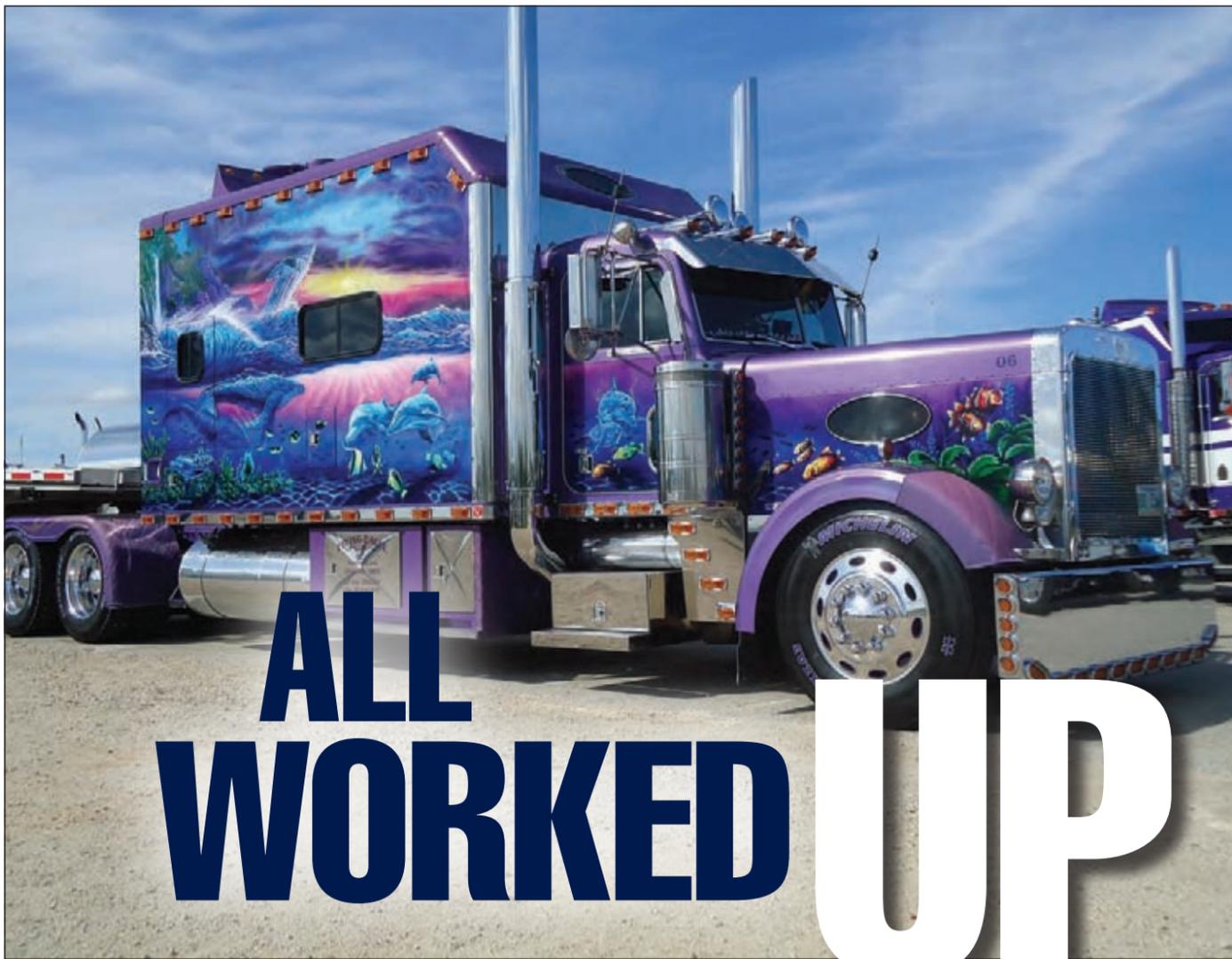


TRUCK WEST

October 2012 Volume 23, Issue 10

Delivering daily news to Canada's trucking industry at www.trucknews.com



PICTURESQUE IN PURPLE: This ain't no Sunday driving rig. Working trucks like this Flying Eagle big bunk Pete got their due at the Working Chrome truck show in August.

Sick and 'tire'd

Western Canadian trucking industry frustrated with limits on wide-base tires

By James Menzies

CALGARY, Alta. – Twelve years after new-generation wide-base single tires hit the North American trucking market, most Canadian provinces still impose limits on their use, even though they're arguably the most fuel-efficient tire available.

While Ontario and Quebec have allowed weight parity with duals, all other provinces continue to limit the tires to US load limits. This, even though impending national fuel economy standards for model year 2014-2017 vehicles will push trucking companies to spec' the most fuel-efficient vehicles possible.

There's hope in the industry that an anticipated report from Laval University will put to rest any lingering perceptions that the new-generation super-singles are more damaging to roadways than duals.

"The pavement issue is the card (legislators) always come up with" to limit weights on wide-base tires, explained Francois Beauchamp, field engineer with Michelin, which has been among the strongest proponents of wide-base single tires.

This limitation on fuel-efficient wide-base single tires is a major frustration for Canadian fleets running east-west. While they

Continued on page 32

Working trucks get their due at *Working Chrome truck show*

By Mark Lee

WINNIPEG, Man. – I've visited all the major truck shows in the past couple of years. I enjoy spending time visiting the trade shows and seeing all the new products on display, but each and every time, my first port of call is the show truck section.

As a member of the press, with

a flash of my credentials, I can get photographs before the arena is officially opened and engulfed with visitors. I also get to visit with the drivers who bring their trucks to the show. This is a good thing, as once the doors open to the public, I would have no chance.

For me, this is one of the perks

of my job as member of the team here, but truck shows are not just for the members of the press – they're for the drivers and fans of trucking, so why shouldn't they enjoy the same benefits? Largely that is because of numbers, but mostly because of the size of the events themselves. Manufacturers and

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Navistar's new path

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Mark Dalton O/O



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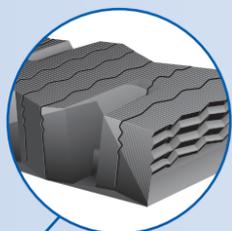
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It's time for governments to end hypocrisy

The transportation industry, by its very nature, is an obvious target for legislators looking to reduce this nation's greenhouse gas emissions and other pollutants. It's one of the largest contributors of harmful emissions, any way you slice it. Yes, trucks have gotten cleaner and greener in recent years, with the advent of an alphabet soup collection of acronyms: EGR, DPFs, SCR, DEF...you get the idea.

Now the feds, both north and south of the border, are looking to regulate carbon emissions.

It's never going to end, folks. There are bureaucrats who justify their existence by finding new pollutants to control and, as I mentioned before, transportation is the first place they look.

There are benefits to this, I won't deny it. I do believe the air we breathe is slowly improving, especially those of us who spend significant time around diesel-powered vehicles.

If anything, the latest GHG regs are something the industry should be willing to embrace. Greenhouse gases are closely linked to fuel consumption, meaning any reduction in these harmful emissions will likely come in lockstep with a lower fuel burn. This means significant savings for fleets.

But what really gets me going is the hypocrisy shown by these very governments that want to see the industry reduce its GHG output yet at the same time, will penalize them for – or disallow them from – using some of the most obvious fuel-saving technologies available.

Take for example, wide-base single tires. Ontario and Quebec, to their credit, allow full parity with duals on the latest generation super-singles. But those two provinces are an island oasis in the middle of an expansive country. East of Quebec and west



of Ontario, weights on wide-base singles are restricted to US loads. As you'll read on pg. 28, no transport minister wants to risk being the one to approve higher weights for wide-base singles and then come to find out later that they cause more damage to infrastructure than traditional duals.

But the real tragedy is, this mindset is based on outdated data. They're basing their concerns on experiences with a past generation of super-singles that has about as much in common with today's tires as a smoke-belching 1986 Ford Louisville has with a 2012 Cascadia. Apples and oranges. Sadly, many of these transport ministers view their portfolio as a stepping stone to greater ambitions and don't want to risk – or create – a legacy.

Another example is trailer tails, which extend from the rear of the trailer providing undisputed fuel savings upwards of 7%. The Canadian rule makers, in their infinite wisdom, have decided these devices are dangerous in the event of rear-end collisions. Yet, roll-off chassis and flat-decks with rearward

facing forklifts hanging off the back are perfectly legal.

You can fold these fairings in with a couple of fingers. They're lightweight and collapsible. What is there to be afraid of?

I don't oppose government's role in mandating cleaner-burning on-highway equipment. I'm proud of the progress the industry has made over the past decade in this regard. But you can't have it both ways. If government wants the industry to go green, it needs to grant access to the tools with which it can accomplish these ambitious targets. Allowing parity with duals on wide-base tires as well as the use of full-sized trailer tails would be a great way to start. □

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ACI: Don't get left behind

Our cover story this month points out that the date for Canada Border Service Agency's Advanced Commercial Information (ACI) e-manifest requirements to go into effect is fast approaching and questions whether motor carriers are ready to comply.

Judging by the fact there is about six weeks left to go till CBSA's Nov. 1 deadline (as of press time) – yet fewer than 1,000 carriers have signed up for the new e-manifest portal – it would seem the deadline may catch many unprepared. With the implementation of e-manifest, highway carriers transporting goods into Canada are required to transmit cargo and conveyance data electronically to the CBSA prior to arrival. The cargo and conveyance data must be received and validated by the CBSA a minimum of one hour before the shipment arrives at the border.

Motor carriers may have delayed jumping on board because the CBSA itself has played pretty loose with deadlines over the past few years. The program was initially set to be rolled out in June 2010, then in September of that year, and then it was pushed back to Oct. 31, 2010 before being sus-



ended indefinitely. Key to the delay was creating an acceptable online portal which carriers could use to file their Customs documentation. But that finally came online last August and so CBSA is stressing the latest deadline is for real.

Not all carriers may choose to use the CBSA portal to send their shipment information. Large fleets may opt to build their own electronic data interchange (EDI) approach; others may choose to rely on third-party service providers. But the purpose of the CBSA-portal, as our cover story indicates, was to provide a user-friendly, cost-effective (it's free to use) way to transmit data for small and mid-sized fleets. Unfortunately, the number of those signing up so far has been less than impressive.

Carriers who did not take a test drive of the portal over the past year, missed out on an opportunity. Early adopters have more time to adjust to the process and ad-

dress any problems they encounter before they start affecting their crossborder shipments.

It's also too bad more carriers have not been early adopters, because apparently the experience with ACI is pretty good. The Canadian Trucking Alliance has surveyed its members to gauge experience with ACI so far and reported that while there are issues to address, implementation of ACI is going well.

Where problems do exist is at the port of entry and with US clients. Respondents to CTA's survey said that further education is needed to clarify the process at the border. As well, CTA members reported that many of their US customers are not prepared for ACI. But those kinds of issues, and the education required to remedy them, require time to communicate.

As with all border legislation, there will be a period of "informed compliance" before fines are assessed. There is no better time than now then to get familiar with the new requirements and CBSA's e-manifest portal. □

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CLASS 8 TRUCK SALES TRENDS

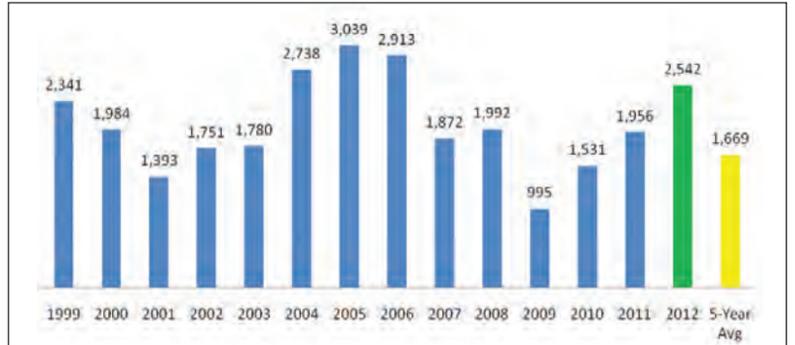
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Monthly Class 8 Sales – July 12

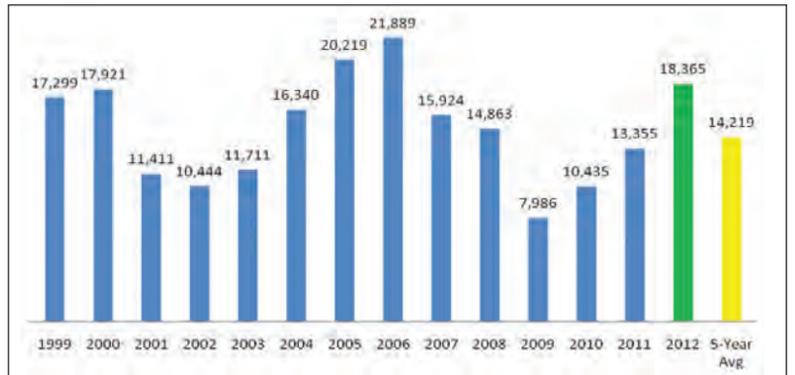
OEM	This Month	Last Year
Freightliner	612	453
International	438	379
Kenworth	489	452
Mack	199	143
Peterbilt	330	214
Volvo	265	196
Western Star	209	119
TOTALS	2542	1956

This summer was sizzling not only in temperatures but also in Class 8 truck sales. A strong June was followed by a strong July with Class 8 sales hitting 2,542. That proved to be the fourth strongest July in our recorded period, trailing only behind the record-setting years of 2004 to 2006. The monthly total was about 900 units above the five-year average. Every manufacturer surpassed its monthly sales totals from the previous year, in most cases by a healthy margin.

Historical Comparison – July 12 Sales



Historical Comparison – YTD July 12

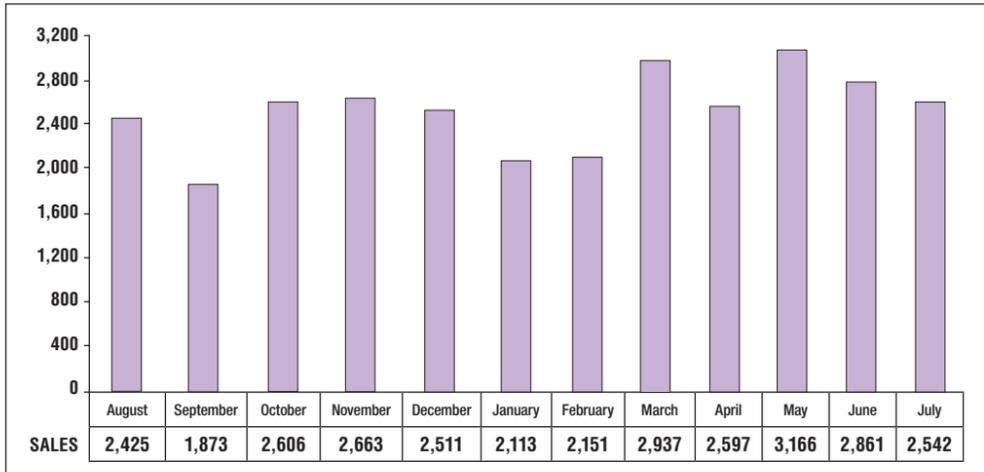


Class 8 Sales (YTD July 12) by Province and OEM

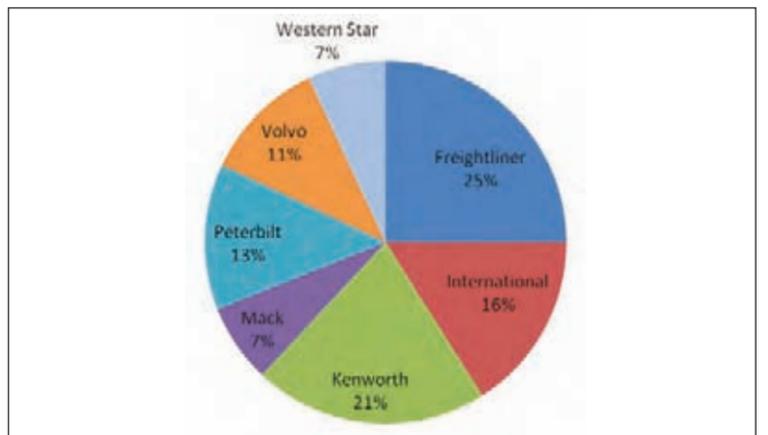
OEM	BC	ALTA	SASK	MAN	ONT	QUE	NB	NS	PEI	NF	CDA
Freightliner	343	440	135	395	2,062	774	210	87	24	8	4,478
Kenworth	394	1,646	249	148	661	651	81	0	0	0	3,830
Mack	62	260	114	77	528	249	40	23	0	10	1,363
International	101	439	53	179	1,274	578	103	54	21	40	2,842
Peterbilt	241	799	180	353	411	353	90	15	0	0	2,442
Volvo	134	177	75	169	988	408	75	53	0	3	2,082
Western Star	227	453	61	29	179	244	53	73	0	9	1,328
TOTALS	1,502	4,214	867	1,350	6,103	3,257	652	305	45	70	18,365

The Canadian and US economies may have slowed in recent months but the economic recovery, sluggish though it may be, continues. And so does the surge in Canadian Class 8 sales, which can be called anything but sluggish at this point. Class 8 truck sales have slipped in the US but so far in Canada sales remain strong. The 18,365 trucks sold after the first seven months in the Canadian market are more than 4,000 better than the five-year average. To date, 2012 is the third best year for truck sales dating back to 1999.

12-Month Sales Trends



For the tenth straight month sales climbed above the 2,000 mark, reminiscent of the industry's capacity boom years of 2005 to 2007. The 2,542 trucks sold in July, although not able to keep up with May and June's totals, were still considerably above the 2,000 mark. Our Transportation Buying Trends Survey found that 46% of Canadian carriers expect to purchase new Class 8 trucks in 2012. Question is if most carriers are looking to simply replace older equipment rather than add capacity, how long will the buying spree continue?



After seven months of sales, Freightliner, last year's Canadian market leader, has slipped slightly but retains a commanding 25% share of Class 8 sales. Navistar International is up slightly from the previous month with a 16% share of the market and has announced a change in direction with its engine technology. Kenworth retains a 21% market share while Peterbilt has moved upwards to grab a 13% share. Volvo is the only other OEM to enjoy more than 10% market share.

Source: Canadian Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association

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IN BRIEF



THE WINNER IS...: Pictured (L-R): Darcy Hunter, Fountain Tire store manager; Sid Adduono, tire sales rep, Fountain Tire; Henry Van Ramshorst, winner of the contest and owner, RamCett Enterprises; and Robert Garland, RamCett driver.

Hooked Up reader wins set of Goodyear steer tires

THUNDER BAY, Ont. – Henry Van Ramshorst, owner of RamCett Enterprises in Thunder Bay, has won a set of Goodyear G399 Fuel Max steer tires as part of a promotion in *Hooked Up*, a bi-weekly newsletter written by *Truck West* editor James Menzies.

Goodyear is the exclusive sponsor of the popular newsletter, in which Menzies asked readers to submit their most entertaining tire-related horror story.

Ramshorst won for his first-hand account of learning a valuable lesson

about the dangerous cocktail of excessive speed, hot weather and tire heat. Ramshorst recently picked up his set of tires at Fountain Tire in Thunder Bay.

Hooked Up is now giving away a set of Goodyear mixed service steer tires. This time around, we're looking for a story of tire heroism; an instance where your tires exceeded your expectations in an especially hostile environment. For more info, check out *Hooked Up*. You can sign up for free at www.trucknews.com/hookedup. □

Saskatchewan truckers honoured for roadside aid

REGINA, Sask. – Two Canadian truckers have been named the latest pair of Highway Angels by the Truckload Carriers Association. Laurent Pennacchio and Olegas Milevskis, team drivers for Yanke out of Regina, Sask., are being recognized for helping a young family involved in an accident.

