

TRUCK WEST

January 2008 Volume 19, Issue 1

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

Outlook 2008



There's no sugar-coating it. It's going to be a tough year ahead for trucking.

Julia Kuzeljevich

TORONTO, Ont. – A strong Canadian dollar, weaker southbound volumes, snags and quagmires at the border and on the road to it. Welcome to more of the same in 2008.

While it may not look so different from other years and other predictions for trucking, (save for the pari-

ty-plus dollar), 2008 brings at least the promise of greener fleets and better roads from Canada's provincial trucking associations, who've been pushing for change in their respective agendas.

According to economist Derek Burleton, associate vice-president, and director, economic studies, TD

Bank Financial Group, the steady rise of the Canadian dollar, coupled with high energy costs, will likely mean a dampening of the economy well into 2008.

"Overall, Canada's regional economies are seeing a shift of reliance from the US to international

Continued on page 7 ■

Western showdown

CTA chastises western provinces for not adopting federal HoS rules

By James Menzies

EDMONTON, Alta. – The provinces of B.C., Alberta and Saskatchewan have earned the scorn of the Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA) for their failure to adopt the national hours-of-service rules for all sectors of the industry.

Alberta and Saskatchewan have yet to adopt the national HoS rules for intra-provincial carriers and B.C. has granted exemptions to some sectors, threatening the harmonization of the rules that were more than a decade in the making. The CTA is not impressed; it has called upon the federal government to intervene and force the hands of these renegade provinces.

"For extra-provincial carriers, it's critical that there be uniform hours-of-service regulations across the country," Graham Cooper, senior vice-president of the CTA stressed to *Truck West*. "To do otherwise would not only create operational problems for carriers and drivers, but would also threaten to undermine safety. Imagine, for example, the situation where a driver is moving across three provinces with three different sets of rules. Depending on the degree of variance in the regulations, his drive/work/sleep patterns could be disrupted every time he crosses a

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Mark Dalton O/O



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Tracking tire costs



Are you getting the most out of your tire investments?

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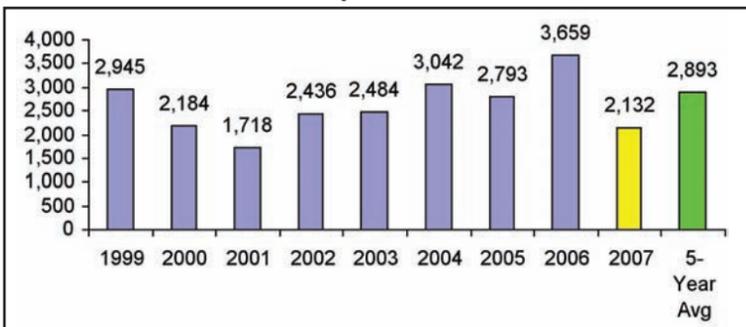
CLASS 8 TRUCK SALES TRENDS

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Monthly Class 8 Sales - Oct 07

OEM	This Month	Last Year
Freightliner	313	782
International	610	913
Kenworth	338	598
Mack	136	199
Peterbilt	269	396
Sterling	173	187
Volvo	178	367
Western Star	115	217
TOTALS	2,132	3659

Historical Comparison - Oct 07 Sales



Motor Vehicle Production to Oct 07

OEM	Total Prod	For Export
International	4,239	3,554
Paccar	3,788	3,253
Sterling	15,410	13,166
TOTALS	23,437	19,973

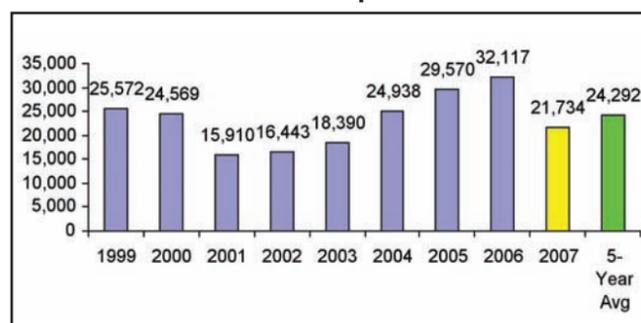
There were 23,437 trucks reported produced in Canada by October this year (note that the Sterling total includes 1,108 medium- and light-duty trucks). The vast majority of those are intended for export to the US market. Sterling's St. Thomas, Ont. plant is, by far, the largest producer of trucks in Canada, easily outpacing production at International's Chatham, Ont., plant and Paccar's St. Therese, Que., plant.

The anticipated dramatic drops in Class 8 sales experienced during the summer continued into the fall. October sales were 42% off last year's record pace, a similar drop to September's. This follows July where sales were 36% off last year's record pace and August which saw sales drop 58% off last year's pace. Other significant monthly drops this year include: a 39% drop in June, a 30% drop in April and a 25% drop in March. The 1,952 Class 8 trucks sold made for the second worst October sales since 1999. They were also below the five-year average for the month by about 700 units.

Class 8 Sales YTD (Oct 07) by Province and OEM

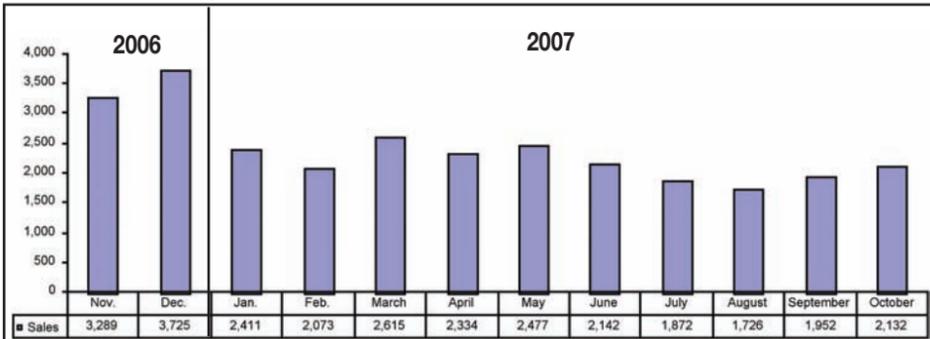
OEM	BC	ALTA	SASK	MAN	ONT	QUE	NB	NS	PEI	NF	CDA
Freightliner	321	773	130	182	1,840	576	135	103	0	16	4,076
International	232	837	79	348	1,905	1,080	232	81	17	87	4,898
Kenworth	700	1,186	182	206	684	548	0	25	0	0	3,531
Mack	161	203	100	127	585	147	23	28	0	0	1,374
Peterbilt	380	713	270	151	586	349	122	43	0	0	2,594
Sterling	216	511	61	52	718	461	31	56	10	37	2,153
Volvo	172	154	77	129	707	195	56	43	0	5	1,538
Western Star	310	562	54	67	313	185	48	25	2	4	1,570
TOTALS	2,472	4,939	953	1,262	7,338	3,541	647	404	29	149	21,734

Historical Comparison - YTD



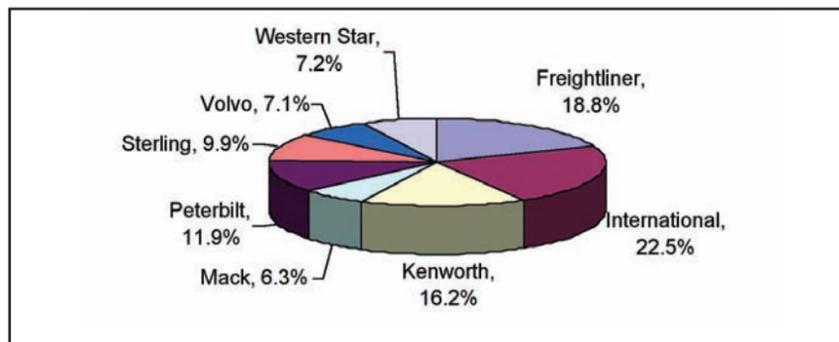
Class 8 truck sales in Canada were at 21,734 units heading into the final two months of the year. That's almost 10,000 short of the mark from last year's record sales year and about 2,500 short of the average for the previous five years. However, the drop in sales from the previous year, as bad as it has been so far, has still not proven to be as precipitous as expected, dropping about 32% instead of the up to 40% drop some experts forecast. It should be noted, however, that Canadian carriers are looking at a North American economy that has been slowed by the bursting of the housing bubble in the US and now concerns about the health of the US consumer. To date, the 21,734 Class 8 trucks sold make 2007 the fourth worst sales year since 1999.

12 - Month Sales Trends



Monthly Class 8 sales continue to range well below the 3,000 mark, which was a regular benchmark during last year's record sales year (the mark was reached 7 times last year.) The 2,132 Class 8 trucks sold in October, however, did mark the first time in three months that sales topped the 2,000 mark. They also made for the sixth lowest monthly total (or sixth highest if one prefers to look on the positive side) of the past 12 months.

Market Share Class 8 YTD



With only two months left to report for 2007, International looks like it has a strong chance to unseat traditional frontrunner Freightliner for the market share lead in this tumultuous year. International has now opened its market share to more than three percentage points. The Paccar group also continues to do very well, in part thanks to its strong western base. Kenworth is a strong third with a greater than 16% market share and Peterbilt has an 11.9% market share. Freightliner sister company Sterling is the only other manufacturer with close to a 10% share of the market.

Source: Canadian Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association

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Mandatory anti-rollover systems? Why not?

Two years ago at its annual convention, the Ontario Trucking Association shocked the industry by announcing its plan to make speed limiters mandatory on all trucks operating in the province. Since then, the association has fought doggedly to have the policy adopted by the various provincial governments.

It appears in Ontario and Quebec at least, it may get its wish.

At this year's OTA convention, the association made another bold announcement, requesting that anti-rollover technology be standard on all new trucks sold in Canada.

The OTA's speed limiter announcement triggered a tsunami of reaction from all corners of the industry and it's still the most popular subject of debate today. This year's stability system announcement has failed to incite a similar reaction. And for good reason: No harm can be done by calling on OEMs to make stability systems standard on new trucks.

Volvo and Mack already offer the Bendix electronic stability systems as a non-deletable item. You can have it removed, but you won't save a dime so really, why would you? Now the OTA wants other manufacturers to follow suit.

The obvious concern about the policy involves money (what doesn't these days?) Why on earth would the industry want to support a policy that would drive up the purchase price of new trucks, especially at a time when those costs are already skyrocketing due to costly new emissions technologies?

But when I spoke to Frank Bio, a marketing manager with Volvo Trucks, he assured me the systems

Editorial Comment

James Menzies



can be made standard at very little, if any, cost to the truck purchaser. As the systems are ordered in larger volumes, the price goes down. And improved efficiencies on assembly lines make installation simpler, further reducing the cost of the technology, he explained.

The systems are remarkably inexpensive to begin with, considering the sophistication of the technology. A roll stability system for tractors lists at only US\$750 with the more advanced electronic stability systems ranging from about US\$1,500-\$2,100.

Fred Andersky, marketing manager, electronics with Bendix, pointed out that with discounts, they cost about 1% of the total price of a new truck. So with price being somewhat of a non-issue, why would industry oppose making stability systems standard on new trucks? The technology exists and more importantly, it works. If you don't believe me, participate in a demo the next time you have the chance to do so. Both Bendix and Meritor WABCO

frequently offer the chance to test the technology first-hand.

Most participants step from the cab a believer. I've had the opportunity to test both systems and I can assure you they work as advertised. But perhaps the biggest reason to support this initiative, is that the mandatory use of anti-rollover technology is inevitable, regardless of whether the OTA endorses their use or not.

It's only a matter of time before government mandates the use of technology that is so clearly effective at reducing rollovers and thus saving lives.

It makes much more sense for industry to bring the mandated use of stability systems in on its own terms, rather than waiting for government to impose such requirements itself. □

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My transportation wish list for 2008

As I began to write my editorial this month, I noticed my eight-year-old son quietly working away at preparing his Christmas list – and I'm sure he'll be checking it more than twice (just like I'm sure that yellow Labrador he's been lobbying for the last two years will be on it.)

So I thought I would follow his example and prepare my own wish list for the industry this coming year:

My first wish is that carriers and shippers find smarter alternatives to the below-cost pricing going on in some lanes.

The current shortage of freight is creating a bargain mentality when it comes to rate shopping. As Scott Johnston, president of Yanke Group, pointed out at our recent shipper-carrier roundtable, contracts in a lot of cases these days don't seem to be worth the paper they're written on.

No sooner are they signed than the carrier finds there is rate action taking place and he's back revisiting the customer.

I fully understand shippers are also under considerable pressure during a slowing economy to reduce their costs.

Transportation costs as a share of revenue can look pretty wonky when revenue is dropping.

Viewpoint

Lou Smyrlis
 Editorial Director



However, it's wise for shippers to remember what another member of our roundtable, Bob Ballantyne, who as head of the Canadian Industrial Transportation Association speaks for some of the largest shippers in the country, advised: "You don't do yourself any favours if your suppliers are losing money. We try to encourage our members to take a longer term view in dealing with carriers."

For me that longer term view involves investing in technologies and practices – online dock scheduling, electronic tendering, capacity forecast sharing and incentive based contracts, to name a few – that help boost efficiencies for both the shipper and the carrier. And it also involves carriers adopting pricing strategies that are sophisticated enough to retain the competitiveness of their clients by doing away with rate volatility.

