

# TRUCK WEST

December 2012 Volume 23, Issue 12

Delivering daily news to Canada's trucking industry at [www.trucknews.com](http://www.trucknews.com)



## Manitoba's massive move

**POWER MOVE** : Three giant transformers, weighing 175,000 kgs each when prepared for transport, were recently hauled to their new home at Manitoba Hydro's Riel Station after a three-night journey across provincial roads. See pg. 7 for the story.

## More port problems in B.C.

By Jim Bray

**VANCOUVER, B.C.** – It appears that growing pains at west coast ports are causing some heavy-duty angst among Canada's freight forwarders.

That's according to an Oct. 25 "e-blast" sent to members of the Canadian International

Freight Forwarders Association (CIFFA). In that e-blast, the Toronto-based CIFFA takes Vanterm and Deltaport in particular, to task, saying that, with a multi-year labour agreement in place, it should be reasonable to expect a "stress-free period of growth and

**Continued on page 14**

## Danish truckers get western welcome

By Jim Bray

**CALGARY, Alta.** – They came, they saw, they were white-hatted!

"They" was a group of 10 Danish trucking industry folk who came to Canada this fall to learn and, perhaps, to teach.

According to Angela Splinter, executive director of the Ottawa-based Trucking Human Resources Canada (THRC), the visit came about after a conversation she had with a Danish counterpart. The THRC's soon-to-be defunct predecessor, the Canadian Trucking Human Resources Council, which Splinter said is mandated "to look at human resources

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## A natural solution to high diesel prices?

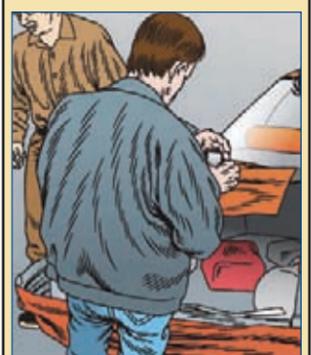


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# Too much connectivity can be deadly. Unless you're a trophy whitetail.

I just returned from my annual (not quite annual, but I try) pilgrimage deep into the Eastern Ontario woods, where I spent a few early November days seeking out big bucks of the four-legged variety.

PETA cardholders, relax. A flick of the tail was the most I saw. I spent most of my weekend chasing something far more elusive: an Internet connection on the Blackberry.

My first intuition was to leave the Blackberry at home. I knew there were few spots where a connection would be obtained and I'm not so vain as to think my company can't survive without me for a few days. But I eventually decided to bring it along, you know, just in case.

I moved into camp Sunday afternoon, and by Monday morning I found myself discretely sliding my phone into my pocket and requesting the one watch where I knew I would get a signal. We call this spot The Flats. For a communications junkie, it should be called Nirvana.

When I saw the little red light start blinking on the Blackberry, I was more excited than if a 10-point buck had emerged from the junipers I was watching. One quick glance at the Inbox wouldn't hurt anyone, so I snuck a peek to ensure the trucking world was getting by okay in my absence.

There were no signs of impending doom, so I turned it off for the rest of the day.

Tuesday, I was dispatched to a watch deep in the woods where a connection would be hopeless. Nonetheless, I brought my little



plastic friend along just in case. Miracle of miracles, the red light once again began blinking, beaming in two days' worth of messages via a weak and sporadic signal.

Within our camp, it would be a cardinal sin to admit to checking e-mail while on the watch. I'd be strung up from the tree like so many deer. So I tensed up when evening debriefings would include: "So, you didn't see anything, James? That deer was headed in your direction."

My dependence on the Blackberry is just one symptom of the hyper-connected world in which we now live. This is evidenced even at the hunting camp. Several years ago, we began using walkie-talkies to stay connected, as is now required by law in Ontario (or some other "reliable" means of communicating).

We have come to rely on these tools so heavily that chaos ensues when the battery on one of the radios should

die. Advancements in vehicle technology mean there's not a spot we can't get to by all-terrain vehicle. GPS ensures we never get lost. Technology has transformed our hunting experiences in the bush, much like it has changed the trucking industry.

The only difference is that while it has enhanced productivity in the trucking industry, I'd hazard a guess that our latest technological distractions have inadvertently saved the lives of more than a few deer. Yes, you can have too much of a good thing. Next year, I'm leaving the Blackberry at home. I swear. □

– James Menzies can be reached by phone at (416) 510-6896 or by e-mail at jmenzies@trucknews.com. You can also follow him on Twitter at Twitter.com/JamesMenzies.



# Tread carefully

Said it before, I'll say it again: tires have to be the most complicated "basic" products you will find on a commercial truck.

Drivers quick to blame their tires for an accident, or owner/operators keen to purchase cheap offshore tires to save a buck because "all tires are the same" would be wise to visit a tire plant or two.

That's what I've done over the past few months, first spending time at Bridgestone Commercial Solutions' flagship tire plant in Warren, Tenn., this summer and most recently at Michelin's US3 plant in Spartanburg, S.C.

Having spent hours at such plants and seeing first-hand the way they operate, I can tell you the sophistication and technology that goes into building a truck tire today – from the chemical compounds used and the design of the grooves or beads to the mechanics of the curing process and detail that goes into the testing and quality control procedures – is truly a marvel to behold.

Take for example, Michelin's focus on quality control at its Spartanburg plant, birthplace of the X One, wide-base tire: Tires are tak-



LOU SMYRLIS

en off the assembly, cut into four pieces, and up to 230 measurements taken to ensure the plant is producing tires true to spec's. In this place every measuring implement right down to the most basic measuring tape and ruler on the plant floor must be tested to ensure it meets a national standard and labeled as such.

This is the same company whose testing facility situated in nearby Laurens, S.C. boasts of 28 miles of test surfaces from smooth asphalt and concrete to tar and gravel to good old-fashioned construction site mud. And believe me, after spending time in the cab with some of their top test drivers, they put their products through hell to ensure they will deliver.

The attention to a tire's complete life-cycle is also impressive. For example, Bridgestone's Ecopia truck tire lineup is designed from the start to work with the company's Bandag Fueltech retread solution.

Using compounds specially engineered in the lab and paired with matching retread patterns, Bridgestone believes it has created a solution that provides low rolling re-

sistance right from the new Ecopia tire through to the FuelTech retread while extending casing life.

Our annual national Tire Buying Trends survey shows that almost one-third of owner/operators intend to optimize their tire costs in the future not by selecting better products or adopting preventive maintenance practices but rather by focusing on price alone. Thirty five per cent tell us they have used cheap offshore tires from India or China, mostly at the drive and trailer positions.

Yet they also tell us that not one of these tires gets a passing grade when it comes to performance – the highest score is a measly 2.68 out of five.

Three quarters of O/Os don't bother retreading those tires either. Low price is the main reason O/Os are placing cheap tires on their rigs.

I say, that's awfully short-term thinking for a product that has such a large role to play in reducing fuel consumption and improving comfort and safety. So do your homework, speak with your dealer about intelligent tire solutions, and visit a reputable tire plant. It will open your eyes. □

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# CLASS 8 TRUCK SALES TRENDS

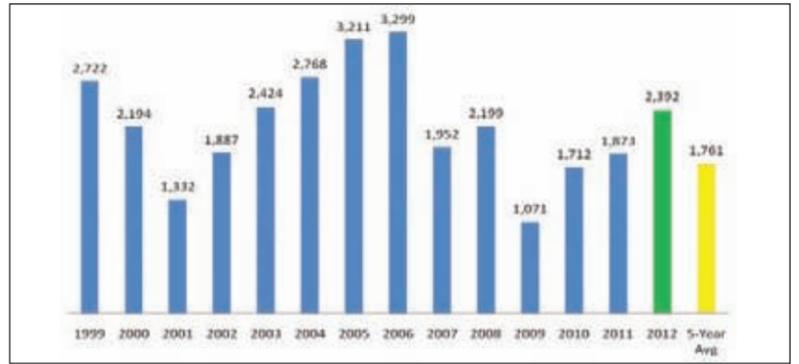
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Class 8 truck sales in September once again topped the previous year's tally but, just like the previous month, the year-over-year increase was not as pronounced as earlier in the year. The 2,392 Class 8 trucks sold into the Canadian market in September was about 400 units better than last year's performance. That was also more than 600 units better than the 5-year average. But it made for only the sixth best September since 1999. The slower sales growth in August and now September is further indication of a slowdown in truck purchases for the rest of 2012.

### Monthly Class 8 Sales – Sept 12

OEM	This Month	Last Year
Freightliner	604	528
International	283	438
Kenworth	404	485
Mack	204	174
Peterbilt	384	288
Volvo	312	325
Western Star	201	163
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>2392</b>	<b>1873</b>

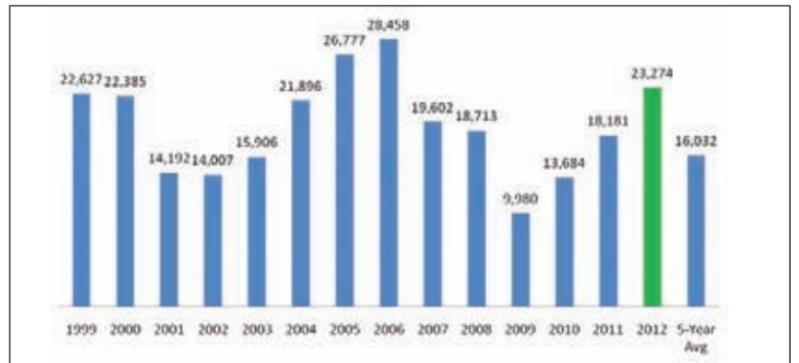
### Historical Comparison – Sept 12 Sales



### Class 8 Sales (YTD Sept 12) by Province and OEM

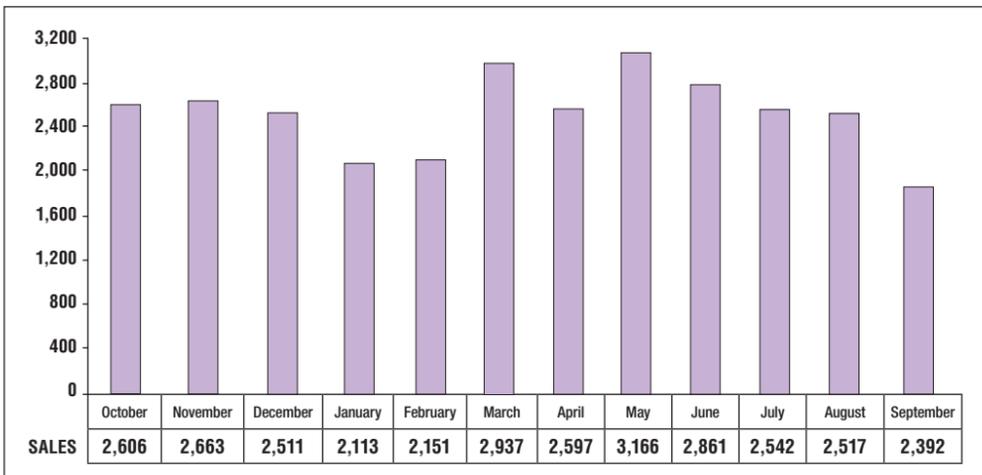
OEM	BC	ALTA	SASK	MAN	ONT	QUE	NB	NS	PEI	NF	CDA
Freightliner	470	566	186	481	2,630	1,010	267	113	24	10	5,757
Kenworth	512	1,927	307	178	810	836	92	0	0	0	4,662
Mack	83	320	158	91	711	310	55	33	0	15	1,776
International	128	585	65	208	1,574	689	135	64	24	47	3,519
Peterbilt	301	1,059	234	423	535	457	133	19	0	0	3,161
Volvo	168	232	88	202	1,282	540	91	56	0	6	2,665
Western Star	310	618	70	35	230	302	62	94	4	9	1,734
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>1,972</b>	<b>5,307</b>	<b>1,108</b>	<b>1,618</b>	<b>7,772</b>	<b>4,144</b>	<b>835</b>	<b>379</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>23,274</b>

### Historical Comparison – YTD Sept 12



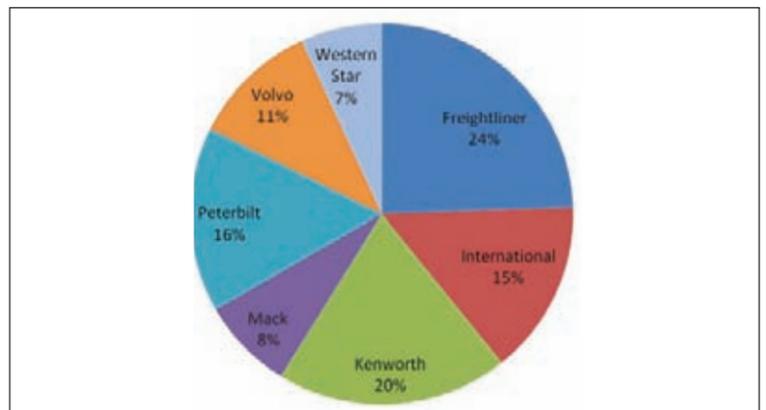
The Canadian and US economies have slowed over the summer, particularly in manufacturing, but there is still economic growth. Many industry experts believe the economic softening will impact Class 8 truck sales for the remainder of 2012. So far, sales in August and September have shown signs of a slowdown but the earlier monthly sales totals are helping boost 2012 to the third highest YTD total dating back to 1999. The 23,274 trucks sold after the first nine months in the Canadian market are more than 7,000 better than the 5-year average.

### 12-Month Sales Trends



For the twelfth straight month, sales climbed above the 2,000 mark, reminiscent of the industry's capacity boom years of 2005 to 2007. The 2,392 trucks sold in September do reflect the fourth consecutive monthly decrease since the highpoint of 3,166 trucks sold in May but they are 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?

### Market Share Class 8 – Sept 12 YTD



Three quarters of the way into the year, Freightliner is having a banner year, commanding almost a quarter of Class 8 sales. Kenworth is in the number two spot for marketshare and enjoying the fact that its strong western network is able to tap into the stronger western economy. Troubled International is at 15% share of the market after announcing a change in direction with its engine technology and changes to its management team. Peterbilt has moved upwards considerably to grab a 16% share. Volvo is the only other OEM to enjoy more than 10% market share.

Source: Canadian Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association

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## BORDER

## Government-backed bridge one step closer, following Michigan vote

**DETROIT, Mich.** – The people of Michigan have defeated a ballot proposition that would hold up construction of a second bridge at the Windsor-Detroit border crossing.

Proposal 6 was a proposed constitutional amendment supported by the owners of the private Ambassador Bridge to delay or block the planned New International Trade Crossing (NITC) bridge between Detroit and Windsor.

### Sandy cost trucking \$140M per day

**NASHVILLE, Ind.** – The US trucking industry incurred short-term losses of US\$140 million per day as a result of Super Storm Sandy, industry analyst FTR has estimated. However, those losses will be easily recouped thanks to an increase in freight demand, Noel Perry, senior consultant with FTR reports.

His per day estimate of lost revenue is based on 20% of the industry not moving freight because of the storm and its aftermath.

“While some fleets will surely lose revenue during the initial phases of the latest disaster, storms like Sandy create new demand later,” explained Perry. “Retail outlets need immediate resupply that only trucking’s time-sensitive character can accommodate. Plus storm damage needs to be fixed. That creates longer-term additional freight tonnage. While the storm is devastating to many, the trucking industry will see mostly positive effects.” □

## OOIDA to throw big bash for 40th birthday

**GRAIN VALLEY, Mo.** – The Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association (OOIDA) is throwing a party to celebrate its 40th birthday. And you’re invited.

The association is celebrating its 40th on Oct. 18-19, 2013 at Kansas Speedway, at what it has dubbed the Heart of America Trucking Show. It will be open to members, non-members and the public.

“We wanted to get the word out as soon as possible so that the trucking community can save the date,” said Mike Schermoly, marketing director with OOIDA.

“Forty years of representing professional truck drivers is a milestone that gives our members and friends a great reason to celebrate. We are pleased to be able to hold the event here in Kansas City at an exceptional venue in a world class motorsports facility like the Kansas Speedway.”

Additional details will be released in the coming weeks, the group said.

Activities will include a truck beauty contest, contests, educational sessions, concerts, food and vendors. □

Ontario Trucking Association president David Bradley has called the vote results “terrific news that shows that the people of Michigan reject the self-interest and cronyism that so many of the state’s legislators have fallen victim to in recent years.”

The OTA says the voters’ defeat of Prop 6 helps clear the path for Gov. Rick Snyder and Canadian officials to proceed with the NITC project unimpeded.

“As has been said so often in the last 12 hours – the people have spoken and the people are always right,” said Bradley. “The people have rejected a proposal that would have denied Michiganders and the people of the entire United States as well as Ontario and Canada the benefits of the most important infrastructure project in years.”

Denis Lebel, Minister of Trans-

port, Infrastructure and Communities, issued a statement, calling the results “good news for travelers, workers and industry on both sides of the border.”

“The new bridge will attract new investments and business opportunities to boost our local and national economies and will result in much needed jobs for Ontario and Michigan communities,” he said. “The new crossing will also increase border capacity to handle future trade and travel growth, and will be built with the security of both our countries in mind.”

Bradley, who has been an ardent supporter of a new, publicly-owned bridge for many years credits the efforts of Gov. Snyder, and the hard work of a dedicated group of private citizens and business groups “in overcoming a campaign against the new bridge

which has been founded more on financial might than what is right.”

He also commended the government of Canada and its officials in the Canadian Consulate in Detroit for its leadership.

Bradley doesn’t expect the battle to be over as NITC may still end up in legal wrangling, but he added, “the only court that truly matters – the court of public opinion – has rendered its decision.”

Alluding to US President Barack Obama’s re-election Nov. 6, Lebel noted: “We will continue to work with the Obama Administration and our partners in Ontario and Michigan to obtain the necessary Presidential Permit to allow this important bridge to proceed. Together we will get the job done and build a bridge for the future.” □

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## BORDER

# Manitoba moves make MTA mad – and glad

By Jim Bray

**WINNIPEG, Man.** – The Manitoba Trucking Association says some highway improvements in the province are just what the doctor ordered, but others are a prescription for trouble.

The MTA said it's pleased with improvements announced to Highway 10 north of Brandon and the renewal of Highway 75, but not so pleased that the province is mulling over cutting the province's snow clearing budget going into this winter.

The Highway 10 improvements were announced in early October and cover the area between the

Trans-Canada and Highway 25, a distance of about 15 clicks. The province promises enhancements to facilitate safer merging, new service roads, paved shoulders, guardrails and rumble strips.

"It is always positive when governments make significant investments in infrastructure," said MTA president Norm Blagden, noting that "these improvements will make the roads safer for everyone to travel on, including our commercial drivers. We rely on

these roads for our business, and consumers rely on us to get the job done." Blagden said the improvements have been high on the MTA's wish list for a long time, and "while there is still work to be done on that particular stretch of highway, this is a step in the right direction."