On June 29, Pennacchio was travelling on Highway 17 in northern Ontario, while Milevskis slept. After coming around a sharp curve in the road, Pennacchio saw a vehicle that had just been involved in a serious accident. A woman and two children were standing nearby.

Pennacchio pulled over and woke Milevskis up. The men gathered safety jackets and flashlights and then approached the vehicle, only to discover a large moose lying on the ground that had collided with the car.

The father, who had been driving, seemed injured, but was not moving and was still inside the vehicle. Quite shaken, the mother was attempting to

describe the location of the accident to a 911 operator, but her unfamiliarity with the remote area was making it difficult. Pennacchio provided the details so that emergency personnel could find the scene quickly. Then, the drivers comforted the woman and asked her permission to take the two children out of the cold and into their warm truck. Pennacchio stayed with the kids while Milevskis assisted with traffic control and waited with the woman. Both men stayed on the scene until the accident site was secured by police.

"I would like to thank your drivers [for] their assistance at the scene," wrote a constable of the Ontario Provincial Police to Yanke after the fact. "In this isolated section of highway – and certainly after dark – few people are willing to assist people in need. Cell phone service is spotty, which delays the response time of emergency crews, so any initial help is important." □

Manitoulin to feature in Ice Road Truckers TV series

YELLOWKNIFE, N.W.T. – Alex Debogorski of Ice Road Truckers fame will be hitting the far north again for a sixth season of the popular series. This time he'll be driving for Manitoulin Transport, putting the company front and centre on a big stage. Season six of Ice Road Truckers hits the History Channel lineup beginning Aug. 29 at 9 p.m. This year, the show will focus on Canada's remote Dempster Highway.

Debogorski will face unseasonably warm weather during the series, which creates the thinnest ice the winter roads have ever seen, according to a release. Manitoulin CEO Gord Smith said he's looking forward to seeing the company's vehicles undertake the challenge in the capable hands of Debogorski, adding, "We're proud to have Alex represent us." □



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BORDER

ACI e-manifest requirements are coming Nov. 1. For real, this time. Is the industry prepared?

By James Menzies

OTTAWA, Ont. – Canada Border Services Agency's (CBSA) Advanced Commercial Information (ACI) e-manifest program for Canada-bound loads is set to go into effect Nov. 1. For real, this time. They swear.

The program, Canada's answer to CBP's ACE, was initially set to be rolled out in June 2010, and then in September of that year and then it was pushed back to Oct. 31, 2010 before being suspended indefinitely. One key piece of the puzzle was conspicuously absent all along; a CBSA portal that carriers could use to file their Customs documentation. That didn't come online until August 2011. Now, CBSA insists it's ready to roll out ACI in earnest.

In short, e-manifest requirements will work this way, as explained on the CBSA Web site: "With the implementation of e-manifest, highway carriers transporting goods into Canada are required to transmit cargo and conveyance data electronically to the CBSA prior to arrival. The cargo and conveyance data must be received and validated by the CBSA a minimum of one hour before the shipment arrives at the border."

But how prepared is the motor carrier community? The large fleets and Customs brokers are already filing much of their documentation electronically, as required under ACI. But what about the small to mid-sized fleets?

According to Amitha Carnadin, media relations spokesperson with CBSA, 932 active business accounts have been created to use the portal, which can be found online at www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca.

That represents a startlingly small proportion of Canada's cross-border trucking industry. Since the portal went live last August, 255 carriers have used it to file 32,882 submissions.

It's worth noting, not all carriers will choose to use the CBSA portal. Large fleets can build their own electronic data interchange (EDI) clients and fleets of all sizes can rely on third-party service providers. Still, the CBSA portal was meant to be a user-friendly, cost-effective (it's free to use) way to transmit data for small and mid-sized fleets and it appears few have signed up for the service just weeks before the program is launched.

The CBSA is now urging carriers to get up to speed with the program before the new e-manifest requirements go into effect.

"The Agency strongly encourages clients to adopt e-manifest requirements before they become mandatory," Carnadin said in an e-mail to *Truck West*. She pointed out early adopters benefit from: more time to adjust to the process and address problems; a vast collection of online resources and tools; and reduced likelihood of

non-compliance when enforcement begins. (CBSA told *Truck West* there'll be a period "to encourage informed compliance" before fines are assessed, but the agency didn't specify how long that period would be).

Carriers interested in using the portal should go to the site, file for a CBSA-issued carrier code and then choose a method of filing information.

High-volume carriers are encouraged to explore EDI options, while the portal itself was developed primarily for small and mid-sized carriers. Fleets looking to choose the EDI method must first apply to become an EDI client, and then compatibility testing with CBSA's e-manifest Technical Support Unit could take two to three months to complete.

"The transmission of advanced commercial information to the CBSA using either the e-manifest portal or an EDI method and with or without a third-party service provider is an individual business decision," Carnadin said.

Carriers that have been early adopters of ACI report "expedited processing at the border upon arrival into Canada," Carnadin said.

Customs brokers, by and large, have been among the first to explore the CBSA portal in detail. Shirley Smith, president of Buckland Customs Brokers, said her staff finds the portal to be well designed, all in all.

"I don't know if it's as good as CBP's portal," she said. "They have a very good portal. But certainly we've done some testing on it (CBSA's portal) and from a carrier perspective, it seems to be adequate."

The biggest flaw noticed in the CBSA's portal is its inability to store user data, which would make it easier to file information related to repetitive loads. An in-house solution, or one developed by a third-party service provider typically would allow the user to save certain information so they don't have to re-enter it every time they use the site.

Still, Smith said she thinks the CBSA portal will be a good option for small carriers that aren't constantly crossing the border. A key difference between the CBSA portal and that of the US CBP is that the American portal requires driver information whereas the Canadian portal does not.

"I think not requiring the driver

immigration data makes it much simpler than the US model, where you also had to have the driver's information as well," she said.

Smith says her firm already files 98% of its documentation electronically and she hopes the CBSA sticks to its guns and rolls out the program already.

"I think CBSA has done a fairly good job in getting the information out to the various industry sectors in all the logistics disciplines," she said. "From our standpoint, there's been some frustration in that the timeline keeps getting pushed out, so it becomes very difficult to prepare."

The big question may be whether or not there will be pandemonium at the Canada border on Nov. 1, as thousands of trucks arrive at the border oblivious to the new requirements? CBSA doesn't think that'll be the case.

"The CBSA is making every effort to prepare for the implementation of the new requirements for advanced electronic trade data, with a view to delivering a reliable and predictable commercial processing system with tangible benefits to the trade community," Carnadin said via e-mail.

"We are well poised to address any increases in traffic volumes and will make adjustments as needed. Our officers are fully trained and equipped to handle the new requirements. The agency strongly encourages clients to adopt e-manifest requirements before they become mandatory." □

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BORDER

New hours-of-service rules "defy reason": C.R. England chair

By James Menzies

DALLAS, Texas – A serious disconnect between the realities of trucking and the decision makers in Washington and state capitols around the US is threatening to seriously hamper the industry's productivity. That was the message from Dan England, chairman of C.R. England and also the American Trucking Associations as he spoke at the Commercial Vehicle Outlook Conference in Dallas.

England held up the new hours-of-service rules as Exhibit A. He noted that since the current rules were put into place in 2004, truck-related fatalities have declined 29% and injuries even more so.

"With this kind of performance, you ask yourself 'Why is the government coming forward and wanting to change the hours-of-service rules?' It seems to defy reason. It's

all about politics. It's very clear the current Administration is beholden to certain interest groups, labour being one of them," England said.

The ATA has sued the FMCSA, and given the flawed data the agency has used to support its case, England said he's optimistic the association will defeat the proposed changes. In a cost-benefit analysis prepared by the FMCSA, England noted the agency deviated from its usual consensus that 2.2% of truck accidents were caused by fatigue and now uses a figure of 13%.

This is because the agency now considers all "associated factors" to be the cause of the accident, and in some cases fatigue may be just one of several so-called associated factors.

As an example, England said a crash involving a mildly fatigued driver, on an unfamiliar road, in bad weather after being cut off by another

motorist is now categorized as a fatigue-related accident.

"This is the kind of reasoning that's being used by the agency in trying to justify these changes," England said. "That's a tremendous error they're making. Instead of looking for one causal factor in an accident, they're looking for associated causes and there could be five or six associated causes."

Even using that flawed logic, England said the costs of the new rules will still outweigh the benefits. England figures his company itself would require six to 13% more hours to complete some of its dedicated runs than it does today if the new rules go into effect.

England also pointed out the FMCSA overstated the benefits of the new rules. According to England, the FMCSA says there would be US\$170 million in savings if 10%

of drivers got an additional 4.8 minutes of extra sleep per night under the new rules and another \$20 million would be generated for every 14.4 seconds of extra sleep per night.

"Does that make sense to you?" England blasted. "This is the kind of reasoning we're dealing with here."

England also had some critical words for CSA, which the ATA originally supported – and still does, though it too has its flaws. England said the FMCSA has rushed the roll-out of CSA and lost sight of its original charter, which was to improve safety and reduce truck-related fatalities.

England said too many carriers are being deemed unsafe by shippers and insurers, even if they have garnered alerts in categories that aren't directly linked to safety. For example, the new HazMat BASIC has seen many part-time HazMat haulers red-flagged for seemingly minor violations such as improperly displaying placards. An uninformed public sees the red flags and assumes the carrier is unsafe.

"Most carriers who haul HazMat on a regular basis don't seem to have a problem in terms of it showing them as being on alert and so forth, but carriers who haul HazMat on an irregular basis, they tend to show poorly in this area," England explained. "What it really does is measure how well you put placards on your trailer. I ask you, what does that have to do with safety and crash risk? It really has nothing to do with it."

Another issue south of the border is the attempt by desperately broke state governments to reclassify independent contractors as employees, so they can generate more employment taxes. England said the movement is gaining steam and is supported by labour unions and trial lawyers – the former so they can organize them and the latter so they can sue carriers for not extending benefits that company drivers are entitled to.

"We at the ATA are working very hard on a state-by-state basis in fighting this issue," England said.

Another battleground for the association is that of highway funding. Many legislators are leaning towards road tolls to generate revenue without introducing new taxes. However, England said the industry favours higher fuel taxes. The reason?

"When a road is tolled, of every \$1 taken in by tolls, 35% goes to administrative costs," he said. "In the case of fuel taxes, it's about 1%. The politicians support tolls so they don't have to support taxes, so the taxpayers won't be angry. But the end result is the taxpayer pays more money anyway because of the tremendous administrative costs."

When asked what four more years of Obama may mean to the trucking industry, England was candid: "I just don't like the direction the country is going in right now," he said. "There's a certain demonization taking place of businesspeople and that demonization is reflected in increased regulations and poor regulations...What it ultimately means is that there's going to be more costs associated with doing what we do and I don't think there will be an improvement in safety." □

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BOOK REVIEW

Trucker Ghost Stories

A UFO abduction at Deacon's Corner Truck Stop in Winnipeg and a female trucker gets French-kissed by a ghost in her Peterbilt bunk. A trainee and his over-the-road mentor on a driving test run hit a mother and her baby, but there's no body to be found. When the police arrive, the trainee explains breathlessly, "Thank God, I missed her." The police officer says stone-faced, "Yeah, by about 28 years."

These are a few examples of stories told by truckers in the new book *Trucker Ghost Stories*, compiled by author Annie Wilder and just released through Tor Books Inc.

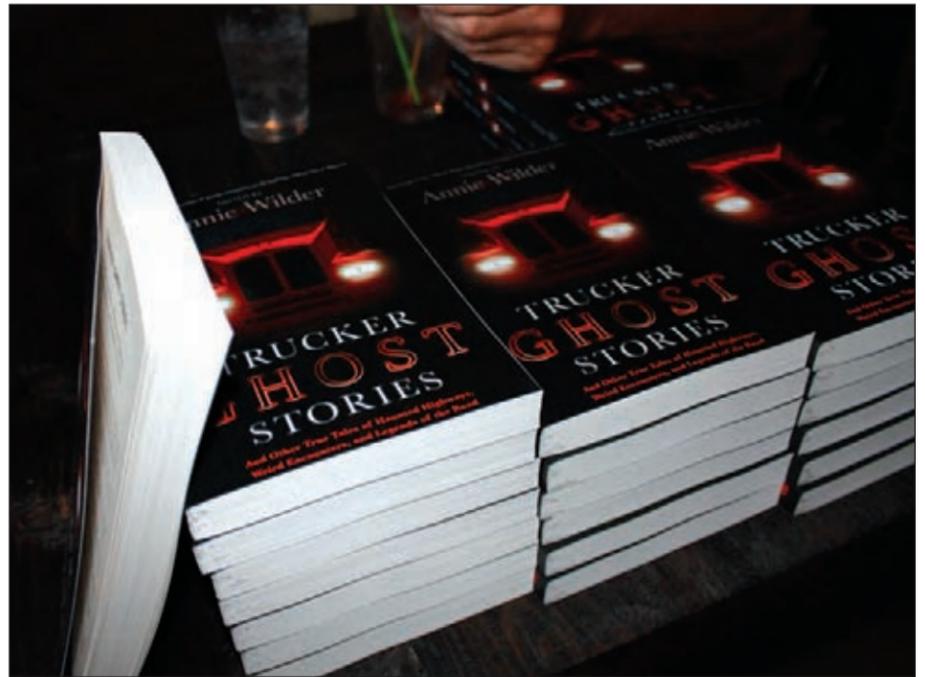
Trucker Ghost Stories is Wilder's third book, continuing her theme of ghosts and tales of the unknown. She should know about ghosts and spirits. She lives in a

haunted house in the small picturesque town of Hastings, Minn.

She suspected that it was haunted when she first toured the house with her realtor. She bought it anyway, and she was right.

Wilder's first book was entitled *House of Spirits & Whispers*, which describes the strange events that occurred in the 120-year-old house immediately after she moved in. She discovers that the house is inhabited by the spirit of the previous owner, Leon.

Wilder is fearful at first, but begins to learn to live peacefully with the spirit, who tends to be a rather benign ghost. She and her husband claim to have seen Leon and often feel his presence. I toured the house a month or so ago and sadly, I did not see or hear Leon but did experience a few anomalies, such as lights



blinking on and off inexplicably.

Wilder's motivation to write a book about true tales of haunted highways began while watching

Ice Road Truckers. She said, "Oh my gosh, I have an idea for the perfect mash-up of paranormal and uber-masculine profession: trucker ghost stories!"

She remembers the days back when she was a young girl answering phones at her father's sand and gravel company.

While trucks loaded up, Wilder had a few minutes to meet the drivers but especially remembered trucker Bill Sykes, a tall rail-thin fellow who wore cowboy boots, black slicked-back hair and a long chain on his wallet. He loved to tell the story of a little ghost girl he saw on the highway. Wilder was hooked on ghost stories.

As she began to gather ghost stories from truckers around the world, she had a vivid dream about Sykes...or was it his ghost, because Bill has been gone for a few years?

In her dream, Sykes showed up with his black slicked-back hair and simply nodded to her and left. She took that as a sign that she had his blessing.

It took a few years but Wilder's book *Trucker Ghost Stories* is in book stores and online. I read it and loved it, but then I have enjoyed ghost stories since my father and his friends swapped spooky stories back in rural Cape Breton when I was a kid. I am still a bit of a skeptic, but I keep my mind open. After all, I have only seen one ghost. That's a story for another time.

For bunk-time reading, if you aren't easily spooked, pick up a copy of *Trucker Ghost Stories*. The Foreword is beautifully written by trucker Terry Aldershof. He has driven nearly six million miles.

He writes: "These are our stories – stories told by real truck drivers and by their families and colleagues in the transportation world. If you met us, you will be able to recognize us by what they call the thousand-yard stare in our eyes – for we have seen so much more than you ever will." □

– Stan Campbell is host of *Trucker Radio*, a syndicated radio show that can be heard on dozens of country music stations across Canada, the northern US and in Europe. For more info, visit www.TruckerRadio.com.



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OPINION

Technology replacing truck drivers with steering wheel attendants

I read last month's issue of this magazine on my smartphone. It's amazing how technology has allowed me to read a magazine at the touch of a button. Well, not even at the touch of a button – I just touched an icon on my screen and the complete magazine appeared as if by magic.

Look at that in isolation and it's quite an achievement. But is it really necessary and is it that much more convenient? In reality, all it changed was that instead of getting off my butt and picking up a copy of the magazine, I reached into my pocket and tapped on my screen. Everything I wanted from the magazine was still there in front of me, for sure, but the experience itself was not as pleasurable as actually sitting down and turning the pages myself. I was still in control of what I read, but at the same time, I wasn't in control of the magazine. I was in

You say tomato,
I say tomahto

MARK LEE



control of a bunch of microprocessors and other technological wizardry that was doing all the work for me.

It isn't difficult to flip a page, just as it isn't difficult to crank a window up or down, or shift a gear in a transmission, or to find a destination in an atlas, yet now to do any of those things all we have to do is push a button and a microprocessor does it all for us.

Trucks are going the same way. Get into the cab of a brand new model and there are no sticks and levers to be found, all you see are buttons and switches. Under the skin there are now kilometres of

wiring and electronic control modules galore. The average truck now has more computing power than the space ship that took the man to the moon.

There are cars today that can park themselves. I'm not talking about top of the line BMWs or similar either, you can get all this on a sub-\$20,000 family car. Pretty soon this will filter down to trucks, cameras in the rearview mirrors will be linked to motors in the steering gear and all you'll have to do to hit the dock is touch an icon on a screen and the microprocessors will do the rest.

We already have automated manual transmissions that shift gears for us. They take information from a variety of sensors in the engine, transmission and suspension systems and come up with an ideal gear for the situation.

We have traction control, lane

departure warning systems and adaptive cruise control that keep us a safe distance from the vehicle in front. Coming down the pike in the very near future is cruise control that is linked to GPS so that it knows when you're approaching a grade and gets ready to apply more power or downshift.

My question is, do we actually need any of this? Or is it just being done because it *can* be done? Even going back to basics, do we really need a combination of switches and electronic motors to raise or lower a window when a simple winding handle and a few cogs will do the same job?

Do we need a computer to shift gears? Do we need a computer to judge a safe following distance or tell us that we're veering out of our travelling lane? Do we need a computer to get the truck on the power or in the right gear for a hill? Do we need a computer to tell us which way to turn at an intersection so we can arrive at our destination without getting lost?

The honest answer is, no we don't. I know that times change and that we need to improve things to progress, but sometimes progression can be a bad thing. In the case of trucking, I think that in the long-term it will do more harm than good. For one thing it will spell the end of the truck driver. We will be replaced by the 'steering wheel attendant.'

A truck driver knows when they need to shift a gear and they know how to time that shift so that it goes through smoothly. A truck driver knows that they're in the correct position on the highway, not too close to the vehicle in front or over the centreline or on the shoulder. A truck driver knows through the seat of their pants or the feel through the steering wheel when the roads are slick, and drives accordingly. A truck driver knows how to read an atlas and find a destination.

On the other hand, a steering wheel attendant needs help in every one of those areas. They need the truck to shift for them, they cannot judge speed, distance and road position, they rely on traction control to judge road conditions and apply brakes and cut the power so they can keep it out of the ditch. How can that possibly be considered as progress?