My second wish is that the provinces considering backing

away from their commitments to adopt Canada's new standard for hours-of-service stop their small-time thinking and consider the good of the industry, and our country, as a whole.

As Canadian Trucking Alliance CEO David Bradley correctly points out: "From the outset of discussions more than 10 years ago to put a new hours-of-service rule in place, a fundamental – perhaps the most important – undertaking given to the trucking industry by the federal and provincial governments was that the new regulations would be uniformly applied across Canada as a National Safety Code standard instead of a hodge-podge of inconsistent provincial regulations."

In this age of world trade, great countries have great transportation systems. Also-runs have transportation systems hampered by a patchwork of legislation that addresses regional needs while ignoring national aspirations. Which country do we want to be?

So Santa, if you can work on the wish list above, I'll see what I can do about that yellow Lab. □

– Lou Smyrlis can be reached by phone at (416) 510-6881 or by e-mail at lou@TransportationMedia.ca.



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Temporary relief of driver shortage as volumes slow

■ Continued from page 1

markets, but the US will continue to be the lifeline of the Canadian economy," said Burleton.

"Alberta's economy will lose some steam, cooling off to a growth rate of about 3% into 2008 (down from 4% this year) tied to cost pressures, labour shortage, and shortage of materials," he said.

British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Atlantic Canada appear to be benefiting in some ways from Alberta's losses. B.C. and Saskatchewan anticipate healthy job growth as the cost of living in Alberta grows and jobs spill over to the neighbouring provinces.

Atlantic Canada, meanwhile, has seen a renewed flurry of activity in energy, utilities, construction and manufacturing, with New Brunswick leading. In Nova Scotia the forestry sector continues to decline.

"In Ontario and Quebec, in 2008 we predict continued lean times with contraction in manufacturing," said Burleton.

And all of the provinces face broader, long-term challenges with regard to infrastructure.

"There are optimistic signs that the government is getting the message about this challenge but it's a long-term issue. Border fees and infrastructure are huge setbacks. There's still a need for the provinces on the whole to look at improving trade opportunities," said Burleton.

The data has not been lost on Western Canada's provincial trucking associations, which have been ramping up efforts to meet the challenges ahead.

British Columbia

According to British Columbia Trucking Association president Paul Landry, southbound volumes in the province were already slowing down even prior to a significant rise in the dollar.

But on the jobs front, with Alberta's economy cooling slightly, Landry said that carriers in B.C. are finding it a bit easier to find qualified workers.

He said the BCTA is pleased with funding commitments to improve infrastructure in the province.

These include improvements to the Trans-Canada highway, the South Fraser perimeter road, key east-west and north-south routes Highways 10 and 15, and bottlenecks removed at Kicking Horse Pass and Kelowna.

On the environmental front, Landry has made several recommendations to B.C.'s Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services that he said would provide financial incentives to encourage the trucking industry to step up its efforts to reduce greenhouse gas and smog emissions.

"We've indicated our strong desire and willingness to work with government on environmental initiatives. We want government to provide more regulatory flexibility (weight forgiveness for APUs, and the widespread allowance of super singles). We've also requested that government consider financial incentives for the acquisition of new

trucks and for legacy fleets, such as forgiving sales tax for new equipment, waiving first year registration or licensing fees, etc.) While it's difficult to say what their response will be we wanted them to understand the industry's resistance to acquiring new equipment," said Landry.

BCTA has been pushing for minimum truck driver training that would be available through a coherent and consistent training system of approved institutions.

The program would consist of pre-Class 1 licensing and on-the-job training by employers who also have to meet certain standards.

ITA-approved driver trainees would be distinguished from regular Class 1-licence holders, would allow access to student funding for trainees and facilitate graduates' en-

try into the trucking industry.

At press time, the standard had received approval in principle by the province's Industry Training Authority (ITA).

"The next step is to begin working on the program itself for their consideration. This process will probably take us to February 2008. We've engaged a consultant to help us define the skills and knowledge required. We're hoping by late spring to have approval from ITA where we can move on and offer the program for fall 2008," said Landry.

He stressed that such a program would need a strong commitment from employers.

"While the smallest of companies would struggle to be involved in this program hundreds have enough trucks and infrastructure to deliver

mentoring and on-the-job training," added Landry.

Alberta

According to Mayne Root, executive director, Alberta Motor Transport Association, the trucking industry, like most other industries in Alberta, continues to have recruitment problems in all aspects of the industry from drivers to mechanics to office staff.

"We are competing with all of the other industries, some of which are able to pay better, even for general labour-type jobs. For drivers, insurance requirements and training costs make it difficult for younger people to get into the industry as they need to be over 21 and have the proper class of licence just to get started and, at that time, they cer-

Continued on page 8 ■

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Drilling activity dries up in Alberta's oilfields

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tainly aren't qualified to jump into a tractor-trailer unit and hit the road. The company then has to provide them with on-the-job-training and mentoring to get them to the point that they can safely operate the equipment and handle the freight," he said.

In the late '90s the association, together with industry, developed the Transportation Training & Development Association to address the need to attract more people to the industry and provide the required training for them to be successful.

"In 2007 we received final approval from Advanced Education and Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation to conduct a pilot project for a college level course for professional drivers. Red Deer College and driving schools in Edmonton, Calgary and Lethbridge are working together to provide in-class and behind the wheel instruction for the multi-week course that is eligible for student funding. Unfortunately, conditions were placed on the program to not include the Class 1 training and licence. As a result, we are having difficulty getting students for the pilot project. The employers have adjusted their rate structure and benefit plans to maintain their current driving staff and to attract other, mature people to the industry. In addition, they have had to adjust their shift scheduling to better appeal to new entrants. Some carriers have also begun hiring foreign workers, where possible.

"As far as the business situation, the drilling sector has slowed considerably over the last year. I have heard that as few as 27% of rigs are working this year compared to 2006. This means a slowdown in the hauling of pipe, equipment and supplies to that industry but that is the only sector that has experienced a slowdown. I am still getting calls daily looking for companies who can carry goods within the province, nationally and internationally. We do not see this slowing into next year. The border security issues continue to add cost and time to highway

transportation going south and coming back into Canada and many companies have completely pulled out of the international market but the rest are doing what they have to, to meet the constantly moving and more demanding requirements."

With regard to infrastructure, said Root, Alberta has been fortunate to have a well-established highway network but they are now encountering difficulty in keeping it properly maintained and upgraded.

"At last note from the province, they are several hundred million dollars behind on this. With the availability of more funding being announced in the last few months, we have seen an increase in the number and scope of projects being started – Calgary and Edmonton ring roads, Highway 63 to Ft. McMurray, improvements to the Highway 3 corridor in southern Alberta, several interchange upgrades throughout the province, etc. These projects may be causing some traffic delays now but will result in safer and better highway systems in the future."

Saskatchewan

According to Al Rosseker, executive director, Saskatchewan Trucking Association, the province is facing an acute driver shortage with many companies making use of the Saskatchewan Immigrant Nominee Program (SINP), which allows Saskatchewan to nominate applicants, who qualify under criteria established by the province, to the federal government for landed immigrant status.

"It's a longer process than we'd like," said Rosseker. "We also have the largest truck driver training school in Saskatchewan, which trained 1,200 drivers last year."

There are also lots of initiatives to bring in new candidates from First Nations communities. While Rosseker said there isn't a groundswell, it's a step in the right direction. "There are members of our association working almost exclusively in the north (of the province)," he noted.



GRASS NOT ALWAYS GREENER: The slowing oilpatch and skyrocketing cost of living in Alberta are causing some drivers who fled there with dollar signs in their eyes to turn around, which is good news for fleets in other provinces.

Southbound volumes have also not been good for the province.

"We're not going to hurt as much as Ontario but goods aren't moving. Some of the commodities are still flowing but the stronger dollar is making them more expensive," said Rosseker.

The association, which in 2007 celebrated its 70th anniversary, has set out some key priorities for 2008.

"We would like to develop more partnerships with training entities. We're also branching out with a pilot project on heavy equipment training as there is a shortage of skilled operators there too. There are so many components to trucking and a wealth of opportunity in the industry," said Rosseker.

At press time, the province of Saskatchewan also announced a primary weight corridor network called Clearing the Path (CTP), with aim to increase primary weight access on municipal roads throughout the province for a more integrated transportation network.

Manitoba

Bob Dolyniuk, Manitoba Trucking Association's executive director, said that there is currently excess capacity in the province.

"The auto, pulp and paper and BSE (mad cow) crisis have meant a shift in market focus for carriers. They have looked to other markets to keep their trucks busy," he said. "We've been in this situation for over a year with excess capacity southbound and even domestically," he added.

It has de-stabilized pricing and Dolyniuk said he expects a shake-

out ultimately.

"Some carriers have just walked away from certain routes."

With excess capacity, admittedly, some of the pressure is off the driver shortage, but Dolyniuk said the issue is not on the back burner and only means the association is looking harder at the question of making its membership more efficient and productive.

MTA members are actively involved in the immigration nomination program.

Manitoba Public Insurance is also launching a \$5 million program over the next three years to train 250 new entrants per year for the industry, he said. Dolyniuk said that centres such as Winnipeg are well placed to attract business with the promotion of trade corridors like the Asia Pacific Gateway.

"As the cost of living rises with wages in Alberta, it's less compelling to locate consolidation and distribution centres there, where the wage scales are competing with the oil industry."

Manitoba has announced \$4 billion in funding over 10 years to fund infrastructure. They've also committed \$400 million over five years for bridges.

"These have not had the attention they've needed," said Dolyniuk. "But if these projects don't go through during this timeline, then the funds will go back into general expenditures and not into infrastructure."

On the environmental front, Manitoba is looking at an ethanol and biodiesel mandate over the next few years. □



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CTA boss predicts tough year for trucking in 2008

TORONTO, Ont. – Trucking is as good a leading indicator of economic activity as there is, said David Bradley, president of the Ontario Trucking Association, at the group’s annual conference held recently in Toronto.

When the economy is thriving, that’s a good thing. When it’s not, trucking is often a victim.

“Whatever the state of the Ontario economy, or sectors within that economy, it will be reflected in the business levels of the trucking industry,” Bradley said.

“The impact of the appreciation in the value of the Canadian dollar, combined with slowing US economic activity and the resultant impact on Ontario’s manufacturing and export-based economy will continue to exert a drag on freight volumes and create challenges for motor carriers in 2008.”

“There is an overcapacity of supply of trucking service, certainly in the general freight sector, and until that situation is resolved, either through improvement in the amount of freight being generated by the economy, or through industry attrition and rationalization it will continue to be tough sledding,” he said.

In order to deal with the capacity gap, Bradley expects carriers to employ a number of strategies.

He foresees further merger and acquisition activity in the year ahead.

Carriers will continue to hold off investing in tractors and trailers and will try to reduce their fleet sizes to reflect volumes in order to get utilization rates up. There will inevitably be layoffs and some business failures, he says.

“Some will take measures to address the capacity situation voluntarily, others will be forced into it,” he says.

“Continuing to chase freight that doesn’t pay just to keep trucks rolling is not sustainable. Carriers can act quickly to address their fleet size.”

Bradley says shippers should not expect the current soft rate environment to last.

“Carriers are battenning down the hatches on costs, but the outlook for fuel prices suggests a tough winter is in store and eventually equipment needs to be replaced. There has to be a margin to pay for this. Moreover, the demographics of the driver population point to a worsening of the driver

‘Continuing to chase freight that doesn’t pay just to stay in business isn’t sustainable.’

David Bradley



“Canada’s improving national debt situation and the fact that our federal financial situation has gone from deficits to surpluses, should provide us with a fiscal dividend; including additional flexibility on interest rates. The Bank of Canada should act now to lower interest rates to bring about a moderation in the value of the dollar.”

But, he also sees a role for government.

“It’s time that the Government of Ontario addressed some key long-standing issues like the taxation of business inputs by harmonizing the provincial sales tax and the Multi-Jurisdictional Vehicle Tax with the federal Goods and Services Tax.”

And, he says, “The federal government and the province have got to get on with the job of building a second crossing at Windsor and find a way to talk to our major trading partner about restoring sanity to the border.”

Bradley says there will always be a need for trucks and the industry will remain the dominant mode of freight transportation, though the players may change over time.

However, he cautions, “The current problems in the trucking sector are indicative of larger problems in the Ontario economy.” □

shortage problem which will eventually have a significant impact on capacity.”

Those that either don’t have the kind of freight that lends itself to building ongoing relationships with carriers or who choose to go to the market for each shipment in hopes of driving rates down may find themselves scrambling to get service, Bradley reminded attendees at the event.

However, Bradley cautions: “When a turnaround will occur and how strong and broad-based it will be depends not only on what carriers do to address the capacity softness, but what is done now by Canadian governments and the Central Bank to bring the Canadian dollar back down to earth and to ensure that Ontario businesses – including truckers – are competitive.”

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IN BRIEF

Driver error causes most livestock truck accidents

CALGARY, Alta. - A recent study completed by Alberta Farm Animal Care (AFAC) suggests drive error is to blame for 85% of livestock truck accidents.

