway.

At first he tried backing off every time someone was trying to pass, but after a while he found he was constantly trying to get his rig back up to 100. Eventually, he just kept his speed constant and if people wanted to get around him so bad, then they could do so at their own risk.

It wasn't long until someone decided to play daredevil. Mark was steady at 100 while oncoming traffic was busy enough to make passing difficult.

No problem for a driver of a Honda, though. Despite the solid yellow line. Despite a tanker truck approaching in the southbound lane.

And despite the highway opening up to two lanes in less than five kilometres, this driver wanted in front of Mark...now!

"Wonder if he'll make it?" Mark wondered aloud as he watched the Honda pull out from behind him and begin his pass. The car obviously didn't have as much power as the driver thought because it seemed to sputter in the passing lane, taking way too long to creep up Mark's side.

"Give it up, buddy," Mark said, keeping his speed steady.

Still, the Honda continued with the pass. The tanker was on them. Finally, the car found another gear and quickly shot past Mother Load.

But the gap had closed too quickly and the Honda cut right in front of Mark, nearly clipping Mother Load's left front corner. Mark turned right to avoid a collision, driving onto the shoulder causing the trailer to fishtail behind him. It wasn't a pleasant feeling – tons of steel moving back and forth, jerking the cab one way then the other.

It was the tail wagging the dog. Then something shuddered on the rig. Mark could feel the whole thing wanted to go right, but managed to muscle the steering wheel to keep all 24 of his wheels on the ground. The Honda was gone. Drivers continued passing him, honking their horns and giving him the finger for driving so dangerously. Who cared if it wasn't his fault, if he'd been cut off, and he was actually doing a fine bit of driving just to keep his rig under control?

After a few hundred metres on the shoulder, Mark signaled left and pulled back onto the highway. He brought it up to 80 and kept it there a while, taking deep breaths and wiping the sweat from his face, head and arms.

People were still honking at him, but he cared even less now. He was going to keep it straight and slow for as long as it took for his heart rate to get back to normal. **TW**

– Mark Dalton returns next month in Part 2 of *The Blame Game*.

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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Canada Cartage boosts Western presence

TORONTO, Ont. – Canada Cartage has announced it will be increasing service to one of its key Western Canadian clients to serve an additional 26 stores, marking a 21% increase.

The new service was launched June 2 and will provide outsourced fleet services for store-to-customers home delivery of products including lumber, shingles, windows and other home renovation products.

The trucks will be painted in the colours of the store, but will be driven and managed by Canada Cartage, the company says.

Canada Cartage said the new business resulted from the client's evolving

supply chain and their need to consolidate home delivery service from several suppliers into one channel.

"We are delighted to expand our long-term partnership with one of our major clients as they increase their home delivery service offering to their customers," said Paul Dunn, vice-president of the company's Direct2Home subsidiary. "Our focus for the first few months is managing their crucially important peak season with a complement of experienced drivers and expanding fleet. After that, we will look at improving existing processes to ensure we are operating at optimum efficiency." **TW**

Mullen buys Jay's Moving & Storage

REGINA, Sask. – Mullen Group announced today the acquisition of Jay's Moving & Storage in a deal expected to close on June 1.

Jay's, owned by Dennis Doehl and based in Regina, Sask., has been in business since 1964 and operates more than 600 trucks and trailers and 11 full-service terminals, providing LTL transportation services.

In 2010, the company was named Saskatchewan's Business of the Year by the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce.

"We are extremely pleased to add Jay's to our organization," said Murray Mullen, chairman and CEO of Mullen Group. "Dennis Doehl is a true entrepreneur starting with just a couple of trucks nearly 50 years ago. His company has an exceptional reputation for providing outstanding service to its customers and we look forward to working with the management team to enhance the service offerings to Mullen Group's existing customers and realizing on the potential synergies resulting from this acquisition. This is a great company with an established history and a strong management team. As such, we anticipate a quick and smooth transition."