I can see a time in the near future when all the truck drivers have disappeared and been replaced by steering wheel attendants. The freight will still move and to the outside world, nothing will have changed – until there's a malfunction in one of the systems and the steering wheel attendant doesn't know how to react, because all the basic skills of keeping a truck on the road have been eroded due to years of having everything done for them by a computer – and there's a catastrophe. It's a scary thought. □

– 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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CANADA

Roadcheck 2012's driver, vehicle out-of-service rates near record low

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The 25th annual Roadcheck safety blitz, conducted by the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA) in June, saw a record number of truck and bus inspections and the second-lowest vehicle and driver out-of-service rates for Level 1 inspections in the event's history.

Of the record 74,072 truck and bus inspections, 48,815 were North American Standard Level 1 inspections – the most comprehensive roadside inspection – of which 22.4% of vehicles and 3.9% of drivers were placed out of service.

The overall out-of-service rates for the entire event – which includes all inspection levels – were 20.9% for vehicles and 4.6% for drivers, both representing an increase from last year's numbers.

Despite the positive trend on the Level 1s, the numbers indicate that one in five vehicles selected for inspection was found with a violation serious enough to be considered an imminent safety hazard. "These mixed results indicate that, while the attention paid by industry to maintenance and regulatory compliance generally is improv-

ing, more needs to be done by industry and enforcement alike," officials said in a release.

Organizers said Roadcheck 2012 emphasized a focus on braking systems and Hours-of-Service, the top-ranking violation categories for vehicles and drivers, respectively. Despite the increased focus on these areas, the proportions of brake-related and hours-of-service-related violations relative to all out-of-service violations declined slightly. In addition, seatbelt violations issued totalled 848, the fewest recorded since 2007.

During the event, CVSA estimates that over 9,500 CVSA and Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration inspectors participated at approximately 2,500 locations across North America.

As well, 10 US states and two Canadian provinces engaged part of their enforcement activities to focus on vehicles serving oilfield and natural gas

production sites, where increases in commercial truck traffic have raised significant safety concerns.

"Roadcheck continues to shine a spotlight on the critical importance of the roadside inspection program across North America and how vital it is to commercial vehicle safety and our march toward zero deaths on our roadways. I appreciate the continued focus by both enforcement and industry towards ensuring that it remains a top priority," said CVSA president David Palmer, an assistant chief with the Texas Department of Public Safety.

"This is a clear indication that enforcement and industry's efforts during Roadcheck are having a positive impact," said CVSA's executive director Stephen A. Keppler. "This goes to show that even in these difficult budgetary times for states, provinces and local agencies that each and every roadside inspection is important and makes a difference." □

Ontario cities among worst speed trap locations

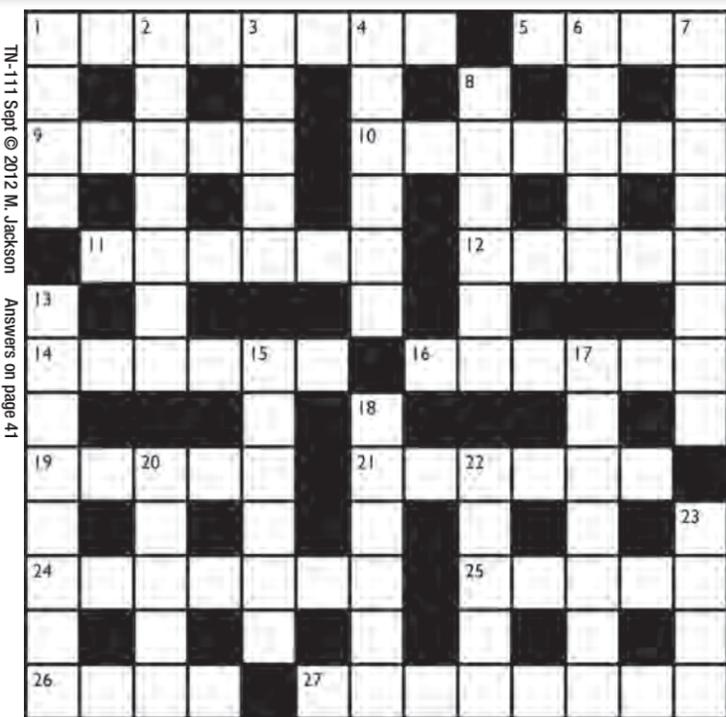
WAUNAKEE, Wis. -- A recent public poll conducted by the National Motorists Association (NMA) has found that three Ontario cities are among the worst speed trap locations across the US and Canada. Windsor, Hamilton, and Mississauga rank third, fourth, and fifth, respectively, in the Worst Speed Trap Cities category for cities with populations greater than 50,000. Flower Mound, Texas and Livonia, Mich. Ranked number one and two in the same category.

Not surprisingly, Ontario took the top spot in the Worst Speed Trap States and Provinces category, with Nova Scotia coming in second. The province faring best with voters was Quebec, coming in 52nd place out of 53 states and provinces.

The NMA analyzed the most recent five years of data from its Web site, The National Speed Trap Exchange, which lists tens of thousands of chronic speed traps in the US and Canada and includes descriptive commentary about each listing. To develop the rankings, the NMA calculated the total number of affirmative votes across speed traps in a given community and then indexed the total to the community's population size.

For its part, the NMA condemned speed traps as typically combining "arbitrarily low speed limits with heavy traffic enforcement designed to generate ticket revenue. While the intent may be to modify driver behaviour long-term, that is rarely the result. Speed traps keep springing up in the same locations, the issuance of tickets flows unabated, and there is no material effect on traffic safety. That is why the NMA advocates for increased speed limits in chronic speed trap areas supported by traffic studies and proven engineering principles." □

THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD PUZZLE



Across

- 1. Medium-duty maker in Woodstock, ON
- 3. Info-laden tire section
- 9. Tim Hortons baked goods
- 10. Tridem axle count
- 11. Truckers' cargoes
- 12. Engine-output measurement
- 14. Truck-leasing alternative
- 16. Ryder rig
- 19. Convertible season
- 21. Transmission and differential parts
- 24. Cargo-restraint type
- 25. Mack motors
- 26. Dipstick info (3,5)
- 27. International ____ FORCE engine

Down

- 1. Canada's Steel Capital
- 2. Cross-border trade pact
- 4. Road maps' city sections
- 5. Do Not ____, one-way-street sign
- 6. Dashboard channel (3,4)
- 7. Lender's claim on financed truck
- 8. NV commercial vans' brand
- 13. A GVWR category (5,3)
- 15. Georgia-overdrive gear
- 17. Certain International tractors
- 18. NB-PEI link
- 20. Canadian-flag leaf
- 22. Zamboni-driver's workplace
- 23. Canadian diesel-fuel brand

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OPINION

Applying the Smith System for defensive driving to everyday life

Sometimes you just need to step back and view the world through a different lens. I was reading over The Smith System for defensive driving and started thinking about how we can apply those proper visual habits to the issues we face in our professional and personal lives just as easily as we can apply them to our physical world.

The first seeing habit we develop is to 'Aim High in Steering.' As professional drivers we know that by looking at least 15 seconds ahead, we allow ourselves the reaction time we need to adjust for the changes ahead.

So I asked myself how often do I look 15 years down the road at my own life and the industry I work within? The answer was not often enough.

The second seeing habit is to 'Get the Big Picture.' As professional drivers we depend on our peripheral vision to detect movement, which we then investigate with our central vision and react to appropriately.

There are hundreds of issues we face every day affecting the path our lives may take and I had to ask myself if I was getting the big picture here? Am I just letting current events carry me along without even noticing their effect on my daily life?

The third seeing habit is to 'Keep Your Eyes Moving.' If we develop a fixed stare while driving, it is sure to get us into trouble. We need to keep scanning and picking up on all that movement fed to us by our peripheral vision.

Do we do the same thing in our personal and professional lives? Think of the fixed stare we have developed around issues such as hours-of-service, electronic on-board recorders and speed limiters.

I started making these comparisons because I had just watched Sebastian Thrun's *Ted Talk* on Google's driverless car. It's a short video, just go to YouTube and search Sebastian Thrun. It's fascinating stuff and it put me on to a lot of different reading material regarding technology, transportation infrastructure and where we may be headed over the next couple of decades.

So you may be thinking, 'Come on Al, you don't honestly believe that trucks will be moving freight down the road without a driver behind the wheel, do you?' Call me crazy, but yes, that's exactly what I'm proposing.

It's not going to happen for some time, but we already see signs of automation moving in that direction.

Anti-rollover technology and advances in braking systems are one of the first steps, parking assist that allows a car to park itself is becoming all the rage with auto manufacturers.

The agriculture industry has been rolling out automated sprayers and combines that use GPS to map a field and then complete the job without further input from the operator.



Over the Road

AL GOODHALL

Pretty cool stuff, all of it. The potential benefits are huge and that in itself will continue to drive innovation and implementation of this type of technology. Watch Thrun's video and apply some of his observations about this technology to the trucking industry and you'll see what I mean. So that brings me to the last two steps of the Smith System.

The fourth seeing habit is 'Leave Yourself an Out.' Or, protect yourself from being trapped by errors of other people. If you don't practice the first three seeing habits diligently you will always find yourself boxed in, put-

ting you in a situation that leaves you dependent on the actions and reactions of others.

The fifth seeing habit is 'Make Sure They See You.' If the people around you are not practicing those first three seeing habits you can wake them up by making sure they know you are close by and aware of what is happening around you.

As drivers we do this by flashing lights, blowing the horn, or making eye contact. In our daily lives we do the same thing by networking, Tweeting, posting messages on Facebook, blogging, writing letters to the editor, voting, lobbying, joining business groups, etc.

I can't help but think that we have developed a fixed stare surrounding the hours-of-service issue and its close cousin the electronic on-board recorder. These

issues are in our immediate field of vision, just a few feet in front of us.

That fixed stare is preventing us from seeing the issues further down the road that require our attention now so that we have time to react accordingly. We're not getting the big picture. We are being reactive and not proactive. That is affecting our daily lives in the present moment and we are feeling the anxiety.

These five simple seeing habits are a great way to view the world we live in as well as the road ahead. □

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



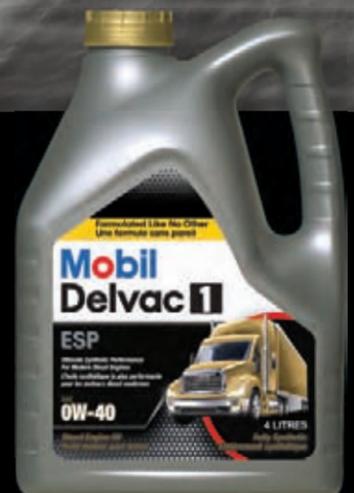
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TAX TALK

Learn how to use CRA's online services

Monitoring your own online profile has its advantages

Last month I referenced situations where owner/operators were lied to by their accountants and tax preparers. I mean, when you get a letter from Canada Revenue Agency requesting your latest GST/HST return, how many times do you have to hear your accountant tell you, "I just sent it in" when you know in your gut that he didn't?

No matter who prepares your tax return, it's up to you to make sure it's accurate and filed on time. When you're counting on someone else for help, how do you verify that your personal or business tax accounts are up to date?

You have to contact CRA. You can call, of course, but you should be prepared to wait a long time on hold.

Tax Talk

SCOTT TAYLOR



A better way is to manage your CRA accounts online. A few years ago CRA introduced two programs as a way for individuals and businesses to have online access to many of their accounts and to perform various functions and filings with CRA.

My Account for Individuals

My Account for Individuals lets you view 11 years of tax returns, so if

your tax return was filed you'll see it online.

If your 2011 tax return is shown as "not received," and your tax preparer says he sent it in, you'll know you need to correct the problem by: a) submitting the return; and b) finding another tax preparer.

You can see information about your personal tax refund, your balance owing and payments on the account, set up or change banking info for direct deposit of your refund, check your RRSP limits, and get details about any payments from Child Tax Benefit, GST/HST Credit, Universal Child Care, and other related programs.

You can also change your address and phone numbers online

so your CRA mailings will updated properly.

My Business Account

My Business Account is a similar electronic service for accessing CRA business accounts and asking CRA account-specific, tax-related questions. Business owners can use My Business Account to interact electronically with CRA on their GST/HST, payroll, and corporate income tax accounts. Not sure if your accountant filed your GST/HST return? Just go online and check.

Not only will the online service tell you when the return was filed, but once the return has been processed it will tell you when the money will be direct-deposited into your bank account. Now that's darn handy information!

You can also file returns, check account payments and balances, view correspondence from CRA, update bank info, request a CPP/EI ruling, and register a formal dispute.

Another feature we use with all of our clients is called Represent a Client. Our clients sign a CRA form to authorize us as a representative. This gives us access to almost all the same information and features available through My Account and My Business Account.

One service that saves tons of time and aggravation is that we can get info on missing tax information slips – T4s, T4As, T4A(P)s, T4A(OAS)s, and T4Es. If these slips get lost, we can simply go download them from CRA.

Actually, there's another common use of this service. If our client is at the bank getting a loan or refinancing and needs a copy of his latest Notice of Assessment from CRA, we can go online, download it, and fax it to the bank for him. A big convenience and a fast solution.

Signing up

You'll find lots of information about both programs at www.cra-arc.gc.ca, including demos to walk you through. Signing up takes four steps: you provide some personal information; create a CRA user ID and password; create security questions and answers; and enter a CRA security code, which will be mailed to you.

An electronic push

In keeping with CRA's push to become more electronic, many of its District Tax Offices are going to stop offering payment counter services. So no more running to CRA at the last minute to pay your account.

According to CRA, you now only have three ways to make a payment: pay through your bank's Web site or phone banking; pay through CRA's My Payment service; and pay by cheque with a bank teller. Funny that CRA no longer lists mailing a cheque as an option.

I know not everyone is comfortable with CRA's emphasis on online account management. If you need help or reassurance, contact your accountant or tax preparer. And if you don't think you'll get a straight answer, talk to me. □

– 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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FUEL ECONOMY

Common sense solutions for the pursuit of fuel economy

With so much talk recently about the importance of maximizing fuel economy, I would like to share some observations with you that I have discovered over the years.

With the rising price of fuel and the need to be more efficient in our daily trucking routines, common sense often gets overlooked while technology garners most of the attention.

Ten years ago, one of my supervisors asked me to try a liquid product that made claims of increased fuel economy. I was quick to discount any product that made such claims as 'snake oil,' but took on the task of monitoring and graphing any net benefits of the product.

To achieve the accuracy required, I set strict parameters to ensure the results were reliable. The truck was a 379 Peterbilt day cab with a C-13 Cat running to Michigan daily.

I made sure tire pressures, levels, and speed were constant and consistent. I began to time traffic lights and reduced my roadside stops. I observed a decent improvement in fuel mileage while other trucks testing the product did not.

As a result, we did not purchase the product by the case. Still curious about the results, I continued employing the same parameters as when testing the product and the results did not change – my fuel mileage remained good. It became apparent that the strict parameters for accuracy set at the start of the



test were what was causing the improvement in fuel economy. To my own embarrassment, it was driver conduct that made the improvement – not the product.

A month or so later I was asked to take a truck for a test drive. The truck's regular driver had reported poor handling, lack of power, and poor fuel mileage. After inspecting and taking the nearly new Pete 387 for the day, I really didn't want to report my findings because I knew what the end result would be.

Every tire was down 20 lbs and the engine was down three gallons of oil. Again, driver conduct was the culprit, albeit on a much larger scale. Needless to say, I didn't make any friends that day.

Since those days of 89 cents a squirt, I keep a mental note of the factors that cause my vehicle to labour excessively, whether it's my own personal vehicle or a company truck. Some people call it 'hypermiling.'

It's really not that extreme or high-tech; mostly it falls into the realm of common sense. Low fluid levels will cause radiator fans to activate more frequently and the detrimental effects of inad-

equate lubrication are obvious. Like the aforementioned Pete 387 that wasn't performing to expectations due to driver neglect, I have encountered a lot of equipment in this state. The vehicle may still be able to pass a roadside inspection in this state, but performance will suffer. Here are some of the most commonly overlooked problems:

Tire pressures: Tire pressures fluctuate by up to 15 psi between summer and winter temperatures and must be adjusted to their cold settings. 'Cold' refers to their ambient temperature at rest. This not only maintains consistent fuel mileage but also extends the life of the tire by preventing irregular wear. Many fleets in the summer may be running on 115 lbs whereas, in the winter the tires are running on 85 lbs.

Fluid levels: Too often, fluid levels are deemed to be not safety-related and as a result, they get ignored.

Non-functioning greasing systems or the lack of grease: Poor lubrication can cause a vehicle's performance to suffer.

Shock absorbers: They may appear intact and devoid of any signs of leakage, but there's no guarantee of a functioning control system, since evidence of a malfunction can

easily be washed away under normal use. Salt spray, road dust or a random power washing can make leaks invisible at a quick glance. Without conducting a heat test, there is no way of knowing if shocks are working. Daily and roadside inspections do not identify non-functioning shocks.

Lastly, I would like to add that not enough attention is given to new technology. I'm not speaking about truck technology, but rather the advances in communication between parties involved in the movement of goods.

A driver can be notified of an error before the fuel is wasted. An on-board GPS can get a truck to its destination the first time without wasting fuel searching or pulling over to read maps.

Getting lost is costly. Satellite monitoring systems may cover hard braking, idling, and excessive speed, but they don't identify all the problems outlined in this column.

The tips outlined above are rudimentary steps to fine-tuning fuel mileage. While emerging truck and trailer technologies have helped pinpoint efficiency losses, we've taken a step back by ignoring the simple rules. □

– Angelo Diplacido has been trucking for 30 years, both as an owner/operator and company driver.

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						\$144.40

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OPINION

Why are small fleets viewed as the scourge of the industry?

I see my role here as a *Truck West* contributor as quite simple. Once a month, I climb up on my newsprint soapbox and offer an opinion on an industry-related subject, while periodically mixing in a little useful information. My only firm guidelines are to address these issues primarily from a small carrier's standpoint, and to avoid being confrontational or insulting towards any group or individual. The latter is my biggest challenge. Even if I wasn't painfully cynical and opinionated, some issues facing small carriers must be addressed with an occasional verbal jab, just to be properly understood.

This month, I need to temporarily change gears and shake up the whole premise of this column; kind of an uphill backhaul, if you will. Rather than offering an outright opinion, I'm using this month as an opportunity to raise questions instead. I don't expect answers; rather these questions are in-



Small Fleet, Big Attitude

BILL CAMERON

tended as a tool for serious self-reflection by those managing both small and large carriers.

The largest share of industry interviews in trucking publications and the mainstream media are conducted with large carriers, for obvious reasons relating to accessibility, profile and recognition. (Aside from *Truck West*, few publications provide any outlet at all for the small fleet perspective). These interviews with owners of large carriers don't always express an opinion that is shared industry-wide. I'm not a huge fan of any industry organization or trucking support group – large or small – and in that, I'm not alone.

So how, aside from regular corre-

spondence with the *Truck West* editorial staff, does a small carrier representative offer his or her opinion? You will note that nearly every industry study or initiative is conducted by a panel consisting solely of OTA or CTA members who, arguably, conduct their affairs very differently than us smaller outfits. This usually results in noticeably slanted policy.

If the action was initiated by OTA or CTA, fair enough, but why the limited input for government-requested commentary? Although we make up the majority of trucks on the road, our presence doesn't exist on the national or legislative stage. Shouldn't this change? How? Any contact that I have had with transport ministries, past or present, left me with the impression that my opinion was not only unwanted, but an intrusion. Strange that if highway safety and productivity is supposed to be a universal goal, input from anyone heavily involved in

this industry should be anything less than welcome, whether or not you are affiliated with an association.

