

TRUCK WEST

November 2009 Volume 20, Issue 11

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



BACK ON TRACK?

LEADING THE PACK: Glenn Creed's #59 Ford Louisville runs up front during one of the North American Big Rig Racing series' 2009 events. Creed eventually won the championship.

Big rig racing rolls on despite closures, changes and challenges

By Jim Bray

CALGARY, Alta. – Coming to an oval race track near you: the roar of the diesel, the smell of the crowd – and the excitement of big rigs running wheel to wheel, lap after lap after lap.

Or maybe not. The future of big rig racing in Western Canada is cloudy right now, as organizers and participants strive to find the right sponsorships and venues.

Challenges also include many of the same ones that affect non-racing truckers these days: a money crunch, as well as increasing – and sometimes unfair – competition.

But in the meantime, the show goes on.

The North American Big Rig Racing (NABRR) series was formed after the demise of the "GATR" (Great American Truck Racing) series that ran in the east-

ern US and Canada. Founded in Calgary in 1989, NABRR expanded subsequently to Vancouver Island and Washington State in 1997 and later its influence spread further south, right to California. Long time NABRR racer and series organizer Ron Singer, of Calgary, says some of the GATR events offered over \$100,000 US as a pay day for the

Continued on page 11

CSA 2010

What you need to know if you haul into the US

By Ingrid Phaneuf

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Are Canadian truckers ready for the FMCSA's new safety rating system, slated to kick off in July 2010? Or are they being caught with their pants down, yet again?

It depends on whom you talk to. Either way, those in the know say the new Comprehensive Safety Analysis system (a.k.a. CSA 2010) created by FMCSA, will monumentally change the way carriers track and hire drivers and owner/operators.

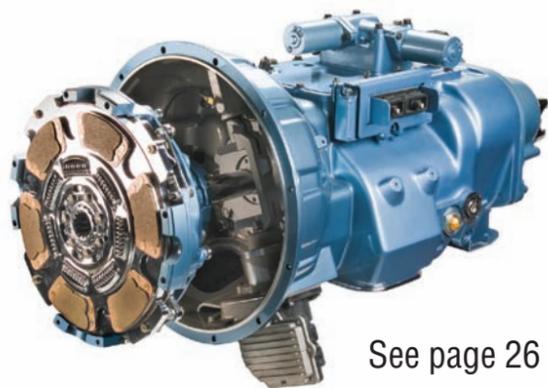
"It's like a tsunami," says Peter Charboneau, the Canadian rep for a US company selling carrier solutions. "Honestly there is almost no awareness by Canadian fleets of what is coming towards them. The impact is going to be tremendous."

"Up to now, the FMCSA was able to provide safety ratings for less than 2% of carriers in the US," says Charboneau's partner Steve Kessler, based in Dallas, Texas. "But with this new program, they'll have the ability to generate safety ratings for every carrier on a monthly basis."

So are Charboneau and Kessler just blowing smoke because they're

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Making the grade



See page 26

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- **Economic outlook:** We report from the American Trucking Associations convention where all eyes were on the economy. Be warned: There was no sugar-coating. Page 12
- **Lighting the way:** It seems there's a bright future for manufacturers and users of LED lighting. We take a look at some of the latest innovations. Page 17
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- **Ready for winter?:** Two safety columns cover the dangers of driving in the winter time. Pages 21-22

Mark Dalton O/O



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CLASS 8 TRUCK SALES TRENDS

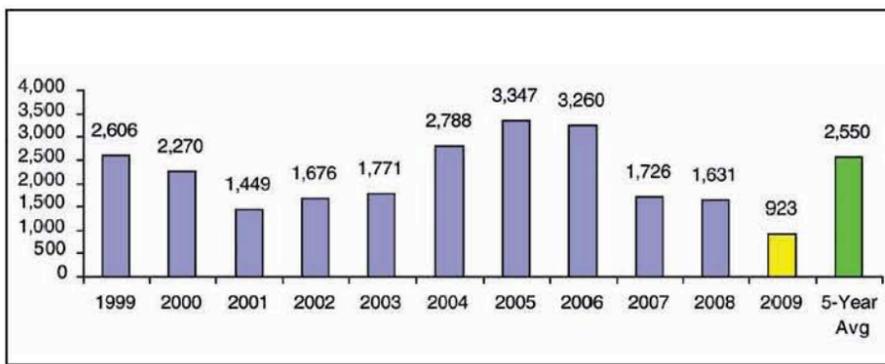
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Monthly Class 8 Sales - Aug 09

Class 8 truck sales in the US showed a bit of an uptick in August but not on this side of the border unfortunately. There were just 923 Class 8 trucks sold in Canada in August, which was by far the lowest August sales tally for the decade. It was also about 1,600 units off the five-year average. (It should be noted that five-year average includes the industry's peak years of 2004 to 2006.) and about 700 below last year's August sales. This is the worst recession to hit the North American market in the post war era and monthly truck sales continue to reflect that reality.

OEM	This Month	Last Year
Freightliner	125	314
International	273	326
Kenworth	154	270
Mack	60	121
Peterbilt	114	166
Sterling	40	165
Volvo	75	178
Western Star	81	91
TOTALS	923	1631

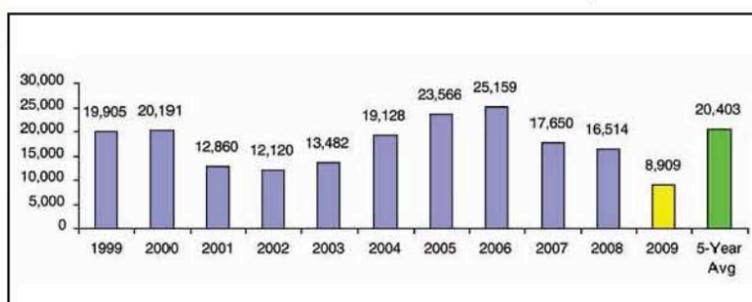
Historical Comparison - Aug 09 Sales



Class 8 Sales (YTD Aug 09) by Province and OEM

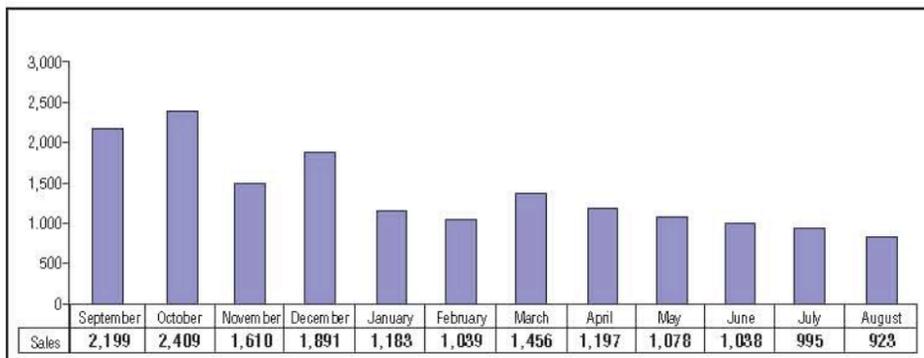
OEM	BC	ALTA	SASK	MAN	ONT	QUE	NB	NS	PEI	NF	CDA
Freightliner	93	214	84	106	659	360	133	86	0	6	1,741
Kenworth	137	262	68	67	202	283	45	12	0	0	1,076
Mack	30	60	78	43	363	87	24	18	0	0	703
International	78	336	45	125	1,115	655	114	49	23	46	2,586
Peterbilt	79	130	72	68	119	90	30	15	0	0	603
Sterling	89	90	23	8	197	213	17	5	3	20	665
Volvo	46	84	73	123	350	121	46	47	0	6	896
Western Star	84	200	31	21	104	88	47	62	0	2	639
TOTALS	636	1,376	474	561	3,109	1,897	456	294	26	80	8,909

Historical Comparison - YTD Aug

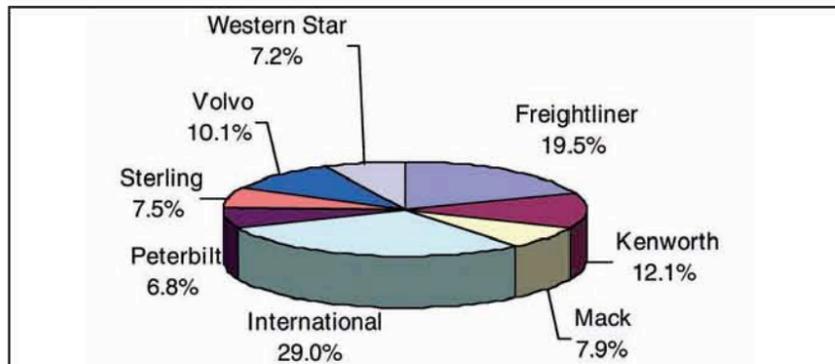


With August figures so low, it's unavoidable that the third quarter will go the way of the second and first. The first quarter of the year was strong foreshadowing of things to come. Just three months into the year and sales were more than 2,000 off last year's YTD pace, hardly a banner year in itself, about 3,000 off the five-year YTD average and about 5,000 off the banner year of 2006. Eight months into the year now, Canadian Class 8 truck sales are at their lowest point YTD of the past decade by a long shot. They are about 11,000 units off the five-year average, at almost half the level of last year's sales and almost 16,000 units off the banner year of 2006.

12 - Month Sales Trends



Market Share Class 8 - Aug YTD



There are many reasons motor carriers are reluctant to purchase new trucks right now. Although the recession is likely over, the rebound is not expected to be as robust as it was in past recessions and trucking will not be a leading indicator this time around. Still, high inventory to sales ratios will continue to dampen freight volumes and the trucking industry remains in over capacity, which places downward pressure on rates. General freight rates declined 5.6% YTD in 2009 from the end of last year, according to the latest research. Used truck values are also making it difficult for carriers to turn in their old trucks for new ones. In addition, the growing age of the Canadian truck fleet is misleading because mileage is down compared to the pre-recession years.

International retains its lead in this downward market, controlling 29% of Class 8 sales in the Canadian market YTD. Freightliner, a former front runner for many years, is close to 20% of total sales. Traditionally strong performers, Kenworth and Peterbilt, have fallen back compared to previous years, perhaps because both are strong in the west and Western Canada is no longer booming. Volvo is the only truck manufacturer other than Freightliner, International and Kenworth with more than a 10% share of the market.

Source: Canadian Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association

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Truckers fuming over Ontario smoking fine

When an OPP officer pulled over a truck driver near Windsor recently and fined him for smoking a cigarette in his rig, he couldn't possibly have known the firestorm he'd ignite. Or maybe he did.

Maybe it was a slow day and he wanted to shake up a hornet's nest and create some headlines. Maybe Ontario's speed limiter law has been so effective at slowing down the big rigs that he had to find another way to get his trucker-ticketing fix.

Or perhaps he was acting upon a directive from some bureaucrat in Toronto who wanted to enforce the letter of the law and make an example out of some unsuspecting trucker.

Whatever the case, the ticket spurred the ire of not only many professional drivers, but also gained national attention in the mainstream media.

Dare I say the prevailing sentiment from the media and most readers was that of empathy? For once the trucker wasn't portrayed as the villain.

In what has become a dinner table discussion, it seems most would agree that the OPP had no business charging the truck driver for smoking in his truck.

However, according to the Smoke Free Ontario Act, it is, in fact, against the law to smoke in any workplace – and that includes a truck cab.

Now there are exceptions to every rule. An owner/operator is still able to smoke in his cab – provided he or she is the only person to drive and work in that vehicle. Federally-regulated carriers are also exempt. They must instead adhere to the federal Non-Smoker's Health Act, which allows for 'smoking areas' within workplaces. So theoretically, a

Editorial Comment

James Menzies



truck can be deemed a smoking area – provided non-smokers are not required to work within that truck.

But drivers working for intraprovincial carriers operating company-owned vehicles can in fact be fined \$305 per offence, and the company that owns the rig can be smacked with a fine as high as \$10,000 if it knowingly allows smoking in its vehicles.

So what's a driver to do? Does the province really want a truck driver who smokes to pull over on the side of the road to light up? That's far more dangerous than smoking in the cab

– and you better not linger too long or the police will soon be along to fine you for illegal parking.

Is a driver expected to pull entirely off the highway and park at a rest area before having a smoke? Wait a minute, most of those have been closed by the province and may remain closed for years (see story on pg. 8).

And besides, just imagine what would happen to delivery times and the trucking industry's productivity

should this occur.

The sad thing is, there was no need to enforce the letter of the law in the first place. In my opinion, some overzealous cop chose to do so and as a result, the professional driver has been beaten down even further by an ever-longer regulatory billystick.