Mullen said Doehl would stay on for the remainder of the year to assist with the transition. Jay's will operate as a stand-alone company under the Mullen Group umbrella and is expected to add revenues of \$35-\$40 million. **TW**

Contrans expands waste division

SLAVE LAKE, Alta. – Contrans Group has purchased waste collection company Deuce Disposal. Based in Slave Lake, Alta., Deuce has been providing waste collection services – including residential waste collection and recycling, commercial waste collection/recycling, metals processing and custom waste bin solutions – since 1981.

It is expected to bring annual revenues of \$9 million to Contrans.

"Since our entry into the waste collection business in 2010, we have been looking to add to this line of business,"

said Contrans chairman and chief executive officer Stan Dunford.

"This successful business was built on a foundation of exceptional service. The team at Deuce has developed some customized collection services for unique customers in their local area. There are numerous new investments in the local businesses and the oilfield production infrastructure, and we believe Deuce will successfully grow along with its customers. This transaction adds a new dimension to our fast growing waste collection business in Alberta." **TW**

Yanke rewards drivers for long-time service

SASKATOON, Sask. – Yanke Group recently celebrated the achievements of 47 professional drivers and staff members, including five drivers who've reached two million miles with the company.

The awards were presented as part of Yanke's quarterly Key Business Indicator and Service Awards luncheon. Drivers reaching the two million mile mark with Yanke included: Gerald Hinks, Jason Hunter, Andrzej Jaworski, Paul Miller and Erin Skomoroh. Collectively, they've circled the globe more than 400 times in service to Yanke, the company points out.

"Our industry is one of constant change and transition. Many companies struggle to retain good people. We have endeavoured to put in place programs that make Yanke a desirable place to work and I am very proud of our retention record, and of these five operators specifically in their achievement," said Russel Marcoux, president of Yanke Group of Companies. Drivers and staff with five, 10, 15 and 20 years of service were also recognized at the event. **TW**

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

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

Last Employer _____

Name _____ Company City _____ Prov/State _____

Tel _____ Start/End Date _____

Job Description _____ Reason for Leaving _____

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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...

Thank goodness for global warming – spring finally arrived in southern Alberta just in time for us to miss our nearly annual Victoria Day weekend major snowfall. Perhaps we'll get it during Stampede this year, maybe just in time for the parade!

Barbecue season

Anyway, it's now barbecue season (which in our household means it's "someone else's turn to barbecue" season, since I regularly turn out little black rocks where meat used to be). In Alberta, that also means the Alberta Motor Transport Association's annual string of driver barbecues (I was gob-smacked to discover they don't really cook drivers!), which kick off in this month of June. AMTA's annual salutes to truckers are held at Alberta inspection stations, via the auspices of Alberta's Commercial Enforcement officers

(and no, they aren't there to shoot fish in a barrel thanks to having a captive audience – or so I was told when I attended one on a particularly wet and nasty day a couple of years ago).

The lunches are free (see, there is such a thing!) and drivers are invited to stop by as they pass. Here's a list of this summer's events: Vermillion, June 20; Leduc, June 26; Whitecourt, July 10; Dunmore, Aug. 9; Demmitt, Sept. 11; and Balzac, Sept. 6. Don't forget, if you're at the first barbecue, to say "Thanks Vermilion!" as you drive off...

Driving standards

Elsewhere in this issue I outline how the AMTA is helping to develop commercial driver standards in Alberta, but the topic of upping the education ante for drivers is also high on the list of priorities in other western provinces as well.

In beautiful British Columbia, the Immigrant Employment Council of B.C. has awarded the B.C. Trucking

Association \$196,000 to develop a professional driver vocational assessment tool aimed at helping new Canadians who apply for positions as drivers, as well as employer licensing and training resources.

According to the BCTA, the tool will be meant to help assess an applicant's "job-readiness" in terms of technical skills as well as with respect to "communications, customer relations and other important qualities." They're going to test the tool on 25 pre-screened immigrants who are actively seeking to work in the biz. The licensing and training resource for employers is meant as a reference tool that outlines the licensing and testing requirements, training regimen, and the like, that employers need to assess the qualifications of applicants who have non-Canadian licences and/or experience.