Jennifer Woods, a well-known animal transport expert, studied the results of 415 commercial livestock truck accidents in Canada and the US occurring between 1994 and 2007.

She found that weather, which is often assumed to be the cause of livestock truck accidents, was only a factor in 1% of livestock truck crashes.

Fatigue is a much greater contributor, Woods found, since most accidents occurred between midnight and 9 a.m. and involved only a single vehicle.

Eighty per cent of livestock truck crashes involved a single vehicle and 83% of accidents involved a rollover.

Of those, 84% rolled to the right.

Most accidents happened in October, followed by November, August, April and May.

Fifty-six per cent of livestock trucks involved in accidents were hauling cattle, 27% were transporting pigs and 11% poultry.

"Transportation is a vital link for the livestock industry and it is the responsibility of the entire livestock industry to ensure that animals are being transported safely and humanely," AFAC said in its most recent newsletter. "Transporters need to be provided the necessary tools to educate and train drivers on accident prevention. Fatigue management is a key to accident reduction."

As a result of the study, Woods concluded that a national program is required to reduce the number of livestock rollovers.

B.C. provides funding for 'green fleet' programs

VICTORIA, B.C. - The government of B.C. has invested \$500,000 towards greening the province's fleets. The money will go towards the Green Fleets B.C. program, which aims to reduce emissions from vehicles of all kinds and improve air quality. Part of the program will entail expansion of the E3 Fleet program, which provides fleets with advice on how to improve fuel consumption and then grades them according to a ratings system. Through programs such as Green Fleets B.C. and E3 Fleet, the province is urging fleet managers to spec' low-emission vehicles, choose the right vehicle for the job, adopt progressive engine technologies and use low-emission fuels. Proper vehicle maintenance, careful route planning and sound driving practices are also encompassed in the programs.

As part of the partnership between Green Fleet B.C. and E3 Fleet, the groups hope to see involvement in E3 Fleet grow to at least 50 green-rated fleets by 2010. The province also plans to encourage the use of biodiesel and hopes to have at least a 5% renewable fuel content in diesel by 2010. For more information on the program, visit www.greenfleets.ca.

B.C. driving school shut down by ICBC

SURREY, B.C. - A B.C. driving school has been shut down after being accused of helping students illegitimately obtain Class 1 licences.

The Insurance Corp. of B.C. and

the RCMP conducted a joint investigation into Southwest Driving Academy, which allegedly provided students with fabricated experience letters to help them obtain their Class 1. While the investigation is continuing, ICBC revoked the school's licence.

"I am glad to see that ICBC is taking this matter very seriously," said Solicitor General John Les. "The provincial government's priority is to ensure that we have safe drivers with secure licences on B.C. roads."

ICBC announced in a release that it has also taken action against a number of students who used the false driver experience letters to help them obtain a Class 1 licence. Other students from the school have been asked to provide additional proof of experience. ICBC says about 123 people have been asked to provide further proof of their driving experience. Twenty-two have had their Class 1 licence revoked as a result of the investigation.

"ICBC has a zero tolerance policy for this type of behaviour," said Mark Withenshaw, ICBC vice-president of driver services. "We actively work to protect the integrity of the driver licensing system and have a comprehensive plan in place to identify any potential fraud vulnerabilities in the driver licencing process."

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HOURS-OF-SERVICE

Associations oppose 'wholesale exemptions'

■ Continued from page 1

provincial border. That of course implies that all provinces need to adopt the federal regulations for extra-provincial carriers, either by reference or through incorporation in their own rules."

Cooper went on to say it's unacceptable to have different HoS rules governing intra- and extra-provincial carriers.

"One of the key issues is the competitive imbalance that would be created within a provincial trucking market if, for example, the provincial rules were less stringent than the federal...the harmonization is supposed to extend to all commercial drivers, no matter where they live or where they drive."

The double standard Cooper referred to is exactly what's playing out in some regions, including Alberta. When contacted by *Truck West*, Mayne Root, executive director of the Alberta Motor Transport Association (AMTA) voiced frustration that the province's Transport Minister seems to be bending to the demands of special interest groups representing certain sectors (namely logging and heavy construction), that have dubbed the new rules unworkable.

In Alberta, provincially-regulated carriers are still able to run according to the old rules: 15 hours a day, seven days a week in perpetuity.

"This makes it really hard for federally-regulated carriers to compete for any contracts within the province," Root explained. "It's a huge issue."

The oil and gas industry has also been accused of seeking exemptions to the rules, but Patrick Delaney, vice-president of health, safety and government regulations with the Petroleum Services Association of Canada, insisted that is not the case.

In a letter to *Truck West* (which can be read in its entirety on pg. 28), Delaney explained the "oil and gas industry is not seeking exemptions

from the regulations."

Root agreed that Alberta's oil and gas sector seems willing to work within the federal rules if required.

"The oilfield guys are looking for ways to deal with the new standard," said Root. "They're more than willing to give it a shot."

On the West Coast, truckers who rely on B.C. Ferries to get to and from Vancouver Island are encountering problems of their own. Some drivers are running out of hours on the ferries, due to their inability to break up their sleeper berth time under the new rules. As a result, drivers are finding they are out of compliance when they arrive onshore and in some cases even driving their truck off the ferry would constitute a violation of the rules.

Paul Landry, president of the B.C. Trucking Association (BCTA) said his group agrees with the CTA's position that national uniformity is required. However, he also pointed out there are "problems with the existing rules."

"The rules don't always make sense in all situations," Landry admitted. But like the CTA, the

provincial association opposes exemptions for entire sectors, such as logging.

"Fatigue is fatigue, no matter what you're doing," he stressed. "The rules should apply for everybody."

The provincial associations appear unified on this front, despite the protestations of certain industry sectors or lobby groups and despite the ongoing complaints of many carriers. "The provincial associations are unified in the call for harmonized rules across the country and in their opposition to...exemptions," said Cooper.

"That said, the associations collectively represent over 4,000 carriers. It would be naive of us to expect all these carriers to be fully united behind almost any position - the industry is much too diverse for that."

The CTA does appear willing to accept the issuing of permits that would grant exemptions from the rules under extremely rare circumstances.

"At least in the case of a permit process, the regulator would have the ability to impose certain conditions, and to put the onus on the applicant

to show that safety wouldn't be undermined," Cooper said.

Operators of service vehicles in Alberta's oil and gas industries, for instance, can apply for a permit to extend their shift under limited circumstances, Delaney said. But only if the company boasts a stellar safety record and has a fatigue management program in place.

The issue of harmonization was touched on during the Ontario Trucking Association's recent convention. OTA president David Bradley bluntly referred to the situation as "a dog's breakfast" during a panel discussion on regulatory affairs.

Transport Canada's Kash Ram said the agency is aware of the situation and added "We are in the process of briefing the Minister."

Also on the panel was Milt Schmidt of the US-based Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), and he gave OTA delegates another bone to chew on. The FMCSA is seeking to align its safety rating system with that of Canada so there is complete reciprocity by November, 2008.

"We're about ready to accept Canadian data into our systems," he said. However, if provinces are not adhering to the National Safety Code (including the national hours-of-service rules), they will not qualify for reciprocity, Schmidt warned.

The CTA plans to continue its efforts to have the national HoS rules adopted from coast-to-coast.

As Cooper said: "The bottom line is that if the human body needs seven or eight hours of sleep per day to counteract fatigue, and 10 hours off-duty time is what it takes to get the right amount of sleep, it doesn't matter whether you're driving a tractor-trailer between Toronto and Winnipeg or a logging truck on a highway in the B.C. Interior, you're still going to present a safety threat if you're sleep deprived." □

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US HoS Update: FMCSA to keep existing rules

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The American Trucking Associations (ATA) has welcomed the Interim Final Rule on drivers' Hours-of-Service, which was issued Dec. 11 by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). The rule retains the key components of the 2004 rule (11 hour driving day and 34 hour reset), which ATA has supported. ATA officials say that in just four years, that rule has led to significant decreases in the number of fatal large truck crashes, the fatal large truck crash rate, the number of injuries from truck-involved crashes, and the injury crash rate.

"FMCSA has made an important contribution to highway safety by keeping in force Hours-of-Service rules that have led to a reduction in deaths and injuries over the last several years," said ATA president and CEO Bill Graves.

The new rule reflects the scientific research that shows that the comprehensive regulations in effect since 2004 (except for a change in sleeper berth regulations in October 2005) promote driver alertness and enhance safety. The FMCSA cited data collected by the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute that showed there is no increase in crash risk in the 11th hour of driving. The Interim Final Rule is in effect while the agency collects additional data on the safety impact of the two challenged provisions. □

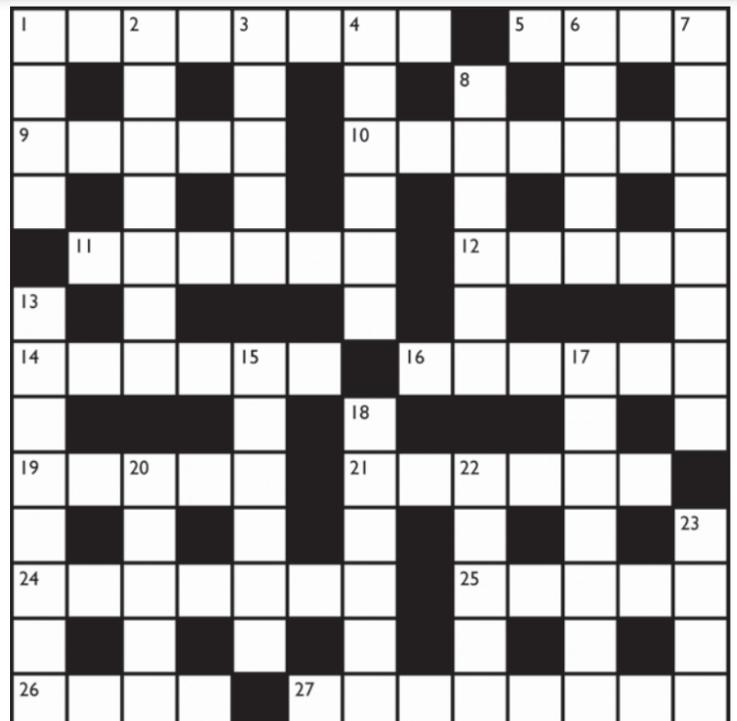
THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Across

- 1. Overly aggressive driving behavior (4,4)
- 5. Full-retail price, briefly (1,1,1,1)
- 9. A Petro-Canada engine oil
- 10. Pneumatic-suspension brand (3,4)
- 11. CB query, "Got your ____?" (4,2)
- 12. Late-'70s Chevy conventional
- 14. Overtakes a slowpoke
- 16. Collision type (4,2)
- 19. Streets, boulevards, etc.
- 21. Road ____, Australian multi-trailer rigs
- 24. Lode King offering
- 25. Cops, you might say
- 26. Word following on or off
- 27. UPS or FedEx drivers

Down

- 1. Certain traffic lights
- 2. Pneumatic-suspension components
- 3. Pistons' jewelry
- 4. Passenger on "Beverly Hillbillies" truck
- 6. Sends goods by commercial transport
- 7. VW Beetle, a.k.a. ____ roller skate
- 8. Adjustment on 18-Down item
- 13. It's in 0/0
- 15. Ford's famous fifties failures
- 17. Cargo protection or support material
- 18. Truck-tunes source
- 20. Anti-theft-system noisemaker
- 22. Traffic-light color
- 23. Words in fixer-upper truck ad (2,2)



Answers on page 23

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Make anti-rollover technology standard on new trucks: CTA

By James Menzies

TORONTO, Ont. – The summer of '07 earned the dubious distinction of being termed the “Summer of the Rollover” after a number of high-profile truck rollovers snarled traffic on major highways in the Greater Toronto Area, causing commuter chaos and media mayhem.

While most of the accidents were caused by four-wheelers weaving in and out of traffic, the trucking industry still took a beating in the mainstream media. Aiming to proactively address the problem, the Ontario Trucking Association (and by extension, the Canadian Trucking Alliance) called on truck manufacturers to make anti-rollover technology mandatory on all new trucks.

There are varying levels of stability technologies available, ranging from roll-only systems that focus on lateral acceleration which typically occurs in a rollover situation, to the more sophisticated full-stability systems that also incorporate a yaw and steer angle sensor which interpret driver input. There are also trailer-only systems.

“Our members are convinced that the current anti-rollover technology performs well with all types of tractor-trailer configurations and should become part of all standard new vehicle packages,” David Bradley, president of the OTA announced at the association’s annual convention in mid-November.

The association has written to all truck makers, urging them to make the technology standard on new vehicles. As *Truck West* went to press, Barrie Montague, senior policy advisor with the OTA said “We’re in a waiting situation because they haven’t responded yet.”

Volvo and Mack already have made stability systems a non-deletable option on new trucks, meaning customers can opt to remove the system, but they’ll pay for it regardless, which greatly reduces any temptation to do so.

Frank Bio, marketing manager with Volvo Trucks North America, pointed out Volvo went standard with its Volvo Enhanced Stability Technology on highway tractors in 2005. He said the company supports the OTA’s policy.