Many professional drivers got into this business because they're independent spirits and enjoyed the chance to work alone on the open road without anyone looking over their shoulder.

Those days are long gone. Is it any wonder, as Lou writes below, that driver satisfaction is on a steady decline? □

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Take this job and...

There are many depressing numbers I've had to look at this year. Class 8 truck sales, for example, are down 46% year-to-date compared to the same time last year and off an incredible 65% from their peak in 2006. By June of this year, rates were down 5.6% from the end of last year and LTL cross-border rates down more than 21% while company valuations are down by more than 40% on average. There's no need to go on. I'm sure you get the picture. This is definitely a year worth forgetting.

But there is one statistic I think we dare not forget. It may be the most depressing statistic of all and will not improve simply because the economy will eventually rebound. This sorry statistic was revealed most recently by our annual *Driver Satisfaction Survey* but perhaps of even greater concern is that it reflects a clear downward trend. Our nationwide survey of drivers and owner/operators found their satisfaction rate down to a paltry 3.13 out of 5 this year, compared to 3.48 last year and 3.66 for the two years previous to that.

Whereas two years ago the job satisfaction rate could be considered a solid 'B', 3.13 is barely a 'C'. For the

Viewpoint

Lou Smyrlis
 Editorial Director



first two years of our survey almost two-thirds of drivers taking the survey described themselves to be either "satisfied" or "very satisfied" in their driving jobs. Last year that dropped to slightly more than half being happy with their driving jobs. This year that's down even further with only 42% being satisfied. And while last year we reported alarm that a full fifth of the people behind the wheel now considered themselves either "unsatisfied" or "very unsatisfied" in their jobs, that level is now up to almost a third reporting dissatisfaction.

Our survey, conducted in partnership with the CTHRC, digs further, asking drivers to rate their satisfaction with 12 different aspects of their job, ranging from pay and recognition to stress and growth opportunities with the company. The depths that these satisfaction levels have fallen to in several areas

should be of great concern. Of the 12 different job factors, only one was rated above 3.50 or, put more simply, given a 'B' grade.

Several important areas slipped into dangerous territory, slipping uncomfortably close to receiving a failing grade. These included the "amount of pay and benefits," the "amount of job security" and the "amount of job training." The "quality of supervision received on the job," and the "amount of independent thought and action exercised on the job," were also graded low.

And there were a couple of areas graded at 2.5 or less out of 5 this year, which translates into a 'D' grade or worse. These included driver satisfaction with the "amount of recognition received for strong performance," and the "opportunity to grow with the company."

The economic uncertainty and tumultuousness of the last couple of years have proved to be the perfect storm in which to test our mettle when it comes to driver relations. And at the moment, we are fighting an uphill battle. □

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

It's a convoy, alright!

Economic conditions can't dampen spirit at Canadian legs of World's Largest Truck Convoy

By Jim Bray

PARIS, Ont. – Talk about Long Combination Vehicles (LCVs) – or long vehicles combining their efforts, anyway.

While these particular vehicles weren't exactly the type of LCV you see on some highways, they were special trains of trucks that travelled three provinces recently, and they were so long they required police escorts – and so important that truckers gave up their precious weekends to ensure it came to pass.

The trucks were participating in this year's World's Largest Truck Convoy, which brought truckers and their vehicles together with athletes, law enforcement personnel and others over late summer and early autumn weekends in an annual effort to raise money and awareness for the Special Olympics charity. It's an event that began in Florida before spreading to Canada, and the organizers of this year's Canadian legs report that 2009's convoys were a big success despite some major challenges.

"It was our fifth anniversary in Ontario, and it came hand-in-hand with the 40th anniversary for Special Olympics Canada," organizer Tammy Blackwell says. "So it was a very special year for us."

Blackwell announced that the Ontario truckers – as well as one from Langley, B.C. who drove across the country for the event – ended up writing a cheque to the Special Olympics in the amount of \$51,000 after their Sept. 19 convoy.

The 2009 convoy didn't always seem as if it would come off, though.

"With a not very promising economy," Blackwell says, "we really thought about whether or not we would even go forward. Was it wise? Would we get the turnout? And then we started hearing from our drivers and decided to do it anyway. I'm very glad we did."

Ontario's convoy begins and ends at the Paris fairgrounds and goes as far as the Putnam scales, where there's a large turnaround area the trucks can use.

Once back in Paris, the participants take part in a lunch and awards session that gives them a chance to rub elbows with the athletes, the law enforcement officers involved, parents and the public. Blackwell says that, as a special treat this year, Lynn Snider of Drumbo Transport addressed the crowd.

"She's not only part of a trucking family, but she also has three Special Olympic athlete children," Blackwell says. "So she could talk from the trucking side as well as the side of the parent of Special Olympics athletes."

Snider was accompanied on-stage by four athletes and, according to Blackwell, "You could've heard a pin drop. It's the first time I've ever heard that many truck drivers quiet in one spot."

Snider's family was well repre-

sented in the trucking part of the convoy, too. Her husband Dwight was one of the top three fundraisers, pledging \$3,100 – only beaten out by Luis Alves, of Linamar Transport (\$4,730, which earned him the honour of driving the lead truck) and Brian Hilton of MacKinnon Transport (\$4,244). A total of 56 trucks were on-hand for the day, which ended with a baseball game between the top 12 pledgers and Stratford's Special Olympics baseball team.

"Try to visualize 12 out-of-shape truck drivers who haven't touched any sporting equipment for years playing a bunch of athletes who practice all the time," Blackwell says. "It was a hoot!"

The \$51,000 given to the Special Olympics surpassed last year's total by \$1,000 and, while it wasn't a record, the organizers weren't discouraged.

"We knew it was going to be a tough year so we dug in and got a few more prizes and worked hard on sponsorship," Blackwell says, "because we knew we couldn't just depend on one element to bring in all the funding. Overall it came out good for us."

It's good for the drivers, too, apparently. Blackwell says some of them are already asking for their 2010 pledge sheet. "They want them before Christmas so they can hit up everybody at the Christmas dinner table," she says.

In Manitoba, Special Olympics director of marketing Terry Hopkinson reports its third annual convoy also came off well despite economic kerfuffles.

"We had the largest number of trucks ever," he says proudly, tallying 48 in all, up six from a year ago. The Sept. 12 event ended up raising close to \$15,000 for the Special Olympics, Hopkinson reports, praising the great buy-in from the industry, "particularly at the driver level."

"We had some companies that stepped forward and put a lot of trucks into it as well, such as Bison and TransX, who were huge players," Hopkinson says, noting that many independents and company drivers turned out for the convoy as well. The Manitoba convoy headed out from a new venue this year: the town of Oak Bluff, which sits on the perimeter highway just southwest of Winnipeg.

"They were really good to work

with," Hopkinson says of the townspeople. "They let us use their community centre, which had showers and washrooms and the like, so a lot of the truckers stayed overnight and were ready to go on Saturday morning."

The procession followed a 52-km perimeter route around Winnipeg and, besides the truckers and police escorts, they also had "a bunch of athletes come out and they all got to ride in trucks – and they were absolutely thrilled about it, pulling on the horns and that. They thought that was pretty terrific," Hopkinson says.

Trophies were awarded to TransX, for having the most trucks in the event, and TransX drivers Cliff and Brenda Sumner raised the most money, "about \$3,500" according to Hopkinson, and got to be the lead truck. Henry Picton, with Darcol International, was the number two driver, while Norm Lussier of CWS Logistics came in third.

The Athlete's Choice Truck, awarded to the truck the athletes thought was "the prettiest," was the Darcol International/Henry Picton entry.

Saskatchewan truckers held their third annual fundraiser on Saturday, Sept. 26, with 60 truckers – the most participants since the event began there, beating handily the previous high of 42 – heading out in a two mile long train along Hwy. 11 from Saskatoon to Regina.

This year's event supporting the province's 1,250 Special Olympics athletes grossed \$25,000, according to Special Olympics Saskatchewan director of operations, Roger Dumont. "Which is tremendous in terms of sponsorships and registrations from all of the truckers involved," he adds, "Given the economic times and conditions that we have, this year certainly surpasses the expectations that we had."

After the convoy, figure skater Justin Duong spoke to the crowd at a celebration barbecue, recounting his experiences competing with Special Olympics for eight years. Duong has won 18 gold, 11 silver and six bronze medals at four national competitions.

"Special Olympics helps him train, compete and meet new people and travel across the country," Dumont says, "And the truckers' support goes a long way to help him and other athletes get to competitions."

For the third year in a row, Ed Wright, who drives for Kindersley Transport, raised the most pledges (\$3,100) and drove the lead truck. Second was Al Ackerman with Slinkemo Enterprises and third was Brian Harrison from Maximum Training.

Dumont credits Paul Perry, safety and compliance officer for Jay's Group of Companies, as being the lead organizer of the event. "It is his enthusiasm and long hours on the phone making calls that lines up all these trucks," Dumont says, "But the effort was worth it."

The World's Largest Truck Convoy has raised well over \$50,000 for Special Olympics Saskatchewan in its three years.

Money contributed from each convoy stays in its home province, helping to provide a much-needed lift to Special Olympians there. □



BIRD'S EYE VIEW: Trucks taking part in the Saskatchewan convoy stage for departure (inset) before heading down the highway en masse.

In Brief

Funding available for fuel-saving technologies

SASKATOON, Sask. – The Government of Canada is offering to pick up the tab for a million bucks in environmental upgrades for the heavy-duty trucking industry.

The government announced the program Sept. 10, which will allow fleets to apply for up to \$100,000 in funding to put towards proven fuel-saving devices such as aerodynamic devices and low rolling-resistance tires. Up to 50% of the cost of eligible fuel-saving devices will be refunded under the program.

Eligible products must be EPA SmartWay-certified and funding will come from Canada's ecoENERGY for Fleets program, which is administered by Natural Resources Canada.

"Fuel efficiency in all sectors is important to our economy and the environment," Brad Trost, MP for Saskatoon-Humboldt, announced on behalf of Lisa Raitt, Minister of Natural Resources. "By investing in fuel efficiency we will help the industry reduce fuel costs and contribute to a cleaner Canada."

Not surprisingly, the trucking industry welcomed the announcement, but Canadian Trucking Alliance chief David Bradley hopes it's just the beginning of things to come.

"While this is a step in the right direction, the industry is still looking for a coordinated, dedicated program of rebates and appropriate tax treatments for all the aerodynamic technologies available to the indus-

try," said Bradley. "While there have been small programs here and there, what is lacking is a cohesive, targeted plan to achieve meaningful emissions reductions and improved fuel efficiency for industry that these technologies can make happen. Society's environmental goals and the economic goals of the industry have never been more aligned."

To find out more about the program, visit fleetsmart.gc.ca.

Meanwhile, the Manitoba Trucking Association (MTA) is now accepting applications for the second phase of its GrEEEn (Economic, and Environmentally Efficient) Trucking Program.

The GrEEEn Trucking program offers incentives on green technologies, such as low rolling resistance tires, aerodynamic tractors and trailers, trailer side skirts, auxiliary power units, and tractor-trailer gap fairings.

The MTA, together with Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation, the Centre for Sustainable Transportation, and the University of Manitoba Transport Institute, launched the program's first phase in the spring.

Participants are required to invest a minimum of \$2,000 in technologies to be eligible for rebates. These rebates range from 15% up to 25% (maximum \$2,500 per unit) of the company's capital investment.

For more information, visit www.grEEEntrucking.ca. □

DriveBC Web site features new highway cams

VICTORIA, B.C. – DriveBC had added new highway Web cams to its site to help truckers and motorists plan their routes this winter.

In the southern interior of B.C., new Web cams have been placed on: Hwy. 3 about three kilometres east of Paulson Summit; Hwy. 3 in Hosmer; Hwy. 95 at Brisco Road in Brisco; and Highway 93/95 at the junction of Highway 95A near Wasa.

In the south coast region, new Web cams can be found at: Hwy. 7 east of Nelson Street in Mission; Hwy. 99 at Function Junction, five kilometres south of Whistler; Hwy. 99 at Alice Lake, 10 kilometres north of Squamish; and Hwy. 99 at Furry Creek, 12 kilometres south of Squamish.

To check out road conditions, visit www.drivebc.ca. □

Behind the headlines

Trucknews.com has been named a finalist for best overall magazine Web site and best video awards in the first-ever Canadian Online Publishing Awards. Trucknews.com was the only transportation magazine to be recognized in any award category.

The awards program, produced by *Masthead* magazine, recognizes excellence in online editorial and innovation by Canadian magazine and Web site publishers. The best overall magazine Web site category is awarded to the publication deemed to best serve the needs of its target audience through content, design and use of the Web medium.