The renewal of Highway 75 through Morris includes improvements to intersections, new lighting and sidewalks, and better drainage. MTA executive director Bob Dolyniuk noted that Highway 75 is a major trade route for the trucking industry, so "any investment in it is a good starting point."

On the other hand, "While new lighting and sidewalks are important, the reality is that the investment in Highway 75 has to be more than cosmetic," Dolyniuk said, calling for significant additional improvements in order to prevent

the regular closure and near-closure of the highway (and the resulting detours) whenever there's flooding in the area. "These closures and detours [cost] our industry with...added miles and longer transit times," he said.

The MTA estimates that the extra costs associated with flooding-related closures of Highway 75 are at least "\$1.5 million dollars per week," which, as is the reality of commerce, means the consumer will end up footing the bill. "The sooner that trade route remains open year-round, the better it will be for everyone," Dolyniuk said.

As for the province mulling over cutting the snow clearing budget on several Manitoba highways this year, "We are very concerned that the provincial government is considering removing overnight snow clearing services on Highways 1, 16, 59, and 75," Dolyni-

uk said, pointing out what should be an obvious fact: that it is first and foremost a safety issue. "As every Manitoban knows," he said, "it doesn't have to be snowing for snow to cause problems," referring to how blowing and drifting can wreak havoc on highways and drivers.

It's more than that, however. Dolyniuk said it's also a cutback that could impact economic activity negatively, and he tore a strip off the government for how it let the public know about its plans. "These are major trade routes, and reducing snow clearing services on them will impact just-in-time freight movements," he said, "especially those that rely on overnight service to rural communities within Manitoba. We are disappointed by this decision; we are also disappointed in how Manitobans found out about this one, which was through the media, rather than from the government itself." □

## Giant transformers complete journey

**WINNIPEG, Man.** – Three giant transformers have arrived at their new home at Manitoba Hydro's Riel Station after a three-night trek across provincial roadways.

The transformers – each valued at more than \$5 million and weighing more than 175,000 kg when prepared for transport – are being installed as part of the utility's reliability improvements on its 500,000-volt line linking Manitoba to Minnesota.

The transformers were transported using a special 320-tire self-propelled modular trailer (SPMT) that was brought to Manitoba especially for the move. A special 144-km route, designed to avoid tight city streets and narrow overpasses, was used for the journey.

The SPMT used to move the transformer measured just over 34 metres in length and approximately 7.5 metres wide. The 320 tires on the SPMT were used to allow the tremendous weight of the transformer to be distributed evenly over a large area of road, preventing damage to the concrete and asphalt. The move was conducted at a speed of about five kilometres per hour. Officials say this was the first time SPMTs have been used in Manitoba.

Six semi-trailers were also required to move the accessories, such as bushings, coolers and other ancillary equipment, needed to complete each transformer once on-site at Manitoba Hydro's Riel Station. Six semi-tanker trucks also moved the 112,000 litres of insulating oil required to fill each transformer. □



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## CANADA

# New trucking HR organization rises from ashes of CTHRC

**OTTAWA, Ont.** – The Canadian Trucking Human Resources Council (CTHRC) will fold next year, and in its place will be the newly formed Trucking Human Resources Canada.

The new organization has the support of the Canadian Trucking Alliance, Private Motor Truck Council of Canada, *Truck West* publisher Glacier Business Information Group and Newcom Business Media.

## Shell, HDDC offer scholarships

**BURLINGTON, Ont.** – Shell Rotella and the Heavy-Duty Distributor Council of Canada (HDDC) are teaming up once again to offer their Heavy-Duty Technician Scholarship.

The pair will award a total of \$15,000 to six students pursuing accreditation in such career areas as trucking, logistics, supply chain management, engineering, mechanics, fleet maintenance, importing/exporting, third-party logistics, and shipping/receiving.

On March 30, Shell and the HDDC will select a total of six scholarship recipients across Canada to each receive \$2,500 toward the completion of their post-secondary technical studies.

The committee will choose students based on their academic merit, financial need, and their commitment to contributing to the success of the trucking industry. Successful applicants will be notified by phone and e-mail by the end of April.

The application deadline is Feb. 28. For more information about eligibility or to apply, visit [www.Shell.ca](http://www.Shell.ca). □

## Bulk DEF prices decreasing

**TORONTO, Ont.** – Diesel exhaust fluid (DEF) prices remained steady at the pump in October, at 80 cents per litre, while costs of totes and bulk deliveries are on the decline.

The October issue of *DEF Tracker* provided updates on the North American DEF market, including pricing in every US state and Canadian province.

In the US, pump prices went up four cents per gallon between September and October, to US\$2.80/G. That's the second highest average pump price in the past 12 months, *DEF Tracker* reports. Canada's pump price average of 80 cents per litre is consistent with previous months.

Also over the past 30 days, 77 new locations in North America began offering DEF at the pump.

Christopher Goodfellow, North American emissions analyst at Integer Research, said "Reductions in raw material costs and moves by distributors to capture market share have caused diesel exhaust fluid prices to decrease in tote refill, and FTL and LTL bulk delivery modes during October."

For more info on DEF Tracker, visit [www.integer-research.com](http://www.integer-research.com). □

It will focus on: identifying human resources issues, trends and opportunities in the trucking and logistics industries; supporting the recruitment and retention of human resources needed to meet industry demand; partnering on initiatives that impact human resources; providing a national forum for gathering and sharing best practices; and promoting career opportunities and career paths within

the trucking and logistics industries.

"Trucking HR Canada will be a forum for gathering and exchanging ideas and information relating to human resources and best practices in training," says Angela Splinter, executive director of the new organization. "As a national, partnership-based organization, we will collaborate to promote safe, secure, efficient and professional trucking

and logistics."

The CTHRC will phase out of operations early in 2013.

"By including the most prominent membership-based fleet organizations in Canada, and publishers of the largest trade magazines in the trucking and logistics industry, our new organization is immediately positioned to support the broadest range of businesses and ensure HR needs, resources and strategies are effectively communicated to the industry at large," Splinter says.

"We are very hopeful that a new national organization which focuses on working with industry partners can help us as we work to address what most carriers believe is the industry's toughest challenge – making sure we have top-quality people who are recognized as skilled labour and treated as such, to pilot our vehicles in the future," says David Bradley, president and chief executive officer of the CTA.

Bruce Richards, president of the PMTC adds: "PMTC is a firm believer in the need for exceptional human resources practices in the trucking community. Our members recognize the value of proven training curricula and delivery methods, as well as the bottom-line results that can be delivered by superior hiring and retention practices. We are pleased to be a part of the new organization in helping to bring awareness of high-level HR practices to the forefront of the Canadian trucking community." □

## Canadian Freight Index slows in September

**TORONTO, Ont.** – TransCore's Canadian Freight Index saw a drop in month-over-month spot market freight volumes in September, decreasing by 15% from August. Year-over-year load volumes were down 24% from September 2011. Quarterly figures were down 14% year-over-year while truck capacity was up 13%. The softening of the Canadian spot market freight is similar to figures reported for the North American Freight Index, according to TransCore.

While a decrease was detected in both equipment and load postings, the equipment to loads ratio for September widened to levels previously seen more than two years ago. The variance, however, is reflective of previous third quarter results leading into fourth quarter. Available capacity is comparable to April, which is typical for the month of September, TransCore said.

The top states of origin for loads destined to Canada in order of most loads were Ohio, Pennsylvania, California, Illinois and Indiana. California moved from fourth highest in August to third this month.

The top destinations for freight originating in Canada were New York, Texas, Pennsylvania and California, with New Jersey bumping Florida from spot number five.

Cross-border postings still accounted for 70% of all load postings. Intra-Canada postings made up 26% of the total load volumes.

The top destinations for loads imported into Canada were: Ontario (54%), Western (22%), Quebec (21%), and Atlantic (3%). The top regions for import equipment into Canada were: Ontario (52%), Western (24%), Quebec (21%), and Atlantic (3%). Regions of origins of loads within Canada were: Western (43%), Ontario (27%), Quebec (22%), and Atlantic (8%). □



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## OVER THE ROAD

# Professional drivers caught in the middle of a perfect storm

*Finding the time to rest, relax and recharge is becoming more difficult every year*

Well, here we are heading towards the end of another tough year. There's still lots of economic uncertainty to go around and austerity measures are all the rage. Is that what we have to look forward to in 2013? I sure hope not.

Maybe we should all get together and form a Trucker's Bank – then we would be too big to fail and someone would come along and bail us out. Just a thought.

Yes, 2012 has been a real grind for me. It's not that I don't enjoy what I do, but I spend more time on the job for the same money I was earning 10 years ago.

I feel like I'm treading water and I'm not sure if I can keep it up until I reach retirement age. For me that's 15 years or so in the future.

That's a difficult thought to face every morning. Finding the time to rest, relax, and recharge is becoming more difficult with each passing year.

I'm an optimist at heart, so I have a difficult time sharing thoughts about our industry that at first glance appear to be coming from a negative center. But that's not the case. I, like most of you, recognize that the trucking

lifestyle is unique. It's not a job you start at nine and finish at five. It requires a strong commitment, work ethic, and self-discipline.

Although you have to accept the fact that you will be away from home and family for extended periods of time, you should still be able to have the time over the course of each year to meet the obligations to your family and to yourself.

Over 10 years ago I started on a course that saw me give up tobacco, adopt a healthy eating regime, lose a pile of weight, and take the time each day to get the exercise I need. By eliminating all of those high-risk health factors I feel better – at least physically – than I have at any point in my life.

Yet I still feel the daily stress from the time crunch. It's not without irony that the time I have to take to get the exercise I now crave, and the time I take to prepare healthy food choices, and the time I take to rest when I need it, all add to that feeling of stress that comes from not having enough time in the day. So is a healthy lifestyle part of the trucking lifestyle or not?

Many carriers, including my

## Over the Road

AL GOODHALL



own, recognize the importance of this issue but we still have a long way to go in making sure all drivers at least have the opportunity to take the time to invest in their health if they so choose. The trick is to be able to do it without giving up any of your income stream.

Also over the past 10 years we have seen stricter enforcement of hours-of-service laws, the ongoing adoption of electronic on-board recorders, the implementation of speed limiters, laws put in place to control distracted driving, and much tougher laws in the States to rate carriers and drivers.

Soon we may also see legislation that requires testing for such things as sleep apnea.

Drivers no longer have the option to cut corners to get the job done.

Doing the job right, doing the job by the book, requires taking the time to make sure all your ducks are in a row all of the time. So again, the trick is to also do all of these little extras without giving up any of your income stream.

Drivers are not the only ones finding themselves stretched a lit-

tle thin. Carriers have faced very tough competitive pressures over the past four years along with increased costs and the challenge of finding seasoned drivers to get the job done. There has been a lot of pressure on driver salaries as a result. We seem to be caught in the eye of a perfect storm.

So what is 2013 going to bring us? Probably more of the same. I think what we really need is some imaginative thinking. Hours-of-service laws, implementation of electronic on-board recorders, and carrier/driver safety ratings are definitely not going to go away.

We need to find some creative ways to use those laws to benefit drivers directly when it comes to issues of health and time management. I think we spend far too much time looking backwards at what used to be and trying to reclaim successes of the past rather than looking forward, despite the current gloomy view.

It would be nice to find our way out of the eye of the storm in 2013, wouldn't it? □

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

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**TAX TALK**

# How to find tax deductions in your financial documents

You can't fuel a trucking business with enthusiasm and good intentions. You need money. And if you've ever taken out a line of credit or financed a truck – or refinanced an existing loan – you know that borrowing can be expensive.

No matter how you are structured, it's important to track interest and finance costs. That's because any time you incur expenses to borrow money, and that money is used to help you earn business income or to provide working capital for your business, those expenses are tax-deductible. This includes interest you pay on the loan, the cost for the loan to be set up and managed, and fees for legal, accounting, and bookkeeping services.

Loan-related expenses aren't like most business expenses. Interest and other fees may be amortized over the life of the loan and wrapped into monthly payments. Up-front administrative or documentation fees may be buried in the fine print. The paperwork can be onerous and complicated. It's easy to miss potential deductions.

**Strictly business**

As your business seeks to expand, add equipment, or just pay the monthly bills, take every opportunity to identify loan-related expenses. At the same time, you want to avoid the common pitfalls that can get these deductions disqualified.

One of the biggest issues I see is the mixing of business and personal credit. When you finance a new truck, it's pretty clear that the money is being used to advance your business. But when a line of credit or credit card is used for both personal and business transactions, it makes deductible expenses harder to track.

We always advise our clients to keep dedicated accounts so the expensing of service charges, overdraft charges, interest, and fees is clear to you, to us, and to any auditor who happens to review your return. In a perfect world you would have separate credit cards and credit lines for business and personal use.

When money is borrowed partly for business and partly for some other purpose, only the part of the expense that may reasonably be considered applicable to the business is deductible. Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) expects you to apportion a business-related percentage of related interest and charges.

If you mix business and personal debt, you'll have to calculate the proper business percentage each year.

Besides, you will lose track of how much money you have loaned to the company and how much you have taken from it. Over time you will look at your entire line of credit and credit card balances as business when in fact they are not. A CRA auditor will want you to prove that the percentage of interest you are expensing is valid. That may mean going back over years of statements to prove the business portion.

Your accountant can help you clarify precisely what borrowing expenses are business and which are personal. For instance, you might think your tax accounts (including



**Tax Talk**

SCOTT TAYLOR

personal tax, corporate tax, payroll source deductions, and GST account) are business-related. But CRA says you cannot deduct the interest charged to these accounts or any loans you may get from financial institutions to pay these amounts. Also, any loans to buy RRSPs or fees charged within your RRSPs are not deductible.

**Depreciation and loan expenses**

If you borrow money for the purpose of acquiring depreciable property (for example, your truck), and incur deductible expenses in the

course of borrowing that money, you can capitalize these expenses along with the interest paid. When these costs are capitalized, they form part of the capital cost of the asset subject to capital cost allowance (CCA).

Your income will be a little higher, but that's okay if it means keeping the bank manager happy. And you're not giving up the deduction, you're just expensing it over time. If you think this approach is right for you, talk to your accountant to make sure.

**Review the documents**

Sit down with your accountant and review your loan documents (preferably before you sign). While you're identifying administrative fees and other charges, make sure the payments are properly amortized and the interest calculated

correctly. We do this with clients on a routine basis.

We find mathematical errors, incorrect interest rates, confusing guarantee terms, missing pages, illegible type – astonishing mistakes. No matter how eager you are to seal the deal, spec' the money with as much care as you do the truck.

Finally, as another year draws to a close, I want to thank you for reading this column. I hope it has helped you along the way and will continue to do so in the New Year. All the best for the holidays, and here's to a prosperous 2013. □

– 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](http://www.tfsgroup.com) or call 800-461-5970.

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## OPINION

# Want your voice to be heard? Start by cleaning up the language

## If we want to be taken seriously, we need to discuss issues diplomatically

Lately, I have been talking with a few of my fellow drivers on the topic of electronic on-board recorders (EOBRs), trying to get an objective, man-on-the-street, view of things and how the future legislation will affect us all. My goal was to just listen to what others had to say; I didn't want to steer the conversation in any particular way, just to let things flow. So I took off my truck driver's hat and wore my journalist's one for a few days.

The results of my experiment astounded me. I chose a broad selection of drivers to talk to, company drivers for the big box carriers, lease-operators, local city drivers and some specialist drivers on heavy-haul and gravel trucks.

You say tomato,  
I say tomahto

MARK LEE



This way I could get a fairly balanced view.

Unfortunately I never got a balanced view at all. I was left with the same impression by almost every driver. Even more unfortunate was that I had completely forgotten about the topic in question and the objective I had hoped to achieve from the general conversation.

It seemed almost impossible to have a conversation with anybody that I could call upon for a quote

without issuing a Parental Advisory warning beforehand. F-bombs were thrown around like confetti. At first I didn't pay much attention to it. After all, we're big butch truckers. But the more it went on, the more disappointed I became.

How are we ever going to get anybody to hear our views when it appears that we cannot construct a sentence without swearing with every other word? There is no doubt that the question of EOBRs is something to bring out a passionate response, but surely there is a better answer than #\$\$%@ that! How on earth can we expect to be taken seriously when we conduct ourselves in this manner?

Time and again I heard the same old story: "I told those (insert expletive of your choice) that I'm not doing that." This was referring to instructions from dispatch or at a shipper/receiver.

Now, I took this with a pinch of salt at first, because I've worked on both sides of the desk. I used to work alongside drivers that were always telling me that they told the office to shove it, however when I moved into the office myself, I never heard so much as a peep out of them – all the bravado of the yard or truck stop had disappeared.

So it would appear that we say one thing, yet do another. Or do we? I have sat in on a couple of the listening sessions set up by the FMCSA. Listening to some of the questions and statements from the drivers had me wishing the ground would open up and swallow me.

Thankfully the F-bomb wasn't dropped, but some of the questions and statements were very poorly thought out. Now don't get me wrong, I applaud those that are passionate enough to actually take a stand and try to get their point across. At least they're doing something. Unfortunately, the way their opinions were received is very troubling. I was not the only one there who was rolling my eyes.

The people at the FMCSA who are trying to bring in this legislation do this for a living. Debate is their bread and butter. They thrive upon it and quite often because of the legal jargon they use, the cause itself is completely lost. As long as the T's are crossed and the I's are dotted, they're happy. We cannot hope to compete in a debate with these people unless we have all our ducks in a row. Sitting back and letting a few passionate people do all the work for us is not going to be enough.

We need representation from within our ranks. We cannot leave it to the likes of OOIDA, OBAC or the mega carriers to speak on our behalf. They all have their own agendas.

F-bombs aside, the overwhelming majority of drivers I have spoken to throughout my career have all said, in so many words, that nobody ever listens to them.

We're a bit like a teenager in this respect; they too often complain that nobody understands or respects them. Well of course they don't, nobody understands or respects grunts and tantrums, which is something we all need to remember if we want to be taken seriously.

The EOBR is just the beginning. Soon every aspect of our lives behind the wheel will be controlled by legislation. The people in the corridors of power have to justify their existence and because we have nobody speaking up on our behalf, we're sitting ducks for anything they decide to throw in our direction. I think it's about time we stand up, clear our throats and make them listen to us. We still have the right to free speech – for now. □

– 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](http://www.brandttruck.com/blog).



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## ALBERTA

# Danes dig Canadian trucking industry

Continued from page 1

and workforce planning issues for the industry, looking at ensuring it has the workers they need," was involved in an international project that took Splinter to Europe a year or so ago.

"We are sharing the Canadian material that we have – competency profiles and occupational standards for drivers – we share a lot of that as a project partner," Splinter said, "and it was through this project that I met Magnus Kobke."