Ask a large carrier what has been the single biggest downfall to strike this industry, and many scornful fingers will be wagged towards smaller carriers; primarily involving deregulation. How, exactly, was this such a tragedy? Some of the largest carriers in Canada were born after deregulation. Those of us who continue to operate small are quite confused about what we've done wrong. Although supposedly the cause of falling rates, our freight rates, with some exceptions (even I can admit there are always exceptions) are traditionally higher than those offered by large carriers. At one time, trucking surveys identifying the largest carriers included revenue numbers which, when divided by number of power units, appeared laughable to the manager of a small carrier. The laughing grew louder when we noticed trailer inventories were two to three times the number of power units.

Most flow charts on expense calculations and staffing costs usually range from 2-4% profit margins, apparently because the industry has not shown a need for the profit margin chart to go any higher. In my experience, small carriers, although paying higher costs for equipment, fuel, and even drivers, are generally above 8%. Although our equipment is often older, our maintenance is frequently far above the standards followed by large fleets.

This is possible, mostly because our equipment is accessible to home base more often. The other reason is that more frequent preventive maintenance services are viewed as a good investment in equipment. We do not generally stretch maintenance intervals as do large carriers, because our equipment numbers are not so large that stretching intervals represents a savings; rather, it is a poor and misleading practice, or as I refer to it, false economics. Our drivers and owner/operators are generally very well paid. Bearing all these facts in mind, what the hell have we done that is such a detriment to the industry?

Nearly all the large carriers started small and grew quickly. This shows that in the early days, the owners of these companies displayed a nearly unmatched business sense and an uncanny, thorough knowledge of the trucking industry.

Simple good luck doesn't allow the growth from one truck to 1,000. So in the matter of rates and customer service, what happened? Did the ultra-successful growth formula get forgotten along the way? Did growth in vehicle numbers become more important than practical, manageable, and profitable growth? Or are we small carriers greedy, and reaching for unrealistic customer service goals?

I've saved my largest question for the end: We're all in the same line of work, during the same economic times. The phrase "Level the playing field" is used more often than a tire hammer during a pre-trip. The smaller carriers with a "revenue per travelled mile" 20% higher than the large carriers are not driving new Cadillacs. So why have I been able to ask any of the above questions at all? □

– Bill Cameron and wife Nancy currently own and operate Parks Transportation, a four-truck flatdeck trucking company. Bill can be reached at williamcameron.bc@gmail.com.

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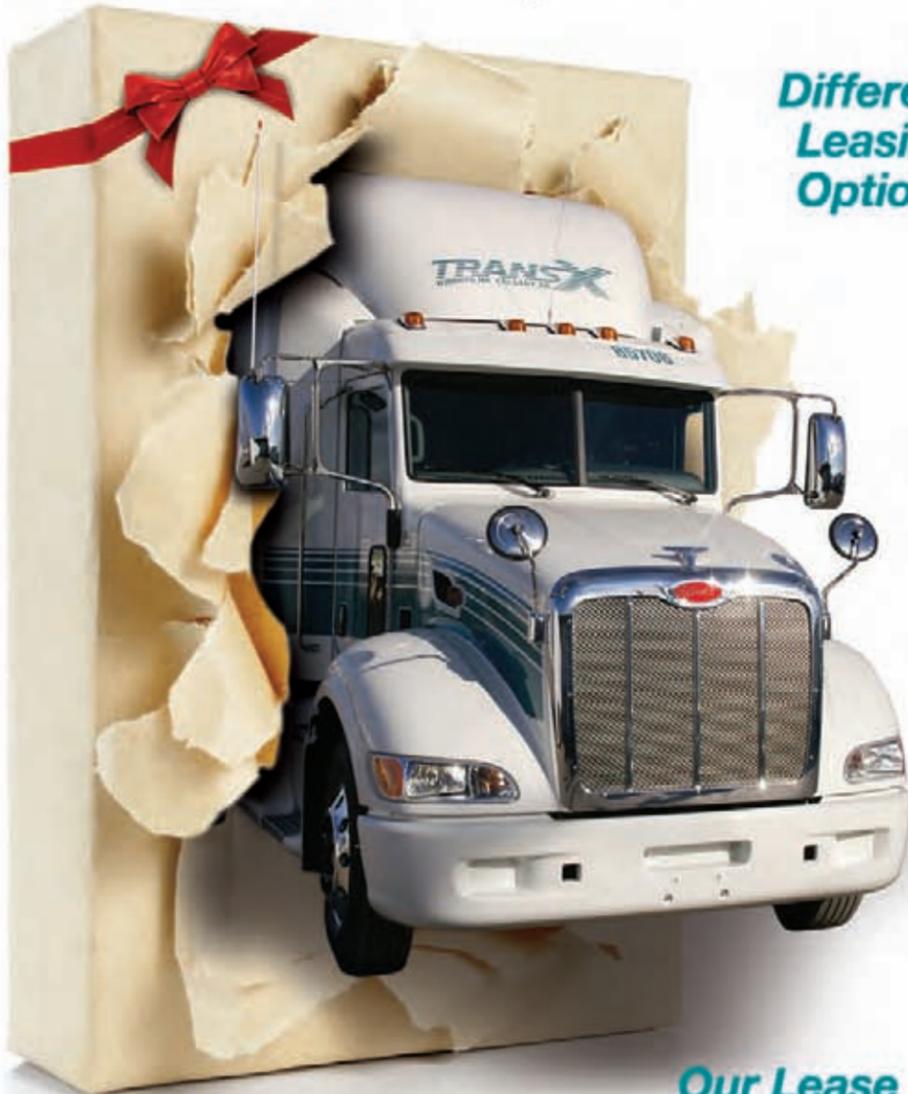
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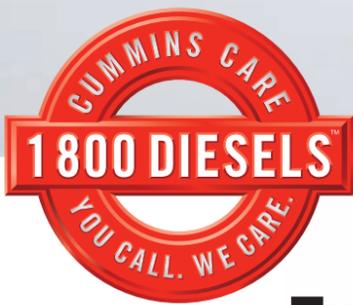
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SASKATCHEWAN

Campaign aims to add traffic capability to northern gateway

By Jim Bray

PRINCE ALBERT, Sask. – The Windsor-Detroit border crossing isn't the only Canadian gateway where there's been considerable talk of adding a second bridge.

Saskatchewan's booming economy may be good news for its citizens, and even the country as a whole, but it's also straining the province's infrastructure as traffic increases with the boom.

It's to the point now where the Diefenbaker bridge across the North Saskatchewan River in Prince Albert can't keep up with the traffic – a situation made worse by severe slowdowns that were caused after a crack was discovered in a support girder back in August, 2011. The cracks led to the closing of the southbound lanes, with all traffic squeezing into the northbound ones while repairs were made.

Making things worse for truckers, a weight restriction of 15,000 kgs was inflicted during that period, though it was raised to 63,000 kgs this past March.

Repairs and weight restrictions notwithstanding, however, the bridge is still deemed to be inadequate to handle the traffic volume as it increases over time. The answer, to some, is to build a second bridge across the North Saskatchewan to help handle the load.

"Prince Albert is known as the

Gateway to the North," said Al Rosseker, executive director of the Saskatchewan Trucking Association (STA), "but right now it's the bottleneck to the North."

He noted the problems being encountered by his organization's carrier members with the existing bridge are both numerous and onerous.

"It seems like almost every second week there's a lane shutdown for who knows what? They're checking the bridge or they're doing some other kind of measurements or adjustments or tests," he said, "and it just slows everything down going into the north or coming out of the north."

That unfortunate reality led to the formation of the Build a Second Bridge Committee, a group whose makeup includes Prince Albert City Council, members from the North Central Enterprise Region, the Prince Albert and District Chamber of Commerce and a group called New North, which advocates for Northern Saskatchewan municipalities.

The STA is also on-board, though Rosseker said the STA isn't

exactly leading the charge.

"We've sent letters of support to the chamber of commerce and the Premier," he said, noting that the Committee has only been up and running for a few months and that not much else has happened so far.

Regardless of the need, getting a new bridge built may be easier said than done.

"A bridge is going to cost a minimum of \$130 million and probably more," Rosseker said, "and I doubt a city the size of Prince Albert would have those kind of

reserves or that kind of borrowing capability. So it would be a question of senior governments coming to some kind of agreement on funding or maybe a public-private partnership."

R o s s e k e r

thinks a strong case can be made for a second bridge, though he also thinks it may be an uphill battle in the grand scheme of Saskatchewan infrastructure projects.

"I think that basically at this point (the province) can see a need," he said, "but it's the timeline that's the issue – is the need for tomorrow or in five or 10 years?"

And since the Brad Wall government has an abundance of infrastructure issues on its plate right now, "I doubt that putting a second bridge in at P.A. is high on their radar," Rosseker said. On the other hand, "it's one of those situations where if they start seeing a groundswell of support it slowly starts making its way higher on the list of wishes and wants."

So far, however, the bridge advocates haven't heard much in the way of encouraging words from the province.

"It's not an outright 'no'," Rosseker said, "but in the next fiscal year I would think that they certainly won't be making any kind of major funding commitment until studies have been done – and they would probably check with the federal government as well to see how the expense can be justified."

As it sits right now, then, while there's definitely a need for the bridge, a lot of groundwork needs to be done before the span becomes anything more than dream.

"At this point I doubt they've even the selected a site to get across the river," Rosseker pointed out, "so it's extremely preliminary." Not only that, but the STA itself doesn't think the Prince Albert bridge is as important as some other projects elsewhere in the province. "It's not even on the list of infrastructure priorities that we as a trade association sees," he said.

Higher on the STA's list is the infrastructure surrounding the Global Transportation Hub just west of Regina.

"There's probably seven or eight

interchanges that are needed, minimum," Rosseker said, noting that each of those projects costs about \$35 million. He also called for a southeast bypass to take eastbound trucks on the Trans-Canada around Regina, as opposed to through the outskirts of the city as is the case now. "We have a ring road with development on both sides," he said, "but it's a ring road that has traffic lights on it. I mean, come on! The way it's working now there's a couple of real bottleneck areas of trucks going in and out so that presents its own set of problems right now."

Rosseker said the STA is also looking into the possibility of twinning Hwy. 6 from Regina to the US border, as well as finishing the twinning of the highway that connects Saskatoon and Prince Albert. "So there's lots of other priorities right now," he said.

As for getting the second bridge underway, "there has to obviously be a business case," Rosseker said, "and I would think that the Chamber of Commerce that's spearheading it out of PA and the Prince Albert city administration are going to have to sharpen their pencils and get their ducks in a row."

Those ducks include outlining what the bridge lobbyists see in terms of hard rock mineral production in the areas affected, how the stuff is being shipped now – pointing out the Diefenbaker bridge as a bottleneck – and making the case for how much more truck traffic and development would be possible in the North if the second bridge were a reality.

"At this point it's baby steps," Rosseker said, "and for anyone to think we're going to have a new bridge across the river in three or five years, I don't think it's going to happen."

Saskatchewan's recent economic successes are good news for its people, but they're also a double-edged sword – in that it's showing up all kinds of new challenges.

"This is a province that's been relatively dormant for many, many years," Rosseker noted, "but with the oil boom and with the commodities and construction booms, everything is happening and it's tough keeping up."

Rosseker noted that a booming economy means there's far more traffic, including heavy truck traffic, and that's also going to cause more congestion and wear and tear on the roads all over Saskatchewan. "We're trying to cope with that as a province," he said.

Meanwhile, "as an association, we're trying to help any of the planners and the highways folks from the infrastructure folks as much as we can in terms of trying to give them an idea as to where we see the kind of hot points," Rosseker said. "It's a matter of trying to stay ahead of the infrastructure game and it's kind of a cat and mouse thing."

Good problems to have, undoubtedly, because they indicate that times are good, but they're problems that have to be dealt with nonetheless. □

"Prince Albert is known as the Gateway to the North, but right now it's the bottleneck to the North."

Al Rosseker, STA

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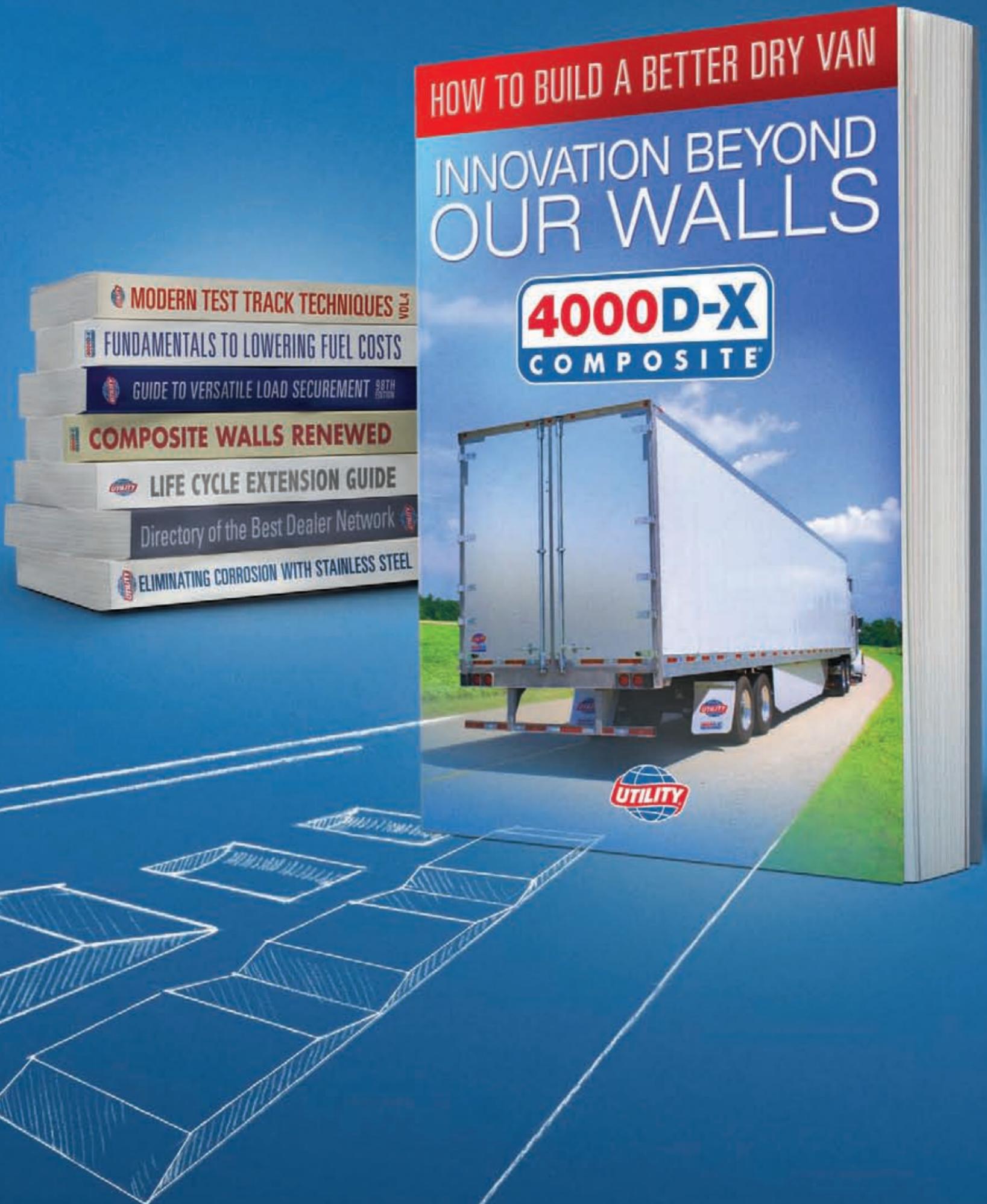
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INDUSTRY

London's embracing of trucks was my Olympic moment

Trucks played a surprise role in closing ceremonies of Olympic Games

Like most people on the planet for a couple of weeks this past August during the London 2012 Olympics I became a fan of sports that normally I wouldn't pay any heed too. (I am basically a hockey guy with a bit of baseball thrown in to get through the off-season).

Also, being a Brit-rock fan – or at least of the bands from the '60s and '70s – and of British toilet humour, I loved both the opening and closing ceremonies (except whenever IOC president, Jacques Rogge, gave a speech).

Having been lucky enough to visit London on numerous occasions I thought both ceremonies captured the essence and pulse of that great, vibrant city.

Indeed, we were told that the closing ceremony was an artistic portrayal of the everyday hub-bub of life in London, including its traffic. So, the backdrop to the performances (by video at least) of John Lennon and Freddie Mercury were constantly moving traffic scenes which featured not only the ubiquitous London cabs and Austin mini's, but trucks (or as the Brits call them, lorries) – lots of them.

To most people this probably didn't even register, but to me watching all those cars and trucks sharing the world's stage, and sharing the road (stylized but still a road), was a simple yet powerful recognition that the trucking industry is an important and accepted part of the fabric of London life. Maybe I am hypersensitive to these kinds of things but I thought "good on London."

I couldn't imagine that Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver or any other Canadian (or for that matter North American) city would even think to consider including trucks in such a performance.

Here, trucks and the trucking industry are still at best taken for granted, or considered a necessary evil. The "food not circuses" crowd, who no doubt would want to be heard here, don't think we need trucks at all and I am sure that any suggestion to feature trucks in a celebration of everyday life would have been greeted by them with hostility.

I suspect I may be overstating London's acceptance of trucks and its recognition of the importance of the industry probably didn't even enter into the thinking of those who planned the closing ceremony, but it was nice to see anyway. Just maybe someone gets it.

It is incredible how large cities in particular, which are so dependent upon trucks for supplying their cities and businesses with the necessities of everyday life, can be so decidedly anti-truck.

New York is often held up as the best example of that sort of thinking. Fines, fees, size and weight restrictions, truck bans, are all taken to a new level in the



Industry Issues

DAVID BRADLEY

city that doesn't sleep. But, the Big Apple is far from alone on that front.

Transportation planners in the big cities have been and for the most part continue to be either ignorant or dismissive of goods movement needs. Perhaps that is in part because their political masters are also ignorant of the importance of goods movement and the essential role played by trucks, or they are downright hos-

tile to the idea of accommodating truck traffic in any way.

The citizenry in large cities are also guilty of the same behaviour. Everyone wants the shelves stocked with the latest fashions in the shops; they want the markets filled with produce and meats. But they don't want trucks on the roads (especially if it is *their* street); and they don't want to provide areas where the trucks can park, or where they can be safely and quickly loaded and unloaded. The sum total of most goods movement strategies these days seems to be that by investing in transit (and indeed having trucks helping to pay for transit) that will free up space for the trucks. Ya, sure. We've heard that one before.

I don't profess to have all the answers. The problems are surely more complex that I am able

to portray in the space afforded me in this column. But, truckers are practical people. We don't expect everything to be paved over to make way for our vehicles. We know that an efficient, convenient transit system is vital to a city's economic, environmental and social health. We know that we need to share our workplaces with motorists, pedestrians and cyclists. We know that we must be respectful of neighbourhoods. But the essential role of goods movement and of the predominant mode of freight transportation – the truck – needs and deserves recognition and respect. We need our London moment. □

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

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NATURAL GAS

Natural gas has potential, but challenges remain for early adopters

C.R. England's LNG fleet not yet delivering a return on investment, executive says

By James Menzies

DALLAS, Texas – C.R. England is struggling to achieve a payback on a fleet of five day cab tractors running liquefied natural gas on a dedicated run between Southern California and Las Vegas, according to Dan England, chairman of the 4,800-truck fleet.

Speaking at the Commercial Vehicle Outlook Conference, England said the five Kenworth T800 trucks equipped with the Westport 15-litre HD LNG engine were deployed last October and are currently running a loop for Coca-Cola that takes them 250 miles in each direction. There are LNG filling stations at both ends of the route, England explained, with each of the trucks running about 500 miles per day.