Trucknews.com is also up for the best video category through its weekly WebTV show, *Transportation Matters*. Video features were judged on how they serve their intended audience, through their educational, entertainment and production values. Trucknews.com has been named one of Canada's Top 5 business Web sites by the Canadian Business Press for four years running.

Meanwhile, to make accessing information on Trucknews.com easier and more convenient, we've removed all registration requirements.

In other news, the first video in our new online information video series *The Driver's Seat*, is now available.

Coupling/Uncoupling, the first title in the ongoing series, features *Truck News* personality Adam Ledlow learning the correct procedure to couple and uncouple a tractor/trailer from KRTS master driver trainer, Randy Burry. Future releases will feature other common driver tasks such as air brake checks and daily vehicle inspections, as well as business-related material. *The Driver's Seat* is available as a subscription service with prices starting at \$7.99/month. For more information, visit www.TheDriversSeat.ca. □

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Ontario

Closed for business

Ontario highway service centres could be closed for years

By Harry Rudolfs

TORONTO, Ont. – Drivers looking for a restaurant and a place to buy fuel on Ontario's 400-series highways will find slim pickings the next few years. Twenty of the 23 sites are closing while they are being decommissioned and rebuilt. And although some parking, vending machines and portable toilet facilities will be available at some of them, the project is expected to take much longer than originally expected.

The service centres are being shut as soon as the leases expire and the last one will close its doors in 2011. But until the first of the new structures come on stream – a process that takes three years or more – we could be left with only three fully-operative service centres (Ingersoll, Maple, and Newcastle) on the 400 and 401 highways.

This is nothing new to truck drivers. From Windsor to the Quebec border we've watched these places close in bunches for the last couple of years; the strategy probably suited the Ontario government as it wanted one vendor to take over the whole works.

The deal with a provider, at least, appears to be in place. In August of this year it announced Host-Kilmer Service Centers as the preferred proponent, although the monetary details are yet to be worked out.

The rebuilding initiative is a joint venture between the MTO and Infrastructure Ontario, but the fact that the ground at these sites is contaminated with decades of spilled gasoline and oil drippings brings the Ministry of the Environment into the mix.

The sites are subject to environmental assessments, and before the first brick can be laid, the old fuel tanks have to be dug up and the polluted soil removed. Then, according to the regs, the sites have to remain fully closed for six to nine months before any construction can begin.

But this slow approach is clearly not satisfactory to Bob Runciman, opposition Conservative house leader at Queen's Park.

"This is a colossal screw up," he tells me on the phone just after he's finished lambasting the governing Liberals on the issue during question period. "This is going to provide a bad image for the province and potentially jeopardize public safety by not having these services available."

Indeed, Runciman might be particularly agitated because two of the recently-closed centres (Mallorytown north and south) were in his home riding of Leeds-Grenville.

He estimates the closures from these two centres alone will cost 250 local jobs.

"There's absolutely no reason those two service centres at Mallorytown had to close," he fumes. "There's nothing wrong with the tanks in the ground, they've been checked and they're good for at least four or five more years. We talked to the lessee at Imperial Oil and they told us they offered to



NOTHING TO SEE HERE: More Ontario service centres are being shuttered, in many cases leaving truckers with no place to park. *Photo by Harry Rudolfs*

extend the lease and were denied. We used to get 15 buses in there at one time. Are you going to be able to do that with a little trailer and a johnny-on-the-spot?"

Furthermore, Runciman questions the deal with Host-Kilmer itself and the fact that no numbers have been released.

"They're still negotiating and it's not finalized," he says. "Who knows how many billions this is going to cost? They haven't supplied any kind of figure."

The CAA has also expressed anxiety for motorists travelling the 400 highways.

"Our concern is that people, instead of stopping, will keep pressing on. Motorists who are not familiar are reluctant to stop in small towns or places they don't know," says CAA spokesperson Edyta Zdancewicz.

"With winter coming, it might be a big problem for motorists running out of gas who have to travel more than 150 km to get fuel."

The provincial government, on the other hand, says it is doing what it can to mitigate the discomfort to travellers.

"If a service centre is temporarily closed, every effort has been made to have the next one on the highway open with interim services at a minimum," says Paulette Den Elzen of Infrastructure Ontario.

Den Elzen adds that signs have been posted along the highway in advance of the service centres that don't have fuel. As well, she says, "While the service centres are closed, fuel and food services can be obtained on a 24-hour-a-day basis at privately-operated and easily accessible alternative service areas located along the highways."

It should be noted that some expanded truck parking is now available at the Morrisburg and Wooler Hill (Trenton) sites.

Bob Nichols, media liaison for the MTO, adds that King City, Barrie, Woodstock, Cambridge North, Cambridge South, Newcastle, Port Hope, Napanee and Odessa have been approved for LCV use.

"Once the new service centre sites have been redeveloped, all the sites will include LCV-friendly access and parking," he says.

But on the whole, truck parking spots have been lost while the sites

are being developed.

Joanne Richie, director of the Owner-Operators' Business Association of Canada (OBAC), is critical of the government's handling of the project.

"We're incensed with the Ontario government's poor planning... They've completely dropped the ball on this one."

Ritchie recalls meeting with members of Infrastructure Ontario and the MTO while the project was in the planning stages.

She says OBAC's suggestions for truck-friendly sites with safe, accessible truck parking so drivers can comply with HoS rules were warmly welcomed at the time.

"They liked our ideas and asked us if we would work with them and the contractor going forward (when they were chosen); we readily agreed, then we never heard from them again... That was over two years ago."

As a professional driver, I agree that truck parking is available off the 401 at truck stops and the like, but finding a spot after 11 p.m. while you want to run in and get a coffee is often an ordeal. As for the 401 centres, I stopped using them because of the dearth of truck parking and fears of getting blocked in.

Nichols may have declared the Odessa site LCV-friendly, but you don't want to pull around the back of that place at night.

My linehaul colleague at Purolator, Tom Murray, agrees.

"I found out the best thing is to get off the highway." He immediately starts listing his favourite Tim Horton's in Brockville, Trenton and Belleville.

"The new rest area at Wooler is okay I guess, but it's an awful long way from the truck parking to the bathroom."

Fellow driver and newly-minted LCV pilot Greg Manchester is more scathing.

"Why could they have not brought in a temporary Tim Horton's in those closed places? It is absolutely absurd and socially irresponsible that the Ontario government would allow this to happen. Where are drivers supposed to stop and eat and take their mandatory breaks?" □

Plan ahead when driving in Ontario:

The following service centre sites are **closed with no interim services available** at this time: West Lorne – westbound; Mallorytown North – westbound; Ingleside – westbound; Bainsville – westbound; Mallorytown South – eastbound; and Trenton South – eastbound.

The following service centre sites are **open with interim services** (interim services include parking, accessible washrooms, drinking water, vending machines and telephones but no fuel): Tilbury North – westbound; Trenton North – westbound; Tilbury South – eastbound; Dutton – eastbound; and Morrisburg – eastbound. While truck parking is available at all five of these sites, expanded truck parking lots exist at Tilbury South, Dutton, Morrisburg and Trenton North.

The following service centre sites are **open (for now) with full services**: Napanee – westbound; Newcastle – westbound; Cambridge North – westbound; Ingersoll – westbound; Woodstock – eastbound; Cambridge South – eastbound; Port Hope – eastbound; Odessa – eastbound; King City – northbound; Barrie – northbound; Cookstown – southbound; and Maple – southbound. Truck parking is available at all sites however Newcastle, Ingersoll, Woodstock, King City and Maple have more truck parking capacity than the other sites. □



Ontario announces Oct. 26 enforcement date for cell phone ban

CB radios to be phased out in three years

TORONTO, Ont. – Ontario’s cell phone ban for drivers will kick in Oct. 26, with fines of up to \$500 for offenders beginning Feb. 1, 2010 the province has announced.

The new law makes it illegal to use a handheld communications or entertainment device while driving.

Ontario joins many other jurisdictions with similar laws, noting that a driver is four times more likely to be involved in an accident while using a handheld phone than a driver who’s focused on the road.

The ban does not include hands-free devices, including a cell phone with an earpiece or a headset that uses voice dialing. GPS systems that are properly secured within the vehicle are also acceptable, according to the

province.

Truckers will also be able to continue using display screens that provide information about the status of the vehicle.

The province has also allowed certain exemptions for commercial drivers.

It will allow a three year phase-out period for the use of two-way radios including CB radios to allow time for hands-free alternatives to be developed.

The Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) which lobbied for exemptions for truckers, said it’s been told by the Ministry of Transportation that if hands-free solutions for CBs are still not available in three years, the exemption may be extended.

Mobile data terminals, logistical tracking devices and dispatch de-

vices will not be banned, the province said, provided they aren’t being held in the driver’s hand while the vehicle is in motion.

Hand-mics (push-to-talk devices) and portable radios will be allowed in hands-free mode only, allowing a driver to use a lapel button or other hands-free application as long as the hand-mic or walkie-talkie isn’t held while driving, according to the province.

The OTA was satisfied that its concerns about the removal of tools of the trade truck drivers require on the job have been addressed.

“There is sufficient evidence to suggest that the new law is directionally appropriate,” said OTA president David Bradley.

“We support the handheld cell phone ban and believe that the Ministry has made reasonable

accommodation for most of the other handheld devices used by industry that serve an important business purpose.”

However, Bradley admitted truckers may be incensed to learn CBs will eventually be banned along with other types of communication devices.

“Given the still pervasive use of these devices in the industry, I expect there could be push-back from some truck drivers,” he said.

“In many respects the CB is not only an important part of the truckers’ social network, but it is also an important safety device in its own right. However, by introducing a conditional three-year phase-out, it gives us time to monitor how the technology develops and if need be, revisit the issue down the road. It doesn’t mean that CBs are going to be banned on Oct. 26, 2009 or Feb. 1, 2010.” □

‘We appear to have hit bottom’: David Bradley

PICKERING, Ont. – Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) president David Bradley took the trucking industry’s message to the Ajax-Pickering Board of Trade during a keynote address last month.

Bradley told the assembled business folks that trucking is a leading indicator of economic prosperity, and added “the best I can say at this point is the prevailing view of most carriers is that we appear to have hit bottom for the time being.”

He said shippers that are enjoying low rates now should not expect them to continue as the industry continues to shed capacity. Despite trucking layoffs and bankruptcies, he told the gathering that “the shrinkage in the volume of freight has outpaced our ability to shrink the fleet” and that there are already signs of an impending capacity shortage in certain lanes.

Despite the trucking industry’s hardships, Bradley said he remains “bullish” on the industry’s overall outlook. He said carriers are more sophisticated today and better able to weather economic downturns.

Bradley also addressed truck safety to the group, which included representation from the local trucking industry with a large contingent of Shandex and Mackie Group executives on-hand. Unlike any other industry, the trucking industry shares its workplace with the public, and “when we screw up, it can be front page,” he said. That’s why the association endorsed speed limiters, which Bradley said so far have been improving the flow of traffic according to anecdotal reports he’s received. While he admitted not all drivers approved of Ontario’s controversial speed limiter law, he said “the reality is there’s no reason, in our view, for a driver to be coerced or forced to speed to make a delivery.”

Bradley explained some of the details of Ontario’s long combination vehicle (LCV) pilot project to the business group, and said about 18 LCVs are currently operating in Ontario. □

Trucker reportedly fined for smoking in cab of truck

WINDSOR, Ont. – According to media reports, an Ontario truck driver was fined \$305 for smoking a cigarette in his truck.

The *Canadian Press* has reported the truck driver was fined because the cab of his truck was considered a “workplace.” He was reportedly pulled over on Hwy. 401 near Windsor and ticketed after a police officer spotted him smoking.

The Smoke-Free Ontario Act doesn’t allow people to smoke in public areas or enclosed workplaces.

The driver may be able to successfully challenge the ticket, however, if he works for a federally-regulated carrier.

When the Smoke-Free Ontario Act was passed in 2006, the Ontario Trucking Association fought for and received assurance that only provincially-regulated carriers would have to abide by the law.

“Our concern was over provincial incursion into an area of federal law and what precedent that might set in other statutes in the future,” OTA president, David Bradley said at the time. “We are very pleased that we were able to work with the government on this issue and come to an understanding on how the law affects a major segment of the industry.”

Federally-regulated carriers would still have to abide by the Non-Smoker’s Health Act. Under the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, a trucking company could be fined as much as \$10,000 for allowing smoking in its vehicles. To weigh in on the debate on whether or not truckers should be allowed to smoke in their rigs, check out the Trucknews.com blog and post a comment. □

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WHITING

Border

What's coming where?