Kobke is project chief of Demark's TSU, the "transport sector education fund" an organization he told *Truck West* is tasked with seeking "new solutions to improve the training and education of truck drivers in Denmark."

Training is a really big deal over there and Kobke said this focus leads to TSU members taking a road trip every few years "to see if other countries are doing things in another way from what we do."

Hence, the CTHRC-facilitated trip to Canada, and as it turned out, there was plenty for the Danes to see. And while there are plenty of differences between the industries on either side of the Atlantic, there are a lot of similarities, too.

"They're facing the same challenges that we are in terms of an aging workforce and the image of the industry, in that we don't have people lining up to be truck drivers," Splinter said, noting that the Danish delegation admitted the same stereotypes exist over there, including that "anybody can be a truck driver."

Yet the differences are real, including nearly universal unionization over there – with labour peace.

"We almost never go on strike in our country," Kobke said. "Every problem between employers and employees is discussed and they always find a solution."

That spirit of cooperation, he said, is the reason why the Danish delegation consisted of "four employers and four employees," with Kobke and the managing director of the Employers' Association rounding out the group.

Union and management working together like that may sound like cats and dogs living peacefully or oil and water mixing freely, but Kobke says it's natural.

"Employers and employees work together and try to solve the same problems," he said, adding that "union membership means you get unemployment insurance and you can get some help if you have problems."

He said it's common in Denmark for even lawyers and doctors to be unionized and that, of the approximately 75,000 drivers in Denmark, about 60,000 are members of the United Federation of Drivers, the rest being members of "other small unions."

This cooperative aspect, Kobke said, even led to the drivers turning

down part of a raise.

"That was set down during some contract negotiations back in 1989," he said. "They decided to put some money away for better training solutions instead of raising the salary of the drivers. So if you speak with the driver's union, they will say that they pay the money, but if you speak with the employers association, they will say that they are the ones who are paying the money that goes into the fund. It's actually 50-50."

The Danes spent a week in Canada, flying first into Calgary and then moving on to the Ottawa area.

"They did a trip to Banff National Park," Splinter said, "and then had the opportunity to visit large trucking companies in Calgary that service the oil and gas industry. They don't necessarily have equipment of that size and skill, so they found that interesting."

As to why Alberta and Ottawa were chosen out of the vast Great White North, Kobke said "in the beginning, we wanted to go to Vancouver, to Toronto, to Saskatchewan, but it was a lot of travel and we only had one week. And Calgary is a big hub for transportation and Ottawa is where the CTHRC has their offices."

In Calgary, the group met with Westfreight, Mullen and Bison, as well as paying a visit to Trimac's training facility. They also got together with the Alberta Motor Transport Association, where executive director Don Wilson provided an overview of its operations while Fred Gould, AMTA's manager of the Certificate of Recognition program, outlined some highlights of the program.

"The hospitality was great, actually," Kobke said. "We really enjoyed the meetings."

In Ontario, they sat down with the Teamsters and with Kriska Transportation. "Kriska's HR person put together a binder of all their programs, their policies, how they do things," Splinter said, "and (the Danes) were quite intrigued with that."

Kobke said they came away from their trip with an appreciation for how business is done in Canada.

"To be very honest, I think in Denmark and Europe we believe that we have the best in transport, especially Denmark and Holland," he said. "But (in Canada) we saw very good ways of running a trucking business, ways that we didn't believe were possible because in Europe the competition is very hot."

How hot? Hot in a way that many Canadian companies can identify with.

"We have a lot of Danish trucks, but the drivers are from Romania and Ukraine and Russia," Kobke said, "and they are willing to drive for 300 (Euros) a month while most truck drivers require four to five thousand."

The situation means that, instead of a shortage of skilled driv-



**WARM WELCOME:** Visitors from Denmark were 'white-hatted' during a special ceremony while in Calgary. They visited to see how Canucks truck.

ers, there's actually a glut.

"At the moment, a lot of Danish companies are exchanging the Danish drivers for Eastern European drivers to save money," Kobke said, "so we actually have a lot of unemployed Danish truck drivers. Actually, it's one of the major news stories at the moment on television, because one of our news channels has been working with a Bulgarian driver for a week, seeing how they live and how they eat and so on. It's very poor conditions and I think some people outside the transport industry think this is a disaster and want to do something about it."

As for why the unions don't ride to the rescue, "what is happening is that Danish companies are opening a new company on the other side of the border in Germany and in Germany they don't have the same regulation," Kobke explained. "It's a Danish company, but the trucks are registered in Germany. So that means they (can ignore) the contract between the union and the employer association and pay whatever they want."

Companies don't even have to set up an office across the border, either. "They just have a post box or something like that," Kobke said. "The administration is still in Denmark."

As for what Canadian truckers can learn from the Danish, Kobke points toward training.

"In Denmark, all training is basically free of charge," he said. "You don't pay to go to training; it's paid by the government. You even receive your salary when you are in training."

Of course, there being no such thing as a free lunch, "another difference is that the we pay about 60% tax," Kobke said. "We have a labour market tax of 8% – 8% of the total tax goes only to training, if you're unemployed or if you are sick. So everybody in Denmark who is working and making money pays 8% tax just to make sure they can get the money back if they get sick, unemployed or want to go on training."

And unlike the Canadian situation, truck driving is considered a skilled profession in Denmark. "We have a tradition," Kobke said, "where apprentices serve for two-and-a-half years. They work in the transport company, but they'll be in training for about six months and the rest of the time they will be working (as apprentices) inside the trucking company."

He said that after their term, "they go to a final examination and

if they pass, they'll receive a certificate that [indicates] they are fully skilled truck drivers."

Not only that but, as part of the European Community, "we have compulsory training that means professional truck drivers in Europe must go on training for one week every five years," Kobke said. "That's mandatory, to prevent too many accidents on the road and to improve the eco-driving – the fuel consumption is very high in some countries."

As for whether Canadian trucking companies struggling with a driver shortage could get some relief by hiring experienced Danish drivers, Kobke said it isn't as easy as that. "Even though we have a lot of unemployed truck drivers right now, there's challenges because trucking isn't recognized as a skilled occupation in Canada," he said. "They would have to come as temporary foreign workers and wouldn't necessarily qualify right away for the documentation that they would need for cross-border work."

Based on what he saw in Canada, Kobke said he intends to try some new things when he gets home, including a pilot project inspired by a strategy in play at Kriska.

"They had a program where all new drivers were put through a program for at least one week before they start to drive by themselves," he said. "They were experienced drivers who came from other companies, but all the drivers had to receive some driving hours with a very experienced local driver."

Kobke plans to work with a Danish company and, after a year, see if they had fewer accidents, lower fuel consumption, etc. He also plans to translate into Danish a training syllabus his group received in Canada and "compare it with our system and see if we can make any improvements or get new ideas."

While Kobke obviously thinks Canadian companies are doing well, he also has a warning for the industry.

"I heard that Europeans are immigrating to Canada to be truck drivers," he said, "but the Canadian truck companies are also hiring drivers from Eastern Europe because they're cheaper. So I think the same things are starting to happen in Canada that are happening in Denmark."

On the whole, however, "we were very impressed with the way the (Canadian) truck companies are working," Kobke said. "They're very professional. We found that we are not the best...you do even better." □

# Freight forwarders complain of delays at B.C. ports

Continued from page 1

opportunity,” but that such “is not the case.”

According to the document distributed to the CIFFA list, there have been reports of “extensive problems in container pick-up and delivery, primarily at TSI Terminals Deltaport and Vanterm,” though the bulletin points its finger at Centerm as well.

“CIFFA members share horror stories of five- and six-day struggles to obtain reservations to move containers out of the terminals,” the bulletin notes, suggesting that some CIFFA members have gone so far as to suggest “they will change ocean carriers or begin routing containers via US ports simply to avoid the frustrations and costs caused by the current system.”

Besides access problems, CIFFA also claims that members have received storage and demurrage charges, including one for “thousands of dollars, because the truckers they contracted for the pick-ups were unable to obtain reservations.”

CIFFA also expressed concerns with how the current reservation system itself has worked out over the past several months.

The kerfuffle, CIFFA says, has led to truckers at Port Metro Vancouver to hold two rallies to protest conditions at the terminals, which, they also admit, made an “already bad situation” worse.

It appears as if CIFFA may have discovered that labour peace is only one thread in a complex tapestry being weaved in the region; there are also huge infrastructure and methodology changes being made to roads, rail and ports to help facilitate what’s expected to be rapidly increasing freight traffic in the future.

CIFFA isn’t alone in its angst, though. Louise Yako, president and CEO of the British Columbia Trucking Association, told *Truck West* that everyone involved in the area’s shipping industry is experiencing issues right now.

“I can understand their frustration,” she said. “I think what you are seeing or hearing about, generally speaking, are some growing pains related to an increase in cargo.”

Yako pointed out that marine container volumes are up nearly 8% so far this year – over and above a year-over-year increase that’s been going on since “a slight flattening throughout the economic downturn.”

CIFFA members, Yako said, appear to be expressing frustration associated mostly with that extra volume, a situation made worse by what she referred to as sudden, but normal, increases during the year.

“Even though we are generally the most balanced of all of the North American ports in terms of import and export volumes,” she said, “imports are still higher than exports and over the summer, particularly in August and September, we saw a spike in volumes. And when you’re trying to



**CONTAINER COMPLAINTS:** Freight forwarders say they’ll consider using alternative ports if conditions don’t improve in B.C.

do more work within a confined period of time, it’s going to get really frustrating.”

Yako, who is also a member of a group called the Container Drayage Leadership Team, said the dissatisfaction cuts both ways.

“I do believe that the terminals are equally frustrated,” she said, noting, too, her surprise that Deltaport is a source of CIFFA members’ wrath because “the frustrations I’ve heard consistently about were about Vanterm.”

As for reservation snafus, “I think the frustrations are based on the fact that over the past year or so, TSI has signed service level agreements with some trucking companies,” Yako said. She admitted that she doesn’t know the finer details of those agreements, but noted that “in general, the terminals agreed to provide a certain level of service, provided that the trucking companies have a specific level of volume and that they put some of that volume through the night gates.”

The problem with daytime service, Yako said, is that “some of that volume is going through

the day gates and in order to accommodate the speed gate volume during the day, they have reduced the number of daytime reservations.”

The result is that “you’ve got most trucking companies trying to make reservations for the day because they’re not sure whether a night gate will be offered, and even if it is offered sometimes it’s been at the last minute or has been cancelled.”

This uncertainty “raises the level of anxiety about the reservation system,” she said.

Yako admitted that the Container Drayage Leadership Team could perhaps have communicated better the plans for improving the system going forward.

“Hindsight is 20/20,” she said, “and so if there was anything that we could have done differently it would have been that we would have been more open and communicative about the things that we are trying to do to improve the system soon.”

As for what is actually being done, Yako said that TSI, which operates Vanterm and Deltaport,

announced recently that it was going to be adding an extra night gate to its operation, increasing to four night gates a week at both Vanterm and Deltaport.

“One of the things that the trucking companies have complained about is a lack of consistency in terms of the night gates,” she noted, “because without that consistency it’s very difficult to plan, to slot drivers into shifts. So having that consistency, I think, is an improvement.”

So while it does appear a cork is in the process of being removed from the bottlenecks surrounding Port Metro Vancouver, that doesn’t mean there won’t be ongoing issues. “We’re not going to be able to continue to just have a day gate and run all of the containers through the day gate period,” Yako said. “It’s not physically possible.”

Yako also noted that the Container Drayage Leadership Team – which besides herself consists of senior representatives from the terminal operators, Port Metro Vancouver, the Chamber of Shipping of British Columbia and the Western Canadian Shippers Coalition – is getting very close to be able to announce “some proposed changes that we can go out and consult people with and say ‘Here’s what we think can be done.’”

The BCTA itself has been trying to keep its member companies in the loop, for example by bringing together a variety of stakeholders to a spring information session in the Lower Mainland to outline, as Yako put it, “What we’re all going to have to react to and perhaps how we’ll need to change how we operate our businesses.”

All of this may not be enough to mollify CIFFA’s members over the short-term – or anyone else, for that matter.

But Yako pointed out that, since change is coming whether they like it or not, “if people are under the impression that things will continue to be the same, it’s just not realistic.” □

## More funding available for Asia-Pacific Gateway projects, feds announce

**VANCOUVER, B.C.** – Unused funds from the Asia-Pacific Gateway and Corridor Initiative (APGCI) will be invested back into the gateway, federal International Trade Minister Ed Fast announced.

Sometimes, funds made available under the APGCI aren’t spent, for a variety of reasons, but Fast has committed to ensuring the money will find its way into improving the gateway one way or another.

He will soon issue a call for proposals, which will reallocate \$50 million in unspent funds towards infrastructure and short-sea shipping projects.

The funding will facilitate projects that will support Asia-Pacific trade and boost the competitive advantage enjoyed by the gateway, the government announced.

“Our government is committed to helping our exporters reach fast-growing Asia-Pacific markets by continuing to boost Canada’s competitive advantages,” said Fast. “That is why we are ensuring that all of the funds committed to helping better facilitate Canadian exports to Asia are utilized. New projects will help create jobs, growth and prosperity in local communities and ensure the Asia-Pacific Gateway remains North America’s gateway of choice to Asia.”

Applications for the federal funding will be accepted up until Dec. 12, 2012. Any approved projects must be completed by March 31, 2016. □

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## FLEET NEWS

## Bison buys LNG Peterbilts in Alberta

*Becomes first fleet to sign LNG fuel deal with Shell*

**CALGARY, Alta.** – Bison Transport has announced it will deploy 15 natural gas-powered tractors in Alberta.

The company inked a five-year deal with Shell Canada to fuel the trucks at Shell stations in Calgary, Edmonton and Red Deer.

Bison is the first fleet to sign on with Shell, as it rolls out the first of its chain of LNG fuelling stations in Alberta.

The LNG fuelling stations, to be built at Shell Flying J truck stops in the three Alberta cities, are expected to open in early 2013.

“We are very pleased to be working with Shell on this leading edge initiative that stands to transform the commercial freight and fuel industries in North America,” says Trevor Fridfinnson, Bison’s vice-president, western operations. “Proving that this alternative fuel

source can be economically and practically viable is our objective, aligning perfectly with our company values.”

For its part, Shell is building a natural gas liquefaction plant at its Jumping Pound facility west of Calgary.

“LNG can be a cost-effective fuel from an abundant resource of natural gas and we believe it can help our customers build a competitive advantage,” says Lorraine Mitchellmore, Shell Canada country chair. “The opportunity to work with one of Canada’s leading fleets marks an exciting milestone for Shell.”

The trucks will be from Peterbilt, with the 15-litre Westport HD engine.

The first of these trucks will be delivered in November with the entire fleet of 15 to be deployed by January, Bison announced. □

## Mullen Group to develop oil and gas fields in Northwest Territories

**OKOTOKS, Alta.** – Mullen Group has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with two northern business partners to provide oilfield services, transportation and logistics services in the Sahtu Settlement Area of the Northwest Territories.

Its partners include HCI Holdings and Red Dog Mtn. Contracting. The companies have agreed to jointly develop oil and gas fields in the region over the next number of years.

The MOU has resulted in the formation of Canol Oilfield Services, which will operate as a stand-alone company, with Mullen being a 45% stakeholder, the companies announced.

“We are very pleased to announce this new business opportunity,” said Murray Mullen, chairman and CEO of Mullen Group.

“As many know we have worked closely with aboriginal partners in Northern Canada for many years and the commitments and investments we have made in the communities in the north have positioned us as a key partner in the development of the oil and gas sector in Northern Canada for years to come.

“Specifically, we are excited to be working with David Hodgson from HCI Holdings and Eddy McPherson from Red Dog as they bring a tremendous amount of knowledge and expertise to this new business arrangement.

“We are also very pleased that we have been able to coordinate the timing of this important announcement with the Sahtu Exploration Readiness Session that was held... in Norman Wells.” □

## DCT Chambers Trucking wins safety award

**VERNON, B.C.** – DCT Chambers Trucking has won a safety award from the Canadian Society of Safety Engineering.

The company, which hauls wood residuals across the Pacific Northwest, has been given the Achievement Recognition Award for TruckSafe Organizational Excellence. The award is sponsored by WorkSafeBC.

DCT Chambers is the first B.C. carrier in its class to earn WorkSafeBC and the Trucking Safety Council of B.C.’s Certificate of Recognition, which it says is the highest safety honour in the industry.

“This is a significant achievement. DCT Chambers Trucking has committed the time and resources necessary to ensure that these safety goals could be accomplished and should be commended for their efforts,” said DCT safety consultant Paul White, of E.H.S. YSafety Consulting.

Safety initiatives at the company include: Weekly toolbox walks with a supervisor’s safety committee; satellite technology systems to monitor driving practices; safe driving rewards; driver involvement in the development of the drivers’ handbook; and dispatch and area managers are in constant contact with drivers.

“We have hundreds of trucks on highways every day, so we really value the safety of our drivers and the communities they pass through,” said assistant general manager Ryan Chambers. “It’s a huge honour for DCT to win this award.” □

## Totran appoints new CEO

**CALGARY, Alta.** – Totran Transportation Services has appointed Rosemary Marr as its new CEO, effective Nov. 1.

Marr has more than 30 years of transportation experience, founding Transera in 1985 before selling it to U.S.-based C.H. Robinson in 2008. Her achievements include the Ernst and Young Entrepreneur of the Year, Rothman’s Canadian Woman Entrepreneur of the Year, and the Pinnacle Award.

Founded six years ago, Totran has been named one of Canada’s

200 fastest growing companies for 2012 by *Profit* magazine. Company president Rob Miller says he is enthusiastic about the change and feels Marr will bring “a fresh enthusiasm and momentum to the team.”

“I look forward to bringing my capabilities to Totran Transportation to help support the operational team and enhance growth strategies that fit with their fundamental strengths. This is a hugely successful team, and am honoured to join such talented individuals,” Marr said. □

## Meyers buys US distribution centre

**MISSISSAUGA, Ont.** – Meyers Transportation Services has acquired Cheektowaga N.Y.-based Meyers Distribution International (MDI).

MDI is an 80,000 sq.-ft. warehousing and distribution facility, located within minutes of the border and Buffalo International Airport.

Officials say MDI will offer customized and flexible third-party services, and is able to service more than half of Canada and the US in one day’s transit time.

The facility will specialize in consolidation/deconsolidation, order fulfilment, and inventory management, the company said. □

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## DRUG &amp; ALCOHOL TESTING

# A new can of worms

## Have drug testing rules kept up with the changing times?

### On-Road Editor

HARRY RUDOLFS



**WHAT'S THE BUZZ?:** Legal grow-ops like this one are supplying marijuana for medicinal purposes. Should truckers who require their services be allowed to keep on trucking?