The trucks are on a full-service lease with Paccar but “pretty staggering” maintenance costs of about 11 cents per mile (compared to 5-7 cents for diesel-powered vehicles) are eating into the fuel savings, England said.

C.R. England opted for the 15-litre Westport LNG engines because of the elevation changes along the route which may not have been well-suited to the smaller 9-litre Cummins ISL G. England said he's anxiously awaiting the larger 12-litre ISX 12 G which will hit the market next year and will run on either compressed

or liquefied natural gas.

Fueling has not been one of the detriments to the LNG technology. England said drivers have been trained to fuel the trucks, and while they need equipment like gloves, hard hats and masks, they haven't experienced any problems with the fueling requirements.

A bigger concern has been the higher maintenance costs. England said the LNG trucks require oil and fuel filter changes twice as frequently as their diesel counterparts and valve adjustments have been required after just 60,000 miles compared to 500,000 miles on diesel tractors.

“You begin to see, there are some additional costs associated with running LNG versus diesel,” England said.

There have also been more frequent breakdowns with the LNG trucks. One was placed out of service for two consecutive weeks and of 19 engine-related breakdowns, 10 were related to the LNG system itself, England said.

“We're not real high on what's happening with our application right now,” England said. “To get to a break-even point on a 15-litre engine, we have to be out there with a diesel cost of about \$4.80 and it isn't there now, so obviously we're not breaking even with these 15-litre trucks.”

He said Paccar has been working with the carrier to address issues and that he still feels natural gas is a viable option going forward. He said the 12-litre ISX G will likely be a better fit for C.R. England's application and he also said engine costs must come down to make natural gas more feasible.

“Quite simply, the cost of these engines has got to come down,” England said. “And it will, with volume it will come down.”

Despite the “bumps in the road,” England said there are benefits to transitioning to natural gas.

“The reason we jumped into it is, we want to be environmentally responsible and save emissions, but most of all we want to run these things profitably and get a return on investment,” England said. “Natural gas is still new and evolving and we have no doubt that we're going to see a pretty good percentage of our fleet five years down the road running natural gas.”

England also threw water on the idea that fuel surcharges will be a thing of the past when natural gas takes hold.

“It shouldn't go away,” England said of the fuel surcharge. “There are a lot of things to sort through here; we do feel the benefits of natural gas need to be passed along to our customers and ultimately the consumer, but by the same token we feel the carrier oughta be able to benefit from some of the savings we look forward to accruing because of natural gas.”

While C.R. England's results have been less than spectacular, the technology will continue to evolve, insisted Kennon Guglielmo, chief technical officer, Econrols, which produces fueling systems and components. He said when broken down to the price per unit of energy (or BTU), diesel currently costs eight times as much as natural gas.

“In the US, anything less than a 2:1

energy ratio between oil and natural gas is not enough to cause a critical mass movement towards natural gas adoption,” Guglielmo said. “Shale play came along and that plots us currently at about 8:1 today. The cost of a BTU of natural gas today is 1/8th the cost of a BTU of oil and that's what gets you down the road.”

Robert Carrick, vocational sales manager, natural gas with Freightliner, said fueling infrastructure remains the biggest barrier and that too is improving. OEMs already offer a wide range of natural gas products, but fueling them remains the challenge.

“We hear all the time it's the chicken and the egg syndrome. I'm here to tell you the chicken and the egg syndrome is dead – it's the chicken and the feed,” Carrick said. “We, and our colleagues in the transportation industry, can build all the trucks you want with natural gas, we can get all the engines we need from Cummins, the tank manufacturers can come up with all the tanks we need to put on these trucks. The problem is there's no place to feed these chickens, that's the bottom line.”

Carrick said a compressed natural gas truck running 80,000 miles a year can produce a payback in a year-and-a-half at today's fuel prices. Daimler Trucks North America (DTNA) has 1,500 natural gas trucks in service, 900 of them grossing up to 80,000 lbs.

Carrick said he's hopeful the US Natural Gas Act will be passed next year, which will result in expanded fueling infrastructure and incentives to offset the cost of the technology. If that happens, natural gas could suddenly surge into the mainstream, he suggested.

“Our forecast internally at Daimler, we think if all these stars align, we can easily be doing 20% of our build as natural gas by 2020,” he said. “That's certainly a very attainable goal.” □

Natural gas conference coming this fall

HOUSTON, Texas – In an effort to address the both the benefits and challenges of mass adoption of natural gas by fleets in the transportation industry, American Business Conferences will be hosting the Natural Gas Fleet Vehicles North American Congress in Houston this fall.

The event, sponsored by *Truck News/Truck West*, is being touted by organizers as “[n]ot just an industry get-together...[but] a commercially driven, solutions-based initiative, providing the most comprehensive analysis of natural gas vehicles to date.”

The conference will showcase more than 20 national fleet operators, all successful early adopters of this technology, “to give delegates a true and measurable picture of the costs, initial strategies and practical, day to day operational issues related to using natural gas for fleet.” Fleet representatives will include Robert Transport, Frito-Lay, Saddle Creek Transportation, J.B.Hunt, and many more.

Day one will open with insight from early technology adopters, as well as fleet operators considering natural gas introduction for the first time, before scrutinizing the comparative pros and cons of LNG and

CNG by companies that have already made the choice themselves. Organizers say realistic expectations for vehicle performance will then be investigated, including conversion technology, engine power, fuel economy and range. The day will close with a study of maintenance requirements and likely through-life costs.

Day two will focus on the core concerns of infrastructure and strategic business considerations. The infrastructure focus will explore corporate views of infrastructure development, the differing private/partnership approaches to infrastructure development and finally support infrastructure requirements. The second half of the day will detail government financial support, regulatory requirements, safety education and finally analysis of the revenue generation opportunities associated with green fleet introduction.

The conference will take place Oct. 23-24 at the Renaissance Houston Greenway Plaza Hotel in Houston. *Truck News/Truck West* readers are being offered a 15% discount on the registration fee. Contact rwilkins@trucknews.com for details. For more information, visit www.natural-gas-fleet-vehicle-congress.com. □

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INDUSTRY

Creating memories that last

Like Olympians, award-winning drivers should be remembered long after the spotlight fades

Now that we are in 2012's post-Olympic Games phase and a beautiful summer is beginning to edge toward autumn, there can be a tendency to feel just a little let down, a little mellowed out as it were.

I'm told that it is quite normal following emotional highs such as the Olympics to move through the next phase, a coming down, before kicking back into high gear once again.

I felt a little like that the day after the closing ceremonies (that seemed to go on for days in themselves). Suddenly it was all over, finished, complete.

This after watching events in the early morning before leaving for the office, following results on the old Blackberry throughout the day, and then tuning in for more events and evening wrap-ups when I got back home. Those were exciting times (not including Greco-Roman wrestling – sorry it that offends anyone), and then suddenly we were all back to our regular daily routines.

Of course the highs and lows that observers went through over those few weeks were nothing – nothing at all – like those experienced by the athletes themselves. The podium moments in particular must have been indescribable emotional highs, and the disappointment in failure to win a medal couldn't be masked over by the achievement of making it to the Olympics.

Now of course, all of those participating athletes move on to the next phase of their careers, but I can't help feeling that they must have woken up a few days after the Olympics thinking "what now?" and perhaps needing some help to raise themselves back up to their preceding emotional and physical levels.

Albeit on a different scale, a different level, there are those in our industry that experience somewhat similar ranges of emotions when they achieve special honours.

Many associations, like the PMTC, offer award programs to recognize outstanding achievements or contributions to the trucking community. The individuals who receive those awards are often quite surprised.

In many cases they are the professionals who go to work every day, do the best they can – more often than not, do a little extra – and yet don't feel that they are particularly deserving of special awards.

Nonetheless, they find themselves standing on a stage gazing into a spotlight being celebrated by their peers and photographed with their awards. They are usually surrounded by their family and their employers, and the entire event is a once-in-a-lifetime, if only momentary, very special experience for those who live their lives outside of the limelight.

Then they go home.

It's at some point, perhaps a couple of weeks following the ceremonies, that I wonder how they feel?



After the crowds have left, the writers for the industry publications have interviewed them and they've been feted back at the workplace.

Most of us will have had a similar experience at some point in our lives and it's fair to say that we all get through the emotional low and return to normal, but most often we do it on our own. It's difficult for others to understand why there is a letdown at all.

That is why I am so pleased with

the efforts of the PMTC's Hall of Fame sponsors to make the induction into the Hall a lasting memory for the drivers selected.

The inductees are the focus of the Hall of Fame Luncheon during the PMTC's annual conference. They are singled out for recognition of their truly outstanding safety records, provided with specially made mementos, and their stories are run in a number of trade magazines.

Then their achievement is made available for all to see on the PMTC Web site in the Hall of Fame section, where it remains in perpetuity.

But the sponsor of the PMTC's Hall of Fame, Huron Services Group, a CPC Logistics Company, provides more than sponsorship support. They are truly interested in and supportive of the Hall of Fame and they make every effort to provide the inductees with a memorable day and mementos that can be shared in the future with family, friends, and fellow workers.

Among the gifts Huron Services provides are individually monogrammed jackets, with the driver's name and Hall of Fame designation. Any driver would be very proud to wear one of those jackets.

Then, a few weeks following the event, Huron Services sends each inductee a hard-cover, photo-filled book containing pictures of the of the induction ceremonies, beautifully inscribed by their vice-president Bob Boyich.

I seldom single out PMTC's individual event sponsors for this type of recognition, but in this case I believe that Huron Services turns a moment in the spotlight into a lifetime of memories for these Hall of Fame inductees.

On behalf of those drivers I want to say 'Thank you.' □

– *The Private Motor Truck Council is the only national association dedicated to the private trucking community. Direct comments and questions to trucks@pmtc.ca.*

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TRUCK SHOW

Working Chrome truck show

Continued from page 1

other exhibitors spend a small fortune on their displays, so they want maximum bang for their buck. Every show I've been to tells me that they achieve that, but in many cases, the whole reason behind the truck show itself has been lost along the way.

This is not so at the last one I attended; not only was it a grassroots, back to basics truck show, it was also right in my backyard in Winnipeg. The people behind the show are Russell Dovzuk and James Lee (no relation) of the House of Chrome, which is on the south side of the Trans-Canada Highway, just to the east of the DoT scale at Headingley. The show has been going for a few years now, but had outgrown its original location behind the Chrome Shop and had moved to the show grounds just along Portage Ave., almost opposite the Flying J.

The show itself is called Working Chrome and it does exactly what it says on the tin. There are working trucks on show, not Trailer Queens built with no expense spared. Some of the trucks were under a load and some had taken the weekend off and travelled to the show. They were not just local trucks either. One of the truck show must-have's, a flat top 379 Peterbilt had come up from Iowa and another was Whiteline Trucking's Western Star from Dunchurch, Ont. They came just to hang out and be a part of it.

The local truck dealers had a presence, but they had only parked a few of their trucks in amongst the working trucks. Representatives were on-hand to talk about the models on display, but that was more conversational than a sales pitch, so even that fit in with the theme of the show.

The big local carriers were all represented too, mostly with trucks on show – both owner/operator and company trucks – but the reefer division of Yanke, Cool Blue Express had two tractor-trailers on display and had a recruitment drive. Director Gerry Scott said it had been a successful exercise; they had also enjoyed

the relaxed nature of the show.

The show grounds had ample parking for tractor-trailers and the Flying J and Husky truck stops are only a short walk away, so if the parking lots were full, truck drivers could still get in and spend a bit of time visiting with the trucks on show.

Quite a few did, too, as attendance was much higher than I would have thought. Over the three days, Aug. 3-5, more than 11,500 people walked through the gates, which is a fantastic achievement considering there were none of the usual goodies on offer, just a bunch of trucks lined up and looking their best.

To keep the show a friendly event, the organizers decided against a competition between the trucks. There were no losers, but they were all winners in their own right. The atmosphere was very relaxed. Most of the drivers were sitting on lawn chairs next to the trucks they drove through the gates. Most had been driving them all week, before cleaning them up for the show. Everyone I spoke to had plenty of time to chat and I never revealed that I would be writing about them in this magazine. Even though I knew I would be writing this piece, I had my truck driver's hat on that day.

The trucks on display ranged from the wonderful 1961 Kenworth K100 cabover of the Polet Family to the new trucks on display from the local truck dealers. There were some very interesting trucks on show, some like the brand new flat top Pete 389s combined the traditional look with modern mechanicals, others like the 389 glider kit of Mark Brandt still had the old-school motor under the hood. Another interesting glider kit was the Freightliner Coronado of Flying Eagle Transport. This was an off-the-shelf kit, purchased from and built by Fitzgerald Glider Kits in Tennessee. It has a pre-emission Series 60 Detroit engine. In addition to looking good, it also impressed both its driver, Bryn Lewis and company owner, Clarence Falk with its performance and economy.



truck in the lot. That honour went to Brian Dax and his Big Red Giant (see cover photo), claimed to be the longest tractor unit in the world. The owner is waiting for the people at *The Guinness Book of World Records* to confirm that claim and put the Big Red Giant in its rightful position in the famous book.

Russell and James of The House of Chrome are promising more of the same next year. The first weekend in August, Winnipeg is the place to be. □

Flying Eagle Transport also had a 379 Peterbilt at the show, but this one was as far from a flat top as you can get: a huge Double Eagle Sleeper sits on top of the 330-inch wheelbase. Custodian of this beast was Elmer Hanson and he was busy all weekend giving tours around its massive interior. However, this was not the biggest





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WESTERN CANADA

Wide-base tire woes

Continued from page 1

can load up to 9,000 kgs per axle in Ontario and Quebec, the limit is 7,700 kgs in Western Canada. Don Wilson, executive director of the Alberta Motor Transport Association (AMTA) said his group and other provincial associations, have been lobbying provincial governments to increase weights to 8,500 kgs to achieve parity with duals. This would allow the usual 17,000 kgs on the tandem axle group.

Wilson recently met with Alberta Transport Minister Ric McIver along with Westcan Bulk Transport CEO Tom Kenny to push for an explanation. Wilson said they heard a familiar response.

"He says right away 'I don't want to be known as the Minister who got hoodwinked by the trucking industry and gave these allowances and then all the infrastructure is falling apart and the taxpayers are on the hook for that,'" Wilson recalled.

Like Michelin, Wilson said the industry is eagerly awaiting the results of the Laval University study, which will hopefully prove today's wide-base tire is easier on pavement than some early generation super-singles. Even if wide-base tires are shown to be moderately harder on road surfaces, both Beauchamp and Wilson argue provinces need to look at the big picture and consider the en-

vironmental benefits of the tires. And Wilson pointed out it's rare for duals to be inflated to the same pressure anyway, which nullifies the argument that they're superior.

"How can that be any easier on pavement if you have one tire that's carrying more of the load?" Wilson pointed out.

Kenny said Westcan has been using wide-base tires to pull fully loaded tankers and has seen fuel economy improvements of 8.5% compared to duals. Rosenau Transport, which claims to be among the biggest users of wide-base singles in Western Canada, has seen double-digit fuel economy gains in its long combination vehicle (LCV) fleet running from Brandon, Man. to Edmonton, Alta., Wilson said.

Unfortunately, every new Minister seems to have his or her ear bent by pavement engineers who are basing their assertions on outdated information.

"It's the same song and dance. They're listening to the same engineers and bureaucrats," Wilson said.

There also seems to be a reluctance among western Transport Ministers to be the first to put their neck out and allow increased weights on wide-base singles. Wilson said Alberta's Transport Minister McIver indicated that Saskatchewan and B.C. are reticent



NEW TIRES, OLD PERCEPTIONS: Load limits on wide-base single tires across most of Canada has limited the use of the fuel-saving tires. The industry hopes a soon-to-be-released study from Laval University will change that.

to increase weights on the tires, but in conversations with officials from those provinces, Wilson said he got the impression they were open to the idea.

Regardless of who moves first, it's likely the three westernmost provinces will move in harmony, as members of the New West Partnership. If that should happen, Wilson is optimistic Manitoba would follow suit. It's a matter of waiting for that first domino to fall.

"It's a hard sell, but we're not giving up," Wilson said. "We have another meeting in the Fall and we'll keep pounding away."

Achieving parity with duals across Canada would be a huge benefit to the trucking industry. Right now, fleets from Ontario and Quebec that run into the US are restricted as to the loads they can bring back into other Canadian provinces.

Beauchamp said the Laval University study is due out by the end of the summer. Its highly anticipated contents could provide the industry with the support it needs to strengthen its case in favour of wide-base tires and finally put to rest worries that the tires cause excessive pavement damage. Stay tuned. □

Western Perspective



Unless we get weight parity with duals, Westcan is not able to adopt wide-based tires in the majority of our fleet. In the only piece of business we have that the weight restriction is not an issue for us, we have been running wide-based tires for over a year with exceptional results. If the weight were to be increased, our intent would be to switch most of our fleet over as soon as possible.

- Tom Kenny, Westcan Bulk Transport

Western Perspective



We thought about using the wide-based tires on one of our nuclear runs, but with the weight restrictions we could not transport the weight the customer wanted, so we didn't look much further at it.

If the weights were increased to match the current set-up with duals, we may go back and look at it for when we purchase new equipment.

- Troy Stimpson, TimeLine Logistic International

Western Perspective



I believe we are one of the largest users of super-singles in Western Canada. The benefits range from increased stability, better traction in winter, increased driver comfort because of the ride, 10-12% reduction in carbon emissions, longer tire life. And the cost of the tires is cheaper.

We have been lobbying government to increase to standard weights for the four western provinces, but we continually run into stumbling blocks. We run about 20% of our business at full weights, so it would only affect 20% of our business, but it is a damn pain in the butt when we have to shuffle to avoid overloading super singles.

We are currently at about 30% super-singles. If we had full weights, we would be 100%, as they are a game-changer when it comes to savings. It is proven dual wheels actually cause more damage to the infrastructure than super-singles do.

I pity the east-west carriers that operate super-singles in eastern Canada, but cannot bring them west. They need two sets of equipment.

I cannot for the life of me figure out why a government official cannot see the writing on the wall? If memory serves me, in California by 2017 all trailers have to be super-singles. What do these carriers do now? If they have a load from California heading for Lethbridge and then they want to haul a full weight load to Edmonton, they can't.

- Carl Rosenau, Rosenau Transport

EQUIPMENT

Spec'ing tactics evolving with rising equipment costs

Fleets looking to maximize productivity to offset higher costs of Class 8 trucks

By James Menzies
DALLAS, Texas – As shippers continue to commoditize trucking, it behooves carriers to do everything they can to squeeze more productivity out of their equipment. That was the message from Tom Kretsinger Jr., president and COO of American Central Transport (ACT), when speaking at the Commercial Vehicle Outlook Conference Aug. 23.

“This year, we’ve had very little ability to increase our prices,” Kretsinger said. “If costs are going up but the prices that you can charge are not going up, then what is your solution? The only solution is to find ways to increase productivity. To increase your costs without increasing productivity an equal amount or more isn’t rational.”

For ACT, that has meant taking a sophisticated approach to spec'ing new equipment and adopting traditionally unorthodox spec's such as 6x2 drive configurations. ACT bought 50 trucks with so-called ‘dead axles’ last year and gained four-tenths of a mile per gallon while also adding payload.

“The residuals on it are unknown, but the thing that’s surprising is, we’ve had some of these available

through our lease-purchase program and we’ve had some operators specifically ask for them,” Kretsinger said. “They understand how much money they can save on fuel.”

He noted some driver training is required to prevent excessive tire wear when slippage occurs.

When spec'ing new equipment, ACT forms a committee with representation from the finance and maintenance departments. They look at: reliability; dealer support and footprint; reputation; driver acceptance; and resale values, among other variables. Top of mind, however, is total cost of ownership.