Many small fleets unaware of changes to US ratings system

Continued from page 1

selling a product that they say will help carriers stay out of trouble?

Not according to industry veteran Ray Haight, executive director for MacKinnon Transport, based in Guelph, Ont.

"They're fundamentally changing the way carriers are rated for safety," says Haight. "Companies aren't used to being measured by infractions. And they're not used to being measured by their drivers' infractions. The criteria for assessing safety ratings under CSA 2010 has grown exponentially. Canadian carriers need to know what's coming down the pipe."

Jeff Davis, vice-president of safety and human resources for Jet Express, a carrier based in Dayton, Ohio, agrees. He'll be delivering a presentation on the new CSA safety rating system in Mississauga, Ont. in November, under the auspices of the Driving for Profit seminar series, organized by NAL Insurance in partnership with KRTS.

"I think it's fair to say that carriers don't know much about CSA, but I wouldn't feel too bad about it if you're Canadian. The system has been in the planning process for four years now in the US and US carriers are just finding out about it," says Davis. In fact, the FMCSA has just completed a pilot project in four US states (Missouri, Colorado, New Jersey and Georgia), to determine how effective the new system will be. The results are either reassuring or alarming, depending on whether you're already a carrier that tracks driver behaviour closely.

"The government has stated that it has been able to greatly increase the effectiveness of the use of auditors under the new system," says Davis. In plain English, that means that the FMCSA has found that by tracking and rating driver roadside

performance as part of its safety measurement system, it can keep a close eye on a lot more carriers for a lot less money.

And here's the even scarier part, for some. Even though the pilot project has only been going on in four states, inspectors are already gathering the information they've been accumulating on drivers and inputting it into the new database. Which means Canadian carriers (and drivers) will already have a safety rating under the new system when it becomes official next July.

"It will take only three roadside

tween the carrier and the FMCSA) of a safety plan to address the issue, a notice of violation, a focused on-site investigation, and a comprehensive on-site investigation.

Finally, a Tier 3 intervention will include a notice of claim, a consent agreement and a safety fitness determination of 'Unfit'. (Of course all of the above may also be accompanied by gradually increasing fines.)

If all of the above seems a little confusing, think of the whole process this way: If you get a notice that something needs to be addressed (including the roadside be-

'They're fundamentally changing the way carriers are rated for safety.'

Ray Haight

inspections to trigger a safety rating," says Davis.

So how does the new safety rating system work?

To begin with, drivers will receive their own safety ratings, based on roadside inspections. The criteria consist of seven categories of driver behaviour (see *BASICS* chart). How drivers perform according to these criteria will of course impact carrier ratings. Ratings will consist of three categories: Continue Operation; Marginal; or Unfit. A rating number will also be calculated based on the new criteria and, as is now the case, the higher the number is, the more unsafe a carrier will be perceived.

Next, the way the FMCSA responds to a carrier rating will change. CSA 2010 'Interventions' will include Tier 1, 2 and 3 interventions. Tier 1 will consist of a warning letter and a focused roadside inspection. Tier 2 will consist of an off-site investigation, the requirement for the cooperative development (be-

haviour of your drivers) and you don't provide proof that you've fixed it, FMCSA is going to step in and fix it for you or take you off the road. So is this good or bad for carriers and drivers? It depends on who you ask.

"This is definitely going to have an impact on the driver hiring process," says Davis. "Carriers will be required to look at the driver's safety rating under CSA 2010. In a way it's a good thing, because carriers won't have to dig and hunt for info on driver behaviour. Conversely, much more data will be used to calculate a carrier's safety rating. And the algorithms used to calculate the rating will be weighted more towards driver behaviour. Every violation will count." Davis says the FMCSA has severity-weighted 3,589 different violations.

A further impact on carriers will be that they will need more resources to track the increased volume of data on their own drivers, as

well as more resources to train them, should action be required. The advantage, says Davis, is that drivers will be more accountable.

The driver/carrier relationship will therefore change, possibly for the better, says Joanne Ritchie, head of the Owner-Operators' Business Association of Canada (OBAC).

"This new system is going to give drivers and owner/operators a higher stake in making sure they don't do anything wrong," says Ritchie. "That means they'll have more motivation to push back if their carrier tries to push the envelope when it comes to compliance. Carriers won't be able to pressure or threaten drivers into doing things they don't want to do."

So are carriers prepared? *Truck West* called one smaller carrier, which will remain nameless and discovered that the carrier's compliance manager knew nothing of the CSA 2010 initiative.

"We'll be watching for your article to find out more," said the officer.

As for larger carriers, Challenger safety and compliance director Robert Halfyard believes the impact will be minimal, at least for "carriers who currently have effective safety programs and monitor their on-road performance."

As for carriers who do not have ways and means to monitor and correct deficiencies, they "will most certainly have some issues to deal with." For more info visit <http://csa2010.fmcsa.dot.gov>. □

The BASICS

Drivers' safety ratings will be calculated using data from the following BASICS (Behaviour, Analysis Safety Improvement Categories):

1. Unsafe Driving
2. Fatigued Driving
3. Driver Fitness
4. Drugs and Alcohol
5. Vehicle Maintenance
6. Cargo Securement
7. Crash Experience □

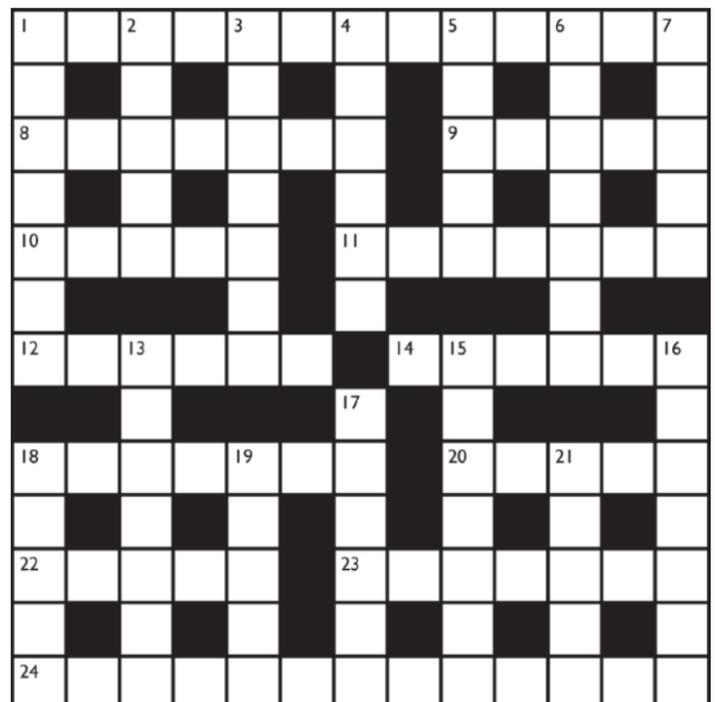
THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Across

1. Protective devices behind cabs (8,5)
8. Lode King product
9. New-truck-deal factor, perhaps
10. Truck-stop fixtures
11. Corporate name on NASCAR vehicle
12. Roadside-assistance service
14. Twist-off cooling-system component (3,3)
18. State with "Big Sky Country" plates
20. Trip-odometer button
22. Dress-up trim for windshield
23. Radiator liquid
24. Event ending ice-road season (6,7)

Down

1. Truck stop with Wi-Fi service (3,4)
2. Anti-theft-system component
3. Truck-transmission brand
4. International sleeper type (2,4)
5. Relationship between gears
6. Freightliner conventional model
7. Tractor-tire type
13. Border city in SW Ontario
15. Gladhands connector (3,4)
16. Brief truck-stop visit, slangily (3,4)
17. Tractor for local-cartage driver (3,3)
18. Allied's business, you might say
19. Ohio's "Rubber City"
21. A vertical exhaust pipe



Answers on page 29

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Racing

Start-up series poses challenges to NABRR circuit

Continued from page 1
drivers.

"It's certainly nothing like what we race for," he says, "because we never, ever made it to those levels. They also had great sponsorship and support from the eastern manufacturers, names like Mobil Oil and the like."

Singer says that in those formative days of the NABRR series, he met with a lot of the GATR owners to pick their brains.

"I wanted to know all about the series, all the good, the bad, and the ugly," he says, noting that "they were pretty wild trucks in those days. The series was very well run and they had big dollars to play with."

He came away from his consultations with the opinion that the GATR series had lost its lustre in part because the trucks stopped looking like real trucks, in much the same way today's NASCAR vehicles are Camrys, Fusions and the like in name only. That doesn't mean today's big rig racing trucks are stock vehicles driven right off the lot or the job site, however.

"We have evolved," Singer says. "When we started, guys parked the trailer in the lot and put the truck on the track and that's how it was. Now, the trucks have been modified to be more racing trucks, but the looks are still genuine OEM – so when you see Mack or a Peterbilt or a Western Star, you don't have to guess what it is."

Singer says the trucks are either tweaked or rebuilt completely, depending upon the team and its budget, and are definitely no longer street legal.

"There's no brake lights or signal lights and no wipers," he says, "And they run altered suspensions and front axles."

All this modification doesn't come cheap. According to Singer, it's easy for a team to invest \$200,000 into a truck. "There's guys that've got \$50,000 in and there's others with \$200,000," he says. "There's a lot of high-tech stuff and knowledge that goes into what makes the truck go fast and how you can stay on top."

Another challenge of racing is the way a team has to balance sport with business. "To be successful," Singer says, "you've got to do the same things as it takes to be successful in business. You have to be efficient and very business savvy; you've got to be entrepreneurial, with some salesmanship about you." A racing team can't succeed, he says, by appealing only to the motor sport fan, but to the sponsors as well, because "They're the most critical part. Without them, you're just not running."

And there's the rub. Singer says the series has gotten so expensive, with a dollar potential that hasn't increased for many years, that it's tough to keep going. And now a cut-rate racing series in the US has been siphoning off NABRR venues by offering to race on the cheap.

"It's all about dollars and cents," Singer says. "It's the same thing that's happening in the trucking



THE RACE GOES ON: Glenn Creed (pictured) was crowned champion of the NABRR series in 2009.

industry itself. We're being undercut and so those tracks we raced at, while they're not happy that we're not there anymore, it only costs half as much to have the other series there."

That means the series has another challenge: looking for new venues, a major issue indeed. Even long-time tracks such as Calgary's Race City Motorsport Park are threatened. Race City has been living under a death sentence recently, thanks to a host city that owns the land and wants to use it for its own purposes: expanding a landfill. Race City's operators have been understandably reluctant to spend a lot of money on the track.

Race City received a temporary stay of execution in late September when Calgary city council decided to allow a renewal of its lease for another five years. And while that may provide some welcome breathing room for many racers and fans, Singer doesn't think it will do anything for the NABRR, because of the wear and tear the trucks put on tracks.

"I'm really happy for Race City and all the people who use it," Singer said.

"It's a good thing for everyone concerned, except for big rigs. I don't think we'll be racing there because the track's just too far gone. We do so much damage, tear it up so bad, and they haven't put any money into the track and probably don't intend to."

The competition for sponsorship dollars – dollars that are also shrinking thanks to the current economic rat race – is also intense. Singer, however, looks on that as an opportunity for more salesmanship and marketing to help the manufacturers and OEMs see big rig racing as a way to reach a captive, friendly audience.

"They spend a lot of advertising dollars every year," he says. "If we can get them to support us a little bit better, if they will only give us an opportunity, we would guaran-

tee a return on their investment."

Singer says the series would ensure sponsors' investments were returned in real dollars and cents, through the teams' support of their products and by the series encouraging people to use their products. "We would be salesmen for their product all the time," he says. "We go to all the big rig shows, all the big truck shows and we would sell their wares there, and at race tracks and any other function we were at."

Singer, whose son now races both his big rig entries and runs the teams for Heavy Metal Motorsports, says he's sure it would work because Big Rig racing in Europe can attract 250,000 people and big rig racing events at Calgary's Race City have been very popular.

"We provide the attraction and the tease, we bring the people to the track," he says, "We fill the seats and the sponsor gets 250,000 people coming to his booth. What they do with them then is up to them."

It's kind of a three-pronged deal, he says, with the teams and the promoter supplying the venue and the audience, and the sponsor

providing the money.

Meanwhile, Singer says the series brings together some of the best talent and experience in the trucking and motor sport industries – and offers good value for fans.

"It's just the cheapest entertainment value for your dollar that you could ever find," Singer says. "You never, ever find any fans that were disappointed. They were always amazed – and the kids just love it."

So do the participants. "What really attracted me to the sport was the fact that you could have a relationship with people you worked with," Singer says, "But it wasn't a work relationship, it was a fun relationship."