Random drug and alcohol testing has been a fact of life for Canadian truckers crossing the US border since 1996. But the initiative began much earlier in the US, as part of the strategy of former US president Ronald Reagan's "War on drugs."

Federal employees were the first to be subjected to pre-employment and random tests. Soon after, the US Department of Transportation turned its attention to transportation workers occupying safety-sensitive positions, including ship captains, pilots and truck drivers.

Random drug testing has been mandated for US commercial drivers since the late 1980s and remains so to this day. Each year 10% of a carrier's drivers are picked randomly for breathalyzer testing, while 50% are chosen for drug testing. The same formula applies to the US-certified drivers working for Canadian carriers.

From its inception, critics of the DoT program pointed out that it had political and ideological overtones.

With the exception of alcohol testing, which has an established threshold for impairment, the initiative concerned itself more with an employee's lifestyle than his or her fitness for the road.

The policy was challenged as a violation of the Fourth Amendment, but was upheld in 1989 in a split five-four decision by the US Supreme Court. The court agreed that random drug testing was invasive in nature but was trumped by a concern for public safety.

But extending suspicionless testing to Canadian drivers became a pricklier problem, as human rights issues in this country are given a different weight than they are south of the border. Moreover, illegal drug use and addiction is considered a disability by Canadian courts, and those employees with a problem must be accommodated.

Historically, random workplace drug and alcohol testing had been tried in Canada over the years. Toronto Dominion Bank and Imperial Oil were among employers who sought to institute drug testing regimens in the 1990s. But unlike the US Supreme Court, the Ontario Appeals Court ruled against Imperial Oil's drug testing program because it failed to show a link between the capacity to perform a job and impairment (*Entrop v. Imperial Oil*, July 21, 2000).

But the appeals court did allow for random alcohol testing and drug testing in certain situations (reasonable cause, post-accident and return to duty), and agreed that drug testing could be a pre-employment condition for those applying to safety-sensitive positions.

Suncor is the latest player to jump

into the random drug testing pool. The oil giant announced it would begin random drug and alcohol testing of its unionized workers at its Alberta plants on Oct. 15. This initiative was challenged by the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union, and on Oct. 14, an Alberta Queen's Bench judge granted an injunction against the protocol, until it could be ruled on by an arbitration board, sometime around the end of November. Meanwhile, Suncor announced it is appealing the decision.

In a related case, the Supreme Court of Canada will ponder a challenge involving Irving Pulp and Paper of New Brunswick and the same union on Dec. 7. Irving has sought to randomly institute breathalyzer testing to its workers in safety-sensitive positions since 2006.

I first ran into workplace drug testing while working for a driver services agency in 1996 when the US requirements were put in place. During a safety meeting, the company president announced that he had enrolled all of us drivers in a random pool and that we could be called on to provide urine samples at any time.

At the time I was a recreational cannabis user (always while off-duty). If a test were given that day, I could have failed because I'd taken a couple of huffs the previous weekend on a joint that was being passed around at a backyard barbecue in Holland Landing, Ont.

One positive result would follow me all of my driving career; I'd be required to see a Substance Abuse Professional (SAP) and subject to months or years of follow-up tests.

As I recall, a couple of guys were called in to give samples over the next months, but a better job came along and I moved on. Since that time I've worked for three fleets and one carrier, all of them domestic, and the issue hasn't come up again. I recently checked with the same driver services agency and found out they dropped blanket testing

soon after I left. The few drivers who do run Stateside are covered by an outside pool. The same was true for other driver services agencies that I called in the GTA, none of which had mandated pre-hire or random testing.

But not so for the major carriers, many of whom have drug and alcohol testing written into their policies and require all their drivers to be tested. Random drug testing of those drivers not required to go to the States would seem to run contrary to Federal Human Rights Commission rulings.

The Ontario Human Rights Commission states its position on its Web site: "Because drug tests do not actually measure impairment, random drug testing is an unjustifiable intrusion into the rights of employees."

But drug testing is well-established in the US where, according to 2011 stats, 57% of businesses require pre-employment drug screens. State legislators are also looking to test people who apply for welfare and benefits. Drug testing providers are big business and a growing sector that supports a surfeit of labs, collection sites, databases, technicians, doctors and SAPs.

A plethora of products is available to analyze saliva, hair follicles, and perspiration, and the results can provide a detailed account of the presence of illegal or controlled substances.

Non-DoT drug screens can also scan for up to 10 categories of illicit or prescription substances. And there are lots of vendors ready to supply products and services should your company want to go this route.

Urinary testing is the cheapest of the above and the established methodology for DoT standards. Five families of drugs are tested, often called the NIDA Five: amphetamines, cocaine, codeine, marijuana, and PCP. A case could be made that the scope isn't broad enough, missing entire categories like tranquilizers and psychoactive drugs,

while including PCP which has all but disappeared. Much-abused prescription drugs like Vicodin and Oxycodone weren't even around decades ago when these standards were developed.

Dr. Craig Karpilow, medical review Workplace Medical Corp. of Hamilton, Ont., was a young occupational doctor in Washington State when he served on a panel that advised the DoT in the 1980s.

"It's ancient history," he says, but he recalls heated discussions between doctors arguing about what drugs to include. "I'll show you my research paper, and you show me another one."

Some drugs have been added more recently to the NIDA Five, including ecstasy and heroin. But cannabis may have complicated things once again, as 17 States and Canada currently allow the use of medical marijuana if it's prescribed by a doctor.

The DoT Web site is emphatic that no positive test for THC is acceptable for commercial drivers. But Dr. Karpilow thinks this might be a contentious point.

"If they come up with a valid document, a doctor's prescription, and they are within the allowable limits, then they are legally allowed to be using it (medical marijuana)," he says.

The protocol for collecting samples for DoT testing is considered almost foolproof. Bob Smith, safety and compliance manager for Mackie Moving Systems in Oshawa, Ont. recently got called to supply a urine sample as part of his company's testing policy.

"It would be really hard to cheat," he says. "You have to empty all your pockets, and the water in the toilet is dyed blue, and your sample has to come back at a certain temperature."

But with the prevalence of drug use in North American society, it's not surprising that some people try to mask their sample by taking additives or tampering with their urine.

"We see it all the time," says Dr. Karpilow. "People spend an awful lot of money on the Internet buying products that don't work."

Prescription drug abuse is the fastest growing problem in North America, and positive results for codeine are also not uncommon with or without prescriptions. Dr. Karpilow warns that Oxycodone, a commonly abused drug, is no longer legal or produced here.

"There's a new type that's time release that's supposed to be less addictive. But if you've got Oxycodone it must have come from China or somewhere else."

Overall, Dr. Karpilow has noticed more marijuana use among working people and more cocaine use among certain ethnic groups, but this tends to be younger people, he says.

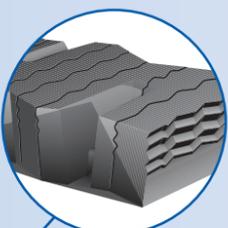
"Most drivers who come from overseas to drive truck here are usually clean. They don't have any reason to fool around with that stuff. The trend that I see emerging is that Canada is going to move towards what the US is doing. After trucking, it will be the auto industry and construction, and then other safety-sensitive jobs like driving a forklift or handling molten steel," he says. "Any job with a potential to injure yourself or others." □

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## INDUSTRY

# Canada-US safety ratings: Reciprocity cuts both ways

The dictionary definition of reciprocity is the relation or policy in commercial dealings between countries by which corresponding advantages or privileges are granted by each country to the citizens of the other. In plain English and in relation to Canada-US trucking, for example, what reciprocity usually means is that we'll accept what you do if you'll accept what we do.

It does not mean that everything needs to be harmonized, but it infers that at the end of the day, while rules and mechanisms may be different, final outcomes are more or less the same. Where this is so, and where reciprocal agreements between Canada and the United States can be worked out, it is usually a good thing. But things don't always work out as planned.

Take Canada-US safety ratings reciprocity for example. Way back in 1994, Transport Canada and the US DoT signed a Memorandum of Understanding that each country would be responsible for monitoring a motor carrier's compliance and safety performance in the carrier's home jurisdiction.

The MOU also obliged both countries to endeavour to establish mutually compatible safety rating and audit programs. Fast-forward to 2007 when an FMCSA "Canadian Issues" study concluded both countries share similar vision statements, missions and objectives to reduce truck collisions and recommended they work together to establish a safety ratings reciprocity agreement.

Under the agreement, a Canadian carrier who operates throughout Canada and the US would have its safety performance activity (collisions, inspections and convictions) in both countries collected, calculated and monitored by its home province. Under that scenario, a carrier would no longer need both a provincial and an FMCSA profile, or be subject to both provincial and FMCSA compliance reviews. The administrative burden on both government and the industry would be reduced. Safety rating reciprocity was even identified as a deliverable under the Security and Prosperity Partnership initiative.

Work continued and in 2008 the FMCSA and CCMTA agreed in principle to reciprocally recognize each other's safety ratings. A bilateral working group on motor carrier data exchange – which is a key to the whole thing actually working – was established.

A number of provinces dropped the requirement for US carriers to register in their jurisdiction and stopped keeping profiles of those carriers. They did, however, begin sending the data on the US carriers' safety performance in their provinces to the FMCSA.

Information also started flowing the other way as the provinces began to receive data from FMCSA on the US performance of Canadian carriers and using that data to populate the provincial carrier profiles.

But then the wheels started to come off. There were a number of technical issues that were difficult to resolve. Legal issues emerged which prevented FMCSA from using Canadian data to rate US carriers.

But most important, it seems, was an apparent change of heart on the whole concept of reciprocity by the

## Industry Issues

DAVID BRADLEY



FMCSA which – not incidentally – coincided with the agency's transition from Safestat to its Compliance, Safety, Accountability (CSA) program.

CSA differs from the Canadian profile systems in some important areas; ie., pointing all violations from roadside inspections (not just out-of-service violations as is the case in Canada) on the carrier profile; and, not accounting for fault on the carrier's collision profile. In the end, FMCSA would not give up its authority to monitor Canadian carriers and/or to conduct compliance reviews on Canadian soil.

The Canadian provinces moved forward on safety ratings reciprocity in good faith. Anyone involved in

the CCMTA process knows this. The provinces invested significant effort and resources in this process. While some may still cling to the hope that all is not lost and that an agreement can still be achieved, the reality is that the prospects for safety ratings reciprocity are zilch. And, until that is acknowledged and resolved, an unlevel playing field exists between domestic and US carriers in eight of the 10 provinces.

Currently, four provinces are using US inspection and collision data in their carrier profiles: British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba. These provinces are (as they have done since 2007) still collecting and sending information on US carriers operating in their jurisdictions to FMCSA, even though FMCSA is not using the data to populate CSA profiles.

Only two provinces (Ontario and Quebec) require US carriers to register to operate in their jurisdictions.

As a result, no one is monitoring and creating a history on US carriers' activities while they are operating in the other eight provinces.

For CTA and the provincial associations, this is not acceptable. With the failure to achieve a reciprocity agreement, US carriers should be required to register in all provinces they operate in and all provinces should maintain carrier profiles of the US carriers that operate in their jurisdictions. Our motivation is nothing more than to address an inequity that has arisen as a result of the failure to achieve a reciprocal agreement on safety ratings. Reciprocity (and safety) now demands that US carriers be treated in Canada the same as Canadian carriers are treated in the US. □

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

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shippers and carriers together for our first annual Surface Transportation Summit this Oct. 17 in Mississauga, Ont., in partnership with Dan Goodwill & Associates.

Transportation and logistics practices are becoming increasingly complex and an effective supply chain is becoming recognized as a competitive differentiator. At the same time, there are lingering questions about capacity, pricing and service standards. By bringing shippers and carriers together in an educational setting, we were looking to foster productive dialogue and networking.

We were rewarded with a blue-chip lineup of speakers, more than 200 delegates and a very insightful exchange of ideas. But this conversation is too important to allow it to end there. So with this issue we are providing a comprehensive report on the major themes from the conference. Look also for our *Inside the Numbers* and *HookedUp* e-newsletters for more information as well as future episodes of our award-winning WebTV show, *TMTV*.

And don't forget to book Oct. 16, 2013 into your calendar for our next Surface Transportation Summit.

**Lou Smyrlis, Editorial Director, Transportation Media**  
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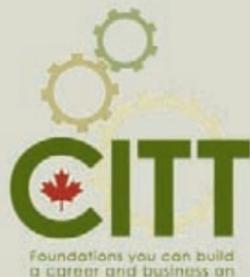
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## SURFACE TRANSPORTATION SUMMIT

# The economy's not as bad as you think: Scotiabank's Gomes

By James Menzies

**MISSISSAUGA, Ont.** – Slow growth is still growth, and with the exception of Europe, the global economy continues to plod along on the path to recovery.

Carlos Gomes, senior economist with Scotiabank, delivered an upbeat economic overview to a packed house at the 2012 Surface Transportation Summit hosted by *Motortruck Fleet Executive*, *Canadian Transportation & Logistics* and Dan Goodwill & Associates.

More than 200 leading shipper and carrier executives were on-hand for the event, which kicked off with an economic overview from Gomes. His message was one of optimism, despite contradictory news reports that at times seem to have the economy headed straight back into the toilet.

"I do remain optimistic with respect to the outlook, notwithstanding the challenges we hear about on a regular basis," Gomes said.

Normal post-recession GDP growth would come in at about 5% per year, but instead, the global economy is growing at a clip of just over 3%.

"It's not the rapid growth of around 5% that was typical in a recovery, but the point is, it is continuing to grow," Gomes said. In North America, economic growth is even more sluggish, at about 2%. The Euro-zone is the only region in the world that is still in recession, with a declining economy. But Gomes pointed out Europe accounts for only 15% of global GDP, "so we have 15% that's contracting and we have the remainder which is improving."

The pace of employment around the world is holding up well, Gomes noted, with emerging nations leading the way in job creation. Global trade has surpassed pre-recession levels and is now at record highs, Gomes pointed out.

In North America, Gomes noted auto production is up 20% this year, giving a boost to overall manufacturing activity and, of course, transportation.

"Our view is the auto sector will continue to see improving sales and one of the main reasons is, the fall-off in the US was so dramatic in 2008-2009, you now have an average age of the US fleet of 11 years," Gomes said of the auto industry. This pent-up demand for new vehicles is good news for the auto industry and the carriers that support it.

Gomes also spoke of an uptick in Canadian building permits, mostly driven by industrial activity. Gomes acknowledged that many nations are saddled with high debt levels, with the exception of Canada where the net debt-to-GDP ratio is a reasonable 35%.

But what about American consumers and their out-of-control spending habits, coupled with rising gas prices? Is consumer spending at risk? Gomes said when you look at the percentage of household income eaten up by debt and energy payments, Americans have aggres-

sively paid off debt and brought that indicator down from 20% pre-recession to 16% today. "That is the lowest level in more than a decade, so Americans are in much better financial shape to withstand any hits from energy costs than they were in 2007-2008," Gomes said.

Canadians, on the other hand, continue to take on more debt, and see 13.6% of their disposable income spent on energy and debt payments, still below US levels but not trending downward as it is with our neighbours to the south.

One of the biggest sources of concern is the so-called fiscal cliff facing the US, when \$500-billion in tax increases and spending reductions are slated to take effect Jan. 1, 2013.

While it will be good for the US balance sheet, there's concern it could put the brakes on economic growth. Gomes said the situation is manageable and expects Democrats and Republicans to come together with a solution to postpone some of the tax increases and spending reductions.

"What we are saying is, there is time, we think there's going to be an agreement between the two parties because it would be irresponsible from everyone's perspective to allow that to happen," Gomes said of the fiscal cliff. "We think they're going to reach an agreement prior to Jan. 1, in order to not have a drastic effect on the economy. There are risks, but it's a political decision that can be dealt with...I'd keep my eye on that with the understanding that it's one of the biggest risks in the system, but there will likely be some agreement prior to the deadline."

Meanwhile, monetary policies around the world will continue to be geared towards reviving growth, Gomes predicted.

"Every central bank in the world is in easing mode," he said. "They're all on the same page, they want to ensure this recovery is sustainable and they're able to keep rates low because inflation has come down across most of the world."

Gomes noted the emerging BRIC nations continue to outpace the recovery of the rest of the world and said Canada would be well advised to begin seeking stronger trade relations with these countries. Canada still sends most of its exports to the US and Europe.

"The global economy is no longer just the US and Europe," Gomes warned. "Asia is over 35% of (the world's) total population, but our exports to Asia are very small; only 9% of our exports (go to Asia)."

Gomes predicted 3.5% global GDP growth next year, up from 3.1% this year. The North American economy will continue to grow at about 2% year-over-year, he added, and there should be some "stabilization" in Europe in the second half of 2013.

He also projected continuing strength for the Canadian dollar, with it reaching \$1.04 versus the greenback by the end of next year. □



# Carriers and shippers debate usefulness of RFPs

By James Menzies

**MISSISSAUGA, Ont.** – Are Request for Proposals (RFPs) a constructive, mutually beneficial process for both shippers and carriers, or are they, as one motor carrier executive deemed them, “Really friggin’ pathetic”?

That was the most contentious issue of the day during the 2012 Surface Transportation Summit, which brought together more than 200 carrier and shipper executives. The event included a spirited debate on whether an RFP builds, or damages, shipper-carrier relationships.

Mark Seymour, CEO of Kriska Transportation, got the discussion rolling when, while lamenting the tremendous amount of waste in the system, called for better collaboration between shippers and carriers and declared “business tenders are no way to get waste out of the system.”

Brian Springer, vice-president, transportation with Loblaw Companies, when speaking later the same morning as part of a Managing a Win-Win Shipper-Carrier Rate Negotiation panel, defended the process.

“I tend to disagree,” Springer said of carrier notions that RFPs are counterproductive. “Formal RFPs, when done in the right way – not a formal RFP where I’ll just grab the lowest cost and run with it, that doesn’t do anyone any good, you’re just back in the same place six months down the road – give you an opportunity to share all your lanes both ways with the carrier community and then really capitalize in balancing those lanes with carrier freight. So, I think there are some good opportunities there.”

Dan Einwechter, CEO of Challenger Motor Freight, was part of the same panel discussion. He countered: “For every good RFP we see, I’d tell you I see two bad ones, where they’re empowering the wrong people to put data together, it’s a dumbing down of information, it’s not correct information and at our place, RFP at times means ‘Really friggin’ pathetic,’ because of the lack of data and because of inconsistency.”

Too often, said Einwechter, shippers are hiring outside agencies to put together RFPs without a comprehensive understanding of transportation and logistics.

“What happens is that the incumbent carrier pays the price, and at times our shipper, the client, who you may have a strong relationship with, pays the price because at the time when they least need or deserve turmoil, they have it intentionally inflicted upon themselves,” Einwechter said.