“We don’t look so much at the price of a new truck itself,” Kretsinger explained.

“We would like the lowest price we can get, but really the price is what it’s going to cost to operate that piece of equipment over its life, which for us is normally about five years.”

Moving to tag axles and wide-base tires has seen some ACT drivers improve their fuel mileage by as much as 1 mpg. Kretsinger said the company recently hosted a Kansas City barbecue for drivers who could reach 8 mpg and 14 drivers were invited. Twelve of the 14 were owner/operators, he hastened to add.

When shopping for new equipment, ACT develops a master spec' with comparable components across the various truck brands. It also relies on past experience, surveys such as JD Power & Associates and networking to determine which vehicles are the most reliable and well liked by drivers. Residual value often gets overlooked, but Kretsinger said it's an important

said it's important to work closely with the OEM when spec'ing new equipment.

“The OEM people we deal with are good folks,” he said. “They’re pretty straight shooters and we don’t see much in the way of fluff. There are times when they want to sell trucks more than others, and you’ll see that in the price. Then, the other thing we do is we try to do multi-year purchases at once, but that also becomes difficult. Everyone in the industry is trying to figure out what’s going to happen in two years – how do you do a three-year deal?”

With the cost of fuel and equipment rising, Kretsinger said the obvious place to look for improved efficiencies is fuel consumption.

“There’s no expense to running a truck that’s bigger than fuel,” he said, noting that going from 6 mpg to 7 mpg yields annual fuel savings of about US\$3,000 per truck. With shippers looking to drive down transportation costs and in many cases staffing traffic departments with purchasing managers instead of transportation experts, Kretsinger said improving productivity is the only answer.

“Our customers, at least now, will not pay for (the extra costs of trucking),” he said. “If we don’t get it back somewhere, we’re just shrinking our margins and that’s not sustainable over time.” □

“To increase your costs without increasing productivity an equal amount or more isn’t rational.”

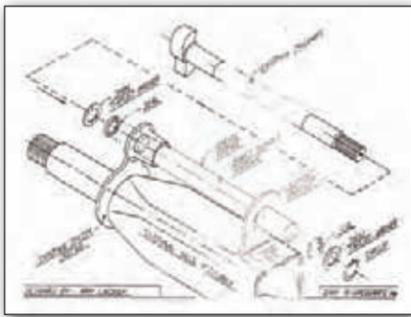
Tom Kretsinger Jr., ACT

consideration. “It’s a very important part of the life-cycle cost,” he explained. “We do spec’ our trucks for the residual market unless it’s something like a dead axle where we think we can make it up ahead of time.”

The company mostly orders mid-level interiors, which are appreciated by drivers, potentially lowering driver turnover and are also easier to sell later. Kretsinger

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Trailer repair shop's invention looks to prevent trailer-top tumbles

By Adam Ledlow
MISSISSAUGA, Ont. – Trailer roof repairs are a common practice in truck and trailer yards, but a simple misstep can spell disaster for both the company and the technician. To avoid the injury-related – and, ultimately, legal – ramifications of falls from trailer tops, many companies simply outsource such services, regardless of the simplicity of the repair.

Sousa Truck Trailer Repair had been just such a company, before opting to take matters into its own hands. The Mississauga-based company has created the tentatively titled 'Mobile Fall Arrest System,' a safety system designed to prevent falls during trailer repairs. Starting as a few scribbles on the back of a napkin over the Christmas holidays by company president John Sousa, the prototype is now in its seventh incarnation and ready for use by the company.

So, what sets Sousa's system apart from others like it? Johnathan Sousa, customer service

rep for the company and son of the elder Sousa, explains: "Every mobile fall arrest system has three parts: there's the anchorage part, there's the lanyard and then there's the harness. We've developed an anchor that can fit onto the top rail of the trailer so that we can hook up our lanyards to our body harness and be able to do repairs on the trailer. We've also attached two wheels onto the top of the anchor so that it can be mobile on top of the trailer so that you can move from repair to repair."

The mechanism is in line with RR521 (regulations that govern working at heights). The system is also capable of withstanding up to 5,000 lbs of force, divided between the aircraft cable, the anchor, the lanyard and the harness.

Sousa says the company's mechanics have had the opportunity to test drive the Mobile Fall Arrest System and have given it the thumbs-up from both a safety and ease-of-use standpoint.



SAFETY-CONSCIOUS: Inventors of this safety system hope it will one day be an industry standard.

"The best thing is that they are comfortable using it. If it's an inconvenience, then no one's going to want to go through the trouble of suiting up in it to get on to the trailer," he told *Truck West*. "If it takes too much time, then...you're just charging your customer more

and that's something that you want to avoid."

While marketing the product to outside repair companies is a possibility down the line, Sousa says that for the near future, the safety system will be limited to the company's hands.

That said, Sousa notes that he would like to see the product ultimately become the industry standard for trailer repair.

"We'd like it to be a regulation that you need this mechanism to get on top of a roof," Sousa says. "We'd just like to eliminate the number of mechanics getting injured on the job as much as we can. There's no worse thing than someone putting out their life to make money for their family – so we'd like to make it a much easier process for everyone."

To see the system demonstrated, watch for an episode of *TMTV On the Road* at www.youtube.com/transportmatters. □

Bridgestone provides deep dive into its operations

By Lou Smyrlis
NASHVILLE, Tenn. – In the words of its own president, Kurt Danielson, Bridgestone Commercial Solutions (BCS) has a tendency to focus on "doing" and not spending enough time talking about its accomplishments.

The company took an important step towards spreading its message last month by inviting business press editors to a Media Boot Camp here to get the inside story on all the new tire technologies and training BCS says will make a real difference for its dealers and customers.

BCS is shooting for some aggressive goals over the next few years, including improving the rolling efficiency of its tires by 25% and reducing the CO₂ content per sale by 35% by the year 2025.

Danielson and vice-president of marketing Scott Damon emphasized that the company is relying on providing total tire solutions and paying close attention to the unique needs of customers rather than producing products and expecting the market to adopt them.

"During the recession, everybody took a closer look at their business and started running it tighter. We have seen a shift in our customer base where they are saying 'Help us manage our tire programs better, help us find solutions to reduce downtime,'" Danielson said. "Buying a 'good tire' is no longer good enough."

The Media Boot Camp included a deep dive into the company's new Bridgestone Ecopia truck tire lineup and Bandag FuelTech retread solution.

The two product lines, which include five new tires and four retreads, are designed to work together. Using specially engineered compounds which have been paired with matching retread patterns, BCS believes it has created a solution that provides low rolling resistance from the

new Ecopia tire straight through to the FuelTech retread while extending casing life.

The Media Boot Camp also included an extensive tour of the company's Warren flagship tire plant and its education centre. The plant produces around 8,500 truck tires a day, employing four shifts. Plans to increase production by another 1,000 tires a day go into effect next year.

After a drive down the highway, journalists were also treated to

a tour of the company's North American Manufacturing Education Centre where Randy Hanson, technical training solutions manager, showed and explained the different machinery used in a Bandag retreading plant.

The centre is used to provide educational support to BCS dealers and customers who come to learn such things as basic tire construction, conditions for tire failure, and equipment maintenance and troubleshooting. □

Want to maximize your tire investment? Take care of the basics: Bridgestone

By Lou Smyrlis
NASHVILLE, Tenn. – The considerable amount of science going into every tire to improve its durability and fuel performance can unfortunately be quickly undone by shoddy maintenance practices.

Consider that a study of scrap tire piles across North America found that the main cause for truck tire scrap-outs is "run flat," an industry term for tires kept in operation with their inflation 20% below what it should be. Run flat is often the root cause of sidewall ruptures, tread separations and fatigue damage.

And, of course, underinflation has a large impact on fuel performance. Industry research shows that a truck tire underinflated by 10% can reduce fuel efficiency by 0.5%.

"As a fleet, if you have a lousy air pressure maintenance program, you can buy all the new technology you want and you will still be leaving fuel economy on the table," warns Guy Walenga, director engineering, commercial tire products and technologies, Bridgestone Americas.

Walenga was among a host of truck tire experts who briefed transportation industry journalists on the science behind truck tires at Bridgestone's Media Boot Camp held here.

Volvo's 'ballerina' truck stunt video goes viral

GREENSBORO, N.C. – Volvo Trucks' European division has drawn the eyes of millions to its new FH series via an online video that showcases the truck's driveability and handling in thrilling fashion.

The video, dubbed 'The Ballerina Stunt,' features a young woman walking a slackline (think tightrope, only not tight) between two trucks driving at full speed. American slackliner Faith Dickey is shown successfully crossing between the two trucks before they enter a tunnel.

The film was recorded on an almost completed new stretch of motorway in Croatia, with no oncoming traffic.

Volvo Trucks officials and stunt coordinator Peter Pedrero said safety was of paramount importance for the stunt.

"Stunts are not for the reckless. Safety always comes first. You have to prepare for the worst possible scenario at all times, and plan for how to deal with it. Preparation down to the tiniest detail, meticulous planning – they're absolutely vital," revealed Pedrero.

The sweaty palm-inducing film has proven a popular one, with more than 5.7 million views on YouTube since the video was added Aug. 16. Volvo officials say the stunt was possible to carry out due to the excellent stability and handling of the new Volvo FH, which allowed both trucks to maintain a steady gap throughout the stunt.

"It's not enough simply to say that we are good. We wanted to demonstrate just how much progress we've made in the area of driveability and handling," said Ulf Nordqvist, project manager for the new Volvo FH series.

You can find the video on YouTube by searching for 'Volvo Ballerina Stunt.' □



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ABS Trailers turns 25, offers discount for remainder of anniversary year



REASON TO CELEBRATE: ABS Trailers staff gather for a photo to commemorate the company's 25th anniversary.

ASBESTOS, Que. – ABS Trailers, a fast-growing manufacturer of live bottom trailers, is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year.

The company got its start as a subcontractor a quarter century ago and

began manufacturing live bottom trailers in 1990.

Today, it has a presence across Canada, with sales offices in Ontario and Quebec and distributors in Atlantic Canada (Gillis Truckways) and West-

ern Canada (Fort Garry Industries). Francois Gouin, president of ABS, said the company kicked off the 25th anniversary celebrations at the start of the year with a Christmas party for staff, customers and suppliers.

The celebration has continued throughout the year, in the form of a \$1,600 discount on certain trailers. That deal will be offered until the end of the year, Gouin told *Truck West*.

Gouin attributes the company's recent success to its single focus on manufacturing live bottom trailers.

"We are a live bottom manufacturer, we don't do any other type of trailer," he said. "Our goal is to be the leader. We're not the biggest, but we want to be the best. We keep this in mind all the time and whenever we're on the road talking to mechanics, drivers and company owners, we really take what they say about our trailer into consideration. We aren't mak-

ing all kinds of surround equipment, we don't try to promote all kinds of equipment on the trailer, we have a trailer made for aggregate and rock and granular transportation and we keep with the one mission which is to transport material efficiently with the best price and nice looking equipment."

This year also marks the development of an interesting experiment in Quebec, where the company has built a prototype trailer where the two rearward axles on a three-axle trailer oscillate in line with the front of the vehicle. While it's not SPIF-compliant for the Ontario market, it shows great promise in Quebec, Gouin said.

"It give us a really good feeling of what the future might be," he said, noting the technology was imported from Europe.

For more info, visit www.abstrailers.com. □

Want to maximize your tire investment? Take care of the basics: Bridgestone

By Lou Smyrlis
NASHVILLE, Tenn. – The considerable amount of science going into every tire to improve its durability and fuel performance can unfortunately be quickly undone by shoddy maintenance practices.

Consider that a study of scrap tire piles across North America found that the main cause for truck tire scrap-outs is "run flat," an industry term for tires kept in operation with their inflation 20% below what it should be. Run flat is often the root cause of sidewall ruptures, tread separations and fatigue damage.

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Guy Walenga, director engineering, commercial tire products and technologies, Bridgestone Americas.

Walenga was among a host of truck tire experts who briefed transportation industry journalists on the science behind truck tires at Bridgestone's Media Boot Camp held here.

Proper vehicle alignment is another basic that has to be taken care of to ensure you are getting the fuel performance and durability you are paying for out of your tires.

The recession and slow recovery has caused many fleets to tighten their operations and try to do more with less; that has made it even harder to stay on top of proper tire maintenance practices.

"It's our job to make sure (fleets and owner/operators) are keeping their eye on the ball with their tire practices so they don't come back to bite them six months down the road," said John Boynton, vice-president, sales, Bridgestone Commercial Solutions.

The company actively helps out by putting on educational seminars, conducting fleet inspections, working through the findings, and collaborating with fleets to put better tire programs in place, pointed out Kurt Danielson, president, Bridgestone Commercial Solutions. It also

educates its dealers to help them understand good and bad maintenance practices, which they can then pass on to their customers.

"You've got to take care of the basics," Walenga stressed. "These tires are assets, not commodities. They are expensive stuff." □

Ryder opens first B.C. sales centre

SURREY, B.C. – Ryder System has opened its first-ever sales centre in British Columbia. Located at 9616 188th Street in Surrey, the centre is situated along the 57 Trans-Canada Highway and just down the street from Ryder's full-service maintenance facility on 190th street. Darryl Wood will serve as the facility's used vehicle sales manager.

"The Surrey facility enables Ryder to better serve our valued B.C. customers and accommodate the increasing demand for quality used vehicles in the Greater Vancouver area," said Michael Cagney, director of asset management for Ryder. "With this new location, we can conveniently provide businesses with affordable, professionally-maintained used vehicles to support their needs."

Ryder will be hosting an official grand opening event for local businesses at the new facility on Sept. 25. The event will feature a barbecue and raffle drawing, as well as discounts on vehicles. □

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Navistar's new path

Navistar executives speak out on their new engine platform, why their in-cylinder emissions strategy didn't pan out and the key advantage they have going forward.

By James Menzies

LISLE, Ill. – A bold bid to establish a “sustained, product-based differentiation” within the marketplace fell short as Navistar International announced last month it would add selective catalytic reduction (SCR) exhaust aftertreatment to its engine line.

Navistar had originally committed itself to achieving EPA2010 emissions standards using only advanced exhaust gas recirculation (A-EGR), while all its competitors chose to pursue SCR, which requires the use of urea-based diesel exhaust fluid.

During a candid discussion with trade press journalists at Navistar's Lisle, Ill. headquarters, Jack Allen, president of the North American Truck Group, said the company was forced to change its emissions strategy when it became clear it would be unable to certify its 13-litre Advanced-EGR MaxxForce engine before cashing in the last of its emissions credits. Credits were earned for producing engines that were cleaner than required under previous emissions standards, but those credits ran perilously low before the company was able to certify its A-EGR engines at 0.2 grams NOx.

“That's really where the wheels came off the cart,” Allen said. “It's not in the technology; it's really in the timing of that technology being ready versus when the credits were going to run out. We got to the point in the intersection where those two factors were coming together like a freight train.”

Allen lamented, “It looks like we'll never know if the technology and the credits would have lined up.”

Navistar's initial decision to take a different approach to EPA2010 emissions standards than all its competitors was borne from a desire to achieve a long-term differentiation in the marketplace, Allen explained.

“The real key is, you have to provide an advantage for yourself but you also have to provide an advantage for the customer or the formula doesn't work. When we looked at 2010 emissions, we thought there was a way to have a sustained competitive advantage with a non-urea engine,” Allen recalled. “We really believed we had the opportunity to get there from a differentiation standpoint, and we think it would've been good for our customers to have a system that didn't require SCR and that provided a lower operating cost.”

Moving forward, Navistar International says it will pay non-conformance penalties (of US\$3,775 per engine) while also redeeming its remaining emissions credits until it's ready to roll out its new ICT+ (In-Cylinder Technology Plus) solution next May. ICT+ combines Navistar's in-cylinder emissions technologies with proven selective catalytic reduction (SCR), which will be supplied by Cummins. It will also offer International trucks with the Cummins ISX15 engine as early as January.

Allen said Navistar has secured a \$1-billion loan and is confident the production and sales of its engines into the North American market will go uninterrupted as it transitions to the new technology.

“We continue to expect there's not going to be any interruption in our production,” Allen said. “We'll go from building trucks with the interim NCPs to building trucks with the final NCPs until we get to the point where our SCR system is integrated into all of our products. By our projection, we have enough credits to get us into next year, certainly until the other side of when the Cummins engine will be available (in January).”

As for its relationship with Cummins, Allen said a Memorandum of Understanding is in place, which will soon be proclaimed an official supply agreement.

“It's quickly moving to a supply agreement to re-establish a strategic relationship with them across a number of fronts, the first one being their aftertreatment system,” Allen explained. He said Navistar maintained ties with Cummins through the past two years and in fact sold more than 11,000 trucks with Cummins power into its export markets in 2011.

“It wasn't a big stretch to get back together with Cummins,” Allen said.

Navistar officials said in some ways, the company will benefit from adding Cummins' SCR technology to its trucks after the system has proven itself over a couple years in the field.

“Everybody had issues delivering their (EPA2010) products,” said David Majors, vice-president, product development, North American platform with Navistar. “That's the benefit of us coming in later with SCR, those lessons have been learned.”

Navistar will also benefit from the extensive knowledge it gained on controlling NOx in-cylinder, officials said.

“The advantage we have is we've gone way deeper into EGR than our competitors have had a need to,” said Tim Shick, vice-president, North American engine sales. “That's what we feel is going to give us an advantage going forward.”

While Navistar will dial back EGR flow rates, Allen said “because of all the work we've done on our in-cylinder product, we're in the best market position to be able to optimize the engine and aftertreatment and to drive the best performance and best fuel economy in the marketplace.”

Navistar hasn't yet decided whether it will continue to develop its own 15-litre MaxxForce engine, or rely solely on the Cummins ISX15 to appease customers with big power

requirements.

“We're going to have to make some decisions on whether we continue with that engine or go with the ISX,” Allen said. “The decision hasn't been made.” Allen confirmed to *Truck West* that the International LoneStar would remain an offering.

“We will add SCR to the LoneStar product and then we've got to evaluate the 15-litre, the cooling and all that kind of stuff to determine if we can go forward with the 15-litre (on the LoneStar),” he said. “We'd sure like to. The LoneStar is a product in our future, for sure.”

For now, Navistar is focusing most of its attention on its highest volume products, bringing out its ICT+ engine and packaging the SCR system on the ProStar+ chassis. The installation of the SCR system has been fairly straightforward, officials said. They showed visiting journalists an International ProStar+ with a Cummins ISX engine with SCR under the hood.

‘It wasn't a big stretch to get back together with Cummins,’

Jack Allen, Navistar

The Cummins engine was pulled from a competitive truck and installed in the ProStar+ and driven from Colorado to Illinois without any issues, Majors explained.

Most trucks will use a switchback installation configuration, with the majority of the SCR components packaged underneath the passenger side steps. The company already has developed several SCR configurations on its various chassis to fit the needs of the vast majority of its customers.

“It's a pretty clean installation for us,” said Majors. Officials said new trucks with either ICT+ or the Cummins engine with SCR will be priced competitively.

“We compete in a very competitive market today and it's our intention to compete in that market going forward from a price/value equation,” Allen said.

There are about 40,000 MaxxForce 13 advanced EGR engines currently in the market, and Allen said Navistar expects them to retain their value.

“What happened when the industry went from 2009 to EPA2010 and what happened to the value of a non-SCR used truck? It went up, there was a marked pickup in the value of used trucks during that period in time,” Allen reasoned.

Shick noted the base engine will remain the same when SCR is added next year.