The money is part of 11 projects the Council is supporting to help employers, industry and business associations develop help integrate skilled immigrants into B.C. workplaces.

The BCTA says it hopes to have both projects ready to go by March, 2014.

They aren't sitting on their hands in Manitoba, either, where the MTA is offering some summer courses designed to help drivers hone their skills. A Professional Driver Improvement Course (PDIC) is set for July 9, with an LCV course scheduled for the following day.

According to the MTA, the PDIC course is designed to fine-tune a driver's skills. The course is taught from the professional truck driver's perspective and is aimed at experienced drivers only. In fact, they recommend that participants have at least a year of professional truck driving under their belts before enrolling.

The LCV course (July 10) is also aimed at experienced professional drivers. It meets the regulatory requirements for LCV drivers in all four western provinces and is made up of four classroom hours and a three-hour road test. The MTA also supplies a manual participants can keep upon completion of the course.

To qualify, you need to have 150,000 kms (or 24 months) of driving experience on articulated vehicles. For info on either course, contact the MTA at 204-632-6600.

Positive negatives?

Okay, the "negative" pun doesn't work anymore in an era of digital photography, but so what? Anyway, the BCTA, which is celebrating its centennial this year, is holding a photo contest for teens. To no one's surprise, the theme is commercial road transportation in B.C., including trucks and motor coaches (I assume taxis don't count, which should cut down on the damn Prius shots!). Photos "should capture something about the industry – people,

trucks, cargo, motor coaches, whatever you'd like to highlight."

The best part? Cash prizes! First place scoops \$400, second place "snaps" up \$200, and the third place entry scores \$100. The contest is open to teenagers who are "children, step-children, foster children or grandchildren of owners OR current employees of a BCTA member company (motor carrier or associate member) who are 13 to 18 years old during the term of the contest." And isn't that quite a mouthful? Time is short to get involved, however: deadline is June 28.

The association is also throwing a 100th anniversary members' open house on July 18 at its Langley office. The bash will feature a "delicious summer barbecue buffet lunch, swinging music and fun activities" as well as offering a first look at the photo contest-winning submissions as well as a chance to drive the Trucking Safety Council of B.C.'s remote-controlled tractor-trailer through what's billed as "a fun and challenging obstacle course." The lunch runs over an extended lunch hour from 11:30 to 2:30. For more info on the photo bombing or the bash, contact the BCTA at 604-888-5319 or bcta@bctrucking.com.

Getting the walk around

As opposed to the runaround? Trucking HR Canada has unleashed the HR Circle Check, a free online tool designed to help fleet managers analyze and improve their human resources practices. Available at www.truckingHR.com the tool, according to Tamara Miller, the group's director of programs and services, is a self-assessment tool that offers "a similar step-by-step process for analyzing the policies and procedures used to attract, train and retain the people who work with the trucks."

Using the tool apparently only takes about 15 minutes, yet with it they say you can create a high-level overview of business practices such as: Managing the business concerns related to human resources; Attracting qualified candidates; Managing the application process; Screening and assessing candidates; Hiring and orientation; Understanding retention and turnover; Mentoring new employees; Creating a high-performance workplace.

Fleets can also apparently use the results of the overviews to focus business-planning efforts. **TW**

That's it for this month! As always, if you know of – or have – an event or an achievement you think deserves publicizing to your peers, fire me off an e-mail to jim@transportationmedia.ca. Naturally, we can only print what we have room for, and it has to fit into today's ideas of good taste, so (as a lawyer once communicated to me) "govern yourself accordingly."

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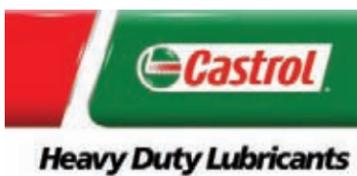
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