It's a relationship that carries over from peers to sponsors. "The thing about motor sports is that it is so brand loyal and I never understood why the big OEM manufacturers didn't support it more. It's been an untapped opportunity and I hope we can change their minds over time."

The racing community is working hard at doing that and has managed to change some minds along the way, getting some of the manufacturers involved in the racing. And while money is a vital ingredient, it also takes a lot of time and effort by the race team, without which "you're nothing. And every part of the team has to be there or you're not going to be on the winning side."

Challenges or not, the 2009 season came to a successful conclusion with Glenn Creed driving the number 59 Ford Louisville 9000 LTL to the championship for Glenn Creed and Valley Racing, sponsored by Johal Trucking, Creed Trucking and Nixon Brothers Contracting. But the 2010 season is still in flux.

"We'll be meeting and talking soon," Singer says, "And then we'll contact other tracks regarding schedule dates." He says there'll definitely be a 2010 season but where and when the races will be held won't be known until after next January or February.

"There's no doubt big rig racing will continue," Singer says, "but it's a challenging time." □

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Good news, please

Although not exactly a poke in the eye, economic overview creates little excitement for trucking industry

By Lou Smyrlis

LAS VEGAS, Nev.— US motor carriers have seen their loads drop by about 20%, their revenue-per-mile or per-tonne fall off dramatically and their total revenues shrink by 30% on average so far in 2009. In other words, the industry has taken it on the chin. So the fleet executives who converged at the posh Las Vegas Mandalay Bay Resort for the ATA's annual conference were hoping to hear some good news from the much anticipated *All Eyes on the Economy* panel session.

Yet all they got from the three experts on the economy and the industry was an assurance that the worst was behind them. The worst recession to hit the US in the post-war era likely ended in the third quarter but unlike past recessions, it will not be followed by a strong and quick recovery.

Panel moderator Stuart Varney from Fox News warned fleet executives that Sara Johnson and Charles Clowdis Jr. of IHS Global Insight and the ATA's Bob Costello would not sugarcoat anything, and they certainly did not.

Johnson, managing director of global micro-economics, said any projections of a recovery in 2010 with 3-4% GDP growth are too rosy, even though past recessions have been followed by even stronger growth.

She figures the final quarter of this year will see GDP growth around 3% as will the first half of 2010 but the second half growth will slip to just 1.5%. In total she projects the US economy, Canada's largest market which absorbs more than 70% of our exports, to grow just 2% in 2010.

"We see some speed bumps in the road ahead," she said, explaining that the US consumer, which accounts for 70% of spending, is still under considerable financial stress. American households have lost \$14 trillion in net worth, so they're not likely to soon return to their pre-recession free-spending ways. Johnson said just as the Great Depression left its mark on a generation of people, so too will the worst recession of the post-war era change the spending habits of today's consumers.

"People are now a lot more conservative in their spending. They are still deep in the hole," she said, adding that by 2005 US consumers were setting aside just 1% of their annual income, as they counted on the appreciating value of their homes to provide their retirement money. The collapse of the housing market changed all that in a hurry and now the savings rate is up to 3% of income and she expects that to climb to 6%.

So the US consumer will be saving more and spending less and will also be checked by reduced access to credit. She expects consumer spending to grow by just 2% annu-

ally rather than 4-5%. Also by the end of 2010 some of the boost to the economy gained from the Obama administration's monster stimulus package will start to wear off and business will again slow down.

"There is a 20% chance we will indeed fall back into recession next year," Johnson said.

Historically the trucking industry has been a leading indicator of both economic slowdown and economic recovery. But it will not be leading the US economic recovery this time, held back by still large volumes of inventory in shipping circles that needs to be worked off before there's any need for trucks to transport new products into stores, plants and warehouses.

"We have seen an inventory cycle like never before," ATA's chief economist Bob Costello said. "By mid-2008 there was an unprecedented increase in the inventory-to-sales ratio." Companies did move aggressively to bring inventory in line with sales but sales dropped faster and deeper than expected.

"Freight volumes got hit much, much harder than the overall economy but I am happy to say it has hit bottom. Volumes are still at very, very low levels and it will be slow and choppy ahead," Costello said.

Year to date, tank loads are down about 20%, dry van loads down about 18%, reefer loads down about 2% (we still need to eat, drink and take medications during recessions) and flatbed has been hit the hardest with about a 25% decline in loads.

"And I still don't know if we can call this bottom for the flatbed sector," Costello warned.

Fleet capacity is down 10% across the board as carriers operate one of the oldest fleets in recent memory and employment in the for-hire sector is at its lowest level since 1995. Costello figured it would be at least another six months before trucking returned to any degree of normalcy and more likely it will take 12 months. Nor did Costello have good news for truck makers, even though the fact the industry has experienced one of its largest capacity reductions ever would make it seem on the surface as if truck plants will soon be getting much busier.

"I think you are lagging behind the fleets. Fleets don't have plans to buy any time soon," Costello said. Aside from weak demand for their services, fleets remain reluctant to buy because the age of their vehicles is deceptive. The average miles travelled by truck fell 22.6% in 2009

compared to the previous year. Based on a five-year replacement cycle, that basically saved a year of driving.

(Incidentally, it's also interesting where many of the used trucks are going of late. At the start of the decade very few used trucks were finding a home outside the US. By last year, however, about 20,000 used Class 8 trucks found new homes in Russia and Nigeria. This year more than half of used truck exports from the US went to Africa).

Several issues will combine to make navigating through the next few years choppy. Bankruptcies in the industry are not close to where they should be given the economic pressures, Costello said, surmising that many lenders are reluctant to move on companies as long as their used truck assets remain low. Once the used truck market picks up, however, that will change.

"Don't be surprised if more carrier failures start to happen as demand picks up," Costello said.

One of the more interesting issues is the focus on reduced packaging. Supply chain executives, faced with high fuel costs and environmental concerns, are on a drive to reduce packaging, explained Clowdis Jr., managing director, North America for global commerce and transport. And they are meeting with some success which has distinct repercussions for trucking.

Clowdis Jr. gave an example of one large telecommunications company which by redesigning the packaging for one of its products was able to get 300 of them on a pallet compared to just 120 under the previous packaging design. Hewlett Packard's packaging redesign for one of its computers is helping it reduce weight by 8% and cube by 25%. The company is able to now move in three trailers what used to take four trailers.

Wal-Mart has a much publicized plan to reduce packaging and is leaning on its suppliers to follow suit. Clowdis Jr. figured that 8% savings on weight and 25% savings on cube will become an industry norm, placing even greater pressure on capacity as fewer trailers are required to move the economy's goods.

The panelists did deliver good news about fuel pricing, which just last year was the top concern for motor carrier executives.

Johnson said the global market for petroleum is currently over-supplied and expects pricing for a barrel of crude to stay around the \$70 mark and then fall to \$62 by March as the economy gets more sluggish. She added that if the impact of speculators was removed and only supply and demand issues drove crude pricing, the price would range between \$50 and \$70.

More good news: there's little chance of inflation despite the \$1.56 trillion deficit the US has racked up and will likely not be able to take below a trillion for another two years. Johnson said excess capacity, wage gains that are down to 1% and significant productivity gains will protect against inflation.

"But clearly we will have to pay for the deficit," she said, explaining the heavy borrowing by government will crowd out private investors. □

Obama on wrong track with ATA over road work

LAS VEGAS, Nev.— For Canadian motor carriers frustrated with Ottawa's historically slow response to dealing with our nation's infrastructure needs or its push towards a more intrusive regulatory approach, rest assured. You are in good company.

They're just as frustrated south of border, even with a new administration in place. The Obama administration's honeymoon with the leaders of the American Trucking Associations (dubious at best considering the heavy Republican leanings of the membership shown in past conventions) is clearly over and infrastructure spending is a particularly sore point.

ATA president and CEO Bill Graves, a former two-term Republican senator in Kansas, came out swinging in his opening address to the annual conference, held this year at the Mandalay Bay Resort in Las Vegas.

Graves said he is frustrated that Congress is working on things that it "really doesn't need to at the moment and doesn't work on things it really needs to." Graves was referring specifically to what he perceived to be a lack of action and funding for infrastructure by the Obama administration, pointing out that the administration recognizes and President Obama even acknowledged during his presidential campaign that America's long-term competitiveness depends on the quality of its roads and bridges.

"It's a point we enthusiastically agree on. But yet when it comes to taking action, both the White House and the Democratic leadership use all their energy and time on health care reform and climate change," Graves said. "...I think it's politically safer/easier to have grand discussions on subjects that are so complex and confusing, and provide legislators with a great degree of political cover by obfuscating the impacts the policies will have on Americans, while avoiding a straightforward discussion about the need to raise the national fuel tax."

Graves said raising the national fuel tax is the only way to create the funding necessary to deal with his nation's "staggering" infrastructure needs. He pointed to a recent report from the American Society of Civil Engineers that concluded that an estimated \$930 billion needs to be spent over the next five years to fix the highway infrastructure. Yet of that, only an estimated \$350 billion will be spent, a shortfall of \$550 billion (when you take into account the \$29 billion included in the 09 economic stimulus package).

"The money included in the stimulus package was a start. But I take issue with labeling it a 'record investment designed to lay the foundation for the nation's economic future', which were the words used to announce it, when, in fact, it fell far short of the money we needed and was such a disappointingly small fraction of the total stimulus package."

Graves said that with all the money spent on the stimulus package, coupled with fighting wars on multiple fronts along with a serious decline in both federal and state governments there is simply no more general fund money available for infrastructure investment without raising taxes. But it's a very tough fight for the industry to win and warned against expectations that something will happen soon. □

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Challenger acquires Sandrock Specialized Carriers

CAMBRIDGE, Ont. – Challenger Motor Freight has announced it has purchased certain assets of the special commodities business of Sandrock Specialized Carriers. Sandrock is an Ontario-based carrier that specializes on over-dimensional transportation.

“The addition of the Sandrock business is a significant moment for both our companies,” said Dan Einwechter, chairman and CEO of Challenger Motor Freight.

“With the addition of their equipment and expertise, we look forward to expanding our special commodities division to provide Challenger’s innovative transportation solutions to a wider range of customers as well as our combined existing client base. Having Mark

Sandrock and his team join our new division, Sandrock Specialized Transport, will enhance service offers to existing Challenger accounts as well as provide Sandrock’s customers with much broader service offerings from a single source, a true win-win situation.”

“With the challenges in today’s trucking industry, it is often necessary and sometimes inevitable to seek out a larger carrier to provide security and diversity of service, and such is the case for Sandrock,” added Mark Sandrock, president of Sandrock Specialized Carriers.

Sandrock was founded in 1999 and has focused on transporting heavy equipment and over-dimensional freight. □

Vancouver, Delta first to earn E3 Fleet Gold rating

VANCOUVER, B.C. – The purchase of medium-duty hybrid trucks and the use of biodiesel are two elements that helped the municipalities of Vancouver and Delta earn the first ever Gold Ratings from E3 Fleet.

The E3 Fleet program is a national program orchestrated by the Fraser Basin Council, which recognizes excellence in fleet management and environmental performance. Under the program, public and private sector fleets can seek formal ratings based on criteria such as: fleet action plan; idle reduction practices; vehicle purchasing; fuel data management; fleet operations and maintenance; trip and route planning; and fuel efficiency.

Vancouver earned its Gold rating by: purchasing medium-duty hybrid-electric trucks, employing the right vehicles for each fleet function, assessing the full lifecycle costs of each vehicle purchased, testing alternative fuels, adopting new technologies and taking advantage of nitrogen tire inflation and engine control module reprogramming, according to the city.

Delta, meanwhile, improved its fuel efficiency by 6% for every kilometre travelled, reducing its greenhouse gas emissions by 1% between 2007 and 2008, E3 Fleet officials said. Delta employed a fuel-efficient fleet purchasing strategy (including replacing 16 conventional vehicles with hybrids), launched an anti-idling campaign, right-sized its vehicles and on larger vehicles installed GPS systems and engine shut-off devices to discourage idling. Delta also uses biodiesel in all its diesel engines. More info on the E3 Fleet program is available at www.e3fleet.com. □

Canadian fleets top SmartWay fuel-savers

LAS VEGAS, Nev. – Three Canadian carriers have been recognized by the EPA SmartWay program for significantly reducing their CO₂ emissions. Thirty-seven organizations were recognized during the 2009 SmartWay Excellence Awards, including Bison Transport, Challenger Motor Freight and MacKinnon Transport.