When a decision was made to add SCR, Navistar moved very quickly to communicate the new strategy to employees, dealers and customers. Dealers, Allen said, appreciate the certainty of the new approach and the expanded product line but engineers who've committed the last few years of their lives to achieving the EPA2010 standard without SCR had mixed feelings.

“Are people disappointed the original strategy didn't work? Of course. But clarity of a direction is a really powerful motivating factor; probably more powerful than any of us realized until we did it,” Allen explained. “The time this was taking, the anxiety it was driving, the uncertainty...I think there's a lot of relief.”

While a seemingly humbler Navistar is looking ahead and eager to roll out its new engine line, Allen made no apologies for the company's motivations to pursue a non-SCR engine.

“Great American companies innovate,” he said. “Great American companies differentiate themselves in the marketplace. It doesn't always work out as well as intended.”

Whether or not Navistar could eventually have gotten its MaxxForce 13 certified if it had more time, and whether doing so would have provided the truck and engine maker with a significant advantage in the market, are questions that will go unanswered.

“I would just say, we came to the conclusion that the time required to continue on the process we were on, relative to the anxiety this was causing internally, with the dealers, the analysts and investors, that it was time to take a different direction and move ahead,” Allen said.

“There was no real one event that drove that. We made a decision to go in a different direction and that's where we're going.” □

Beleaguered Navistar replaces CEO

LISLE, Ill. – Shortly after *Truck West's* visit to Navistar's HQ, the company appointed Lewis B. Campbell, former chairman, president, and CEO of Textron, as executive chairman of the board of directors and interim CEO for the company. Daniel C. Ustian stepped down as chairman, president, and CEO and left the board of directors. The company also announced that it has promoted Troy A. Clarke, currently president of truck and engine operations at Navistar, to the position of president and COO of Navistar.

The announcement came shortly after the company's decision to change gears with its engine platform, adding selective catalytic reduction exhaust aftertreatment to its engine line after originally committing itself to achieving EPA2010 emissions standards using only advanced exhaust gas recirculation.

“Lewis Campbell is a high-calibre executive who brings to Navistar deep and broad strategic, technical and operational skills and a proven track record of leadership with global industrial companies – including 24 years of experience in product design, engineering and manufacturing in General Motors' automotive, trucking and component businesses and seventeen years in senior leadership positions at Textron including more than 10 years as chairman, president and CEO. We are very pleased to have him join the team,” said Michael N. Hammes, Navistar's independent lead director.

Campbell served as chairman of Textron, a \$12-billion publicly-traded industrial company, from 1999 to 2010, CEO from 1998 to 2009 and president for most of the period from 1994 to 2009. □

NEW PRODUCTS

Thermo King unveils Precedent line of EPA-compliant reefer engines

Officials say new line boasts double-digit fuel savings

By Adam Ledlow

MISSISSAUGA, Ont. – Thermo King is looking to set a “precedent” with its new trailer temperature control program, going as far as to say it has “staked (its) legacy” on the reefer unit’s performance. The new unit, aptly branded the Precedent, comes at the close of a years-long process of achieving regulatory compliance with the Environmental Protection Agency’s latest standards.

The final – at least for the foreseeable future – set of regulations for engine emissions (for engines with 25-50 hp), dubbed Tier 4, come into play beginning Jan. 1. Officials say the Precedent was built from the ground up in an effort to deliver “double-digit fuel savings, best-in-class performance and lower life-cycle costs.”

Announced in concert with the Precedent, Thermo King will also be offering a full range of EPA-compliant truck and auxiliary power unit (APU) solutions.

“Building on a long history of state-of-the-art engineering, we called on our global development teams to create breakthrough solutions that add value while providing regulatory compliance,” said Ray Pittard, president of Thermo King North America. “The innovative Precedent platform and new truck and APU solutions provide our customers with the peace of mind that they have met regulatory requirements while delivering leading performance, significant fuel savings

and lower life-cycle costs – all tested under real-world conditions.”

To celebrate the launch of the Precedent, Thermo King of Toronto invited media, customers, and other industry officials to attend an afternoon celebration at its Mississauga facility Aug. 30, where *Truck West* received an up-close look at the latest from Thermo King’s reefer line.

Engine

Recognizing the different needs of its customers, Thermo King is offering the Precedent in two series: the S-Series and C-Series. The S-Series features Thermo King’s ‘Evergreen’ solution, which is designed to meet the strictest requirements of the 2013 emissions regulation without having to invest in compliance technologies down the road.

A “cutting-edge” fuel injection system is designed to deliver optimal fuel injection at “exactly the right time” to control particulate matter emissions within the engine cylinders via a high-pressure common rail that elevates fuel pressure to approximately 20,000 psi, according to the company.

The fuel injection system allows the engine to run cleaner, which Thermo King officials say eliminates the need for an expensive, high maintenance aftertreatment system like a diesel particulate filter.

Another factor in the Precedent’s “clean” approach is its die-

sel oxidation catalyst (DOC), engineered to reduce hydrocarbons and carbon monoxide without penalizing fuel efficiency.

The fuel injection system, DOC and a custom-made exhaust gas recirculation (EGR) solution combine to create a triple threat: “a total system that not only runs incredibly clean, but also helps deliver double-digit fuel savings for your operation,” the company boasts.

For customers seeking a lower first-cost option, Precedent is also available in the C-Series, which Thermo King promises will still offer “improved efficiencies” and “superior reliability” – without breaking the bank.

The current S- and C-Series options include:

- The S-600, a greater-than-25 hp single-temperature unit with an Evergreen engine for use in California;
- The S-700, a greater-than-25 hp high-capacity single-temperature unit with an Evergreen engine for use in California; and
- The C-600, a less-than-25 hp single-temperature unit with an allowed useful life in California of seven years.

A multi-temp option, the S-600M, is scheduled to be released in October.

Options

Thermo King officials say the new



READY FOR TIER 4: Thermo King says its new Precedent reefer line will deliver substantial fuel savings.

Precedent platform offers a variety of engine options and configurations that keep all applications in mind.

The Precedent offers both high (19 hp) and low (12 hp) options in its SmartPower package. The 19-hp motor offers the same heating and cooling capacity as a diesel engine without sacrificing fuel via a 460-volt power solution, the company says.

The 12-hp motor is intended to maintain controlled temperatures once they’ve reached their desired set point and is available in either a 230- or 460-volt power solution.

Customers also have the option of a traditional alternator or an electronically driven battery charger, in addition to a variety of aesthetic options, including available LED lighting, chrome grills and accessories.

For more information, visit www.tkprecedent.com. □

Radar advancements bring big improvements to Meritor Wabco’s OnGuard

By James Menzies

ROCHESTER, Mich. – Meritor Wabco has greatly enhanced its OnGuard collision mitigation system, by improving the radar and adding stationary object detection.

The new OnGuard system, available Oct. 1, combines a collision warning system with adaptive cruise control with active braking and collision mitigation. The new system features a vastly improved radar that can differentiate between large and small objects, which will significantly reduce the number of false alarms generated by items such as pop cans.

“It has very improved object tracking capabilities,” Alan Korn, director, brake systems integration with Meritor Wabco explained during a recent demonstration. “What’s critical for stationary object detection is, most current radar systems have a very difficult time. It’s easy to see the object but it’s difficult to determine the size of the object with radar. Today, we see every object but what we can’t differentiate is the difference between a Coke can or a heavy truck – it just sees it as an object. This next generation can differentiate the size of the object.”

The new version of OnGuard to be released this year provides audible alerts when a stationary object is detected. A new version, slated for release in 2014, will add automatic braking when an object is detected in the path of a vehicle.

Another improvement over the previous OnGuard system is a feature called Evasive Maneuver Check,



STANDING ON-GUARD: Radar advancements have significantly improved Meritor Wabco’s OnGuard collision mitigation system.

which determines if there are vehicles alongside the truck and then uses that information to decide when to intervene. A truck driver who has cars on both sides of his vehicle will receive an intervention earlier than one who can safely make an evasive maneuver when warned of an imminent rear-end collision, officials explained.

Korn said this is possible due to a new short radar beam that can see across a 56-degree span in addition to the long beam that looks 200 metres ahead but only has a span of 18 degrees. (By comparison, the current OnGuard system has a single radar beam that sees across a 10-degree span up to 150 metres ahead). The radar is now able to detect up to six vehicles, compared to the previous version,

which could identify only three.

“With the new system, if it sees there’s a vehicle in the adjacent lane, it realizes the driver can’t do an evasive maneuver so it can start the braking process earlier,” Korn explained. “We believe this is going to further reduce the number of rear-end accidents that are going to occur.”

The new system also offers auto-alignment, which eliminates the need to periodically adjust the alignment of the radar.

Also new is an improved driver display, with a larger, higher-resolution screen with day- and nighttime settings to reduce driver distraction.

The OnGuard system’s adaptive cruise control sounds audible alerts, haptic warnings (a rapid pulsation of

the brakes to get the driver’s attention) and then applies the appropriate brakes when a rear-end collision is imminent. It is functional regardless of whether or not the vehicle is in cruise control.

“Our next generation of OnGuard is a step change in the functionality of collision safety systems and we believe it represents a significant technological leap forward in reducing crashes involving commercial vehicles,” said Jon Morrison, president and general manager, Meritor Wabco. “With more than three billion miles logged on more than 25,000 OnGuard units in the market, our depth of experience in this technology takes us to the next level to further reduce the risk of rear-end crashes on our roads and highways.”

Meritor Wabco demonstrated the system to *Truck West* on a high-speed track at Ford’s Michigan Proving Grounds. All manner of potential crashes were avoided on the track even when the driver’s foot remained on the throttle. While the company doesn’t promise to eliminate all rear-end collisions with its OnGuard system, it says it will at least slow the truck down enough to mitigate the impact and hopefully prevent injuries. In most cases, however, the system seems capable of preventing the accident altogether. The system seems particularly useful when a distracted driver comes upon stopped traffic or in the event of medical emergencies in which the driver is unable to bring the truck to a stop on his own. □

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NEW PRODUCTS



Meritor Wabco has announced a new **electronically controlled air suspension (ECAS) for 6x2 configurations**. The system allows the driver to shift weight to the drive axle to reduce wheel spin in low-traction situations. More fleets are spec'ing 6x2 configurations to increase payload and save fuel. Meritor Wabco officials said about 400 lbs can be saved by switching to a 6x2. However, the configuration can remain a challenge in low-grip scenarios. ECAS is designed to improve a truck's air suspension control system by electronically maintaining a set ride height between the axle and chassis as road and vehicle characteristics change. The pressure control of the air springs is only adjusted when there's a change in the load, officials explained. The new system will be available beginning this month.

TRP has announced availability of a **driveshaft component program**. The program offers premium u-joints and center bearings in a variety of sizes and applications, the company announced. It also offers axle seals in various sizes. More info is available through Kenworth and Peterbilt dealers or by visiting www.trpparts.com.

Peterbilt has added its **proprietary Air Leaf, Low Air Leaf and Air Trac drive axle suspensions** to its Model 382. The truck maker says the new suspensions offer a smooth, controlled ride and excellent braking and handling features. The Air Leaf and Low Air Leaf suspensions require little maintenance and no lubrication, the company says. They're available for single or tandem axle configurations and are rated up to 40,000 lbs. The Air Trac is also available in single and tandem drive axle configurations

and has a maximum capacity rating of 46,000 lbs. For info, visit a Pete dealer.

Betts Spring has expanded its line of spray suppression components to include **quarter fenders**. The SprayOff poly quarter fenders are available for immediate shipment for distribution throughout North America, the company announced. For more information, visit www.betts1868.com.



Webb Wheel has introduced the Vortex Unlimited **brake drum** for drive, steer and trailer axle applications. The company says the drum has been designed to run cooler than other drum brakes due to improved heat transfer efficiency. The drive and trailer axle configura-

tions feature Webb's wear indicator, which the company says indicates operators can expect 25% more life from the Vortex Unlimited. Operating temperatures are about 10% lower than standard drum brakes, thanks to cast-in exterior ribs that conduct heat away from the brake surface. For more information, visit www.webbwheel.com.

Friction manufacturer Fras-le has come out with a new **air disc brake pad program** for the North American aftermarket. The program includes 11 part numbers sold under the Extreme Service brand, covering more than 59 applications on 12 brake systems, the company announced. The Fras-le air disc brake pads are made of OE-quality friction material and offer reliable, quiet, durable and longer life performance, the company claims. For more, visit www.fras-le.com/nabrakes.



Mack has come out with its own proprietary **Bulldog-branded coolants**. The new coolants include: Mack Bulldog Extended Life (ELC) Coolant; and Mack Bulldog Heavy-Duty (HD) PF Coolant. The former has a service life of 600,000 miles/12,000 hours/48 months while the latter is good for 300,000 miles/6,000 hours/24 months. They're designed for use in a wide variety of cooling system applications including on- and off-road and stationary engine applications as well as gas, diesel and natural gas truck engines. □

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2) How many vehicles are based at or controlled from this location? Please indicate quantities by type:
 - No. of Straight Trucks _____ No. of Trailers _____
 - No. of Truck-Tractors _____ No. of Buses _____
 - _____ No. of Off-Road Vehicles _____

3) Does this location operate, control or administer one or more vehicles in any of the following Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW) categories? Please check YES or NO:
 14,969 kg. & over (33,001 lbs. & over)... YES NO
 11,794-14,968 kg. (26,001-33,000 lbs.)... YES NO
 8,846-11,793 kg. (19,501-26,000 lbs.)... YES NO
 4,536-8,845 kg. (10,000-19,500 lbs.)... YES NO
 Under 4,536 kg. (10,000 lbs.)... YES NO

4) This location operates, controls or administers:
 Diesel powered vehicles... YES NO
 Refrigerated vehicles... YES NO
 Pickups or Utility Vans... YES NO
 Propane powered vehicles... YES NO

5) Do you operate maintenance facilities at this location? YES NO
 IF YES, do you employ mechanics?..... YES NO

6) Indicate your PRIMARY type of business by checking ONLY ONE of the following:
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 b) Lease/Rental
 c) Food Production / Distribution / Beverages
 d) Farming
 e) Government (Fed., Prov., Local)
 f) Public Utility (electric, gas, telephone)
 g) Construction / Mining / Sand & Gravel
 h) Petroleum / Dry Bulk / Chemicals / Tank
 i) Manufacturing / Processing
 j) Retail
 jii) Wholesale
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7) Are you involved in the purchase of equipment or replacement parts? YES NO

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Bridgestone showcases the science behind new Ecopia tire designs

By Lou Smyrlis

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Tires could very well be the Rodney Dangerfields of the trucking world; they simply don't get the respect they deserve. They may seem simple and utilitarian but the science that goes into their construction is considerably sophisticated.

That much is quickly made evident as one listens to Guy Walenga, director of engineering for commercial products and technologies, Bridgestone Americas. Walenga has a wealth of knowledge about tire design and during the company's Media Boot Camp held here recently, he shared it with transportation industry journalists.

That "simple" truck tire with a basic four-belt construction actually includes 14-15 different rubber compounds, each chosen for a specific set of properties, not to mention a series of agents to help the rubber cure faster, resist oxidation, etc. Each of these compounds cures under a certain temperature, time and pressure yet they must all cure at the same time to produce a tire.

That's just the basics, of course. As Walenga showed, tire design has taken on a great deal of sophistication over the years. For example, Bridgestone's focus is on a total tire solutions. Its new Ecopia lineup, first introduced to the market at the Mid-America Trucking Show in the spring, includes five new tires (steer, drive and trailer positions) and is married to four new tread designs in the Bandag FuelTech line (drive and trailer positions).

The idea is to provide a fuel-efficient solution from the original tire through to the retread.

Bridgestone believes the tires can save up to 29% in total tire wear costs when retreading an Ecopia casing with Bandag FuelTech.

Walenga walked through several of the enhancements built into the new tires. Within the tire tread, Bridgestone is using a patented polymer technology called NanoPro-Tech. Using this technological advancement, quality carbon black is dispersed more uniformly within the rubber, better controlling particle movement and thus reducing energy loss. Why this matters is because the end result, according to Walenga, is improved fuel economy through lower rolling resistance.

The company has also turned to a proprietary sidewall compound to reduce heat generation, which reduces rolling resistance and improves fuel economy without compromising protection for the tire. The sidewall of the M710 drive radial and the R197 trailer Ecopia tires also contain less bead filler volume as a way to lower tire weight and improve fuel economy. Walenga said about two pounds have been removed from the tires through this design enhancement, which had been used in the Japanese market for about six years before being tried in North America.

"You can barely see the difference but if you touch the tire you can feel it," Walenga said.

The company's line of wide-base singles, called Greatec Ecopia, include a patented Waved Belt design to improve durability and create a more retreadable casing, particularly when paired with a Bandag FuelTech product. □

Chevron introduces new synthetic engine oil

DALLAS, Texas – Chevron has introduced a new Delo 400 LE synthetic 5W-30 engine oil it says can improve fuel mileage by up to 2% in Class 8 long-haul vehicles and 4.5% in medium-duty trucks.

The oil was formulated to maximize fuel economy while also meeting engine manufacturers' performance requirements, Chevron announced at the Great American Trucking Show.

The fuel-saving potential is in comparison to SAE 15W-40 oil and has been validated through SAE J1321 fuel consumption testing, Chevron says.

The new oil complements Chevron's Delo 400 LE SAE 10W-30 oil to provide a line of oils that excel at improving fuel economy without sacrificing engine durability, the company claims. It insists its fuel-efficient engine oils have proven through lab and field durability tests to match 15W-40 oils in engine wear and drain intervals.

"We understand that many of our customers are focused on managing fuel costs. Lubricants can play an important role in improving fuel economy, allowing fleet owners to reduce operating costs and stay competitive," said Jim Gambill, North America Commercial and Industrial brand manager, Chevron. "Chevron is committed to helping its customers decrease expenses by delivering products designed to reduce fuel consumption. Our new Delo 400 LE Synthetic SAE 5W-30 is part of Chevron's vision to offer a line of lubricants that deliver fuel economy without sacrificing engine or component durability."

In addition to improved fuel mileage, Chevron says its newest offering provides consistent cold engine starting, minimizes operating costs and extends emission control system life. Delo 400 LE Synthetic SAE 5W-30 will be available across North America in the fourth quarter of 2012, Chevron announced. □

Meritor Wabco's ESCsmart to adjust to changing vehicle characteristics

By James Menzies

ROCHESTER, Mich. – Meritor Wabco's electronic stability control (ESC) has gotten smarter.

The company recently showcased a new "self-learning, drive-it-away" ESCsmart system.

It responds to the changing performance characteristics of a vehicle over time without requiring future calibrations once the truck leaves the assembly plant, officials said.

As a result, the new system always performs optimally through the life of the vehicle. It also reduces system maintenance by eliminating the need for recalibrations, even after wheel alignments or when an ECU is replaced in the field.

The new and improved ESC system from Meritor Wabco will be available in 2014.

"We continually look at ways to improve base technology so that we can offer the industry more value. ESCsmart is a significant step in the evolution of electronic stability control," said Jon Morrison, president and gen-

eral manager, Meritor Wabco. "The technology advancements with self-learning will not only help save manufacturers time and cost in the validation and application process, but fleets can reduce downtime due to the need for reprogramming the ECU every time they have a truck and/or trailer configuration change."

Meritor Wabco currently has more than 150,000 stability systems deployed across North America.

During a recent demonstration, Alan Korn, director, advanced brake systems integration with Meritor Wabco, said the company's ESC system has a 100% re-order rate.

The system is available on trucks built by Daimler Trucks North America, Paccar and Navistar.