He said Challenger recently saw an RFP that listed \$45 as the target rate for loads going from Southern Ontario to Toledo, Ohio.

“I told my guys, ‘Throw it away, don’t even look at it. There’s no accurate data in there, don’t waste your time,’” Einwechter recalled.

Wes Armour, CEO of Armour Transportation agreed that RFPs often impose an unnecessary burden on carriers. He said his company has received RFPs from customers that generate \$30,000-\$35,000 per

year in revenue.

“Any money we make on them, we spend trying to fill out the RFP,” Armour said. “The questions are ridiculous, there’s no room for flexibility, such as ‘Can we give you an intermodal rate or short-sea shipping?’ there’s none of that in there. It’s ‘What is your rate?’ and that’s what they’re after.”

For carriers that have established strong relationships with their customers, there could be opportunities to sidestep the RFP process. Michael Tan, divisional vice-president, supply chain and transportation with Hudson’s Bay Company, admitted he has forgone the process with sophisticated

carriers such as Armour.

“When we sat down with Armour, it was initially predicated on an RFP,” Tan said. “My team and I quickly decided to throw the formalities of the RFP out the window, and instead ended up with very candid dialogues with Wes and his team. I don’t take the same approach with each negotiation, but in this case it worked out very well.”

Einwechter said RFPs generally fail to reflect the added value that large, sophisticated fleets can bring to the table, such as quick access to data, monthly route analysis, a customer’s trends and patterns, etc.

“That stuff doesn’t get picked up in an RFP, so when it comes to de-

“For every good RFP we see, I’d tell you I see two bad ones,”

Dan Einwechter, Challenger

cision time, our contact who would like to deal with us, is pressured from somebody else to go with the cheaper rate and they don’t realize what they’re going to be losing, so we have to keep selling that value proposition to our customers,” Einwechter said.

Springer admitted that oftentimes, the incumbent carrier is at a disadvantage through the RFP process because it may be familiar with some of the inefficiencies in the system and will build that into the rate, while a competitor that’s bidding on the freight for the first time will not. Springer advised carriers to identify these extra costs in the RFP and not to bury them in the rate. He also admitted shippers need to be aware of these nuances when making decisions.

“The RFP process is an opportunity for carriers and shippers to get connected, not just grab the lowest cost and run,” Springer said. “It really comes back to understanding what’s in an incumbent’s cost and what’s in the new carrier’s cost.” □

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## SURFACE TRANSPORTATION SUMMIT

## Greater collaboration needed between carriers, shippers: Kriska's Seymour

By James Menzies

**MISSISSAUGA, Ont.** – As Canadian carriers continue to repair their balance sheets following the Great Recession, rate increases are inevitable.

However, shippers can minimize any future rate increases if they're willing to work more closely with their carrier partners to eliminate waste from the system, according to Mark Seymour, CEO of Kriska Transportation.

Seymour urged greater collaboration between shippers and carriers when speaking at the 2012 Surface Transportation Summit. Seymour gave an example of a customer that recently asked for a rate decrease. When Seymour said he'd consider it if the shipper improved its payment terms, unloaded trailers more quickly and lowered its trailer detention requirements, the company wasn't

interested.

"Some people just don't get it," Seymour said. "We have no more to give in terms of rates. What we have to do is work together to get rid of waste, because there's lots of waste still in the system but it's going to take a collaborative effort to get rid of it."

Seymour said Kriska's rates took an 18% hit from 2008 through early 2010, and have not yet been fully restored.

"We got half of that back," he said. "It's been a combination of getting half back and reducing our costs that has allowed us to return to profitability. I don't think we'll

ever get it all back; it's not coming back anytime soon. But rates have to go up because there are too many influences that are outside of our control that will not allow us to stay where we are today."

Seymour said most Canadian carriers are still licking their wounds, trying to repair their balance sheets, profit ratios and cash flow.

"We lost control of pricing," Seymour lamented. "We

allowed the tail to wag the dog."

Heading into the downturn, Seymour said Kriska and many companies like it already thought they ran lean. When forced to look further just to survive, more waste was un-

covered and removed. But the carrier itself can't remove all inefficiencies from the system, he warned.

"We're not going to get waste out of the system unless we work together," he told more than 200 shipper and carrier executives at the summit. "Business tenders are no way to get waste out of the system. I think rates need to go up, but maybe they won't need to go up as quickly if we can get waste out. There's a tremendous amount of it stuck in the middle and we can't get it out ourselves as carriers."

Seymour also acknowledged many carriers – Kriska included – still have fences to mend following the downturn. He realized people within his organization were going to suffer when a bank manager put to him bluntly: "You make the tough decisions, or I'll make them for you."

"Employees got hurt," Seymour admitted. "Long-term decisions were made that were in their best interests if they wanted to hang around our organization, but they felt like they got hurt; they felt like they got taken from. That's natural, but when you have to make those decisions, people that trust and respect you will, over time, understand that it had to be done."

Seymour said Kriska has offered rate increases to its drivers in each of the past two years as it has returned to profitability.

"I think we repaired some of the damage that was done," he said.

Seymour also warned of the risks involved in acquiring other businesses. It can be a great way to diversify, but not necessarily to grow, he warned. Kriska has made five acquisitions in the past five years and is smaller now than it was five years ago.

"It's a great way to build business, to create more sustainability and to diversify your income stream, but you have to be very cautious," Seymour warned. "Good fits are hard to find. Often, it's the culture that can drive a wedge between a good and bad acquisition. You certainly don't want to make an acquisition that's a cultural misfit."

Seymour also urged carriers to run their company as though they're looking to sell it, even if the sale of their business isn't on their radar.

"If you run your business with discipline to drive profitability and sustainability, you're always going to be in the position to sell, or at least to be profitable and seen in the eyes of lenders as being very disciplined," Seymour advised.

As for challenges coming down the road, Seymour agreed with other presenters that a shortage of drivers will remain an issue. He also lamented a litany of impending regulations, which will be difficult to enforce. "I'm not against regulations, I just think there are too many to enforce and we have more coming," he reasoned. "Sadly, without being able to enforce the regulations, there are too many carriers, too many trucks on the road trying to fly

'We have no more to give in terms of rates. What we have to do is work together to get rid of waste,'

Mark Seymour, Kriska

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under the radar and we have an uneven playing field.”

Seymour left shippers in the room with this message: “When capacity tightens up and we’re left with the decision of who we’re going to work for, I think the Jack Welch concept will come into play (the former GE executive was known for firing the worst-

performing 10% of his managers each year). At our place if we can’t service everybody, we’re going to service the ones who treat us best, pay us on time, treat our people the best and offer consistent volume and those relationships are built by sitting down and working together, not by wasting time on bids.” □

## Western Perspective



“Shipper-carrier relationships have changed exponentially since I first began my career in 1980. When I was first introduced to sales in trucking at Orlick Transport, shippers were extremely loyal to their carriers, as they depended on the capacity and respected the fact that the trucks and trailers were financed over four or five years and contracts were that length as well, which supported the large capital expenditures. This gave carriers confidence in growth with stable contracts supporting their overhead, and they also cared for each other as business partners.

“Today, the change we experience is severely pointed in the wrong direction; trucks and trailers are being financed as high as seven years, and shipping contracts are one or two years with the promise of an RFP in two years, so everyone can take a crack at that business again. So, in short, the risk-reward balance leans toward the shipper and is very strained and stressful for the carriers trying to match contracts with payments for equipment.

“In the west, we compete largely with the oil industry for employees and as a result, wages have escalated, and the compounded problem of the truck driver shortage creates a supply problem for shippers. Most fleets have the trucks and trailers, but lack the drivers to create more supply for shippers. We turn down a lot of freight because of the driver shortage, then simple economics kick in, the shipper says ‘How much to get it done?’ and there you have an immediate rate increase.

“This is not how I envisioned a successful trucking company to grow; we need the opportunity to negotiate a fair rate for the capacity required by the shipper, maintain a partnership and grow together. I am sure most owners would sleep better with that type of arrangement secured in a contract.”

– Gene Orlick, president, Orlicks Inc.

## Western Perspective



“I whole-heartedly agree we need better shipper-carrier collaboration.

“We have recently seen a move in this direction amongst a couple of our customers. One, in particular, has identified internally that trucking represents a risk to their business.

“They have approached us with the idea of a strategic partnership where we work towards common goals regarding their transportation plan. Sure, they are looking to do everything they can to hold the line on their costs, but they are being much more creative in trying to achieve this.

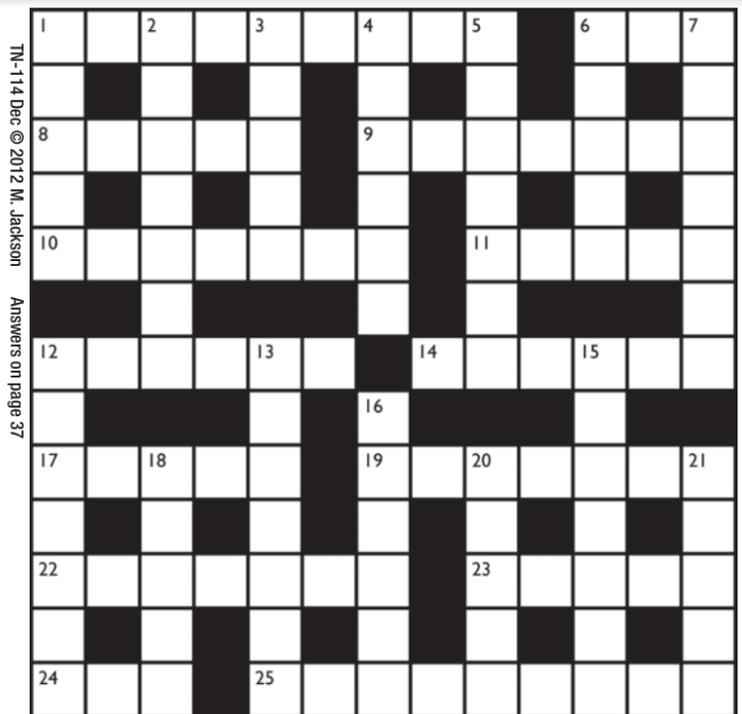
“We are currently working with them to pilot on-board systems to gather information about their runs and identify bottlenecks, road maintenance issues, etc.

“Once we have some data to work with, they are prepared to make changes within their system to reduce or eliminate those bottlenecks and, ultimately, increase our productivity.

“To us, this represents a paradigm shift in thinking on the part of our customers. So, it seems we are coming at the rate issue from the same side of the table for a change...kind of refreshing.”

– Greg Munden, Munden Transportation Group

## THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD PUZZLE



### Across

1. Trucking-industry resource since 1981 (5,4)
6. A 4-Down producer
8. Mississauga bus-building company
9. Smelly city-truck cargo
10. Manitoba border-crossing town
11. Radio code for T
12. Truck-stop breakfast hours (3,3)
14. Bumper or air-horn finish
17. Truck-rental company
19. Crustacean trucked from Nova Scotia
22. Smokeys' radar guns, slangily
23. Roadside guides
24. City-transit vehicle
25. Tractor-to-trailer air couplings

### Down

1. Side-impact collision, slangily (1,4)
2. Toronto-based van-body maker
3. MacDonald-Cartier Fwy, a.k.a. The \_\_\_\_\_ Highway 401
4. Tractor power plant
5. Common cab-paint damage
6. Wallet attachment, perhaps
7. BC's Coquihalla Hwy nickname (3,4)
12. Kenworth sleeper model
13. Fuel-economy factor (3,4)
15. Stop-sign shape
16. Ontario big-rig driving licence (5,1)
18. Try-before-you-buy rides
20. NASCAR's former \_\_\_\_\_ Series
21. Succumbs to road salt

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## SURFACE TRANSPORTATION SUMMIT

# Post-mortem of a recession

## Many carriers still licking their wounds

By James Menzies

**MISSISSAUGA, Ont.** – Many shippers and carriers have emerged from the Great Recession leaner and more efficient than ever before, but the economic catastrophe has left a permanent mark on the transport industry. Carrier and shipper executives who came together at the 2012 Surface Transportation Summit agreed that the difficult economic times of 2008-2010 forced them to make some tough decisions and to dig deep for improved efficiencies.

Michael Tan, divisional vice-president, supply chain and transportation with Hudson's Bay Company, said his company called upon procurement consultants, enhanced its negotiation skills, tightened up details in certain contract terms and re-examined the modes it was employing.

"It forced us to explore ways to maximize sales as well, to segment our business and departments within our business and revamp the transportation strategy for each," Tan said. "Moving fashion for The Bay was different than moving home products."

Also speaking of the shipper experience was Brian Springer, vice-president, transportation with Loblaw Companies.

"It forced us to focus on our transport costs in a more in-depth way," he said. "We were a decentralized business. One of the things we had to do

is become more centralized in our business. We had to look internally in terms of how we were structured."

During these soul-searching exercises, Springer said it also became clear Loblaw wasn't as organized as it should be. It used different technology platforms to track inbound and outbound freight, which "really never portrayed a real accurate profile of what our network looked like, so we never gave carriers the full picture," Springer admitted. "One thing we had to do was completely revamp our technology platform."

As a result, Springer said Loblaw can now provide its carrier partners with six-month, six-week, six-day and 24-hour forecasts, rather than catching them by surprise the night before the shipments need to be delivered.

On the carrier side, Wes Armour, CEO of Armour Transport, had the foresight to pay off the company's debt before the recession kicked in, which put the company in an enviable position once the economy tanked.

"One of the advantages of owning my own company was I was able to put the profits back into the company," Armour said. "We had no debt, our equipment and buildings were paid for. I made the decision it was better to invest my money into my own company that I had control over rather than the stock markets."

This allowed Armour to retain most of its driving force as well as its support staff and executives and to offer small pay increases throughout the recession. Still, the company had to look for cost reductions wherever possible and Armour said: "This has made us a better carrier. We thought we had all our costs under control, but what we found when we started looking is there were better ways to do things."

Armour retained most of its customers through the downturn, but was affected by paper mill closures and the fact its customers were shipping smaller loads.

"We certainly saw less volumes during this period of time," Armour said. "It wasn't less customers, all it really meant was shipments were much smaller. Instead of having a 1,000-lb shipment every week from a customer, we ended up with a 600-lb shipment. We still had the same number of stops, the same amount of traffic, except the truck was generating a lot less revenue because the shipment was smaller. That is coming back slowly, but it took us a while to figure out why we weren't getting the same revenue."

The permanent closure of most paper mills in Eastern Canada will force fleets serving the region to re-evaluate their routes, Armour said.

"Some of these mills shipped 550 metric tonnes a day to the US, Ontario and Quebec," he said. "It creates a huge imbalance coming eastbound versus westbound and southbound that hasn't been able to fix itself and never will. That was a huge volume for our industry for years (which allowed us) to reposition trucks back in and move LTL back in the opposite direction."

For Challenger Motor Freight, the key to surviving was to diversify into new markets. Dan Einwechter, Challenger CEO, said his company focused on new opportunities such as heavy-haul and the emerging wind energy market. This was crucial, since cross-border freight dried up and fleets that traditionally ran north-south turned their attention to running east-west, where Challenger had traditionally been focused.

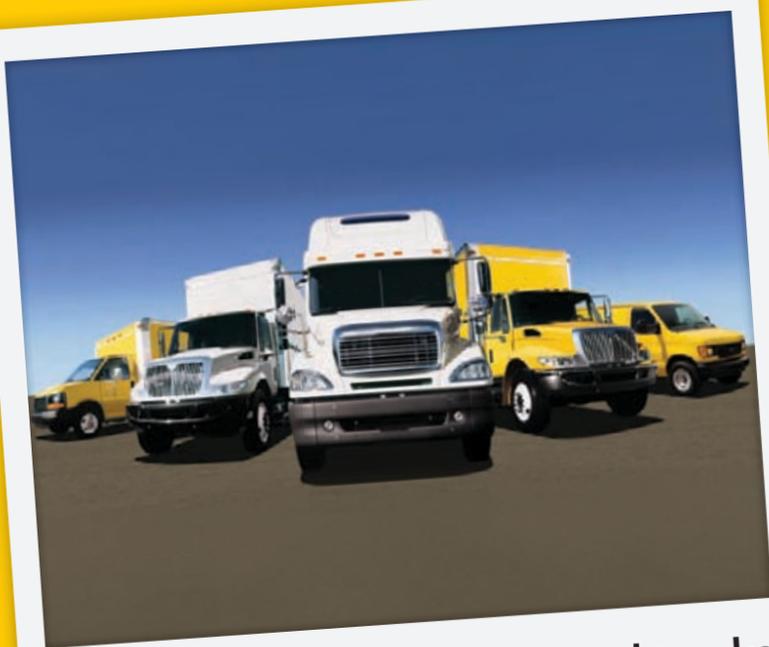
"It was interesting to watch carriers race to the bottom on rates at times with no rationale," Einwechter recalled. "When there's less volume, you'd think rates should go up so you have more profit on each load to cover off your expenses, but it just goes the other way."

Even with the industry slowly recovering, Armour said certain changes are likely here for good. One such observation is that many shippers trimmed staff during the downturn and are now counting on their carriers to do more.

"Nobody seems to mention this, but in our experience, what seems to have happened with our customers – and I assume this – is that they have lost a lot of people through the recession because in order to stay competitive, they had to let people go," Armour said. "Now, what our customers (traditionally) did, we as carriers are looking after. That has changed the whole focus. When they are looking for value, I'm not sure they realize how much a carrier does now. The customer doesn't have the horsepower to do a lot of these things they used to do. In fact, in many cases it's hard to get a phone call back when we have an issue that is probably their issue." □

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## Shortage of available talent will constrain industry's capacity

**MISSISSAUGA, Ont.** – There will be many factors limiting capacity growth in the Canadian trucking industry, but chief among them will be a lack of qualified drivers.

That was the message from Doug Harrison, CEO of Day & Ross Group, when speaking to a full house at the 2012 Surface Transportation Summit. Shippers on-hand heard that trucking capacity is likely to remain tight, due to the rising cost of new equipment, forthcoming regulations, increased consolidation and a reluctance among the carrier community to add trucks in an uncertain freight environment. But Harrison added "One of the greatest capacity issues we have going forward is talent."

Citing numbers from the Canadian Chamber of Commerce and the Conference Board of Canada, Harrison said the Canadian transport industry is short 27,000 people, with that expected to grow to 74,000 people by 2015.

"I can order trailers, I can order power, I can buy fuel, but I can't manufacture people," Harrison said. "To me, the greatest constraint going forward will be the people side of the equation, not the equipment side or the fuel side."

Day & Ross is looking to position itself as a "preferred employer" in hopes of attracting more drivers and support staff to its operations.