“EPA’s SmartWay partnership helps freight companies go the extra mile by saving fuel and money, while cutting air pollution,” said Gina McCarthy, assistant administrator for EPA’s Office of Air and Radiation. “Within our nation’s hard-working freight sector, SmartWay Excellence Award winners have stepped up to help protect our health, climate and environment.”

Bison earned SmartWay’s praise by modifying its idling policies, reducing its speed and reducing its emissions by taking advantage of intermodal opportunities. Bison invested in auxiliary power units (APUs) for 391 of its sleeper cab-equipped trucks, slashing idling by over 650,000 hours, according to SmartWay.

Bison shipped more than 5,000 loads intermodally in 2008 and also lowered its governed speed from 65 mph to 62. Bison also has an incentive program for drivers willing to reduce their speed to 59 mph, which has been embraced by 40 drivers. Bison estimates it improved its fleet-wide fuel economy by 0.3 mpg since

introducing the changes. SmartWay estimates Bison saved more than 9.1 million gallons of fuel and slashed its CO₂ output by 101,796 tonnes.

For its part, Challenger has equipped its entire fleet with idle-reduction equipment including 730 bunk heaters. It’s also in the process of deploying 350 APUs. Challenger takes advantage of intermodal opportunities, saving the company 771,850 gallons of diesel per year, SmartWay claims.

Challenger also takes advantage of satellite technology to track its fleet and improve its operating efficiency. Tractors are dispatched loads based on factors such as proximity to the load, reducing empty miles and idling. Challenger also puts its drivers through a full week training course on fuel economy and efficient driving. SmartWay estimates Challenger has saved more than 11.1 million gallons of diesel and slashed its CO₂ emissions by 123,337 tonnes in 2008.

MacKinnon Transport meanwhile implemented a corporate speed limit of 60 mph, saving it 125,000 gallons of fuel. It has also focused on driver training and behaviour to improve fuel economy. MacKinnon has a cash incentive program to reward low idling time, high gear percentage and maximum use of cruise control. MacKinnon uses wide-base tires on new equipment and its efforts have collectively saved about 732,689 gallons of fuel and 8,133 tonnes of CO₂ emissions, according to SmartWay. □

Bison wins inaugural Volvo safety award

LAS VEGAS, Nev. – Bison Transport has won the inaugural Volvo Trucks Safety Award for fleets accumulating more than 10 million miles.

The award was presented at the American Trucking Associations Management Conference and Exhibition. Winning the award for small fleets was Virginia-based Food City.

“Food City and Bison Transport represent extraordinary ongoing achievements in the safe operation of trucks,” said Scott Kress, Volvo’s senior vice-president, sales and marketing.

“Both of these companies have taken the concept of safety and made it the foundation of their fleets. They have focused significant resources and talent on recruitment, training, maintenance and equipment.”

Participating companies were judged on accident frequency using US DoT definitions of a “recordable accident” in addition to fleets’ accident prevention programs.

Bison boasts an accident rate of 0.19209 per million miles travelled, while operating 1,050 tractors and delivering 3,200 loads per week, Volvo reported. Bison provides drivers with a ‘toolbox’ that contains promises such as the selection of safe equipment, a safe working environment, in-depth training and accountability “so that we don’t lose sight that safety is in fact a priority,” according to Bison president and CEO Don Streuber.

“Bison has an intense focus on safety,” said Streuber. Bison provides ongoing training for drivers using 15 different courses and four simulators. It also performs risk assessments on every driver and uses targeted training to improve drivers who are identified as high-risk.

Each of the winning fleets received \$25,000 from Volvo to put towards their safety programs. □



SAFETY PAYS: Bison Transport president Don Streuber (left) collects the cash from Volvo exec Scott Kress in recognition of its safety practices.



PROUD TO BE PINK: Superior Propane revised its paint scheme to raise awareness (and money) for breast cancer research.

Superior Propane goes pink

CALGARY, Alta. – Superior Propane has introduced a new pink and white delivery truck into its fleet in support of the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation – a sharp contrast to its trademark bright yellow vehicles.

The new vehicle will deliver propane to Superior’s Ontario customers, with a portion of all revenue generated from those deliveries to be donated to the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation. Each customer will receive a note alerting them to the donation.

In addition these deliveries, the truck will also be displayed at various tradeshow and events

throughout Ontario in an effort to raise breast cancer awareness.

“Superior Propane is committed to improving lives and the communities in which its customers and employees reside and this cause marketing relationship is a clear demonstration of that commitment,” officials said in a release. “Breast cancer does not just affect those people living with the disease, but also their friends and families. With the debut of this new pink and white truck, Superior Propane is proud to assist the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation in their mission of creating a future without breast cancer.” □



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Profile



NO SPEED LIMITERS: Mitch Sutherland's trucking business helps fund another form of horsepower – chuckwagon racing.

Prime chuck

Alberta trucker's quest for horsepower takes several forms

By Jim Bray

GRANDE PRAIRIE, Alta. – Mitch Sutherland knows all about horsepower. Sutherland, the 31-year-old owner of Grande Prairie, Alberta's, Hitch'em Oilfield Hauling company, can "torque" about horsepower all day – not only because he's familiar with it from his fleet, but also because he knows it intimately from his summer sideline: he's a champion chuckwagon racer.

The man comes by both facets of his "horse sense" honestly, having grown up in a family with a long history of driving and of racing. Sired in Grande Prairie, Sutherland spent four and a half years studying "a little bit of this and a little bit of that" at the University of Alberta in Edmonton, but quit half a year before getting his degree from the Faculty of Arts.

"I could tell that it wasn't the direction I wanted to go," he says. The experience in the halls of academe didn't propel him directly toward becoming the latest racing and trucking Sutherland, though; for a while he trod a decidedly different path where neither trucks nor horses were part of his stable of interests. Instead, he was into pigs – as in pigskins.

"I played football through high school and a year of junior," Sutherland remembers, playing line-backer first and later, when he got to college, moving up to defensive end. He was good enough to attract the attention of the Canadian Football League's Montreal Alouettes, who drafted him. The CFL didn't work out for him, though.

"It was a little political at that level," he says, admitting that the experience left a sour taste in his mouth. "But that's the way she goes."

He came back home to Alberta and worked construction for a year, "fixing camp shacks and stuff like that," and then got into trucking with his dad Kirk, who's had trucks as long as Mitch can remember.

"He was hauling mud when he was 14, 15 years old," the younger Sutherland remembers. Mitch drove for his dad's company for a couple of years, then made a deal that resulted in him becoming co-owner.

"I could have either had the truck I was driving," he says, "or half of all the company's trucks – which was three at the time."

After opting for the latter arrangement, they spent the next decade building the company to a point where they had 11 trucks in service, though they downsized to four recently and plan to purchase one more to run through the winter "and see how things pan out."

Hitch'em does oil service work such as hauling rental equipment, pipe and the odd load of mud. Sutherland says they used to get into more things, like end dump work, "but we got rid of those trucks because there are just too many out there. There's no money in it anymore."

His busy season is November to April, and he stays mainly around the Peace country, ranging from Hinton in the south to Tumbler Ridge in the west and as far east as Slave Lake. He doesn't drive much during the summer, which suits him just fine – it frees him up to pursue racing. It seemed inevitable that Sutherland would wear a chuckwagon racing hat eventually: his dad has been racing them since before Mitch was born.

"I travelled with him until I was 17 or 18," he says, "then when I started

into the football thing that took over my summers so I wasn't around it for about five years."

When the final gun sounded on his football career, however, he started accompanying his dad to the races again and, when Kirk eventually went south to compete in World Professional Chuckwagon Association events, Mitch took up the Western Chuckwagon Association (WCA) seat his dad was vacating.

"I did that for a couple of years then took a year off before getting back into it last year," he says. His timing couldn't have been better: he won the WCA title last year and again in 2009.

WCA events let him stick close to home. Most races are within an hour's drive of his base, the farthest being three hours away, in Manning.

That suits him for now and lets him keep riding herd on the trucking company which, while he aspires to following his father Kirk, uncle Kelly and cousin Mark into the WPCA, keeps him plenty busy for now.

"Racing locally, you're home for three or four days a week so you still have time to work the trucks if you have to," he says. "With the other circuit, you're gone for two months solid. I do want to get there but it's going to be a bit of a challenge managing the company from the road. But I think it can be done if you have the right personnel back at home looking after stuff for you."

Right now he and his wife, Heather, run the business and Kirk "helps out here and there." Mitch does the dispatching and managing, which keeps him hopping.

"I've got my plate full and now with all the safety stuff the oil companies are starting to require to show you're compliant with the regulations, it's more or less a full-time job."

And while that makes things a little more challenging for him, "It's not a bad thing; it's just time-consuming."

Being as hands-on as he can be – and being around enough to be hands-on – has other benefits, too. "I have more trucks than I do drivers



HIS OTHER RIDE: When he's not riding horses, Mitch Sutherland is running Hitch'em Oilfield Hauling.

so sometimes I end up in the truck," he says. "I don't mind it and it actually seems that the more you're out there, the more work you get out of it because you're out talking to the (customer) and you're not just a driver collecting a paycheck."

Business has been quiet since April, but he's optimistic for the winter and hopes it'll be decent like last winter was.

For the near term though, "It's basically survival, keeping the wheels turning and the wolves away from the door. The recession is turning around, but the price of oil and gas still has to come back up. Another year or two and that'll be back – hopefully at that point I can afford to have a manager."

He admits that his business plans also depend on how much fun he's having with chuckwagon racing. And fun it is.

"It's been getting better and better every year," he says. "We're getting more drivers and more money. It seems like a natural thing for me, I've been around it so much and I love horses to begin with."

He admits there isn't a lot of money in the sport, at least at the level he occupies currently, "But I can break even and I'm having a whole bunch of fun. It's just a love for the sport – it's a lot of fun or I wouldn't be doing it because it's way too much work."

For aspiring chuckwagon racers, Sutherland has this advice: "Ambition goes a long way, especially up in our association. If you've got the drive for it, you can make it happen. You have to go out and get your sponsor, and if you can find someone who'll help you out for the first year, that's a big help."

He says a chuckwagon racing newbie can get away with spending only about \$10,000 dollars on horses and still be competitive for a year or so, which he says is a good way to get one's hooves wet.

Perhaps self deprecatingly, Sutherland says success in the sport of chuckwagon racing is "Probably 90% the horses."

He admits the driver does make a difference, and that it probably takes about 10 years to become a really good driver, but "after that it's horsepower."

It's the thrill of competition that keeps it exciting, though.

"Our club is getting more competitive every year," Sutherland says. "The top three guys are within a second of each other."

In contrast, Sutherland says that at the higher level, such as the WPCA, the top 20 only have a second between them. "If you hit a barrel or something, you're at the bottom."

Right now, however, with the 2009 championship under his belt, Mitch Sutherland is at the top. □

Lighting

Design improvements, lower cost bring LEDs mainstream

By Jim Bray

CALGARY, Alta. – Driving or working at night can be tough enough without having to worry about what's lurking in the dark. Fortunately, today's modern lighting fixtures are doing a better job than ever of not only banishing the darkness, but of ensuring that you can be seen by those around you as well.

Some of today's brightest ideas are advancing the state of the art in LEDs, or Light Emitting Diodes. Solid-state LEDs are not only super bright, they're also getting quite intelligent, allowing their owners to do more things with fewer fixtures.

LEDs have been around for decades – for example, many early digital watches had LED displays – and TV sets are now going LED. LED taillights are commonplace on new cars and trucks, and LEDs for safety lighting have been available to the trucking industry for about 20 years. Besides their brightness, LED's advantages include long life, energy efficiency, and flexibility.

The downside is that LEDs are generally more expensive than their old tech, incandescent counterparts. This is typical of newer technology, however, and in the years since LEDs first appeared, their prices have come down substantially.

According to Mark Assenmacher, director of marketing for Peterson Manufacturing, LED's advantages outshine incandescent regardless of price, making them a compelling choice for companies looking to enhance their bottom lines.

"At one time LEDs were 10 times the cost of incandescents," Assenmacher recalls. "But even then some fleets jumped on-board because they could see the long-term benefit, especially for places like up on the high rails – they didn't want their people climbing up there on ladders replacing light bulbs."

Assenmacher says LEDs last six to 10 times as long as incandescent lights, are impervious to road shock and have no bulbs to break. He also says they're cheaper and easier to use in the long run which, figured on a cost-per-mile basis explains why a lot of fleets are going LED.

Peterson and other manufacturers currently offer a wide variety of LED products, mostly safety lighting such as marker lights, turn signals and taillights.

"It's pretty much commonplace to go to LEDs now," says Assenmacher, "though some guys still stick with incandescent – it depends on the segment of the market."