A University of Michigan Transport Research Institute study has found that electronic stability control can reduce roll-over crashes by 50% while eliminating 25% of loss-of-control accidents. □

Utility adds two dry van steel options

CITY OF INDUSTRY, Calif. – Utility Trailer has announced that two new high-strength steel options are now available for its 4000D-X Composite dry van. The high-strength steel side panel option is currently only available for the DX-100, which comes as an alternative to the standard .040" aluminum side skin. Officials say the option provides a means of countering fluctuations in the price of aluminum.

Using the same exterior side skin material found on plate trailers, the new option features .016" high-tensile 80,000 psi, pre-painted white galva-

nized steel panels that cover the full length of the trailer, including the front wall. Additionally, a new sidewall system will be made available for both the optional DX-100 and the standard DX-101. It features 18-gauge, 100,000 psi galvanized steel sidewall posts in the bay area, which officials say offers significant weight savings for increased payload capacity.

"When combined, this unique pairing reduces weight while adding to the bottom line, making it a winning combination," said Craig Bennett, Utility's senior v.p. of sales and marketing. □



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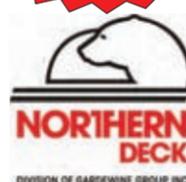
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SAFETY

Cooler heads will prevail when working with reefers

Every experienced trucker knows that cooler heads will always prevail. The phrase just holds a special meaning for those who haul reefers.

Indeed, truckers who remain focused on a few important procedures can address many of the common challenges that are linked to refrigerated loads.

The job begins with keeping a close eye on the equipment itself. Coolant levels, belts and oil levels need to be inspected before any trip to ensure that everything will work as designed. And a regular look at the reflection of warning lights in the West Coast mirror – or the automated messages sent to a smartphone – will help to confirm that the system continues to run as it should.

The focus on equipment is hardly limited to hot summer days. Those who haul reefers through the Prairies during winter months may want to keep the refrigeration units idling all the time rather than relying on an automated start and stop cycle.

The cost of the extra fuel will pale in comparison to storage fees and time in a service bay if the reefer unit fails to start when required.

And while any mechanical system can fail at one time or another, fleets can prepare their drivers for technical problems by supplying lists of qualified service centres or dealerships that should be called if temperatures begin to shift.

As important as the pieces of equipment may be, however, the systems also need to be used correctly if they are expected to protect their cargo.

Reefers are designed to maintain temperatures rather than actually cool a load. This makes pre-cooling strategies particularly important. For example, it can take four to six hours to cool a trailer down to the 34 F (1 C) needed to protect a load of apples, carrots or broccoli. The 28 F (-2 C) needed for frozen foods can require more time than that, and a summer heat wave will only add to the timelines.

Obviously, the sooner dispatchers can inform drivers about the temperatures needed for the next load, the better.

Human errors present a challenge of their own. Some drivers have been known to forget to press the 'Enter' key after punching the related temperatures into control pads, leaving the reefer to default to the temperatures that were selected for the last load.

A focus on the condition of the trailer itself will also play a role in the cooling process.

The reefer's cooling flow of air needs a clear path for its trip around the cargo. Securement devices like straps and logistics bars can help to maintain an unobstructed flow of air around the bulkheads, and a well-placed pair of discarded skids can create their own barriers against any shifting cargo.

Meanwhile, the reefer chute that stretches into the trailer will need to be free of any obstructions, and checked for rips caused by forklifts



that lift skids just a little too high.

But the potential for damaged cargo is not limited to temperatures alone. It's why the drain holes found along the frame rails at the front and back of the trailer should be cleared of any debris like chunks of old pallets, allowing any unwanted water to escape.

As important as the conditions inside the trailer may be, drivers also need to monitor the original temperature of any new cargo that is loaded on-board.

No matter what style of pulp thermometer is used, the most accurate temperature readings will be measured along the out-

side of the pallet and at the centre of the load. Then it is a matter of comparing these readings to the required temperatures identified on the bill of lading, and contacting dispatchers if there is any difference.

At the very least, the document can be marked with news that a shipper did not allow the driver to examine the load.

After all, a constant stream of information will be as important as the cool breeze from the reefer.

Drivers who inform dispatchers about temperature problems will protect the fleet from the cost of rejected loads.

Dispatchers and shippers who hear about equipment breakdowns will also have the chance to work together to save the cargo. And those who call their insurers as soon as a receiver rejects a load can enjoy the support of a

skilled insurance adjuster while the freight can still be inspected.

Challenges are bound to happen. The solutions are simply a matter of paying attention to the details and keeping your cool. □

– This month's experts are David Goruk and Matt Graveline. David is a risk services specialist and has served the trucking industry for more than 25 years providing loss control and risk management services to the trucking industry. Matt is a senior risk services consultant for Northbridge Insurance, and has more than 20 years' experience in the trucking industry as both a long-haul driver and an owner/operator. Northbridge Insurance is a leading Canadian commercial insurer built on the strength of four companies with a longstanding history in the marketplace and has been serving the trucking industry for more than 60 years. You can visit them at www.nbfc.com.

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Mark Dalton: Owner/Operator

Human traffic on the road

By Edo van Belkom

The story so far:

Mark gets a regular run between Toronto and Montreal that gives him two round-trips every three days. He ends up staying overnight at a truck stop near Kingston once every three days and notices the lot lizards working the lot. He hadn't thought human trafficking was a problem in Canada, but now he knows it's a problem everywhere. Mark sees one of the girls waiting for her ride one morning and sits down to talk to her. She's not in the mood for conversation and seems afraid that she might be caught talking to Mark by her pimp. When the man arrives, it's clear he has control over her. Mark offers her the option to stay with him, but she leaves with her pimp anyway.

Mark sees a Truckers Against Trafficking bumper sticker on a truck and he asks the driver about the organization. It seems awareness is key to combating the problem so that night Mark calls the police as soon as he sees the girls working the lot. The police stop things for a while, but everything is back to normal as soon as they leave. Mark thinks there has to be a better way...

Mark stopped at the truck stop three more times and each time he'd been disappointed by the progress the police were making in shutting down the operation. Each night he would call the police to report the prostitution going on in the parking lot and each night a police car would show up, cruise around a while, then drive off without making an arrest.

Once, an enterprising young officer actually went around knocking on doors looking for young girls. He may have actually visited trucks with girls in them, but they were probably hidden away in sleepers and his questions were likely answered with a dumb-struck, "Nope, sorry officer. I don't have any prostitutes in my truck. Maybe over there."

It was like turning on a light in a darkened room and watching the rats run and hide. As soon as the police showed up the girls all disappeared. But they were back at it within minutes of their departure. It was so routine it was almost comical.

By now it had been a couple of weeks since Mark first called the police and besides the appearance of a marked cruiser every once in a while, it appeared that nothing was being done. That didn't mean there

wasn't an investigation going on, or some undercover sting in the works, but all Mark had to go on was what he could see, and from what he could see, nothing was happening.

Mark thought about that, wondering if there was something he might be able to do that would get the ball rolling. If something happened to increase awareness of what was going on, then there'd be dozens of cops out here and the operation would be shut down in a day.

He came up with a plan.

Around six that morning, while it was still dark out, Mark started up Mother Load and moved her around to the last spot on Party Row. Then he watched the lot closely and a half-hour later a girl exited a truck down the line and began looking for her next client.

Mark flashed his headlights and the girl immediately headed towards him.

She climbed up into Mother Load. "Hey," she said. "You want to have sex with me?"

It was a different girl than the one he'd spoken to in the restaurant, but she was one of the regulars and would suit his purposes fine. "Sure," he said.

"Well you better make it quick. My ride's going to be here any minute."

"Perfect," Mark thought. All he had to do was stall for a little while. "How about we just talk a bit?"

She turned to get out of the truck.

"I'll pay you," Mark said. "I'll pay whatever the rate is, but all you have to do is talk."

"You pay in advance?"

"How much?"

She told him and Mark gave her the money. Then she said, "What do you want to talk about?"

Mark asked her name, where she was from and a dozen different questions about who she was and what she was doing here in this truck stop. Since he'd paid her she didn't mind answering his questions. Her name was Cheryl and she was from Calgary. She ran away from home to get away from an abusive stepfather and wound up in Ontario where she met a man named Garfield. That had been two months ago. She'd heard that her mother and stepfather had separated, but she was working for Garfield now and there was really no way out.

"Does he have a gun?" Mark asked, figuring that would be a good thing to know.

"You a cop?"



Illustration by Glenn McEvoy

"No. I just know guys like Garfield don't like you talking to men."

"Yeah, well...he's not here is he?"

Mark smiled, liking this girl's pluck. He was about to ask her about the gun again, but at that moment the blue van pulled onto the lot. "That's him now, isn't it?"

"I better be going."

Mark reached over and put a hand out to block her. "You're not going anywhere." Then he started up the engine.

"What are you doing?"

"Getting you outta here." Mark had fully expected her to make another attempt to get out of the truck, but she seemed happy just to sit tight and see what happened next. Mark asked her again, "Does he have a gun?"

"Not that I know of."

Mark put Mother Load in gear and moved off the line, cutting the van off in the process. When the van screeched to a halt Mark rolled down his window and said, "I've got Cheryl. She's going to work for me now." And then he drove off.

As he'd hoped, the van followed.

Out on the highway, Garfield pulled up alongside Mark for a while, shouting obscenities and threats through an open window.

But eventually he fell back, probably wondering how in the world he was going to pull over a semi-trailer with nothing more than a van.

But for someone without a plan he was persistent, following Mark for 20 kilometres with no sign of giving up.

Which meant it was time for phase two of Mark's plan. He got on the radio, switched to Channel 9 and started talking.

"This is Mother Load and I'm looking for some help from my friends westbound on the 401," he said. "After looking for her for six months, I've just found my daughter working a truck stop outside Kingston. I'm taking her home to her momma, but her pimp's following me in an old blue van. The girl says he might have a gun on him, she can't be sure."

"I see you Mother Load," came one response.

"I'll be there in a minute," came another.

There was plenty of other chatter, including someone who said they'd called the police.

Mark slowed to just under a hundred to allow the other trucks in the area time to catch up. In about 10 minutes three trucks had found him, a box trailer, a flatbed and a straight truck. Shortly after, the blue van was boxed in by the three trucks, which slowed down in unison to squeeze it onto the shoulder.

The police were on the scene in no time and Mark ended up being pulled over by a pair of marked OPP cruisers, one of which had been travelling eastbound and drove over the median and against traffic to get to him.

"What's going to happen now?" Cheryl asked.

Mark shrugged. "I think Garfield's going to be in a lot of trouble, you might be able to go back to your family, and a lot more people are going to know what's going on."

She smiled at him then, a genuine smile, young and joyful and befitting a girl Cheryl's age. "Thanks," she said. □

– If you've seen suspicious activity at truck stops that could be linked to human trafficking, notify police. More information is available at www.pact-truckstop.org. Mark Dalton returns next month in another exciting adventure.

Did you know that there are two full-length novels featuring Mark Dalton?: Mark Dalton "SmartDriver" and Mark Dalton "Troubleload." For your free copy register with ecoENERGY for Fleets (Fleet Smart) at fleetsmart.gc.ca. Both are also available in audio book format.



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OPINION

On sidelines of NHL lockout

As I write this month's column, the NHL owners and the players are miles apart on a new agreement. Yet again, the only real loser in this tug-of-war is going to be you and me.

I consider hockey my favourite sport. Oh sure, I do enjoy spending Sunday watching football, or golf, but for me, hockey rules. In fact, I can count on one hand how many Saturday night games I miss in a season.

If I'm at a dinner party that night, I usually negotiate with the host to at least have the game on even if it means no sound.

If the planets are all aligned and the TV is visible during dinner, I'll pre-plan my spot at the table to get the best vantage point.

You get the picture, and I'm sure I'm not the only one that goes to these extremes.

So when I started hearing about the current problems in negotiating this new contract, I had a flashback to the last time this happened.

The only good that came out of it was that I got a temporary exemption on Leafs jokes. After all, if they aren't playing, they can't be in last place.

So as we all stand by and wait for the Gods of Hockey figure out how much money they'll be raking in going forward, you and I sit on the sidelines and wait. And at the

Publisher's Comment

ROB WILKINS



end of it all, there will be those who will tell you that they are so disillusioned by the whole process that they won't watch hockey again. They'll say the players and the owners have crossed the line and their greed has caused their kids (we'll call them little Billy and Susie) to boycott hockey forever.

The sad fact is, once this is all said and done, all will be forgiven and we'll all go back to watching our national sport. It's in our blood, just like trucking is for many of you. TV ratings won't plummet and we'll tune in to Don and Ron just as we always have. By the end of the season (if there indeed is a season), all will be forgiven. I wonder if Don and Ron get paid regardless of whether or not there's a season? If not, maybe they could team up for some colourful commentary on Bowling for Dollars.

Break out the bowling shirts; it's going to be a long, cold winter. □

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

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Jim's Brayings

COMMUNITY NEWS FROM THE WESTERN PROVINCES

BY JIM BRAY



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...

Tankers against the tanked

Hot on the heels of Alberta's controversial new .05 blood alcohol level law that allows people to be punished with no trial, comes a more positive initiative between Westcan Bulk Transport and Mothers Against Drunk Driving. The campaign includes a new decal that Westcan is putting on 40 of its transport trucks, showing the face of 16-year-old Michael Knox, who was killed by a drunk driver in 1999. The decal calls on drivers to call 911 if they suspect a driver is drunk.

Check out the picture (above right), shot at the unveiling.

Westcan looks at MADD as a good fit, considering the company's focus on safety. According to an AMTA news item, Jim Davis, managing director, RTL-Westcan Group of Companies said "Westcan has always worked hard to have safety ingrained in its culture and operations, and has an ongoing investment in its people, programs and equipment. That is what made MADD Canada appealing as they are throughout Western Canada and the Territories focused on getting impaired drivers off the road. We also believed that MADD Canada was an organization everyone within Westcan would understand and will support this partnership."

The partnership also dovetails with new provincial regulations – which became effective July 1 – in which drivers caught with a blood alcohol level higher than .08 lose their licences immediately and can't drive again until the charges are settled. The more controversial ruling I referenced above started Sept. 1 and puts into effect an immediate, 72-hour licence suspension for those caught with blood alcohol levels between .05 and .08.

Congratulations to Westcan and MADD for their caring initiative.

Now if only we could have a movement to get the morons off the road who can't drive even



WESTCAN FOR AWARENESS: Westcan Bulk Transport and Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) have joined forces to raise awareness about drunk driving. Pictured from left to right are: Edmonton Police Service acting superintendent Kevin Galvin; RCMP superintendent Howard Eaton; Don Wilson, Alberta Motor Transport Association executive director; Westcan CEO Tom Kenny; Louise Knox, MADD Canada; Denise Dubyk, MADD Canada and Alberta Transportation Minister, Ric McIver.

when they're sober.

Cooper rides again

Smokin' Gord Cooper, owner of Ocean Hauling and Hotshot and the guy behind the Smokin' Gun, a 1968 Canadian Kenworth Diesel Pro Rig he bills as "Canada's first and fastest Diesel Drag Semi," is at it again. He was at the Hot August Night Race and the NHRDA Canadian Diesel Nationals, at Castrol Raceway in Edmonton, which he says was covered on Fox Sports (US), and the Web.

Cooper made it to the third round before, as he says, "losing to a diesel pickup truck that weighed half as much as my Kenworth semi." Still, he reports that the crowd liked the racing action and got behind him for the "Burnout" competition (I can think of a few people I know who could compete in a burnout competition – and they don't even drive!)

If you'd like to see some of the action, search for 'NHRDA Burnout Competition August 11/12 at Castrol Raceway' for some coverage. You can also find it on YouTube.

Sounds like a real "race" riot!

Puttering around for good causes

Congratulations to Winnipeg's Beaver



GRUB ON THE GREEN: Beaver Truck Centre staff and friends take a lunch break during the company's third charity golf tournament.

sociated Trades Division (ATD), is held in the spring, with proceeds contributed to ATD scholarships. Nice to see the MTA and its friends trying to take care of the future.

Hard driving TV shows

If you've ever driven B.C.'s Coquihalla Highway, you'll know it's a great time-saver compared to the old Trans-Canada route from Kamloops (and/or Kelowna) to the Lower Mainland, through Hells' Gate and the Fraser Canyon. And now that multi-lane, formerly toll road is getting its moment in the sun, or at least the snow, thanks to the Discovery Channel's new 'Highway Thru Hell' TV series.

Hey, Kamloops may not be my favourite place on Earth, but it's hardly Hell! Besides, no matter how bad things may be on the road, there's always Hope.

Anyway, the show follows a team of heavy rescue tow truck drivers at Jamie Davis Heavy Rescue as they do their best to keep the 100-kilometre stretch of highway through the Cascades open.

The first episode ran Sept. 4 (10 p.m. EST). "Death on the Coq," featured the team's Adam Gazzola and Kevin Ritchie clearing spun-out semis off the road after a multi-vehicle collision closed down both northbound lanes.

The series' producers claim the team's vehicles are the "undisputed co-stars" – and they include "Rescue 52," with its fixed 30-tonne crane and two powerful winches that extend the truck's reach for hundreds of metres.

The original eight-part Canadian series is produced by Vancouver's Great Pacific TV.

And Ice Road Truckers is coming back again, the sixth season seeing Manitoulin Transport teaming up with veteran truck driver/long time Ice Roads TV star Alex DeBogorski. The show runs on the History Channel and is a good view as long as you take it with a grain of salt.

The new season sees the Ice Road Truckers sallying forth along Canada's Dempster Highway, which connects the Klondike Highway to Inuvik. And, apparently, unseasonably warm weather (undoubtedly caused by Al Gore) forces the trucks to head out on some of the thinnest ice the winter roads have seen.

Maybe this will be a "breakthrough" season? Ice Road Truckers airs Wednesdays at 9 p.m. EST. □

– That's it for this month. As always, if you have an item you think would fit well in this little rant and rave revue, please feel free to get in touch with me at jim@transportationmedia.ca. We don't guarantee that every item will get in (space is limited, of course – and we have lawyers!), but we do our darnedest.



STILL SMOKIN': Diesel Drag Semi racer Gord Cooper was at it again in Edmonton recently, bowing out in the third round of the before getting the crowd riled during the "Burnout" competition show above.

Truck Centre, whose denizens threw their third charity golf tournament on July 18 at Elmhurst Golf and Country Club. Proceeds were donated to SCE LifeWorks, a registered charitable organization that supports adults labeled with intellectual disabilities, helping them work and participate in the community.

The "Manitoba Truckers Going the Distance" tourney sold out, and saw a variety of Beaver's clients, suppliers, and staff hitting the links to raise funds while having fun.

Barry Searcy, Beaver Truck Centre's president, said "Every year I continue to be amazed by the tremendous support of our industry for this charity event," and lauded attendees for their winning combination of a love of golf and a desire to raise funds for a worthy cause.

Speaking of funds, the event raised over \$13,000. Kudos to all those involved.

MTA goes golfing

And the Manitoba Trucking Association scheduled its annual Vehicle Maintenance Council Golf Tournament for Wednesday, Sept. 12, at Kingswood Golf and Country Club. Thanks to the lead-time required by the print medium, this column was written before the "hard driving" event happened, so hopefully it was successful. Proceeds for the event were earmarked for the MTA Scholarship Fund.

VMC chair, Kal Tire's Mike Murphy, said in promoting the event that "The Vehicle Maintenance Council believes strongly in supporting up-and-coming members of our trucking industry," and noted that funds go directly to scholarships for Transport Trailer Technician apprentices and Truck Technician apprentices. "Our industry is in serious need of technicians, and this is one way we can encourage young people to come to our industry," Murphy said.

The tournament is one of two golf tournaments hosted by the MTA each year. The other, sponsored by the As-

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