"It's people that deliver the value that you provide," Harrison said. "For us going forward, we'll be spending more time on our culture, focusing on how we bring people in and how we look at succession plans to ensure we're a place people want to join."

Harrison also said the company will be developing relationships with post-secondary schools and First Nations groups to raise awareness of the career opportunities available at the company and within the industry.

Even if drivers were readily available, Harrison said Day & Ross would be cautious about adding capacity in the current environment.

"As an industry, we're all watching very closely for when is the right time to invest in capacity?" Harrison said. "We certainly have to invest in renewal, but when is the right time to invest in capacity? The pragmatic view is caution as we move forward."

He also warned shippers in attendance that simple supply and demand will put upward pressure on trucking rates. So too will infrastructure deficiencies, he added.

For its part, Harrison said the trucking industry will need to continue to innovate, whether it be through the adoption of alternative fuels like natural gas, or the deployment of technologies such as for the remote monitoring of equipment. □



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## NATURAL GAS

# Saddle Creek Transportation ponies up for CNG Freightliners

## With fuel its highest operating cost, carrier decided it had to take action

By James Menzies

**HOUSTON, Texas** – Saddle Creek Transportation has embarked on an ambitious plan to convert its fleet to natural gas, and is already reaping substantial benefits.

Mike DelBovo, president of Saddle Creek Transportation, outlined his company's progress during a presentation at the Natural Gas Fleet Vehicles North American Congress in Houston.

The Lakeland, Fla. company runs 380 over-the-road tractors and operates 26 facilities in the southeastern US, where it operates 15 million square feet of warehouse space. It stores and ships products for major retailers including Walmart, Lowes, Office Depot and Disney. The fleet's foray into natural gas was borne from a desire to help its customers achieve their environmental objectives.

"We sat down with our leadership team and said 'What can we do to drive customer value?'" DelBovo explained. "Our largest cost is fuel, so that was the one element that we could have an impact on in helping our customers save money. We started with a very customer-centric focus."

Saddle Creek teamed up with Freightliner to build its first-generation

compressed natural gas trucks; Business Class M2s with the Cummins ISL9 G engine. The first phase of the project included 40 CNG tractors with a fuel capacity of 130 diesel gallon equivalents (DGE), giving them a range of about 500 miles.

Almost as soon as it began taking delivery of its first CNG trucks, DelBovo said the carrier was already looking at opportunities to improve the design and remove weight from second-generation vehicles.

The next round of trucks had a fuel capacity of 140 DGE and were more fuel-efficient thanks to aluminum rims, wheel covers and improved aerodynamics.

Sixty second-generation trucks have been placed into the fleet, hauling payloads of 49,000 lbs (80,000-lb GVW) on dedicated runs across Florida and other southeastern states.

Saddle Creek installed both fast and slow-fill fuelling stations at its yard and can serve its entire territory from Atlanta to Miami using its natural gas vehicles. It relies on a Clean Energy fuelling station in Atlanta. Saddle Creek also has purchased a CNG-powered Capacity terminal tractor, but DelBovo said it has to run three shifts a day to

deliver a payback.

The over-the-road tractors, on the other hand, are profitable averaging just 400 miles per day.

DelBovo said Saddle Creek is earning a payback on its CNG Freightliners in about four years. He's hoping to run the trucks for 10 years and keep the tanks for even longer, because he's uncertain about what the resale market will look like for the vehicles.

"We plan to keep the trucks for 10 years because I don't know what the resale is going to be," DelBovo admitted. He said tank manufacturers have told him they can be used for up to 20 years.

The benefits of running natural gas have been significant enough that the company plans to add another 200 CNG tractors by 2014. But that's not to say the conversion has been without challenges.

DelBovo said one of the biggest challenges was getting its fuelling site set up and working effectively while navigating the permit process with local governments.

Permitting is "a big time-burner," DelBovo said, adding a cooperative county commission made those hurdles easier to clear and in most cases granted approvals within 24 hours.

The other challenge was educating customers on the benefits of CNG, convincing them to pay for their share of the investment and determining appropriate fuel surcharges.

"A lot of customers have heard of natural gas, but they don't know what it means," DelBovo said. "They would love to have it done for free with no investment on their part. It took some frank discussions with customers on what it costs. The trucks are expensive and the (fuelling) stations are costly to own and operate."

Saddle Creek has customized four different fuel surcharges for four customers, each unique depending on the requirements and risk tolerance of the customer.

"Coming up with a good fuel surcharge program is really key," DelBovo said.

Driver training was also required, both for operating and fuelling the trucks.

Drivers are put through 2.5 hours of in-class training, 1.5 hours hands-on training with the truck and fuelling station and then spend a day-and-a-half with a driver trainer. They must prove their ability to achieve 5.5 mpg before they're certified to run the CNG trucks. When they complete the task, they're given a shirt with their name on it, recognizing them as certified operators.

"Drivers are very proud when they're finally certified to drive these CNG trucks," DelBovo said.

Saddle Creek has enlisted its drivers as ambassadors to help spread the word of the benefits of natural gas. Each truck carries a lami-



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**GLOBAL AWARD:** Vedder Transport president Fred Zweep was recently recognized for his commitment to natural gas.

## Vedder president wins global natural gas award

**ABBOTSFORD, B.C.** – Fred Zweep, president of Vedder Transportation Group, has won an international award for his company's implementation of natural gas trucks into its fleet.

Vedder Group purchased 50 liquefied natural gas (LNG)-fuelled Peterbilts last year for use in its return-to-base truck fleet. In December, it will be opening a "first of its kind in Canada" fully-serviced commercial LNG cardlock in Abbotsford, B.C. The new fuelling station will be operated in partnership with gas supplier FortisBC. For all this, Zweep was presented with the Natural Gas Vehicle Champion Award from the International Association of Natural Gas Vehicles, headquartered in Auckland, New Zealand. The award was presented Nov. 7 in Mexico City, Mexico.

"I do not deem the award presentation to be that of my singular success; rather it's about the cornerstone of success based on the collaborative efforts of Vedder Transport and our partners FortisBC, Peterbilt Pacific and Westport Innovations, which has led to the successful delivery of the Vedder Transportation Group's natural gas project," Zweep said.

"Further, I wish to express my deepest appreciation to the entire professional driving fleet of Vedder Transport, who operate our fleet of 50 LNG Class 8 vehicles day in and day out, as without their ongoing vested interest and dedication to this project and that of the Vedder Transport implementation group...my vision for LNG-operated Class 8 tractors in Western Canada would not have been achievable."

Zweep also thanked Larry Wiebe, CEO of Vedder Group for his "unwavering support, guidance and shared vision from conception to integration of my vision for natural gas technology." □

nated list of frequently asked questions, so drivers are well versed on the technology when questioned by shippers.

One unforeseen hiccup when the trucks hit the road was that they were frequently pulled into the scales so curious inspection officers could have a closer look.

"That didn't really help my productivity very much," DelBovo quipped.

Another consideration is that seemingly small collisions can be costly.

"It's really expensive when someone bumps into one of these trucks," DelBovo said. "Any small incident turns into something expensive."

So far, Saddle Creek has put three million miles on its CNG tractors, reducing its carbon footprint by 11.4 million pounds per year.

With every weight-saving spec' possible, the tractors now weigh just 600 lbs more than the company's diesel-powered Mack day cabs.

The 9-litre engine has no trouble pulling full weights, but DelBovo noted the company runs mostly flat terrain.

Fuel mileage is about 10% worse than diesel, but DelBovo said "If we hit 5.5 mpg, we will get the savings we need."

Perhaps most importantly, DelBovo said the trucks are doing what they were supposed to do: delivering value to Saddle Creek's customers.

"They exceed our customers' sustainability goals," he said. "And our ROI includes sharing the savings with our customers." □

## Anticipation builds for Cummins ISX12 G engine

By James Menzies

**HOUSTON, Texas** – Natural gas truckers are giddy with excitement about the potential of what the soon-to-be-released Cummins ISX12 G can do for their businesses.

The engine, which is currently in field testing and slated to be released in early 2013, came up again and again during presentations at the Natural Gas Fleet Vehicles North American Congress.

"I would imagine the 12-litre engine will come to dominate the market," said Joe Shefchik, vice-president of sales and solutions for Paper Transport, which is currently testing the engine.

"It's the right piece of equipment, it has a lot of power and it's the same engine truck drivers are accustomed to driving for some time."

So far, Paper Transport is averaging 5.5 mpg on its ISX12 G, the same as it gets from the ISL9 G and not quite what it was hoping for. However, Shefchik pointed out it's a prototype and some fuel economy improvements will be gained as the engine is further developed.

"I understand (fuel economy) will be better as the fuel mapping improves and new equipment comes in," he said of the ISX12 G, which is rated at 400 hp/1,450 lb.-ft. torque.

Jerry Johnson, regional sales manager for Cummins Westport, said the initial focus has been on durability.

He assured delegates at the Con-

gress that fuel mileage will get better as the engine is further developed. Unlike the ISL9 G, the 12-litre engine will have an engine brake and will be available with either an automatic or manual transmission. Like its smaller cousin, it will be spark-ignited and able to run off either compressed or liquefied natural gas. The ISX12 G will share about 80% of its parts with the proven ISL9 G. Johnson said a smooth launch is anticipated, because "everything we have learned with the 9-litre, we have been able to incorporate into the ISX12 G."

Johnson said there are 25 field test trucks with the ISX12 G in operation and "the initial performance has been excellent."

Limited production begins in early 2013.

"I can't tell you exactly what those numbers are, but I know OEMs are taking orders today," he said.

"We're so excited to see these 12-litre engines coming out," said Mike DelBovo, president of Lakeland, Fla.-based Saddle Creek Transportation. "We're putting 20 in place right away next year when we can get them."

Ted Phillips, vice-president of

fleet operations with Dr. Pepper Snapple Group, said the ISL9 G was underpowered for its California routes, but that the ISX12 G should fit the bill.

Most presenters agreed the ISL9 G is a very capable engine in applications grossing 80,000 lbs

over reasonably flat terrain. The engine has captured the lion's share of the Class 8 natural gas engine market in the US. Here in Canada, however, with

our heavier payloads and not-so-flat terrain, the engine hasn't achieved the same success as the 15-litre Westport HD.

The introduction of the ISX12 G could bridge the gap between the sometimes underpowered ISL9 G and the Westport HD, which is compression ignited and has some limitations, such as the ability to run off LNG only and the requirement of a diesel particulate filter (DPF) and selective catalytic reduction (SCR), both costly and heavy systems that won't be required by the ISX12 G.

The Westport HD engine has some advantages of its own: It doesn't require spark plugs or a special engine oil. □

'I would imagine the 12-litre engine will come to dominate the market,'

Joe Shefchik, Paper Transport

## Drivers, first responders must be educated on natural gas safety

By James Menzies

**HOUSTON, Texas** – When Saddle Creek Transportation brought together drivers to introduce them to the company's new fleet of natural gas trucks, director of transportation John Erwin stood at the back of the room where he could hear the grumbling.

Drivers were wary of sitting on "time bombs" that could explode at any minute.

Erwin decided to dismiss the formalities and instead turned to YouTube, where he found videos to show his drivers of natural gas fuel tanks being shot with rifles, set atop bonfires, and all manner of other silliness that shouldn't be tried at home, but nonetheless makes a compelling case for the safety of the system.

"It helped drivers ease some fear," Erwin told delegates at the Natural Gas Fleet Vehicles North American Congress. "Safety was a big factor."

So, how safe is natural gas? It doesn't ignite until 1,200 degrees F, which is well above the flash point of diesel. The storage tanks are nearly impenetrable. Liquefied natural gas (LNG), in fact, is so clean that spills are harmless. Dave Jaskolski said any LNG that escapes the tank immediately vaporizes.

"LNG is not corrosive, it's not toxic, it's not even flammable," Jaskolski explained. "It has to return to gas and be in a 5-15% concentration to air (to become flammable). If you spill it, it vaporizes

into the air, it doesn't spontaneously combust. It doesn't pool, it won't go down into the sewers. If anyone has ever had a diesel spill, it's not the same thing."

Fuelling with LNG requires additional training and equipment, namely gloves and a face shield. But Jaskolski noted that's just because it's cold, not because it's harmful.

LNG is stored at -260 F (-160 C), which is about as cold as the oil in a deep fryer is hot.

Fleets looking to make a large-scale transition to natural gas and doing their maintenance in-house may require some costly shop modifications.

For fleets in temperate climates like Florida-based Saddle Creek, that consists of as little as keeping shop bay doors open during the day and parking the trucks outdoors at night.

Fleets working with LNG, on the other hand, may be required to install methane detection systems.

Chris Nordh, senior manager, alternative fuels and finance with Ryder, said his company has upgraded six shops, each costing between \$50,000-\$150,000.

"Ryder is very conservative when it comes to safety and goes beyond what is required by code," he noted.

Ryder's systems can completely exchange all the air in the shop within seconds and automatically open the doors while sounding alarms and flashing lights to warn

people to exit the building.

Paper Transport calls on its local Cummins dealer to service its natural gas engines, so it didn't have to make any modifications to its shop.

Chuck Diehl, trucking fleet manager with Smith Dairy, said his company installed a methane detection system, valves off the fuel systems before bringing the trucks inside and parks them out-

side overnight.

As early adopters of natural gas, fleet managers speaking at the Congress said it's important to bring local fire departments and first responders into the shop to provide training.

"Three weeks ago, the Fire Marshall for the state of Ohio brought in 25 fire chiefs to our site and my youngest technician trained all of them," Diehl said proudly. □

### A cautionary tale about oil intrusion

By James Menzies

**HOUSTON, Texas** – A recommendation to drain the low-pressure fuel filter on natural gas engines each day, if ignored, can prove to be a costly mistake.

That was the warning from Chris Nordh, senior manager, alternative fuels and finance with Ryder, when speaking at the Natural Gas Fleet Vehicles North American Congress.

Nordh said one entire 16-truck natural gas fleet was put out of service for months after experiencing oil intrusion at a reputable fuelling station.

Every component of the fuelling system had to be removed and cleaned or replaced, including the fuel tanks, fuel lines and gas flow sensors.

The issue was caused by the fuel supplier using an incorrect compressor oil, which was then passed into the trucks' fuel systems.

"This is a serious issue and it can cause some troubling maintenance-related issues," Nordh warned.

The best way to prevent this from happening is to drain the low-pressure fuel filter daily and inspect it for any signs of oil, Nordh suggested.

"Have drivers drain that low-pressure fuel filter every day, because once this happens, that's the first place it's going to show up," he said. "Especially if you are using different fuelling stations, this can identify which ones are passing oil through."

Nordh said the fuel supplier and Cummins both went above and beyond to get the fleet back up and running but it took an enormous amount of work and time.

"It was an incredible experience to see what can happen when oil is passed in through the fuel stations," Nordh said. □

## PEOPLE

**Kim Richardson**, president of KRTS Transportation Specialists, was presented with the Queen's Jubilee medal during a special ceremony Nov. 17.

Richardson was nominated for the prestigious award for his extensive community involvement.

The award goes to Canadians who make significant contributions to their community and fellow citizens.

"Being nominated for the Queen's Jubilee Medal is quite an honour," Richardson told *Truck West*. "When I received the letter, you could have knocked me over with a feather. I am very fortunate to be surrounded by so many great friends, members of our community, business associates, and family who are always all-hands-on-deck when it comes to initiatives we get involved with. This medal and recognition is not mine, it is ours."

Trailer Wizards has named **Daran Ultican** manager of its Moncton branch. He'll also serve as regional leader for Trailer Wizards' Atlantic region, the company announced. Ultican has

been with the company since December 2011 as a senior sales rep.

"With the passing of Dave Skaarup, our vice-president of the Atlantic Region, these were tough circumstances to receive a promotion," Doug Vanderspek, president of Trailer Wizards announced. "Daran welcomes the challenge and we confidently welcome him on board in his newest role."

Trailer Wizards also announced it will be adding 150 trailers to its Moncton fleet in response to increased demand in the region.

Trailer Wizards also has named **Dave Nicolle** its new director of fleet maintenance, based out of its Mississauga location. Nicolle will be charged with developing and implementing programs to improve the efficiency and reduce the costs of the company's maintenance program. He'll work alongside regional leaders and shop staff to achieve this, Trailer Wizards announced. Nicolle has more than 35 years of fleet maintenance experience, and has run maintenance shops around the world for the Canadian

Armed Forces.

"Dave brings a lot of valuable experience, expertise and leadership to Trailer Wizards," said Arthur Christakos, vice-president, Ontario region. "I'm confident he will help take us to the next level and ensure our goals and objectives are put into action."

Flo Components has appointed **Marc Savage** as territory sales manager for Sudbury, Ont. A resident and native of Sudbury, Marc studied business administration at Cambrian College. His previous experience over the last 15 years includes various finance, management and sales positions in the finance and automotive industries in Sudbury.

"We are delighted to have Marc join our team," said Steve Matheson, sales manager of Flo Components. "After many years in the industry, Flo has a well established reputation for providing timely and reliable technical support. Marc will work with our key partners in the industry developing lubrication solutions that take away

their equipment breakdown related pain and increase machine uptime and profitability."

EnerMotion, the small Canadian firm looking to commercialize an auxiliary power unit (APU) that runs off waste heat recovery, has announced the formation of its first board of directors.

The new board consists of: **Howard San Shearer**, chairman GE Hitachi, formerly CEO and president Hitachi Power Systems and Hitachi Canada; **Keith Wettlaufer**, CFO and vice-president, Bruce Power (retired), also having served former senior executive roles with Linamar, Magna and Price Waterhouse; **Scott Smith**, CEO and president, JD Smith & Sons; and **Dallas Kachan**, managing partner Kachan & Co., former managing director and executive editor of the Cleantech Group in Silicon Valley.

"I'm very pleased to announce the formation of a new Board of Directors for EnerMotion, whose mandate is to commercialize our Hyper technology," announced Jack McDonnell, CEO of EnerMotion. □

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# TRUCK NEWS

## OTA doles out industry awards

**TORONTO, Ont.** – The Ontario Trucking Association handed out the province's top trucking awards at its 86th annual convention Nov. 9.

**Al Boughton** was named Service to Industry award-winner, marking the first time the award has been won by an Allied Trades member. Boughton is founder and president of Trailcon Leasing. He has served the industry for 35 years. The award is sponsored by Shaw Tracking.

**Barry Elkiw**, a driver with Meyers Transport out of Peterborough, Ont. was named the 2012 OTA/Volvo Trucks Ontario Driver of the Year. Elkiw was recognized for his "unmatched level of organization and attention to detail" as well as "his professionalism, courteousness and exceptional safety record." Elkiw received the award with wife Wanda at his side.