He points to the container chassis market as one place where incandescent lights are still popular, because "they have pilferage problems and don't want to spend the extra (for LEDs)." For the most part, however, "fleets are looking to companies like ours to give them a complete system: wiring harness, premium LEDs, a lot of the time with hard shell connectors to keep corrosion out and help them keep the trailer on the



COOL AND AFFORDABLE: New advancements in LED lighting technology, such as this tunnel effect from Peterson Manufacturing, have created new possibilities for creative fleets and owner/operators.

road and avoid downtime and repair costs."

Assenmacher says "value" LEDs can cost two or three times an incandescent version but, since some LEDs have a rated life of 100,000 hours, they're a good investment.

"And if you want to step up to one that's got all the bells and whistles and hard shell connectors and all that, for longevity, you're going to pay more, maybe three to four times more, but you'll get all the benefits."

Next up for Peterson are "Smart Lamps" that combine strobing LEDs with a turn signal override, so the functions of a Class 2 warning lamp and a legal DoT turn signal can be performed by a single unit.

Peterson's first Smart Lamp was a 36-diode, four-inch round model introduced mainly to the refuse market. When the driver activates the turn signal with the new lamp, the alternating triple flash strobe automatically shuts off on that side, resuming when the signal light is cancelled. The unit is self-contained, with no requirement for a separate controller.

"That's kind of the wave," Assenmacher says, "asking your LEDs to have more functions, to offer solutions."

He says the new smart lamp is an integrated, hassle-free solution

for refuse, maintenance and service vehicles and is more compatible and easier to install than other strobe systems.

Grote Industries is carving its own LED path. At last spring's Mid-America Trucking Show it unveiled LightForm technology that, as vice-president of sales and marketing Dominic Grote claimed at the time, will alter dramatically the way the industry uses lighting.

The LightForm thin-film, solid-state lighting device Grote demonstrated was only a millimeter thick and could be bent, flexed and twisted – so you can even install it around corners. Grote claimed such a lamp can be "peel-and-stick" mounted and can achieve "The same FMVSS 108 photometric requirements for a P2-rated marker lamp, with just 2% of the material used in a traditional LED lamp." He also says it should virtually eliminate installation hassles and costs.

Around the same time Grote was mesmerizing the audience with LightForm technology, Truck-Lite was taking the wraps off a seven-inch round LED headlamp it says brings "a new level of performance for seven-inch round forward lighting 12-volt applications, offering the extended life and energy efficiency of light emitting diode technology."

Truck-Lite says its new LED

headlamp (the follow-up to a 24-volt version now being used by the US military), meets or exceeds all applicable DoT requirements for headlights and offers "a perfect blend of thermal management and light output to produce an aesthetically pleasing beam pattern."

The company says the new headlamp is designed to replace any standard seven-inch round headlight in 12-volt applications and can be aimed using standard mechanical aiming equipment.

Each lamp uses 10 high-output LEDs and Truck-Lite says they should last up to 50 times as long as a typical headlamp, while offering improved visibility.

The bad news is a current price of about US\$350 – per lamp. The company says, however, that the improved durability, extended life and safety benefits (they're also said to offer 30 times the impact strength of glass), ensure their value even at that price.

Higher prices can turn people toward cheaper "knock-off" versions, and such is the case with LED fixtures.

"There's imitators out there," Assenmacher admits. "They bring lights in and you can buy them cheaper in a truck stop, but you're not getting the complete solution."

Assenmacher says such lights are "just a quick fix and you're probably going to have some corrosion problems down the road."

Assenmacher warns that some products may not be compliant with motor vehicle safety standards, even if they're labeled as compliant. "That's something buyers should be cognizant of," he says, adding that "fortunately, most OEMs and fleets are looking for a quality manufacturer that stands behind the product."

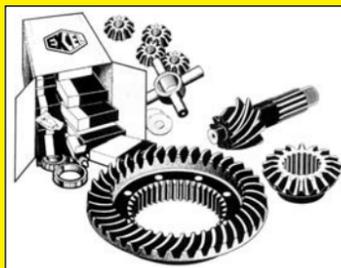
It seems, then, that LEDs are an increasingly bright idea for fleet owners and truckers looking for true enlightenment. □

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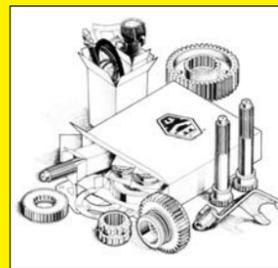
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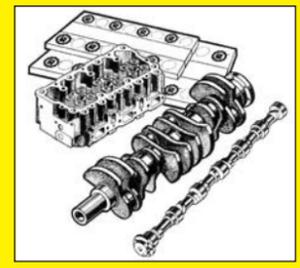
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In the age of unlimited competition, we can agree that having the right parts is the first step in providing quality services. Therefore, many owner-operators and fleet managers turn to well-recognized brands that provide high quality products with high price tags. In the tire industry, it is no different. Many companies purchase tires manufactured by the top three companies despite high prices without considering purchasing other brands, simply because of the perception that the other brands are manufactured by overseas companies with low technology to make them cheap. Certainly, the perception is justifiable to some brands, but not to Hankook. Here is why:

Fact : Hankook Tire is a global company, not an overseas company.

Maybe you did not know this, but Hankook Tire is one of the largest tire manufacturers in the world. In fact, Hankook Tire is the 7th largest tire manufacturer in the world with one of the fastest growth rates in the industry*. With great success and satisfied customers all around the world, the company has grown and transformed itself over the years. Hankook Tire now has more than 20 offices globally, multiple state-of-the-art manufacturing facilities and several technical centres on every major continent including in the U.S., Germany, Korea, Japan and China. With a global network that stretches from Seoul to Toronto to Moscow, it is true that Hankook is a global company, not an off-shore tire company. Hankook products are premium imports developed to exceed the expectations of consumers.

* Modern Tire Dealer, 2008

Fact : Hankook Tires are produced with innovative technology.

Grouped with energetic, smart and consumer-oriented engineers, Hankook Tire continuously re-invests approximately 5% of its revenue into Research and Development. At the Akron Technical Center of Ohio, energetic and dedicated engineers develop tires that reflect the weather, road and drivers of North America. The dedication and effort in advancing tires has been noticed from several highly respected organizations.

First, Hankook Tire is the original equipment tire supplier to International Trucks and I.C. School Buses on drive and steer positions. The tires meet and exceed the requirements of the highly respected company and continue to satisfy drivers and fleets in North America. Secondly, Hankook Tire has been recognized by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and received EPA SmartWay certification on three truck and bus tires for reduced rolling resistance that creates a smaller carbon footprint. The recently launched AL07+ steer tire, top-seller Z35a drive tire and advanced TL01 trailer tire provide reduced rolling resistance of 3% or more to meet SmartWay standards. The certified Hankook tires provide improved fuel economy and reduced costs to drivers and fleet managers.

In addition, Hankook focuses on improving fuel efficiency and lowering the rolling resistance of current and future products with an annual investment of \$19 million on R&D to make more environmentally-friendly products that reduce the operating costs of O-Os and fleets. Certainly, you will hear about additional Hankook products being certified for the SmartWay Program.

Fact : Hankook Tires provide tremendous value to the consumer.

You now know the Hankook products are made by a global company

that focuses on providing innovative products that are high in quality. And the company's effort has been recognized and certified. But did you know the tires provide excellent value to consumers? Hankook tires are very cost effective in comparison with comparable quality products and have been well-recognized for their value. Call your local dealer today to find out how much you can save with Hankook products and how they can deliver better value. The news you hear about the price, quality and value of Hankook Tires will be some of the best news you will hear in 2009.

Fact : Hankook medium truck tires are available at your local dealer.

With thousands of dealers across Canada, Hankook truck and bus tires are available at your local dealer to help you earn more value for your purchase. From the ports of Vancouver to the lumber mills in the Maritimes, the dealers are proud to sell Hankook products and they are widely available. In addition, the new large distribution centre in Ontario can service Ontario fleets directly and help you to reduce costs, which will help your fleet in the current economic downturn. For further information, please contact Hankook Tire Canada Corp., at 1 800 843 7709.

So, how do you spell tires with high value? H-A-N-K-O-O-K

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Tax talk

Baby, you can drive your car (just log the miles)

One of the most misunderstood deductible business expenses I see involves the so-called ‘service vehicle’ – the business-related use of a car, truck, or van, especially if it’s also your personal vehicle. Canada Revenue Agency has pretty clear guidelines about how to document the use of the vehicle for business purposes, yet this type of claim remains one of the biggest red flags for auditors. Why? There are specific requirements for documenting these expenses and it takes discipline to get them right every time.

You’re not only collecting a receipt for fuel, service, or some other expense, you have to record mileage as well. As a truck driver you may be accustomed to that sort of thing, but what about your spouse or kid who’s running a business errand while you’re away?

Before the year ends, talk to your accountant about how to make a valid service vehicle claim. Here are some questions to help get the conversation rolling:

What’s a “business” trip?

There are all kinds of reasons to use your car, truck, or van for business: a trip to the parts store, a meeting with your carrier, and so on. What’s important is that you’re using the vehicle for a task that helps you earn business income.

Note that CRA considers driving back and forth between home and work – commuting – as personal use, so you can’t deduct expenses related to your drive from home to your truck. I’ve argued that if your business office is in your home, then driving from the “office” to where your truck is parked should count as business travel. But I haven’t found an auditor yet who agrees with me.

What expenses are deductible?

Only the business portion of your motor vehicle expenses are tax deductible. So as a rule, you can deduct any reasonable motor vehicle expense you paid or will have to pay to earn business income. This includes licence and registration fees; fuel and maintenance; repair expenses; insurance; interest on money borrowed to buy the vehicle; and your lease payment or capital cost allowance (CCA or depreciation). CRA’s guide, *T4002 Business and Professional Income*, is the official reference on motor vehicle expenses (it’s available online at www.cra-arc.gc.ca).

How do I separate personal and business travel?

To support the amount you can deduct, you’ll need to keep a record of both the total kilometres you drove and the kilometres you drove for business. Divide your business-use kilometres by your total kilometres for the year, giving you anywhere from 1% to 100%.

The percentage is important. CRA uses “90% or more” as its guideline to interpret the words “all or substantially all” in the *Income Tax Act* and *Excise Tax Act*. If your business miles are 90% or more of the vehicle’s annual total,

Tax Talk

Scott Taylor



special rules may apply. For example, if you’re buying a new service vehicle, you can claim 100% of the GST/HST immediately on your next return if you can show that it’s used for business 90% of the time. If the business use is less than 90%, you have to calculate the GST/HST included in the depreciation of the vehicle each year and claim it back over time.

What do I need to know about recording mileage?

You need a logbook for the vehi-

cle that contains the total number of kilometres you drive in a year as well as the date, destination, purpose, and the distance in kilometres for each business-related trip.

Without a log, you can’t prove that the vehicle was used for business. Your kilometres will be deemed to be personal and your expense claims will be denied. Since CRA can audit three years at a time, you may lose three years of claims as well as the GST/HST input tax credits on those expenses. This includes the GST/HST in your lease payments, purchase price, gas, repairs, etc., which can be refunded to you at the percentage of business use. You may have to pay back part of your GST/HST refunds.

If you use more than one motor vehicle for business, keep a separate log and calculate each vehi-

cle’s expenses separately. If you change vehicles during the year, record the odometer reading and dates of each vehicle at the time you buy, sell, or trade it.

And if more than one driver is using the vehicle to support the business, remind them to maintain the log as well.