“We support it and are excited



ON A ROLL: Volvo and Bendix demonstrate their full-stability system during a recent event in Waterloo, Ont.

any has organization determined that it should be standard,” he told *Truck West*.

In developing its policy, the CTA canvassed member fleets and according to Montague, even those that do not currently spec’ anti-rollover systems were on board.

“The survey we did indicated they all think it’s a good idea – even the ones that didn’t have it said it’s a good idea,” Montague said. “Technology is becoming a very significant part of our industry...we have to adopt these things, it’s the right thing to do.”

Not surprisingly, manufacturers of stability systems were encouraged by the position taken by the OTA and its national umbrella organization.

“This is actually great news when an organization like CTA recognizes the value of technology such as stability systems – our concern is that they didn’t go far enough,” said Fred Andersky, marketing manager, electronics, with Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems. He noted there’s a big difference between “full-” and “roll-only” stability systems and Bendix would have preferred the association to call upon manufacturers to make full-stability systems standard.

“We applaud the CTA’s efforts but we would have liked to see them go further,” he said.

Mark Melletat, marketing director with Meritor WABCO, said “Obviously, we have a great deal of interest in how OTA will pursue that (policy).” Meritor WABCO offers both a Roll Stability Control (RSC) and Electronic Stability

Control (ESC) system.

Melletat said that if government gets involved in forcing the use of stability systems, he hopes they stop short of specifying particular types.

“We’d like to see a performance measurement established,” he said. “Don’t dictate the type of technology, dictate the performance of that technology. A performance measurement allows flexibility for future design and doesn’t specify all the componentry.”

Most fleets that currently spec’ stability systems believe strongly in the technology. Melletat said the “re-buy” rate (the percentage of fleets that purchase the system a second time) is nearly 100%.

“Typically, it’s the more educated fleets that are spec’ing the products,” he said. “Those that spend a little more time in their research and have pretty extensive data.”

He said one customer reduced its rollovers by 85% after implementing Meritor’s RSC system.

Montague said Canadian fleets using anti-rollover technology have noted a reduction in rollovers and all their associated costs.

“These things become an expensive accident,” he pointed out. “It’s not like a fender bender when these things roll over. Often there are environmental problems and chaos being created.”

But at a time when stringent emissions standards are driving up the purchase price of new trucks, will the industry welcome the mandatory use of technology that will inevitably further add to the cost of new vehicles? And just how much more will trucks cost if stabil-

ity systems do become standard?

Montague said the additional cost is as little as \$800 per truck and with a four- or five-year life cycle “a \$200 per year increase in premium on that truck is well spent.”

More specifically, the Meritor WABCO RSC system is listed in the data book at about US\$750. Its ESC system costs about US\$1,500. The Bendix full-stability system lists for about US\$1,900-\$2,100, with OEMs ultimately setting the price, noted Andersky.

Depending on your negotiating skills and the size of your order, however, customers would likely pay less than the list price.

“When you figure that into the total price of the vehicle, it’s less than 2%. And when you take discounts into effect, it’s less than 1% when it comes down to it,” Andersky pointed out. “If you look at the list cost of a chrome bumper, it’s about \$1,700-\$1,900. So if you’re willing to put something shiny on the front, it might be nice to have something that keeps the shiny side up and doesn’t cost a lot more.”

And as Volvo’s Bio pointed out, there are economies of scale at play as well.

“As volumes go up, we’re able to negotiate better pricing,” he said. “And because we’re using higher volumes, the cost goes down for installation. The people on the lines are more familiar with it because they’re putting more on and there are fewer issues with rework.”

For now, OTA is anxiously awaiting a response from truck manufacturers. Montague said the association hopes they agree to make stability systems standard, so government intervention is not required. But if they fail to do so, the OTA appears poised to ask government to mandate the use of the technology.

“If we get the response that they will in fact make this mandatory, then we don’t need government to do anything,” Montague told *Truck West*. “I suspect this is going to be similar to the ABS situation, where carriers were introducing ABS long before it became a (government) mandated requirement.” □

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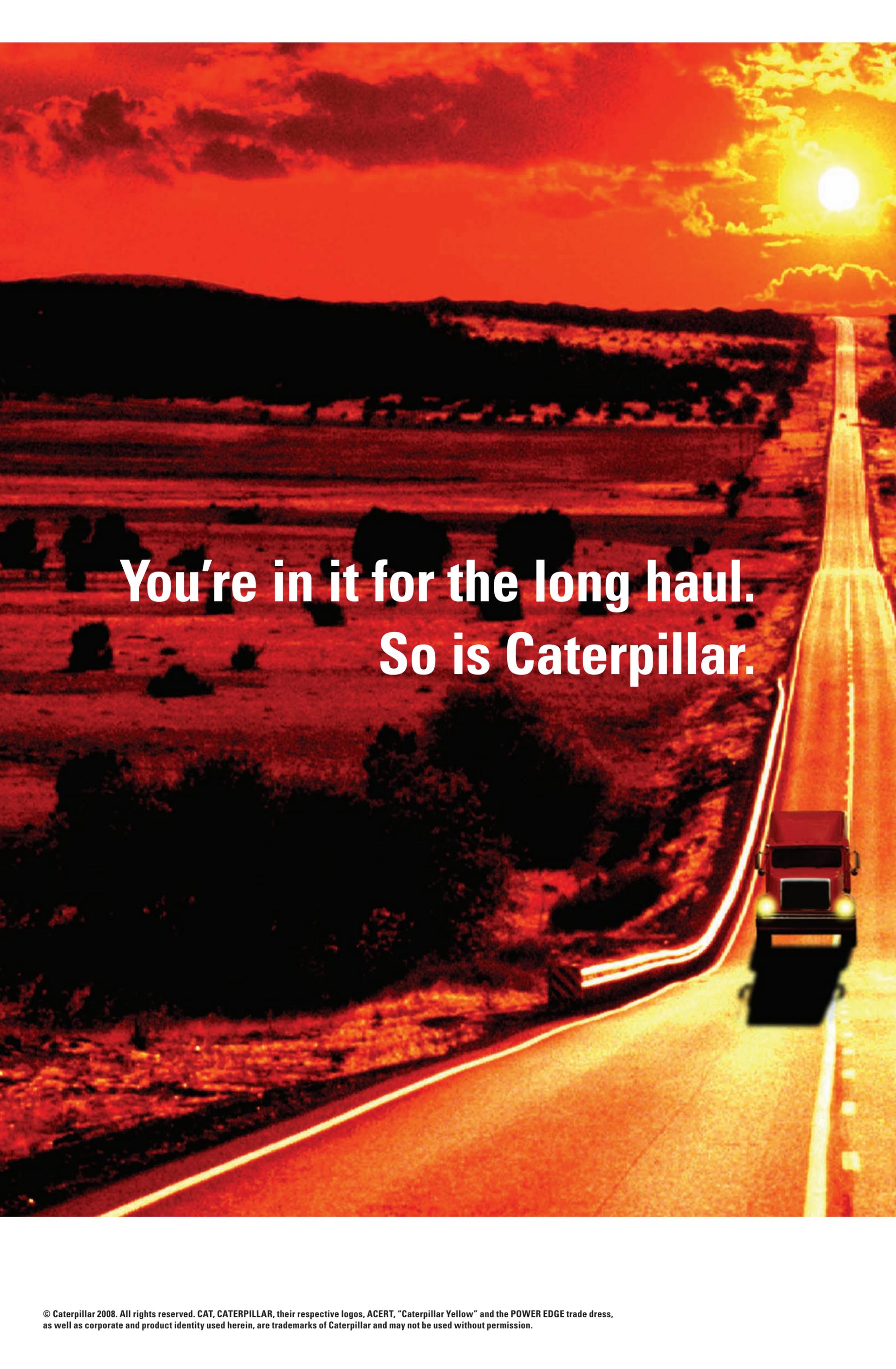
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— Robert Long, CFO, USA Logistics Carriers

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Gimme empty acres

I've moaned long and loud over the years that drivers don't have sufficient parking in Canada. While miles of nothing in the wilderness – no facilities, no food, not even a paved shoulder – is frustrating and dangerous, the situation can be just as bad in major urban areas.

What's the closest truck stop to Vancouver? By my reckoning, it's in Chilliwack, which is over an hour east of town – and that's with no traffic. Halifax? Try the Irving in Enfield – also close to an hour out. Ottawa? The Nation's Capital? Right. There's a Petro-Pass on the east end of town where you can park a truck or two, but if you're hungry, the closest meal in town is the Antrim Truck Stop, about 45 minutes west of the city, or Herb's, about an hour to the east.

And how about Toronto? If you begin looking anywhere after noon, forget it. Truck stops in the Mississauga area fill up fast, and if you go east or west to Bowmanville or Milton, you're pretty well out of the city. Montreal is the same. Nothing within a reasonable distance – and what's there is usually full by dinnertime.

If you're counting miles – and who isn't – adding 50-100 miles to a trip getting back and forth to a parking place starts to take quite a chunk of profit out of the trip.

We've been after governments for years to take a serious look at the

Voice of the O/O

Joanne Ritchie



appalling lack of safe, accessible parking and rest areas for truckers in this country, but given the age-old federal-provincial squabbles of jurisdiction and funding, it's all too easy to pass this one off as some other authority's – or the private sector's – responsibility.

But our persistence seems to be paying off, at least in some small way in this big problem. A couple of OBAC members and I recently met with the folks at Infrastructure Ontario and Ontario's Ministry of Transportation to provide insight into what truckers might want and/or need in a highway service area. Ontario is planning a major redevelopment of its existing network of 23 service centres located along Highways 400 and 401, selecting a single corporation to build, finance, maintain, and operate the whole works. The idea is to turn these dreary, unimaginative places into 24/7 "world-class" travel centres providing travellers and tourists with safe places to rest, eat, and re-fuel, according to the Ministry.

The successful bidder will need to demonstrate a commitment to road

safety and come up with innovative ideas to bring better services to the travelling public and – Hallelujah – to the trucking industry as well.

We've already put forward a tonne of ideas about what would make a service centre "trucker friendly" and we'll be working with Infrastructure Ontario, MTO and the winning firm as the project moves forward. But don't hold your breath – we're talking about government, after all – we're not likely to notice changes until sometime in 2009. And while we'll see improved services with this project, it's not likely to result in a lot more parking spaces; they're working with existing sites and there's a limit to how much they can optimize land use.

So, we've made one small step forward – on a few hundred kilometres out of the thousands that trucks travel over each day – but that doesn't bring us much closer to solving the problem. If I've said it once, I've said it a thousand times, we simply don't have enough places to park 250,000 trucks for 10 hours out of every 24.

And while we're mighty pleased to find one enlightened group of bureaucrats like those we met with on the service centre project, there are still lots out there who don't consider providing "public" parking for trucks a government priority. No place to comply with Hours-of-Service? Tough. Industry should be able to overcome that with more efficient scheduling and use of technology to speed up processes, to ensure drivers can get to designated

rest areas without running out of hours. Bad weather, accidents, congestion, border line-ups? Too bad, that's trucking. And anyway, I've had some of them tell me, it's really up to private sector truck stops to provide adequate parking, along with all the other amenities and services truckers need on the road. Get real.

It's simply not fair to put the onus on truck stop owners to fix the problem. Paving a 10-acre lot costs a tonne of money, and most of that real estate doesn't generate a dime's worth of revenue. There was a time – before cardlock fueling and just-in-time delivery – that drivers actually stopped at truck stops and took the time to enjoy a meal. Now, drivers will stop and sleep, grab a coffee and a cinnamon bun in the morning and hit the road again. I'd guess it's pretty tough to sustain a 10-acre parking lot and a staff on coffee and sandwiches.

So I'll get on my soap box again and call for a concerted, co-operative effort to stop going around in circles on this one.

Solutions are likely to be costly, complex and multi-jurisdictional, and will require all levels of government, the private sector, and the trucking industry to get involved. Kudos to the group behind the Ontario service centre renewal project – let's hope they're starting a trend. □

– Joanne Ritchie is executive director of OBAC. Have an idea to park? E-mail her at jritchie@obac.ca or call toll free 888-794-9990.