Meanwhile, **Chris Fulton** was posthumously named the 2012 OTA/Bridgestone Truck Hero for his life-saving manoeuvres when involved in a crash Feb. 6, 2012 on the night of his 11th wedding anniversary. Fulton, a driver for Speedy Transport, was involved in the crash near Hampstead, Ont. when a passenger van carrying 13 people ran a stop sign and veered straight into Fulton's path.

Fulton, and 10 of 13 of the van's passengers, were killed in the accident. However, police found that Fulton's last-second attempt to avoid the collision likely saved the lives of the three surviving passengers, while ending his own.

"It takes an extraordinary human being to do what Chris did that night," says OTA president David Bradley. "We should all be grateful for truck drivers like Chris Fulton who go about each and every day quietly, safely and professionally. And sometimes, without warning, they find themselves with a choice to put their own lives at risk to save others. Somehow, brave men like Chris always answer the call." □



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## OEM/DEALER NEWS

## Great Dane says ThermoGuard saves fuel

LAS VEGAS, Nev. – Great Dane has announced in-depth testing shows customers using its ThermoGuard refrigerated trailer lining can save nearly 1,000 gallons of diesel over a seven-year period.

The company released results of a seven-year test at the 2012 IFDA Distribution Solutions Conference in Las Vegas. Great Dane said the reported 1,000-gallon fuel savings was achieved over a range of typical reefer operations, excluding produce. Rick Mullinix, executive vice-president of engineering at Great Dane, said the findings are the result of seven years of in-house and independent laboratory testing, combined with real-world customer feedback. He said customers in almost every type of refrigerated trailer operation have achieved savings.

“Our test data shows that most every refrigerated trailer owner can recoup the cost of the ThermoGuard liner in the first few years of operation through lower cooling unit fuel costs,” Mullinix adds. “After that break-even point, owners can pocket the additional savings for the remaining life of the trailer, while realizing other benefits such as reduced maintenance costs and higher resale value.”

ThermoGuard is an impact-resistant, glass-reinforced thermoplastic liner available exclusively on Great Dane refrigerated trailers. Mullinix said reefer units don't have to work as hard to make up for degrading insulation performance over time, resulting in reduced cooling unit runtime, reduced refueling time and extended reefer life. Testing showed that trailers with ThermoGuard insulation performance as strong after seven years as was traditionally available for just one-and-a-half years. □

## Can Canadian Volvo dealers defend status as North American Vista champs?

GREENSBORO, N.C. – Volvo Trucks has kicked off its 2012-2013 Vista competition for technicians around the world.

Volvo refers to the event as the world's largest competition for aftermarket personnel. More than 200 three- and four-person teams compete on behalf of Volvo dealers across North America, with an aim to represent the continent in the global competition next June in Gothenburg, Sweden. Around the world, more than 4,440 teams are participating.

The last Vista event in 2011 saw Beaver Truck Centre of Winnipeg, Man. represent North America in the global championships.

“Expert Volvo technicians and skilled aftermarket personnel are vitally important to the success of our customers and our dealer operations,” said Magnus Koeck, Volvo Trucks vice-president, marketing and brand management. “Rapidly advancing onboard technologies and the increasing need for an integrated vehicle design continue to place a great emphasis on technicians with intimate knowledge of all Volvo systems.”

This year's edition is the largest in the event's 55-year history, Volvo says.

Participants work through three



**GLOBAL CHALLENGE:** A Volvo technician takes part in the company's Vista competition.

rounds of online technical questions and then five teams are selected to travel to Greensboro, N.C. for the North American finals. All the answers to the written questions can be found in Volvo service and parts literature. Finalists are then tested on their knowledge of service bulletins and ability to look up parts and service information within the Volvo system.

There's also a hands-on component, which tests participants' ability to troubleshoot predetermined faults placed on Volvo trucks and engines.

Meanwhile, Volvo has announced it's partnering with WyoTech to provide technician training programs tailored specifically to the chassis, powertrain, emissions, electronic and electrical systems of Volvo trucks. □

## Tallman concludes dealer acquisition

MISSISSAUGA, Ont. – Tallman Truck Centre has finalized the acquisition of Western Toronto International Trucks. The new company's legal name will be Tallman Truck Centre (Toronto) Limited. The acquisition gives Tallman a total of eight full-service International truck dealerships in Ontario, according to the company.

“This acquisition will allow us to further execute our growth strategy of expanding our service network in Ontario,” said company president, Kevin Tallman. “We are excited to represent International in Canada's largest truck market – the Greater Toronto Area – and we look forward to servicing new and existing customers in this very important market. We would also like to welcome all the Western Toronto employees to the Tallman Truck Centre family.”

Located at 7450 Torbram Road in Mississauga, Tallman Truck Centre (Toronto) Limited offers the complete line of International medium, severe service and heavy-duty vehicles, and also features a 28-service-bay facility.

For more information, call 905-671-7600. □

## Navistar finalizes Cummins supply deal, closes Garland truck plant

LISLE, Ill. – Navistar has announced it has finalized its supply agreement with Cummins, to offer the ISX15 in International ProStar, PayStar and 9900 models. Navistar will also use Cummins' selective catalytic reduction (SCR) system on its trucks.

The company announced the “definitive, long-term supply agreements” Oct. 22, though it's been known for some time that Navistar International would be offering the ISX15 and using Cummins' exhaust aftertreatment system.

“This agreement represents a natural extension of the long-standing relationship between Navistar and Cummins and our history of collaboration in serving our mutual customers,” said Troy Clarke, Navistar president and COO. “With the addition of the Cummins ISX15 and the use of the proven Cummins aftertreatment system, we are on a clear path to providing customers with proven, reliable and fuel-efficient clean engine technology.”

Navistar said engineering teams from both companies have been working closely together to integrate vehicle, engine and emissions aftertreatment systems.

Navistar will begin its initial pilot builds of ProStar+s with the Cummins ISX15 this month with the first shipments due in December, the company announced. The ProStar+ with International MaxxForce 13 with SCR will

enter initial pilot production in March 2013 with full production set to begin the following month.

The remainder of International's truck line will be rolled out with SCR over the course of 2013 “based on volume and customer demand,” Navistar announced. During the transition, the company says it will continue building and shipping EPA-compliant trucks by redeeming its remaining emissions credits and paying non-conformance penalties to the EPA.

Meanwhile, Navistar International has announced it will close its Garland, Texas truck plant as part of its ongoing restructuring. About 900 salaried, hourly and third-party temporary workers are employed at the plant. The plant will be shut down by the first half of 2013, with production moved to other Navistar plants that currently build similar models.

The Garland plant is also where the Caterpillar CT660 is produced.

“Closing a facility is always difficult because of its impact on the many great people who've been part of our company,” said Navistar's Clarke. “But the fact is that Navistar has too much manufacturing capacity in North America and we must take quick action to improve our business and position the company for long-term success.”

Navistar said the plant closure is part of a 12- to 18-month turnaround. The closure will reduce operating costs by US\$25-\$35 million per year. □

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# Sixty feet of CONTROVERSY

Walmart Canada's 'supercube' trailer improves productivity by 30%. So, why isn't the industry celebrating its arrival?

By Julia Kuzeljevich, Carolyn Gruske & James Menzies

**MISSISSAUGA, Ont.** – On Nov. 6, Walmart Canada took the wraps off a radical new tractor-trailer design it says increases cubic capacity by roughly 30%. The 'supercube' trailer was designed and built in Ontario, in partnership with Innovative Trailer Design. The trailer itself is 60.5 feet long, 7.5-ft. longer than the industry standard. A lowered floor and 126-inch interior increases trailer capacity by 28%, offering 5,100 cu.-ft. of storage, and a dome box mounted to the back of the cab adds another 521 cu.-ft. of carrying capacity. The trailer is pulled by a Freightliner cabover. The tractor-trailer doesn't exceed existing length or weight restrictions.

Andy Ellis, senior vice-president, supply chain and logistics for Walmart Canada, introduced the design to stakeholders at the 2012 Transportation Sustainability Conference.

"The conference provided us with

a chance to showcase the supercube trailer not only with supply chain and transportation professionals, but also with other retailers," Ellis said. "We've always said that sustainability is not a competitive advantage. We'll share the knowledge and technology put into this truck with anyone who's interested, just as we've shared the knowledge gained from our sustainable fresh food distribution centre in Balzac, Alta."

Walmart's supercube trailer was built under a special permit through a pilot program at the Ministry of Transportation in Ontario. The MTO is granting permits for four trailers, and two tractor units, and Ellis said the first of those vehicles was set to begin making deliveries as early as Nov. 12.

"This is a pilot," Ellis said. "We've got a permit to put four of these trailers on the road in Ontario. We hope we get permission to extend it. At that point we'll obviously work with our

carrier partners. But this is not just about Walmart. We're very happy to share the specifications created through ITD with everybody... It's no bigger and no longer than a traditional truck – it's just been optimized as far as its cube. That was really important in the design."

Carriers of low-density cargo could benefit from the improved productivity, Ellis pointed out.

While Walmart is more than happy to share the design with other shippers and carriers, the trucking industry hasn't exactly greeted the new configuration with enthusiasm.

The Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) held a carrier meeting prior to its annual convention Nov. 8 to discuss the new configuration. Numerous concerns were discussed about the manner in which the new trailer was brought to market and the oversight – or lack thereof – that

could occur going forward.

In a statement, the OTA Board of Directors declared: "The proposal to allow the longer trailers is not something the trucking industry has been advocating for or promoting. Therefore the proposal does not enjoy the support of the trucking industry that previous changes to Ontario's allowable truck configurations did. (The move, for example, to 53-ft. trailers or the controlled use of LCVs).

"However, the association's longstanding position is that it is not opposed to changes to Ontario's truck weights and dimensions standards that would enhance the productivity of the industry, its customers or the provincial economy at large so long as the proposed vehicles maintain or enhance highway/road safety; meet or exceed provincial dynamic performance standards; produce environmental benefits such as reduced GHG emissions; and allow for a sufficient return on investment. Only carriers with acceptable safety records, which are prepared to ensure the safety of their drivers, should have access to special permits. As well, shippers need to show responsibility by using only carriers with acceptable safety records and which are prepared to ensure the safety of their drivers and vehicles."

The proposal, according to the OTA, failed to satisfy those criteria. OTA also objected to the shipper, in this case Walmart, being granted a permit to operate the trailers when in reality, they'd be pulled by third-party carriers.

"Our members are very uncomfortable with this proposal as it currently stands," said OTA president David Bradley. "The proposed issuance of special permits to a shipper is a major game-changer for the industry; it completely turns the whole approach to monitoring and managing truck safety on its head. This must be changed. The industry is already heavily invested in the standard North American trailer of 53 feet; however, as an association we support innovation and a more productive economy where it makes sense. Right now, the

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Walmart semi-trailer would appear to mainly have application as a specialized trailer for dedicated runs, but if the floodgates are opened the consequences could be enormous. We need to set some strict criteria and ground rules before heading any further down the road.”

Asked to explain the issuance of a permit to Walmart Canada for equipment that would ultimately be operated by a third-party, for-hire carrier, and fall under said carrier’s CVOR, MTO spokesman Bob Nichols said it simply didn’t happen that way. He said the supercube pilot will follow the tradition of past pilot projects, especially when it comes to who is responsible for the trucks and trailers.

“There is no change as to how these permits are being handled,” Nichols told *Truck West’s* sister publication *MM&D*. “The permits for this limited pilot will be issued to Walmart’s carrier and not to Walmart.”

However, a Memorandum of Understanding between the Ontario Registrar of Motor Vehicles and Walmart Canada Corp., obtained by *Truck West*, seems to imply otherwise. It reads: “The Registrar of Motor Vehicles, by authority of Section 110.1 of the Highway Traffic Act, agrees to issue Special Permits authorizing Walmart to operate extended semi-trailers on Ontario roads and highways.” The end of the document reiterates: “This MoU will remain in force as long as Walmart holds Special Permits.”

Nichols told *MM&D* that the trucks and trailers won’t be allowed on Ontario roads until the details of

the pilot have been finalized.

“The ministry is currently in the process of sorting out the details of how this very limited and controlled trial operation will take place,” Nichols said. “MTO is working with industry to finalize the conditions for trial operations, including how many carriers would be allowed to participate.”

Nichols pointed out there are significant differences between the supercube trailer proposal and LCVs, which consist of two 53-ft. trailers pulled by a single tractor.

“LCV vehicle permits were developed in consideration of an increase in the overall vehicle combination length, which required engineering assessments of off-ramps, driver rest areas and intersections along their proposed route,” he said. “Apart from the length of the trailer, the overall combination length, height, width and weight of this proposed new tractor-trailer combination are the same as a standard tractor-trailer (rather than an LCV) and the permit requirements for this pilot were developed accordingly. Walmart developed a new design for a truck-trailer combination with increased storage capacity, without extending the total length of the combination.

“Walmart’s concept resulted in a design that will improve cargo volume by 28% and the potential to reduce the overall number of truck trips on Ontario roads, relieving traffic congestion and keeping our air clean. This innovative new combination met the requirements of extensive dynamic performance testing that all other vehicles currently in regulation or under special permit are required to meet.”

In fact, Nichols said the MTO is hopeful the configuration proves itself over the next year and can be expanded to additional applications.

“Ontario is interested in learning more about this truck-trailer combination during the pilot project period to examine their effectiveness on Ontario roads,” he said. “We are also interested in its potential to reduce the number of trucks on Ontario roads and its ability to reduce overall fuel consumption by carriers. The international trade corridor that runs from Montreal through Ontario to Detroit, Mich. is the most important on the continent. We will continue to look at ways to improve goods movement across the province, while keeping our roads the safest in North America.”

Not to be lost in all this is the fact the supercube is a very compelling alternative for transporting lightweight product. Benny Di Franco, president of ITD, said his company enjoyed working on the project.

“When they came to us, we said it’s a no-brainer. It’s fully do-able and a great idea. We haven’t changed anything within the laws. We’ve just allowed more capacity in the trailer without getting any longer,” Di Franco said.

Among the more interesting innovations: the trailer comes with a scissor lift capable of handling 15,000 lbs, so a forklift can be used to stock the front section of the trailer. A bogie airbag lift system raises the height of the trailer to meet the standard loading dock height of four feet.

Inside the trailer interior, a fully welded and sealed lightweight all-aluminum flat floor with anti-slip surface

minimizes trailer weight while providing a safe and low-maintenance surface. Flush-mounted LED lights in the ceiling with a timer switch at the trailer entrance provide excellent visibility for loading and unloading freight.

The drome box can contain four skids and rolls to the rear of the truck frame so it can be loaded by forklift. The trailer itself weighs 14,590 lbs, about 3% more than a conventional trailer. Walmart’s Ellis was the driving force behind the project. His European background inspired the design.

“I’m originally from the United Kingdom, so I looked at the semis on the road here, and I looked at the amount of wasted space that is available on the tractor-trailer unit,” he explained. “I thought about ways to combine the regulations from the UK and the regulations in Canada. Then I set a challenge to my team: how can you build an innovative tractor and trailer unit that optimizes the use of the cube? Walmart doesn’t typically weigh out on deliveries, because of the type of freight we carry. We always cube out. So the challenge was how do you put more cube on the back of the truck and take more deliveries off the road, and take the amount of trucks off the road?”

The cargo capacity will allow the retailer to carry enough merchandise to supply two stores during one run, he added. While industry reaction has been mixed, Ellis remains hopeful the configuration will catch on.

“Subject to approval of the MTO, we will put more trucks like this on the road in Ontario and hopefully roll them out to other provinces,” he said. □

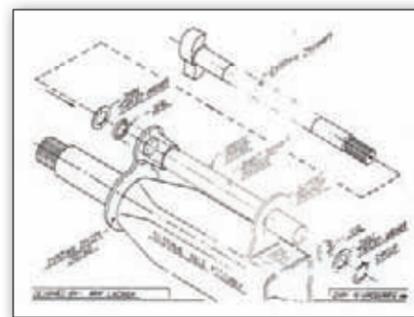
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# Reflect on these handy tips to improve your visibility

As important as the view through a windshield may be, the threats beside and behind a truck can hardly be ignored. About one-third of all the collisions reported to Northbridge Insurance involve situations like sideswiping a vehicle or backing into a stationary object.

A clear view – whether it is supported by unobstructed side windows or reflections in the West Coast mirrors – can help drivers to defend themselves from these threats.

Surprisingly, many mirrors tend to be improperly adjusted, leaving the reflective surfaces filled with a view of a trailer's side panels rather than helping to spot hazards next to the truck. I remember sitting in the driver's seat of a tractor during one safety audit and being able to see the fifth wheel reflected in the mirrors, without the slightest view of the surrounding space.

The ideal angles for any West Coast mirror will reflect as little of the truck or trailer as possible. For example, only a small sliver of the trailer should appear on the inside edge of a passenger side mirror.

The proper angles can be set using nothing more than a couple of cones or other markers that can be placed on the ground around the truck. One cone is placed a



## Ask the Expert

ALBERT ZIMBALATTI

foot away from the truck, at the centre of the drive axles.

A second cone is aligned with the first, but set 20 feet behind the trailer.

In a properly adjusted West Coast mirror, the rear cone will appear about nine inches from the top of the main mirror. The cone sitting in the middle of the drive axles – about 20 feet from the truck's bumper – will be reflected in the upper right of the convex mirror.

These views can be enhanced with fender mirrors, as long as the additional reflecting surfaces are not aimed too high.

A properly adjusted fender mirror will display an area from the centre of the steer tire to the middle of the drive axles.

Once everything is in the right place, the reflection of any hazard should be easily tracked as it moves from one mirror to the next, without any gaps in between.

But these angles can only be set once a driver is properly seated in a spot behind the steering wheel that both maximizes the view and makes it easy to reach every con-

trol. The best position has the seat far enough ahead so the clutch and brake can be comfortably depressed, while supporting 90-degree angles at the driver's knees, hips and elbows. Those who are sitting too low will increase the size of the blind spot created by the hood.

There is also the matter of recognizing the limits of the mirrors. The West Coast mirror on the passenger side of the cab will always show less than the mirror on the driver's side, simply because it is further away from the driver's eyes. It's just one of the reasons why it is always best to travel in a highway's right lane as much as possible.

Of course, the battle against blind spots is not limited to reflections in the mirror. Anything mounted on top of the dash or hanging down below the visor will block some of the view through the windshield. At the very least, something like a CB cord can create a distraction as it swings from side to side.

Maintaining this clear view can be a challenge, particularly as an ever-growing list of electronic tools is planted in a modern truck cab.

But when these all-important electronic tools are installed, they can be mounted where they obstruct as little of the windshield,

mirror or side glass as possible.

After all, the need for a clear view is not limited to the area covered by the mirrors. Every glance through the side windows can help to spot other hazards such as a traffic-weaving car found two or more lanes away.

Once everything is in its proper place, drivers are well equipped to keep a close eye on the hazards about 20 seconds ahead of the truck, and scan the mirrors every five to 10 seconds to spot the potential challenges that surround them.