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 Owner Operator? Manufacturer: _____ Year/Model: _____ Engine Type/Size: _____
 Do you own a Trailer? Yes No If yes, which type: _____
 Preferred driving region: Canada U.S.A. Both

Preferred Trailer Type: (Check all that apply)
 Flatbeds Heavy Hauling/Specialized Moving Vans
 Tankers Straight Trucks Super B Reefers
 Vans Other _____

Trailer Type Experience: (Check all that apply)
 Flatbeds Heavy Hauling/Specialized Moving Vans
 Tankers Straight Trucks Super B Reefers
 Vans Other _____

Current Drivers License:
 Do you have a Commercial License? Yes No
 License Number: _____ Expiry Date: _____ Province/State Issued: _____ License Type: _____
 Has your license ever been suspended? Yes No
 Number of accidents in last 3 years: _____ Personally responsible for: _____ Not personally responsible for: _____

Total Truck Driving Experience: _____/yrs
 Last Employer:
 Name: _____ Company City: _____ Province/State: _____
 Phone #: _____ Start/End Date: _____
 Job Description: _____ Reason for leaving: _____

2nd Last Employer:
 Name: _____ Company City: _____ Province/State: _____
 Phone #: _____ Start/End Date: _____
 Job Description: _____ Reason for leaving: _____

Certifications/Training:
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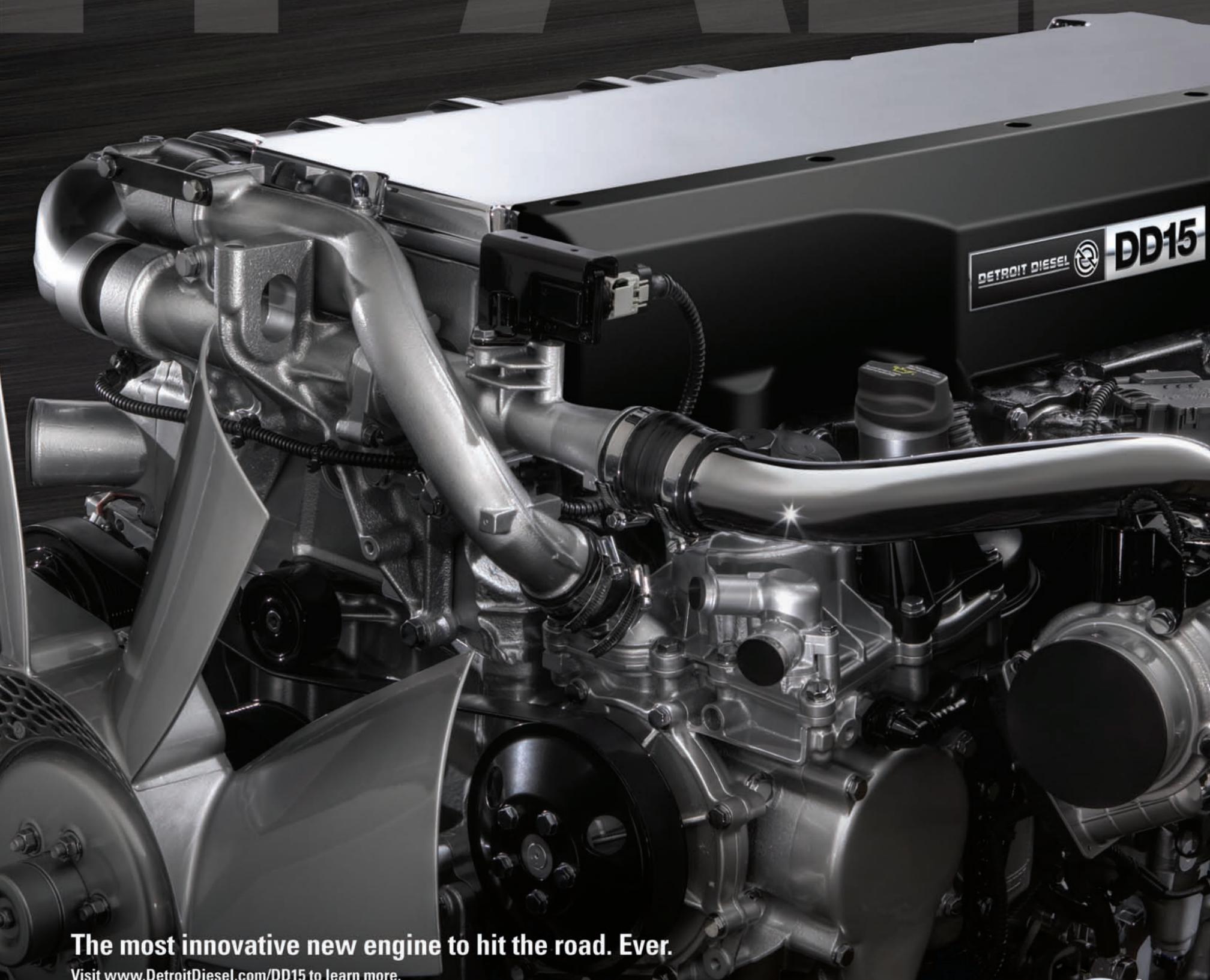
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Who owns your company? Allocate shares with care

For a lot of owner/operators, the “operator” side of the business is straightforward enough. But you can never take the “owner” part for granted, even when your boardroom table doubles as the kitchen table.

Like any company listed in the stock tables of the newspaper, your corporation is collectively owned by its shareholders. Shareholders elect directors (who hire the president, secretary, and treasurer) and can be paid dividends when the company earns a profit. They also have a right to the company’s assets should it be liquidated.

Many owner/operators hold 100% of the shares in their company. Others issue shares to their spouse because he or she is employed by the business in some way. Some give shares to a spouse as part of a tax strategy.

They want to lower their individual tax obligation by splitting income, for example.

How to allocate your corporation’s shares is a decision you need to take seriously. Because let me tell you, the government sure does.

I know an owner/operator who asked a lawyer to incorporate his business for him.

The lawyer gave the owner/operator one share and his wife one share for no reason other than that’s just the way the lawyer did all his clients. The wife had a full-time job and played no active role in the company.

Fast-forward a few years. The trucking business is going well but the wife gets laid off when her employer ceases operation. She submits an application for Employment Insurance benefits.

When you file an EI claim, Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC) will review your total earnings during the 26 weeks leading up to your last day of work. This includes any income you receive as an officer of a corporation.

When HRSDC searched its databases and saw that the wife was a 50% shareholder and officer of her husband’s trucking company, it determined that she was self-employed and clawed back the wife’s percentage of the corporation’s weekly earnings from her benefit claims.

HRSDC sees plenty of scams where a corporation earns income while a principal shareholder does not and files an EI claim.

But in this case, the wife hadn’t taken a dime from the business and, having paid into the system all these years, simply wanted the benefits she felt entitled to after she lost her job.

Yet HRSDC decided to “pierce the corporate veil,” attach a portion of the company’s earnings to her overall income, and adjust the EI claim accordingly. (This owner/operator and his wife happened to be incorporated, but the same thing could happen in a sole pro-

Tax Talk

Scott Taylor



prietorship or partnership. Do you really want your spouses’ name attached as an owner?)

How do you insulate yourself from this kind of scenario yet preserve the potential tax benefits of income splitting?

When we set up corporations, we want to allocate shares in a way that makes sense for the business and its owners today and down the road. If the spouse is not active in the company, we might allocate 1,000 shares to the owner/operator and 10 to the spouse. At only 1%, the share is such a small portion that the exposure to an HRSDC EI claim-adjustment is minimal. Yet as a shareholder, the spouse can receive dividends on a fixed schedule or a special dividend at any time.

There are other important things to consider when allocating shares to a spouse:

1) What if you divorce or one of you dies? The shares in the company have value. Would you or your spouse be able to buy the remaining shares?

2) What are you trying to hide? That’s the question Canada Revenue Agency, HRSDC, and your spouse’s divorce attorney will ask if your company is flush with cash but your personal income is low. When someone says that his wife owns the business even though she has nothing to do with running it, you have to wonder if he’s hiding income or assets from an ex-spouse or collection agency.

3) Get professional help. If your spouse is a vital part of the company, maybe he or she should own half or a significant piece of it. Maybe you’re only distributing shares for tax planning. Either way, talk to someone with the experience to see the range of possibilities and pitfalls of your options.

Incorporating your business is a big decision, but in fact incorporation involves a series of choices starting with how to allocate shares in the company.

Even if you’re a sole proprietor or involved in a partnership, talk to your accountant or business advisor about how you, your spouse, and your company are affected when your spouse is listed as an owner in the business.

After all, the “owner” part of the owner/operator’s business comes first. Don’t overlook this critical step. □

– Scott Taylor is vice-president of TFS Group, a Waterloo, Ont., company that provides accounting, fuel tax reporting, and other business services for truck fleets and owner/operators. For information, visit www.tfsgroup.com or call 800-461-5970.

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*Compared to a Detroit Diesel Series 60 EPA 2007 engine with comparable engine ratings and load weights. **Effectiveness of turbo compound is based on load on the engine. The turbo compound returns horsepower back to the engine's flywheel.

The smart way to go GREEN

Fleets discuss their environmental strategies

By James Menzies

TORONTO, Ont. – There are many ways to go green, and many reasons for doing so according to a panel of fleets, shippers and environmental agencies that gathered at the Ontario Trucking Association's (OTA) annual convention.

But perhaps the most compelling reasons for reducing emissions were presented by major shippers, Sharp Electronics and Volvo Logistics – both members of the EPA SmartWay Transport Partnership, a voluntary program that requires its members to reduce their environmental footprint.

“(SmartWay) is voluntary, but if you want to do business with Sharp it has become a requirement,” said Sharp's Chris Colla, noting 98% of the company's total tonnage is now transported by SmartWay members. “We feel it's a social responsibility for our company.”

Colla also said requiring its carriers to be SmartWay members provides leverage for the manufacturer when dealing with environmentally-conscious retailers such as Wal-Mart.

“It has helped us in our business relationships with companies like Wal-Mart because this is very important to them as well,” Colla said.

Jessica Ford of Volvo Logistics echoed that sentiment, which has become an increasingly popular rallying cry in the shipper community.

“If you want to move Volvo freight, you have to be environmentally aware,” she told carriers in attendance.

As members of SmartWay, fleets must develop a plan to reduce their emissions through improved fuel efficiency. Just how they

choose to meet their self-imposed targets is up to them. Some fleets on the panel chose to equip their trucks with idle-reduction systems while others revamped their terminals to consume less energy. Since the program's launch in 2003, Cynthia Meyer of the US Environmental Protection Agency, said SmartWay members have collectively reduced their fuel consumption by 35 billion gallons and prevented 350 million tonnes of CO₂ from entering the air. The annual reduction in CO₂ attributed to SmartWay equals the removal of 680,000 cars from the road, she pointed out.

But the number that really grabbed the attention of the fleet managers in attendance was that member carriers have together saved more than a billion dollars in fuel and maintenance.

Meyer said the average truck in the SmartWay program realizes a US\$2,000 savings each year. Just how you decide to get there is up to you, and some member fleets were on-hand to share a few ideas.

Spec' for fuel efficiency

Julie Tanguay, president of L.E. Walker Transport, said her company begins the pursuit of its SmartWay targets before even taking delivery of its new trucks. Her fleet initially ran both the aerodynamic Freightliner Columbia as well as its not-so-aerodynamic sibling, the Classic. The Classic was spec'd mainly to please old-school drivers who prefer the traditional modeling, but Tanguay said those trucks did little to improve driver retention.

So the fleet did some benchmark testing and found that the aerodynamic Columbia was in fact 10% more fuel efficient than the Classic model. Since conducting its test, Tanguay said the fleet has



UNACCEPTABLE: The trucking industry is getting serious about reducing its emissions, in hopes vehicles like this will become a thing of the past.

begun phasing the Classic out of its fleet.

The fleet is now spec'ing only aerodynamic tractors. It has also focused on driver behaviour, after finding there was a 35% fuel mileage gap between the fleet's best and worst performers.

Turn the lights down

J.D. Smith & Sons looked at more than just its mobile assets when it set out to improve its environmental performance. Brian Death, general manager of the company, said the company upgraded the HVAC system at one of its terminals while retrofitting the lighting system at others.

Death said the company initially used 16-20 natural gas space heaters to warm a two-year-old terminal. The company replaced the thermostat with sensors that could provide heating only during the 16 hours when people were actually working there.

“We had initial resistance,” admitted Death. “We had to work through that. We didn't tell our

people enough about the project ahead of time and they heard ‘They're turning the heat down’.”

In fact, the company only reduced the heating during the eight hours when nobody was there. In the first year, the company saved \$27,000 in natural gas costs. It cost \$18,000 to implement the changes, for a payback period of just eight months, Death said.

As for the lighting retrofit, J.D. Smith & Sons replaced 400-watt high-pressure sodium lights with fluorescent bulbs at three of its facilities. The average light level was unchanged and in fact, it was preferred by employees, Death said, noting the fluorescent bulbs generated a more natural light.

The company saw its electricity bills plummet about 30% after the retrofits, saving the company \$75,000 in electricity per year. The cost of the upgrades was \$197,000 providing a 2.6 year payback.

However, Death said the company slashed its electricity consumption by 745,000 kilowatt hours, reducing its greenhouse gas



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emissions by 221 tonnes of CO₂. Combined, the two programs reduced CO₂ emissions at J.D. Smith & Sons facilities by nearly 400 tonnes per year.

The company has been rewarded for its efforts with a Transport Canada Green Supply Chain Award.

“Our employees were certainly happy about this, particularly the younger ones,” Death said.

Slowing down

Claude Robert, owner of Robert Transport, says his fleet’s environmental efforts begin with reduced speed.

“If we want to save fuel, it starts with speed whether we like it or not,” he insisted. Robert still manages to find time to drive his own truck on occasion and he says he personally has realized an 80-litre fuel savings when slowing to 55 mph (88 km/h) between Montreal and Toronto. That equates to a savings of about \$80 per trip compared to driving the posted speed limit.

“If you want to save fuel, you have to reduce speed,” he insisted.

John Smith, president and CEO of Bruce R. Smith, said his company began using on-board computers to monitor driver speed as well as idle-time and hard braking. Drivers were graded using a point system and those who racked up too many points were re-trained while drivers scoring well were rewarded.

“We found there were a few individuals who couldn’t control their speed and before that, we thought they were some of our best drivers,” he said. While governing speed will help prevent speeding on major highways, speed limiters do nothing to prevent speeding where the limit is less than 100 km/h, he pointed out.

In its own studies, L.E. Walker found that the Columbia’s fuel mileage improved 5-8% when speed was reduced by 5 mph. Even just a 1 mph reduction in speed achieved a 1-1.5% fuel mileage improvement, noted Tanguay.

Reducing idling

Most of the carriers represented on the panel had employed some form of idle-reduction technology. L.E. Walker’s Tanguay said her fleet tried both auxiliary power units (APUs) as well as IdleAire (available at some US truck stops, the IdleAire system fits into a truck’s window and provides heating, cooling and power).

The IdleAire system costs \$1.80 per hour. Based on 2,500 hours of use per year, Tanguay said the system can deliver a savings of about \$2,032 per truck compared to idling. While Tanguay said the system works well, the biggest challenge is availability. Truck stops offering IdleAire are few and far between and often the IdleAire stations are occupied.

Lynda Harvey of Natural Resources Canada’s FleetSmart program, noted there have been rumours of IdleAire coming to Canada, but so far there are no Canadian locations.

She pointed out the Canadian government does not fund



FUEL-SAVING TRAILERS: Adding side skirts to your trailers can improve fuel mileage, but they may become damaged during the winter.

IdleAire, while the company receives funding south of the border from the EPA. She added the Canadian government conducts full-cycle emissions cost-modeling when doling out funding, and there’s some concern the electricity used by IdleAire may cause more greenhouse gases to create than what is saved through reduced idling.

Most of the fleets on the panel, including L.E. Walker, use APUs – with mixed results.

Jeff Bryan, president of Jeff Bryan Transport, said driver education is important if you hope to realize a payback. This was evidenced by one driver he saw cruising down the road with his APU running “so he could charge his laptop.”

When properly used, Bryan said APUs can deliver a 27-month payback. Twenty-eight per cent of his trucks are equipped with APUs and those trucks deliver a 9% improvement in fuel mileage, he noted.

“APUs are a standard spec’ on our trucks,” said Rob Penner, vice-president of operations with Bison Transport. He said despite some “maintenance issues,” Bison realizes a payback of about 20 months on its APUs.

Robert said reliability issues were a concern at first, but he admitted the most recent generation of APUs appear to be much more dependable.

Smith warned carriers to purchase an APU that is backed by an extensive dealer network. He also suggested fleets should continue monitoring idling on APU-equipped trucks to ensure they’re being used properly.

Super-single savers

Super-single, wide-base tires are another way to achieve a fuel reduction, according to Robert, who could not say enough good things about them. His company operates about 800 wide-base tires and he said they have experienced no problems with them.

Robert said his fleet is realizing a 5-6% fuel mileage improvement with its super-single tires. Both Robert, and Bryan agreed drivers who have driven the super-singles

also rave about the improved ride.

However, the benefits of super-singles are not yet available to everyone, as skeptical governments in many jurisdictions continue to slap weight penalties against companies that operate them.

“When we want to save fuel, it starts with speed whether we like it or not.”

Claude Robert

“Our challenge is the restrictions,” said Bison’s Penner. “We have 25 trucks on the program but most of our fleet is set up to run all of Canada and we can’t give up the

weight.”

Radar

Surprisingly, the Eaton VORAD system was also raised as a key to maximizing fuel efficiency. First spec’d as a safety tool, the fleets on the panel all agreed it had an unexpected side benefit when it came to fuel mileage.

“We used it for collision avoidance at first but it’s been very beneficial to our fuel program,” said Penner, noting the system allows drivers to spend more time in cruise control.

The VORAD system features adaptive cruise control, which detects when vehicles are too close to the front of the truck and then decelerates the truck.

Bryan said his company has achieved a 2% fuel economy improvement on trucks fitted with the VORAD system.

“Drivers are more inclined to let the truck back off in traffic,” he pointed out. “It’s been a really good surprise and the drivers love it.”

Automated transmissions

Most of the fleets represented on the panel are now using automated transmissions to some extent.

“It does not save fuel at the top end, but it did raise our fleet fuel efficiency,” said Bison’s Penner. Bison equips all its highway trucks with automated transmissions and Robert and Jeff Bryan Transport have also made the switch to automated gearboxes.

“We haven’t saved any fuel but it’s easier to hire drivers,” explained Bryan.

Robert agreed: “There has been no fuel savings but it brings the driver’s attention back to his work. I would not buy anything else.”

FleetSmart’s Harvey made note of a recent study that showed while automated transmissions deliver a negligible improvement in fuel mileage, they do receive less wear and tear and they widen the prospective driver pool.

The panel’s discussion was so convincingly in favour of auto gearboxes, that L.E. Walker’s Tanguay said she’d be taking a close look at automated transmissions based on the panel’s experiences.

Don’t forget the trailer

The panel also discussed its experiences with trailer fairings. By now everyone who drives in Quebec or Ontario has seen Robert Transport’s trailer side skirts.

Robert said a fully-skirted trailer with wheel covers can achieve 9 mpg hauling 44,000 lbs.

“It is possible, we tested it,” he confirmed. He admitted that heading into winter, “We are going to have problems in some situations and repairs will be necessary. Education is required.”

Bison has also tested belly fairings on trailers, and Penner said the fleet experienced some snow and ice build-up in the winter.

But he admitted “they work” and said the company is looking at fitting its reefer fleet with the fairings.

Smith said the fairings not only save fuel, but they “look great” and provide a visible indicator that the fleet is doing all it can to stretch its fuel mileage, which can be helpful when negotiating with customers.

New engines

Finally, the fleet managers on-hand had a chance to comment on how the 2007 engines are helping them meet their fuel consumption targets. Now that the fleets have had the time to evaluate the real-world performance of the 07 engines, the verdict is in – and it’s a good one.

“I think the engines are doing well; better than expected,” confirmed Robert. “Our new trucks are more fuel efficient than our trucks with 250,000-300,000 miles on them, so once they’re broken in, we’ll get substantial improvements.”

Penner agreed. “We have received very good fuel performance on all those engines,” he said, pointing out Bison is running three different brands of 07 engines.

On a side note, Robert warned against interrupting DPF regenerations and he suggested drivers prompt an active re-gen every day.

Despite carriers’ best efforts to reduce fuel consumption, and thus emissions, Tanguay pointed out the trucking industry can’t accomplish its goals alone. She urged shippers to shape up and help fleets meet their targets.

“Many shippers won’t let our drivers fax paperwork or make phone calls, that’s another stop and more time lost,” she complained.

“We cannot do these things alone,” agreed Robert. □

Tracking tire costs

Why the price tag shouldn't always drive your tire purchasing decision

By James Menzies

TORONTO, Ont. – Be honest. Did you purchase the tires that are currently on your rig because they were on sale the day you needed them? If so, you're not alone. But if purchase price was the main motivator behind your buying decision, then you're probably not getting the most value out of your investment.

Tracking tire costs can be a daunting task, especially if you don't have the resources of a big fleet behind you. But there are reasonably uncomplicated ways owner/operators and small fleets can develop a cost-tracking program for tires.

Why track tire costs?

Tires are an owner/operator's second largest operating cost behind fuel. But while reducing fuel consumption has garnered its share of attention in recent years, tire selection remains an oft-overlooked way of reducing operating costs.

"Proper tire selection and maintenance is one of the easiest ways for an owner/operator to save himself some money and put some of it on the bottom line for himself," insists Greg McDonald, engineering manager with Bridgestone Firestone North American Tire.

Greg Cressman, technical services director with Yokohama, adds, "Tracking tire costs and knowing what your costs are, seems to be a moving target for a lot of owner/operators."

However, there is help available for O/Os who want to ensure they are choosing the best tire for their application based on more than just price.

"Information is power, and once you have data compiled, you can put it to work for you to make intelligent tire decisions," explains Tim Miller, commercial tire marketing communications manager with Goodyear.

Tracking software

Goodyear (and several other third-party vendors) now offer software solutions for tracking tire costs. The programs (namely TVTRACK and TireValueCalc in Goodyear's case) consist of a spreadsheet that allows owner/operators or fleet managers to plug in tire-related information. The programs calculate a cost-per-mile and display it graphically, in an easy-to-understand format so customers can precisely measure how their tires are performing.

"Our belief is that a well-run tire program transcends buying quality tires," says Miller.

Software solutions are not the only way to track tire costs, however, and some tire experts caution against relying entirely on computers when calculating tire costs.

"I'm not aware of a single



TIRE TRACKING: Software solutions such as Goodyear's TVTRACK are effective tracking tools, usually employed by large fleets.

software (program) that does it all very well," says Ralph Beaveridge, marketing manager, truck tires with Michelin North America.

Bill Hume, national business director with Hankook Tire Canada, says, "An owner/operator or small fleet operator should keep good written records as to when they installed tires, performed maintenance and replaced them."

McDonald adds a set of manila folders in a file box or an Excel spreadsheet on a laptop can be an equally effective way to track tire costs. But where do you start?

Understanding life-cycle costs

Ewing McMeekin, corporate account manager – Ontario, with Kal-Tire, says most owner/operators enter his chain of stores "looking for the best deal possible."

There are more options available than ever before thanks to an influx of off-shore brands in recent years, which can prove tempting for some O/Os.

"We're up against a huge temptation by folks in the market to go try some of this other stuff, but it can be a very expensive learning curve," says Yokohama's Cressman. "The savings might be there when they're throwing down the credit card, but long-term it can be dubious."

Beaveridge says owner/operators and fleets are beginning to realize purchase price is not the most important consideration when choosing a set of tires.

The company's research suggests most O/Os and fleets are beginning to realize this.

"When we ask the question, 'How do you plan on minimizing your tire costs going down the road?', very few say reducing their acquisition cost is their first step. Most say they're going to improve their use of their tires, selection of tires and maintenance to reduce costs."

Bridgestone Firestone's

Loss of air or over-inflation are the two main reasons tires wear out prematurely.'

Ewing McMeekin



MONITOR IT: Measure tread depth and tire pressures to extend tire life, experts advise. Don't just slap the rubber on and forget about it.

McDonald says the following should all be part of the equation when tracking tire costs: purchase price (don't forget to assign a value to OEM tires – they're *not* free); repair costs (on-road emergencies as well as spot-repairs); maintenance costs; casing value; and re-treadability.

"Keep track of how many miles you're getting for these expenses and break it down to a cost-per-mile," he suggests.

Customers should also take note of fuel mileage. Most tire manufacturers have fuel economy data-

bases available that compare the various brands and tread types. Asking your dealer for this information can provide a fuel economy baseline.

"There are tires that are excessively penalty-ridden for fuel costs that may be attractive to purchase if you're only looking at depth of tread or cost on the day of purchase," warns McDonald.

Michelin's Beaveridge admits a cost-per-mile formula may not work for every customer. The key is to develop a 'cost-per-something' calculation.

"Some fleets go with cost-per-hour or cost-per-load," he adds.

Taking care of your investment

Once you've decided on the tire you feel is going to deliver the best value over the course of its life, it's not enough to simply put it on the truck and ignore it.

Any tire will only live up to its full potential if it's properly cared for, and that boils down to three things according to Beaveridge: "Pressure, pressure and pressure are one, two and three in terms of importance. Fourth is alignment."

"Loss of air or over-inflation are the two main reasons tires wear out prematurely," agrees Kal-Tire's McMeekin. "If you're going to spend \$1,000-\$1,500 for a good pair of steers, why not take the time to look after them?"

Tire pressures should be measured with a calibrated tire gauge during every pre-trip inspection – a thump with the hammer is not

enough.

"The difference in quality between pre-trips varies as much between drivers as the preference of soda drivers like," says McDonald. "One driver might do an excellent pre-trip and the next one walks around and if the rim is not touching the asphalt, he's good to go."

Beaveridge says Michelin encourages the use of tire pressure monitoring systems and simple, yet clever new devices called "Alligator caps."

These are valve caps that work like a check valve, allowing you to check tire pressures without unscrewing the cap and risking having it stick in the open position.

Alignment should be checked frequently to protect against irregular wear and tires should be rotated as required.

"If you can maximize the original tread life through balanced wear and through timely rotations, you can get an extra 100,000 km out of these things quite easily," insists Cressman.

What next?

So you've done your homework when selecting the right tire, and you've taken proper care of it while in use.

You've tracked all the costs associated with running that tire along the way, and now you've got a pretty good idea at what the total life-cycle cost of that tire amounted to.

"As a basic rule of thumb, when you find a tire you feel is suitable and you're getting value for the money, that's probably the one you should stick with until something changes," says Hankook's Hume.

In most cases, that tire probably wasn't the one with the lowest sticker price at the shop.

While tracking total tire costs may seem like an intimidating undertaking for an owner/operator or small fleet, the rewards are worth the effort.

"When your job is to stay profitable through low cost-per-mile and tires are your second highest operating cost, it's imperative to track your numbers," concludes Miller. "It's the only way to a solid bottom line." □

Mark Dalton

Going **FAST** Getting **FURIOUS**

PART 3

By Edo van Belkom

The story so far...