The ever-scanning eyes will also keep them from locking onto any single threat at the expense of everything else.

A career in trucking offers a moving office with a view. Steps like these give drivers the chance to soak it all in. □

– This month's expert is Albert Zimbalatti. Albert is an executive risk services consultant for Northbridge Insurance, and has more than 35 years providing loss control and risk management services to the trucking industry. 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.nbins.com](http://www.nbins.com).

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Mark Dalton: Owner/Operator

# Collision Course

By Edo van Belkom

## THE STORY SO FAR...

Mark is driving along Steeles Avenue in Brampton with a clear road ahead of him. Suddenly a car pulls in front of him and slams on the brakes. Mark rear-ends the car and five people get out, all injured. Mark calls Bud for some advice about what to do...

Traffic was continuing to slide past the accident scene. The police had likely been notified because two tow trucks had already arrived on the scene, no doubt having heard a report of the accident on their police radios.

As Mark came around the front of Mother Load, he took a moment to check the Peterbilt's front bumper. He was relieved to see that there was just minor damage to his truck, which would be an easy enough fix. But it wasn't his truck that Mark was worried about. It was the aged sedan that he'd hit with five seemingly brittle passengers inside.

He came upon the first passenger, a dark-haired man looking to be in his mid-forties. "Are you alright?" Mark asked. The man's face contorted in pain and he let out a moan. Mark moved onto the driver. "Are you okay?"

The driver put a hand on his car to steady himself and shook his head.

Mark moved to the other passengers in turn and asked them the same question, "Are you alright?" None of them answered him with any more than a simple "No," or a shake of their head.

Mark took a quick look around and saw that the police and ambulance hadn't showed up yet. It would be a good idea to get a police report on this accident, as well as some medical assistance for the people who'd been in the car. He took out his cell phone to call 911 but he never got the chance to dial.

"No, no, no," someone said.

Mark looked up from his phone and saw the driver was approaching him with a frantic look on his face.

"No police," he said. "Insurance information, please."

'So,' Mark thought. 'He does know some English after all.'

"Don't worry," he said. "You'll get my information, but I want the police here first." Then, while Mark had his cell phone handy, he switched on the camera and began to record the scene.

He started at his truck, making sure to record the damage to his bumper. Of course, there was little more than superficial damage to the wide slab of steel, but a picture of it would provide some

evidence of how fast Mark was travelling at the moment of impact.

Next, he moved to the rear of the car, making a slow pass of the entire rear end to record every bit of damage for posterity. It was an old car with plenty of rust and the cost of repair probably wasn't even worth the value of the car. This one would be a write-off.

"Insurance information," the driver said again, this time approaching with his own ownership and insurance documents in his hand.

"Yeah, just a minute," Mark said. "First I'd like to know where you're injured." He held the cell phone up high. "Is it your back?" A nod.

"How about your neck?" Another nod.

"What about your knees and legs?"

The driver stumbled at the very mention of those limbs.

Mark moved on to the passengers and it was the same story with each one. Back pain, neck pain, headaches. This was going to be a real insurance nightmare, he thought. Five claimants, plenty of soft-tissue damage...the claims could go on for years. Just then someone came up behind Mark and tapped him on the shoulder. Mark turned and saw an elderly man standing there, a business card in his hand.

"I see that your truck is damaged," he said, extending the hand with the card in it. "I know a good mechanic in town, my nephew. He has his own shop not far from here. He does good work, little money. You pay cash if you want, no problem."

Mark brushed the man's hand away. "Thanks pal, but I've got my own mechanic."

Finally the police arrived on scene.

"Thank God," Mark muttered.

One cruiser pulled up behind Mother Load with its roof lights on while another tucked into the gap between the truck and the car.

But as happy as Mark was to see the police, their presence seemed to have a detrimental effect on the car passengers. Each one of them suddenly seemed to be thrown into spasms of pain, writhing and moaning with newfound agony.

"You the driver of the truck?" one of the officers asked Mark.

"Yes."

"What happened?"

Mark explained exactly what had happened, and as he did so the officer just began nodding...as if he'd heard plenty of similar stories before.

"Alright," he said. "Give me your driv-



Illustration by Glenn McEvoy

er's licence and insurance info. I'll talk to the driver of the car, and I'll probably have to talk to you again."

"Can I wait in my truck?"

"Yeah, sure. I shouldn't be too long."

Mark climbed back up into Mother Load and watched as two ambulances showed up on scene.

As the car passengers were being looked at, the police went from one man to the next getting their information and taking notes. Minutes later, the car was on the end of a wrecker and two of the passengers had been placed on stretchers and loaded into ambulances for transport to a hospital.

"You gotta be kidding me?" Mark said, watching the scene unfold. "They were riding in a Buick for Pete's sake, not a Pinto!"

Then as the police officer approached, Mark rolled down his window and said, "Were they hurt that bad, officer? I wasn't going that fast, I swear."

Again the officer nodded like he'd heard similar excuses before. "Come on down," he said. "I need to speak to you in my cruiser."

Mark climbed down out of Mother Load and got into the front seat of the cruiser parked behind his truck.

"Are you alright?" the officer asked.

"I'm shaken up a bit," Mark said. "And more than a little worried about what might happen to my insurance premiums."

"That's normal. It looks like it'll be a big claim."

"But I didn't do anything wrong. As stupid as it sounds, I was just driving along minding my own business when they pulled right out in front of me and..."

The officer put up his hand to cut Mark off. "I know." A pause. "Unfortunately you did run into the back of their vehicle...and I have no option but to give you a ticket

for following too closely."

"But..."

Again the officer raised his hand.

"I'm not saying you're at fault, but in these circumstances I don't have a lot of discretion. I have to give you a ticket of some kind, so I am. However, we know that there are plenty of staged accidents in this city, especially on this stretch of road. It's gotten so bad that insurance rates for people living here are higher than for those living somewhere else... anywhere else."

"Unbelievable."

"Believe it," the officer said. "Now it's not up to me to decide if it's a staged accident or not, but if the insurance company denies their claim and it goes to court, then a judge can decide based on the evidence."

He handed Mark his ticket and a copy of the accident report. "All the names and information of the people in the car are there for you in the report. Your insurance company will be able to use that information."

Mark nodded. "And what about my ticket?"

"Fight it. If you take it to court, who knows, I might be busy that day, or I might lose my notes on this accident."

Mark understood and thanked the officer for his time. □

— Mark Dalton returns next month in Part 3 of Collision Course.

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



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NEW PRODUCTS



Ridewell has expanded its RAR-240 series of trailer **air-ride suspensions** to include yoke-mounted suspensions designed specifically for use with Ridewell brand axles with Wabco PAN 22 air disc brakes. The new suspensions can also be used with IMT's axles with Wabco Pan 22, 19 or 17 air disc brakes or Haldex disc brakes, the company announced.

Meritor's aftermarket business has begun distribution of the Fras-le Work Truck and Fleet **Disc Brake Pad Program** to its customers. The North American program includes a complete line of hydraulic disc brake pads for vehicles up to Class 7, and is designed to help aftermarket customers expand friction sales into new vocational market segments, according to Meritor. The new product is being distributed from Meritor's North American distribution centres in Florence, Ky., and Brampton, Ont. Meritor will be supplying a lineup of all-makes hydraulic brake components including rotors and calipers to complement the Fras-le pad program.

Shell has introduced a new Spirax S6 ATF A295 **synthetic transmission fluid** for Allison automatic transmissions. The new fluid lasts up to 300,000 miles under normal operating conditions, or 150,000 miles under severe conditions, the company says. It outperforms conventional automatic transmission fluids in Allison transmissions and meets the longest drain intervals possible, Shell claims. Spirax S6 ATF A295 is available in drums, pails and gallon jugs.



An American owner/operator has invented a system to safely tarp flatdeck loads from the ground, using a forklift. The **Ultra Tarp system** was created after O/O Edgar Lockard suffered an injury from falling off a trailer while tarping. The system mounts underneath a flatbed trailer and fits directly onto the end of any forklift, so the tarp can be raised securely over the load. It can be purchased at [www.UltraTarp.com](http://www.UltraTarp.com). To see how it works, check out the YouTube video at [www.youtube.com/user/keeptruckingsafe](http://www.youtube.com/user/keeptruckingsafe).

Kinedyne has introduced new **load binders** that comply with the new WSTDA T-6 standard. The Web Sling and Tie-Down Association, for the first time in its history, recently released recommended standards for load binders. Kinedyne says the new standard will help ensure a minimum level of quality and traceability for all load binders. The changes to Kinedyne's load binders were made in anticipation of action by federal and local enforcement agencies that would adopt the new standard into existing cargo securement regulations. Kinedyne's load binders are now manufactured and tested to the new standard and feature stamped markings, verifying them as such. For more info, visit [www.kinedyne.com](http://www.kinedyne.com) or speak to a dealer.



Rice Lake has come out with a new **legal-for-trade on-board scale**. TradeRoute is one of very few legal-for-trade onboard scales in the North American market, Rice Lake announced. It operates solely from a parked position where hydraulics are used to engage the scale.

The new scale is designed to install around the frame of many common straight truck designs, the company announced. Benefits include maximizing capacity and reducing the risk of errors resulting from handwritten tickets. For more, see [www.ricelake.com/traderoute](http://www.ricelake.com/traderoute).



Double Coin recently introduced two new **drive tires**. The RSD3 is being dubbed a new "ultra premium drive position tire optimized for severe winter driving conditions." It features an open shoulder design for excellent traction and improved cleaning ability. Zig-zag siping increases traction and performance in any condition, the company announced. Also new from Double Coin is the OptiGreen Series FD425 super wide fuel- and weight-efficient drive tire. The FD425 is SmartWay-verified for low rolling resistance. It features advanced tread compounds, a wider, low profile design for low rolling resistance and weight savings for greater mileage, the company announced. It's available in a 445/50R22.5 size and has a maximum carrying capacity of 10,200 lbs. For more info, visit [www.doublecoin-us.com](http://www.doublecoin-us.com). □

Shell introducing new synthetic oil

**NEW YORK, N.Y.** – Shell Rotella will be delivering an early Christmas present to the Canadian market. In December, it will introduce its Rotella T6 0W-40 fully synthetic oil, which was designed specifically with the Canadian climate in mind.

"T6 0W-40 will provide the best low temperature flow within the Rotella product line," said Shell HDEO formulator Matt Urbanak during a press briefing in New York City.

At -30 degrees C, Shell's testing has shown that T6 0W-40 will reach the rocker shaft within 90 seconds. Rotella T5 0W-40 took 106 seconds.

Exceptional low temperature flow is critical in preventing excess wear.

"T6 0W-40 delivers good wear protection in Cummins ISM tests," said Urbanak. "In terms of crosshead wear, it got a perfect score of 700/700."

It also achieved a sludge rating of 9.4/10 in Cummins ISM testing - the highest in the Shell portfolio – and maintained its SAE 40 grade even when it contained 6% soot (in Mack T-11 testing), thus offering exceptional shear stability. Testing has shown that T6 0W-40 also offers significant improvements in startability at -35 degrees C over Shell's T6 5W-40 and 15W-40 formulas.

The new cold-weather formula may also offer maintenance benefits.

"It could help reduce stress and wear on the starter/battery and possibly reduce maintenance costs for these vehicle components," said Urbanak. "This has been inferred from the cold box testing we have done."

The new oil, which will replace Shell's T5 0W-40 and 0W-30 formulas, will meet CJ4/SN, Volvo VDS-3, Mack EO-N and Caterpillar ECF-3, ECF-2 and ECF-1A. □

Paccar revamps engine line for 2013

**KIRKLAND, Wash.** – Paccar has introduced a new line of engines for 2013, which it says opens the door to new applications and provides improved performance.

The company's 2013 engine line includes the MX-13, PX-9 and PX-7.

"The new engine line-up further strengthens Kenworth's vertical integration," said Judy McTigue, Kenworth director of marketing planning and research. "Paccar's latest engine technology provides efficient and productive performance for customers in a wide range of truck applications."

The 12.9-litre MX-13 can be spec'd in applications over 100,000 lbs, the company announced.

"The new Paccar MX-13 engine offers a wide range of horsepower and torque ratings to meet customer power requirements. This engine opens the Kenworth door to additional customers in vocational appli-

cations, including logging, dumps and hauling applications over 100,000 lbs," said McTigue. The engine's horsepower and torque begin at 380 hp and 1,450 lb.-ft, respectively.

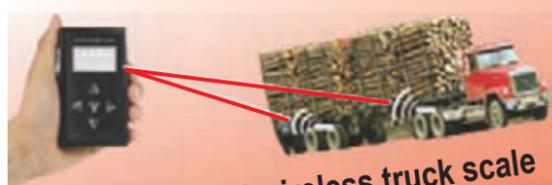
The PX-9 boasts one of the highest power-to-weight ratios in its class, Paccar claims, and offers heavy-duty features such as replaceable wet liners, roller cam followers, bypass oil filtration and targeted piston cooling. It's available with 260-380 hp and up to 1,250 lb.-ft. of torque.

The PX-7 has power ratings of 200-325 hp and up to 750 lb.-ft. torque.

These engines replace the Paccar MX, Paccar PX-8 and Paccar PX-6 in the company's portfolio. They're currently undergoing field testing and dealer service technicians will soon be trained on the new offerings, Paccar announced. They'll also be available in Peterbilt trucks. □

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# Jim's Brayings

COMMUNITY NEWS FROM THE WESTERN PROVINCES

BY JIM BRAY



**COMING 'ROUND THE MOUNTAIN:** DCT Chambers' unique safety initiatives, which range from satellite monitoring to weekly toolbox talks, led to the Vernon, B.C. trucking company receiving the Canadian Society of Safety Engineering's (CSSE) "Achievement Recognition Award for TruckSafe Organizational Excellence." Inset, EHS Y Safety consultant Paul White (left) and DCT Chambers assistant general manager Ryan Chambers (right) accept the award at a Langley banquet. As for the size of this picture, hey, when you go to great lengths to get us a great shot, we'll take full advantage of it!

Welcome to Jim's Brayings, a quick look at some interesting community news items from across the west that we think will interest you. If you have some news you think will be a good match for this column, pop me off an e-mail at [jim@transportationmedia.ca](mailto:jim@transportationmedia.ca). We can't run everything, of course, but we'll try to get in as much as space permits...

## Rewarding experiences

Not that it isn't always, but with the weather getting decidedly iffy (as in "iffy it snows we're going to be in it deep"), safety is on the minds of leading trucking companies as they prepare for less than optimal roads. It's also something on the collective minds of folks at groups such as WorkSafeBC and the Canadian Society of Safety Engineers, the latter of whom, I assume, don't

drive trains despite their "one track minds" on issues safety-related.

Anyway, bad puns aside, I'd like to extend congratulations to Vernon, B.C.'s DCT Chambers Trucking for being awarded the WorkSafeBC-sponsored CSSE "Achievement Recognition Award for TruckSafe Organizational Excellence" (and how's that for a mouthful?) The company was recognized at a Langley banquet in late October, honoured for such things as becoming the first B.C. carrier in its class to earn the WorkSafeBC and Trucking Safety Council of BC's Certificate of Recognition (COR).

It was this "COR function" (oops, there go the puns again) that, along with its comprehensive Occupational Health & Safety pro-

gram for staff and its excellent track record overall, that caught the attention of the CSSE.

DCT Chambers has been one of the Pacific Northwest's leading wood fibre and commodity carriers for nearly half a century. Among its safety initiatives are weekly toolbox talks (one would think it would be a tad cramped in there!) with a supervisor's safety committee, satellite systems to monitor drivers' practices, rewards for safe driving and constant contact between drivers and their dispatch and area managers.

Assistant general manager Ryan Chambers said "It's a huge honour for DCT to win this award," and noted that "we have hundreds of trucks on highways every day, so we really value the safety of our drivers and the communities they pass through."

And according to the company's safety consultant, Paul White, "DCT Chambers trucking has committed the time and resources necessary to ensure that these safety goals could be accomplished and should be commended for their efforts." Congratulations!

## What happens in Vegas shouldn't necessarily stay there

Western Canada was represented well at the recent American Trucking Associations bash in Sin City, at which time Calgary-based Orlicks was named a winner of the Environmental Protection Agency's SmartWay Excellence Award. It's a repeat win for Orlicks, and yet another kudos for western Canadian trucking companies.

Gene Orlick himself, in a self-

deprecating e-mail to me, noted that his company won the award back in 2007 as well. He said "the award is for doing paperwork correctly, I guess. We certainly try hard to be efficient and save fuel, so the award was a surprise to me. I know Bison and Challenger won it last year, but when you consider the difference between my 30 truck operation and their huge fleets and the significant numbers of APUs installed, just under 1,000, I would have given the award to them."

Orlick says he's enjoying the notoriety, however, and "hopefully some of the shippers will see that we are trying to make a difference in their GHG reduction plans."

As for the award hander-outers, "These companies know that the benefits of SmartWay are not just a sticker on the cab or a slogan on the letterhead, but they include real, bottom-line savings," said outgoing ATA chairman Dan England. "They've earned these awards, but more importantly, they've shown us what our industry can do to improve our environment."

ATA president and CEO Bill Graves kissed up to the US government body, by opining that "SmartWay is a shining example of what can happen when government engages the private sector to achieve a goal. Just as we should congratulate these member companies for their commitment to environmental sustainability, we should recognize EPA's commitment to helping them become more efficient as they deliver America's most essential goods."

Seems to me that it's more like forcing them to comply at the point of a bureaucratic gun, not that I want to rain on the well-deserved honours earned by Gene Orlick and his team.

But it makes me wonder how long it'll be before the EPA starts pushing for solar or wind-powered trucks?

## Santa's big helper rolls along

Heading toward the Christmas season, Rosenau Transportation has an idea that should really sleigh you!

Yep, the holiday-and-people-minded folk at Rosenau are rolling out their 18 Wheels of Christmas program again. According to the company's release, Rosenau is trying to "overfill" a trailer with food and is asking for your donations to help them reach that goal.

Donation date is Dec. 18, and all the stuff collected will be taken to the Calgary Food Bank. For more information, contact Dale, Colleen, or Shirley at 403-279-4204 or e-mail [18wheels\\_xmas@rosenau.org](mailto:18wheels_xmas@rosenau.org). They'll even pick up your donations for you.

"The magic begins with you," Rosenau notes, undoubtedly to the chagrin of David Copperfield and the late Doug Henning. Well, Henning probably doesn't care... □

*-That's it for this month. As always, if you have an item you think your peers should be peering at, why not send it along to me at [jim@transportationmedia.ca](mailto:jim@transportationmedia.ca). Naturally, space prohibits us from running everything - and our lawyers may have something to say about it as well! - but we do our best to include "all the news that's fit." See you next time!*



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