Mark is spending a few days driving loads between Toronto and Barrie for a warehousing company that's moving their whole operation. The work is profitable, but driving the 401 and 400 all day is frustrating, especially when car drivers keep cutting him off and butting into the safe following distance Mark's trying to keep in front of him. At the next on-ramp Mark straddles the lane to keep traffic moving, infuriating drivers behind him, and attracting the attention of a cop up ahead.

Mark continues driving the loads and nearly gets run off the highway by a pair of street racing imports – a lime-green Honda and a tangerine Nissan – who dart through traffic, cutting off everyone in their path. When Mark is forced onto the shoulder, nearly losing his load, he gets furious and vows to get even with the street racing maniacs.



bailed is re-arrested? Hardly ever.

Politicians and everyone else are always talking about getting tough on crime and cracking down on street racing, but that's only when those things are in the news. Every time some teenager or innocent bystander is gunned down it's suddenly time to get tough on gun crime. Or some truck driver is run off the road and a mother-of-two is killed in her mini-van, and it's time to crack down on street racers. But a month or two down the road, when the incident is all but forgotten, there will be few people who remember the urgency of the days immediately following the tragic death.

It has gotten to the point where even the Vatican had to get in on the act with their "Guidelines For the Pastoral Care of the Road," or as everyone else calls them, "The Ten Carmandments."

1. You shall not kill.
2. The road shall be for you a means of communion between people and not mortal harm.
3. Courtesy, uprightness and prudence will help you deal with unforeseen events.
4. Be charitable and help your neighbour in need, especially victims of accidents.
5. Cars shall not be for you an expression of power and domination, and an occasion of sin.
6. Charitably convince the young and not so young not to drive when they are not in a fitting condition to do so.
7. Support the families of accident victims.
8. Bring guilty motorists and their victims together, at the appropriate time, so that they can undergo the liberating experience of forgiveness.
9. On the road, protect the more vulnerable party.
10. Feel responsible toward others.

Sound advice, each one of them,

but forgiveness, courtesy and charity weren't exactly on Mark's mind after nearly being run off the road. Perhaps, thought Mark, the Vatican had mistakenly omitted the other carmandments, the ones that dealt with revenge, retribution and punishment.

Mark considered writing up a few guidelines of his own, then sending them along to the Pope for his consideration. After all, Mark was sure he had a few more road hours under his belt than his Holiness.

Mark pulled into a truck stop off the 400 halfway to Barrie with the intention of taking a break and grabbing a bite before finishing his last run of the day. After pulling into a parking spot, Mark checked his mirrors to make sure he was safe and not in anyone's way.

And that's when he saw them.

Behind Mother Load, near the very edge of the parking lot were two very distinct cars. One was a tangerine Nissan, while the other was a lime-green Honda with flames flickering down the entire side of the car.

"Unbelievable!" he said under his breath.

Mark's first instinct was to look around for a cop. It wasn't an absurd thought since plenty of officers parked in the truck stops when things were slow or they had paperwork to do. And if he could find a cop, he might be able to persuade the officer to check the cars over and maybe even pull them off the road. But as much as Mark wanted there to be a policeman around, there were none in sight.

Okay, he thought, if there isn't a cop around then maybe I can do something about this myself.

But what?

Mark thought about that for a while and in the end decided that he wasn't all that hungry and dinner could wait

until after he'd made it into Barrie. After that decision was made, there was nothing left for him to do but get back onto the highway.

Mark restarted Mother Load and waited until everything was warm and back up running normally. Then he put Mother Load into gear...Reverse.

He backed up slowly, so he wasn't going all that fast when the rear end of his trailer connected with the lime-green Honda. But then again the trailer was fully loaded with everything from books to batteries and what Mark lacked in speed he more than made up for in mass.

Mother Load pushed the lime-green Honda across the parking lot as if it were an empty cardboard box. In fact, the Honda barely lost any momentum when it smashed into the tangerine Nissan behind it. Mother Load and her trailer just kept moving and together the rig and the two cars behind it skidded and screeched across the asphalt until they were forced to a sudden stop by a light post that marked the very edge of the parking lot.

The post was sturdy and the passenger-side door of the Nissan folded around it like a card – its window bursting outward like a paper party favour. Then, satisfied there was nowhere left to go but forward, Mark put Mother Load into first gear and pulled away.

With all the noise of screeching tires, twisting metal and busting glass, several truckers had come out of the restaurant wondering what on Earth was going on? When they saw Mark driving away leaving a mangle of twisted citrus behind him...they began cheering him on as if he'd just won some marathon road race.

"You're welcome!" Mark said, gesturing to them with something that was halfway between a wave and a salute.

Mark took another look around, just to be sure. He'd needed a policeman before and there hadn't been one around.

Now, thankfully, there still wasn't a cop anywhere to be seen. The police would arrive later, and when they did, the drivers lining his way would all swear they hadn't seen a thing.

He gave a short, sharp blast on his air horn and took one last look behind him. The two cars were a tangle of tangerine and lime – an automotive fruit salad that looked a lot like justice.

Mark's only regret was that he wouldn't be around to see the drivers' faces when they saw their cars, then frantically looked around the lot for a cop. Of course, there wouldn't be one when they needed one, and somehow that seemed right.

"I might never catch you," he said.

"But I assure you, I'll get even." □

- Mark Dalton returns next month in another adventure



The continuing adventures of Mark Dalton: Owner/Operator
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NEW PRODUCTS

The great equalizer

Pedal to the metal? So what?

By Eric Berard
MONTREAL, Que. – A group of four entrepreneurs from the Montreal region has created a com-

pany called RM2J, which has begun the successful commercialization of the Fuel MaximiZer (MFZ for short). Not one of these gizmos you

drop in the fuel tank or “magic magnets” you stick on fuel lines, this patented device actually moderates drivers who tend to “floor it” too often.

Engineer Jean-Francois Aussillou (very well known in the Quebec trucking community for the work he does at Allison Transmission) had the basic idea, a little more than 25 years ago while he was working in Cameroon, in central Africa.

He was a teacher at a small technical college and the school was using a truck to get goods from the main village. As fuel supplies were limited, diesel consumption was a big issue there, and the young teacher rapidly realized that the intervals between the fillings varied radically depending on who drove the truck. It was obvious: some drivers just buried the throttle pedal in the floor of the vehicle. Now, if he could only find a way to prevent this. He tried a couple of hand-made prototypes that did the job, but as oil prices were much cheaper in the 80s than they are now, he didn't succeed at raising much interest about his idea. But now that a barrel of oil is flirting with the \$100 mark, it's a completely different ball game.

Put simply, the FMZ he developed with partners Rejean Turmel, Jean Poulin and Mathieu Guerin, is a computerized device that calculates the power the truck really needs to haul a given load safely, but also as fuel-efficiently as possible. The unit weighs merely a pound and is roughly the size of a Kleenex box. It is connected between the accelerator pedal and the engine's ECU. Each unit is programmed to fit with each carrier's unique conditions of operation (flat or mountainous, medium or heavy loads, etc.)

After the installation is done (not more than two hours, claims RM2J) the “throttle box” takes into account various parameters such as load weight, available horsepower, etc. to calculate what power is really needed to make the truck accelerate in a decent, yet civilized manner, in order to maximize fuel economy. It takes the electric signal sent by the throt-



IN CONTROL: The Fuel MaximiZer improves fuel mileage by giving a driver only the power he needs, not the power he wants.

tle pedal, interprets the conditions and sends a command to the engine's ECU for a certain amount of power, at a certain RPM level. Think of it a little bit as the “locking” mechanism that keeps a truck from going over a determined speed limit.

“The basic idea is to give the driver the power he needs instead of the power he wants,” says Aussillou. But is it safe? What if the driver needs instant power to get out of an emergency situation? Nothing to worry about says Mathieu Guerin. “Let's say that the truck is half loaded. It would simply react as if it were fully loaded; a situation the driver is familiar with. So he'll just adapt his driving accordingly, going more smoothly, thus saving fuel.”

Payback time

Tests on the dyno, on prototypes and in real-world conditions with the first customers have proven that this “impetuosity control” can translate into fuel savings that can reach the 10% and over level, depending on the application. The more stop-and-go and the more hills, the more a fleet can save, since it's in these circumstances that the engine is most solicited.

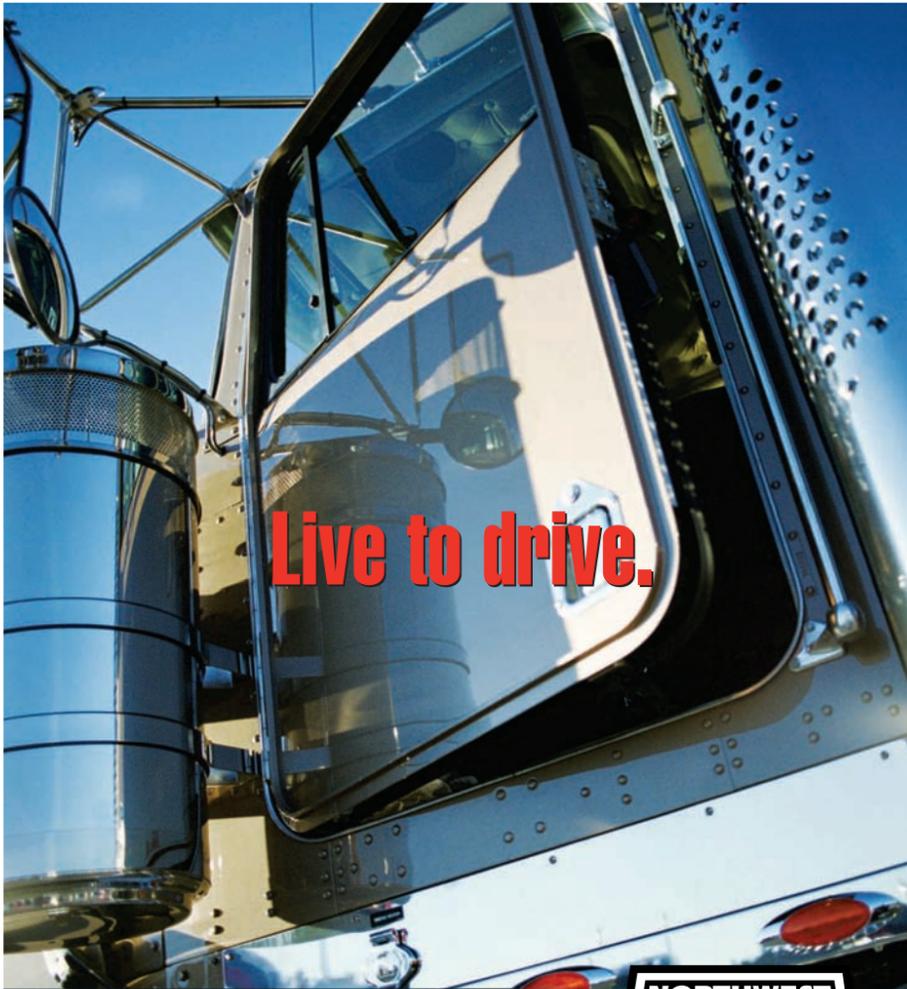
“In some applications where the loads are almost always equal, on flat roads and with excellent drivers, the FMZ would not make a significant difference,” admits Aussillou, adding: “But if a fleet is concerned about some of its drivers not being gentle with their machines, they should definitely consider it.”

The device is priced somewhere between \$1,500 and \$2,500 (depending on volume) and is a 100% Canadian invention, using Canadian brains and Canadian components. It has a “plug-and-play” configuration, so there are no wires to splice or cut, no modification whatsoever to the truck or the engine. The team of engineers has made sure it is compatible with all Class 7 and 8 truck engine brands and that it doesn't have any negative effect on the engine's warranty or that of the aftertreatment system. With the fuel savings realized, RM2J representatives say the ROI period can be as short as a couple of months but almost never more than one and a half years.

A fleet can install the units itself or have it installed at one of the branches of Detroit Diesel Allison Canada East or Wajax for about \$250. The product is guaranteed (parts, service and technical support) for one year or 160,000 km.

More information is available at <http://rm2j.net>. □

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NEW OWNERS: Consolidated Fastfrate CEO Ron Tepper says the acquisition will help the company achieve further growth.

US group buys Consolidated Fastfrate

WOODBRIIDGE, Ont. – US private equity firm Fenway Partners has announced it has reached an agreement to acquire Consolidated Fastfrate, Canada Drayage and Koch Transport.

Consolidated Fastfrate is one of Canada's largest privately-owned transportation and logistics providers with more than 1,500 employees. The company transports more than two billion pounds of freight each year. The company provides LTL and truckload services in Canada and the Northeast and Midwest US.

It also provides national drayage and cartage, warehousing, transloading and third-party logistics services. Consolidated Fastfrate is also Canada's largest LTL intermodal carrier with a relationship with Canadian Pacific Railway.

The company says it is the only intermodal carrier in North America that has co-located facilities with the railway in every CPR intermodal yard in Canada, with the exception of Edmonton where one is currently slated to be built. The company has 17 terminals in Canada as well as a sales office in Shanghai. Under the deal, Fastfrate's shareholders will control 25% of the company.

"Fastfrate is a highly successful and recognized leader in Canadian transportation and logistics and is an excellent addition to Fenway's growing portfolio of investments in this sector," said Marc Kramer, managing director of Fenway Partners and co-head of the firm's transportation and logistics practice. "We are enthusiastic to have (current CEO) Ron (Tepper) and his team join the Fenway family and look forward to providing the necessary resources to capitalize on the wide range of growth opportunities that we perceive in the Canadian transportation market."

Tepper added "Our company is in the fortunate position of having built one of the largest and most complete service offerings for transportation in Canada. It is very clear to me that there are and will continue to be attractive opportunities for us to grow our business quickly through selective strategic acquisitions. We have the capacity and the knowledge, we have the management team and the desire, and this

deal will now give us access to Fenway's capital, human resources and extensive network in transportation and logistics which will help us reach our goals.

"These next few years will be a very exciting time for Fastfrate and all of our employees." □

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Oil and gas industry not seeking HoS exemptions

Dear Editor:

I have read the article on Hours-of-Service and the comments attributed to Dave Bradley of the CTA in the December 2007 editions of *Truck News* and *Truck West*.

Reference is made in the article to “exemptions for logging trucks and those operating in the oil and gas industries.” I wish to make it clear that the oil and gas industry is not seeking exemptions from the regulations. I have spoken with Graham Cooper at the CTA and written to Mr. Bradley to express our concern at the characterization of our industry as having exemptions from the regulations.

There is provision in the regulations for an “Oilwell Service Vehicle Permit” which, if granted, does permit a driver to extend their shift under very limited circumstances. This can hardly be considered an “ex-

emption” from the regulations.

The permit is not issued to every company operating in the oil and gas industry and companies that apply for the permit have to provide substantial proof that they are operating in a safe manner, have a fatigue management system in place and a good carrier profile.

Drivers covered under the permit have to have taken courses specifically designed for oilfield drivers. □

Patrick J. Delaney, CRSP
Vice-president, health, safety and government relations
Petroleum Services Association of Canada

Give us a break

Dear Editor:

Not only are we not wanted on our highways but a lot of our big coffee shops don't want us on their paved parking lots so they make them too small to get a truck in. A lot of restaurants along our highways, put up signs, “No Heavy Trucks.”

The road shoulders near these establishments have “No Parking” signs so we get fined if we stop on them to run and get a coffee. I guess, that is everyone's right and I respect that. Ah, but our government is a different story.

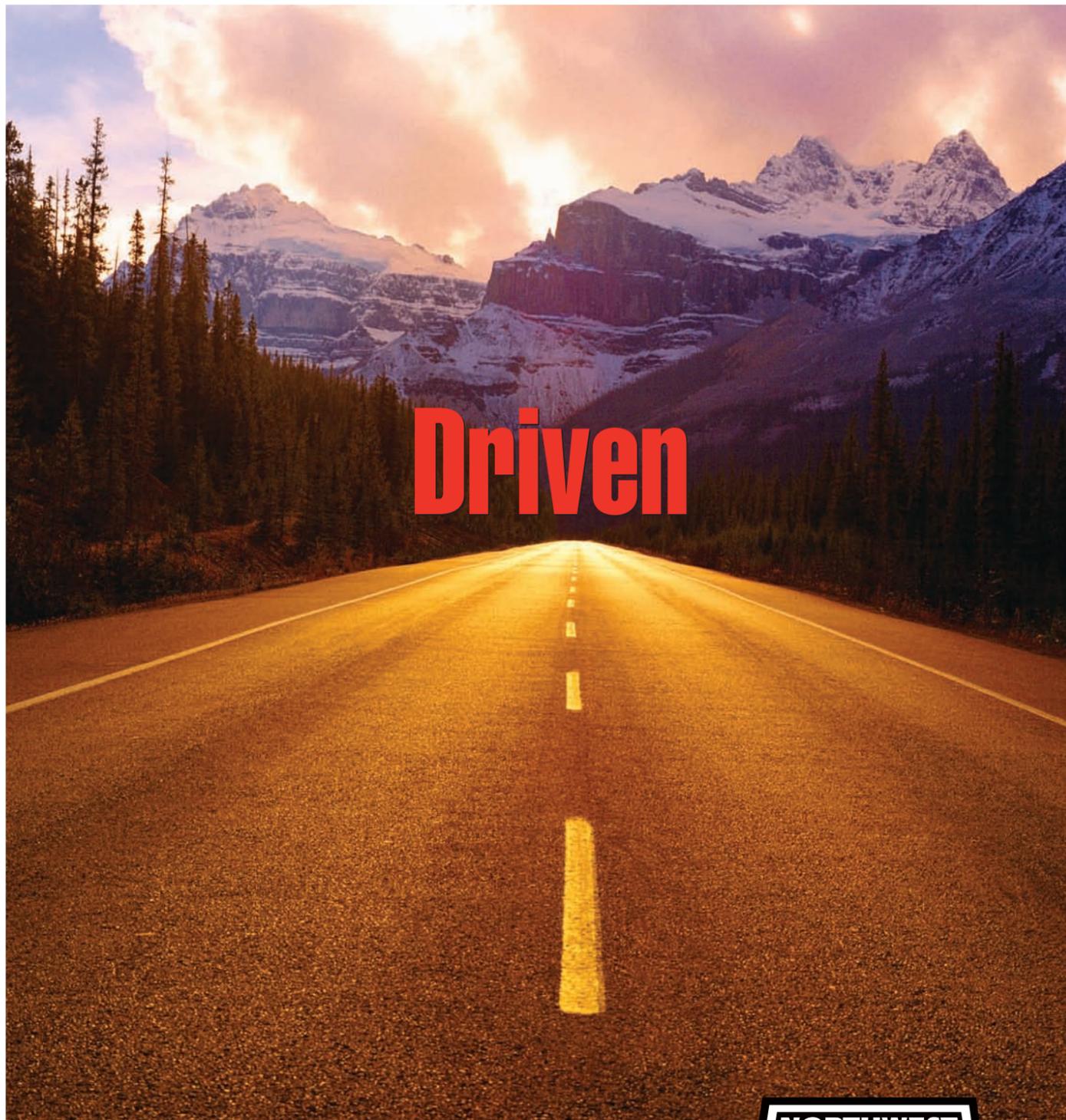
You see, trucks and their drivers are governed by a strict set of rules and regulations and this is good. We need them for the safety of all. Safety being the key word here, I am asking our new Minister of Safety, Mr. Bartolucci who is a strong proponent of highway safety, to look at the hazards that are being generated by our government not making allowances for an industry that needs to pull over and rest/sleep periodically. When drivers cannot get their proper rest, they become hazards.

There are fewer places a driver can park to get the rest that he/she needs. I run northern and southern Ontario and just in that little circle of country I find our rest areas (the few that are out there) did not take trucks into account when they were constructed. There are too few truck stops to handle the volume. We are not permitted to just pull over and sleep on the shoulders (if there are any) or on/off ramps.

Even some unused inspection station areas are barricaded. Most existing inspection stations only allow us to use half of the area. Drivers are regulated to get eight hours of sleep after working 14 hrs. Not being familiar with the area can force a driver to stop on the shoulder to get the needed rest when his/her body needs it. I'm lucky to know my area enough to plan ahead for most of my rest. But, what about the driver that is unfamiliar with the area they are going through?

Trucks need rest areas, at a designated regular distance, so a driver can get off the highway. Then there are those signs that are well lit up on our highways; “Fatigue Kills, Take a break.” Where? □

Kevin Shanahan
Via e-mail



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Drinking and driving laws are about to get tougher

'Tis the season to be jolly fa-la-la-la-la-la-la-la-la-la (I think I got them all in).

A few words of caution: if you need alcohol to be jolly that's fine, just don't get behind the wheel.

I know you've heard it before but drinking and driving is a definite no-no.

Being convicted carries huge increases to your insurance, and that licence you depend on to make a living will be locked away for a minimum of one year (not to mention the increased risk of you injuring or killing someone in an accident if you're impaired behind the wheel).

Towards the end of next year, Ontario residents will be subjected to a whole new set of rules. Blow between .05 and .08 and you'll be handing over your licence for a period of three days (presently it's 12 hours) plus that suspension will be recorded on your abstract (which the insurance company has access to). Rumor has it that you shouldn't be surprised to see premiums head north by at least 25% on a first offence. I can't imagine what second and third timers will see.

This legislation falls under Bill 203, the same Bill that enables police officers to impound your vehicle and take away your licence for a period of seven days if caught doing 50 km/h over the speed limit.

Bill 203 handles repeat offenders with an iron fist.

Second warnings will result in a seven-day driver's licence suspension and you'll be attending a drinking and driving awareness program.

If you are caught a third time, you'll be receiving a 30-day driving suspension, the mandatory classroom attendance and you'll be required to install an ignition blow device in the vehicle (I can't imagine the boss is going to be too happy about that).

It sounds like these new deterrents will indeed be implemented. Personally, I don't have a problem with them.

In my circle of friends, if we're "out and about" a designated driver will be determined, if we can't find one, it's cab time for all.

In addition, OPP will be stepping up their RIDE programs to include both morning and evening rush hours (in Toronto that means 24 hours a day)!

I'm all-in for eliminating the drunk driver from our roads. I also find that the social inaccept-

Publisher's Comment

Rob Wilkins



tance of the act is helping curb the problem.

When I walk into a party with my wife, often the first words from the host's mouth will be "who's driving?"

My response, more often than not is, "I drove here so Lynn (my wife) will surely want to drive home."

Sometimes it even works! Have a safe and happy holiday! □

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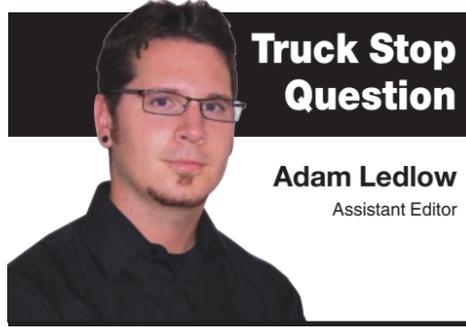


BOWMANVILLE, Ont. – Few topics tend to cause more grumbling among truck drivers than the mention of Hours-of-Service. The new HoS rules, implemented Jan. 1 in Ontario, prevent drivers from splitting their shift, so once the clock is ticking, any downtime can be detrimental to driver productivity. Not surprisingly, certain sectors have felt the crunch worse than others and are looking for a way around the rules. Specifically, B.C., Alberta and Saskatchewan have considered exempting logging trucks and some of those operating in the oil and gas industries from the federal rules. But would this be fair to the rest of the industry? *Truck West* stopped by the Fifth Wheel Truck Stop in Bowmanville, Ont. to see if driver's think Hours-of-Service rules should continue to be enforced universally or on a case by case basis.

Saini Bihari, a driver with Muir's Transport in Toronto, says that when it comes to Hours-of-Service, drivers must follow the rules. Bihari says that he knows of some people who have driven in excess of 20 hours a day in order to get a job done.

"That's not good. Anybody who is driving should be according to the Hours-of-Service," he says. "If at some moment, you get tired, you get sleepy and this is not a small thing. If you are not in your senses there is going to be a disaster."

Les Tennant, who operates his own towing company in Bowmanville, Ont., says that certain sectors should



Truck Stop Question

Adam Ledlow
Assistant Editor

Should certain sectors within trucking be exempt from HoS?

be exempt from HoS – starting with towing. "If...the OPP wants you to move a truck and you're out of hours, hey, you move it," he says. Tennant says that the only way HoS will be fair is if the rules apply to all industries – not just trucking. "If



Les Tennant

they're going to do it for everybody, fine. Do it for the guys working in GM for the guys working at Chrysler or whatever, in a plant; (it's the) same thing."

Alex Tabor, who runs his Tabor Farms business out of St. Mary's, Ont., says not just some but all sectors in the industry should be exempt – and he's in one of them.

"I have a short trip here from St.

Mary's to just north of Peterborough. I try to run through the night through Toronto and miss



Alex Tabor

all the traffic, get loaded and go back through at about noon hour. You can't do that within a 10-hour drive," he says. "I'm still in favour of the split bunk deal so I can sleep a little bit on this side and sleep a little bit on the other side. Once you start your log, it's gotta run for 13 hours and it can't be done legally for me."

Randy Burry, a driver instructor with KRTS in Caledonia, Ont., says that HoS rules should be across the board for everyone.

"What I tell all my students (is) you gotta live with the consequences



Randy Burry

that happen should you fudge the rules," he says. "If you have an accident and you knew you shouldn't have been driving, you've got to live with those consequences. I tell everybody I drive with: every car around me is my family; I want them all to get home safely."

Fred Sears, a trucker with Midland Transport out of Moncton, N.B., says he's been lucky enough to work in the oilpatch in the past, and can understand why they want hours extended (*for a response from the oil industry on this issue, see pg. 28*), but notes that people still need their proper rest. Sears says he'd be in favour of partial exemptions.

"Rules are rules in Canada, coast-to-coast, but when in a specialty, if it's needed to run a little bit (longer), that's one thing. But when it starts causing a problem, then it would have to be readdressed again," he says. "It's hard because everybody wants to work and when the work's there, people want to work to make money." □

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