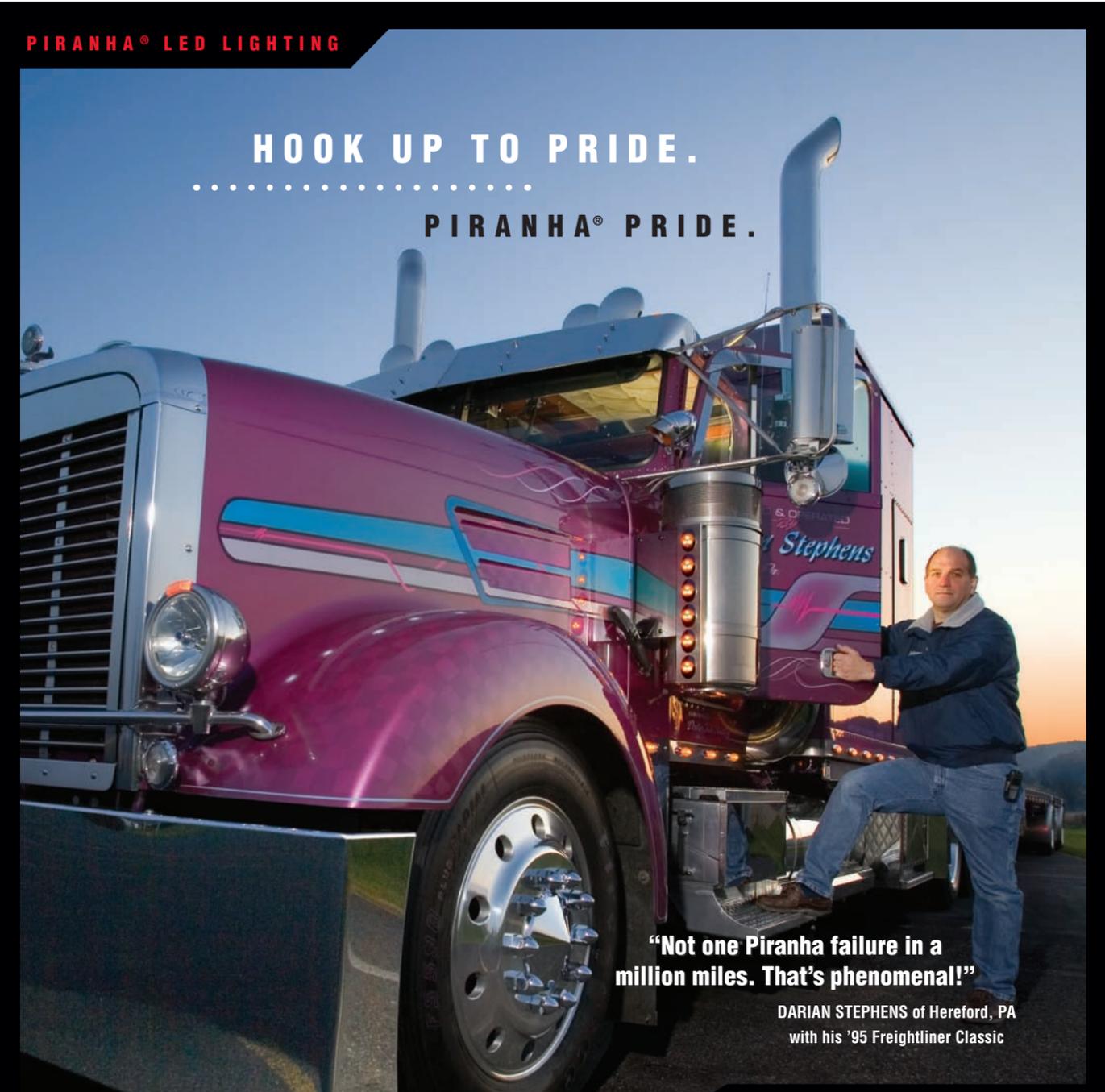
Make sure there’s a working pen inside the vehicle and an envelope to organize receipts. Like any other record-keeping exercise, keep it as simple as can be. □

– *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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Profile



The LAST LOAD

CHANGING GEARS: Bill Waistell pauses for reflection as his trailer is loaded with furniture one last time. After 40 years in the furniture hauling business, Waistell's ready to spend more time fishing and golfing. *Photo by James Menzies*

After a lifetime of hauling furniture from coast-to-coast, a professional driver pauses for reflection as he prepares to make his final delivery

By James Menzies

OSHAWA, Ont. – After 40 years of ‘humping furniture,’ as Bill Waistell refers to it, it’s time to park it for good. The owner/operator, who has spent the last 25 years of his career driving for Mackie Moving Systems, reaches into his pocket and pays his lump sum one last time at the Mackie warehouse in Oshawa, Ont.

He has just taken on his last load, which he’ll haul to Hamilton in the morning before heading to Prince George, B.C. for his final drop. After that, it’s back home to Shawnigan Lake, B.C. just outside Victoria. His truck’s already sold. Most of his goodbyes have been said.

“It hasn’t hit me yet, but I know it will,” he says as he prepares for his final cross-country run. “I sometimes wake up at night thinking about it – Jeez, no more on-the-road, no more seeing all the guys I know and like and having a good time. It’ll be different, but I think my wife will like it.”

Waistell’s wife Vivian is resting at a nearby hotel – there’s no more living out of the truck for either of them.

“When I’m travelling, it’s the truck all the time but when I get into town, it’s the hotel,” he says. “A lot of guys will stay at the truck stop, but I can’t stand it.”

Waistell first got into the furniture hauling business at the age of 25, when he was dissatisfied with his job as a B.C. Ferries deckhand.

“I had a lot of days off and one day my next door neighbour said ‘I work for a moving company, do you want to work on your days off?’ So I started doing that and I loved the physical labour,” Waistell recalls. It turned out to be a lasting labour of love. Waistell bought his first truck,

a 1965 single-axle Ford cabover with a 250 Cummins and began hauling household goods around Vancouver Island.

“That was quite the ol’ beast, I tell you,” he says. “Colder than a whore’s heart in the winter time.”

Waistell signed on with North American Van Lines and soon after, with North American agent Mackie Moving Systems. He took a short hiatus about 20 years ago to try hauling freight, but “three months later I quit freight and went right back into furniture again,” he recalls. “I couldn’t stand it.”

Waistell figures he has owned about a dozen trucks during his career. One of his favourites was a ’65 Kenworth with a 250 Cummins and a four-and-four, two-stick transmission that kept him busy behind the wheel.

“I just loved that truck,” he recalls with a chuckle. “You had 16 gears to choose from and you were always playing with them. In the mountains it was nice because you always had a lower gear.”

It was a far cry from his current ride – a 2004 Volvo VN780 complete with an automated transmission, twin bunks, refrigerator and a 19-inch TV.

“I’m spoiled now,” he says with a smile. Waistell has always taken pride in his equipment, and he had no problem finding a buyer for his current rig, which has only 650,000 kilometres on it.

All told, he says he’s racked up about two million miles during his career and has delivered furniture from coast-to-coast in Canada, as well as into the US and as far north as Yellowknife. Most of his loads originate in B.C. and from there he’ll usually deliver to Mackie headquarters in Oshawa, or to a

home in Toronto, Ottawa or Montreal. A delivery from Victoria to Ontario can earn him as much as \$17,000 gross, which is one of the appeals of transporting household goods.

“Furniture is good money compared to freight...if you want to get out and make some money, you can do it,” he says, adding a good run will consist of 30,000 lbs of furniture packed front to back, top to bottom. “Whenever you load them, you load them right to the roof and right to the back, otherwise you don’t make any money.”

Exceeding legal weights isn’t a concern with furniture, he explains, since a 53-ft. trailer cubes out before it grosses out when hauling household goods. Furniture hauling is a different kind of trucking. Waistell makes just seven or eight trips per year and often spends two to three weeks waiting for a backhaul. When he’s stranded in Ontario, Mackie’s tries to keep him busy hauling general freight or car parts for other segments of its business. However, Waistell is often just as happy to catch up with old friends while waiting for a return load of furniture. The lucrative nature of furniture hauling means there’s less urgency to get back on the road.

But like other forms of trucking, the furniture business is not without its challenges.

“The (cost of) labour’s gone up,” Waistell says. Over the years, he’s established a network of helpers in virtually every Canadian city, but many of them now command \$20 an hour “from the minute they sit down in that seat.”

There’s also a growing contingent of “independents” to contend with – smaller movers with no van line



READY TO ROLL: Loading furniture is an art form, since the trailer must be loaded to the roof from front to back.

affiliations, who Waistell says often undercut rates and promise unrealistic delivery schedules.

“The discounts have gotten bigger in the moving industry,” he laments. “I don’t want to cut all the independents up, because there’s some good ones out there, but there are a lot of bad ones too. Some people never see their furniture again and if they do, they only get half of it or it’s smashed and broken.”

Waistell also has grave concerns about the safety of Canadian highways. While he says he’s “watched them twin the Trans-Canada Highway across the prairies” over the years, current traffic volumes and the lack of professionalism on the roads today worry him.

“It gets more dangerous out there every day,” he says. “In the winter time, you’ll see at least five wrecks between here and Vancouver.”

Driving through the Rockies in winter is one of the things Waistell says he won’t miss, even though his wife prefers to accompany him on those scenic runs. He also won’t miss the physical labour. Just a few months ago he had to pick up a load in Kelowna in the 40-degree heat – closer to 50 C inside the enclosed trailer.

“I’ve had enough of that,” he says. “I’ve humped millions of pounds of furniture.”

However, like any trucker he admits he’ll miss the call of the open road, as well as visiting the many people he’s come to know during his travels.

“I chum around with a lot of people and have gotten to know hundreds of people,” he recalls. “I get into town here and I know everybody. I’m really going to miss the Mackies and all these guys here. Even the guy at the hotel; I told him I was leaving and he and his wife came to my room and brought me a bottle of scotch to say goodbye.”

Ross Mackie, patriarch of the family-run Mackie Moving Systems, is still hopeful he can coax Waistell back to work once winter passes. But Waistell shakes his head.

“I don’t think so,” he says. “I’ve made up my mind. As much as I like them, I just don’t want to do it anymore. It’s a hard ol’ life sometimes, humping that furniture, I tell you.”

Instead, Waistell plans to spend more time on the golf course or aboard his buddy’s 18-ft. boat in pursuit of Vancouver Island salmon.

But that’s not to say he’ll never again slip behind the wheel of a tractor-trailer. In fact, he admits with a grin that he has already put out the word that he’s available to deliver the odd load of freight or lumber locally on the island. □

Safety

Remember to adjust driving habits this winter

Driving challenges increase at a chilling pace in winter. Whether you are a seasoned professional transport driver who has clocked thousands of hours on winter roads, or an industry newcomer, there are guidelines to keep in mind that will help you stay safe. Safe winter driving demands knowledge of defensive driving skills and adjustments. The winter scene will be less hazardous if you keep some of these in mind.

While the two major hazards in winter driving are commonly considered to be poor traction and reduced visibility, research has shown there are *six* important problems which confront all drivers:

Poor traction

To keep your grip, start off slow and easy. Do not spin your wheels. In deep snow, try turning your wheels from side to side to push the snow. Before you turn off the ignition, move your vehicle back and forth one to two metres (four to five feet). This packs the heavy snow for easier starting. When you are pulling out, use a light foot on the accelerator, easing forward gently.

Reduced ability to stop

It takes three to 12 times the distance to stop on ice and snow covered roads than on dry roads. Under winter conditions widen this gap accordingly – the more severe the conditions, the wider the gap.

Starting and stopping

Braking on ice is never easy but as the temperature rises, ice becomes even more slippery. For example, your braking distance can double with a temperature variation from -18 to 0 degrees C.

Slippery surfaces

The action of tires spinning and sliding on snow and ice polishes the surface. It happens most often at intersections, on curves and on hills. Slow down early when you approach a slippery intersection, curve or hill. Gearing down may be necessary to slow down safely.

Black ice

Ice sometimes becomes disguised. The road ahead may appear to be black and shiny asphalt. Be suspicious, it may be covered by a thin layer of ice known as black ice. Generally, in the winter, asphalt is a gray-white colour. If you do see a black surface ahead, slow down, and brake smoothly and gently. Proceed with caution.

Reduced ability to see and be seen

Before starting your trip, clean off the entire windshield and all the windows. Wipe off the headlights, stop and tail lights and turn signals so that others may see you. This may be necessary frequently during a heavy storm. Road splatter can leave you blind. Use your windshield washer often. At night, stop occasionally to clean off the headlights. In fog or snow, keep lights on low beam and adjust your speed.

Hazards of jackknifing for tractor-trailer combinations

There are two distinct kinds of jack-

Guest Column

Michael Burke



knifing: a tractor jackknife in which the rear of the tractor skids sideways; and a trailer jackknife in which the rear of the trailer comes around.

Repeated tests have shown that if a jackknife develops beyond 15 degrees, it is almost impossible to recover. A jackknife can go to 15 degrees in 1.5 seconds. You must react fast in order to take preventative action and recover control of your vehicle. The faster this 15 degree angle develops, the greater the severity and potential damage of the jackknife. Safe defensive driving and adjusting to conditions offer the best safeguard against jackknifing. Going

over a hilltop at 60 km/h to discover a sheet of ice or cars and trucks piled up below, invites tragedy.

Letting the truck build up speed downhill before a turn or a stop invites danger by having to overbrake, which could result in a skidding or jackknife accident. There has been considerable difference of opinion on the subject of jackknifing and driver techniques have been studied to find the most effective methods of maintaining control of a tractor semi-trailer.

The most effective technique for recovery from a jackknife on ice is almost complete reliance on steering with little or no use of the accelerator or brakes. A prompt start in correcting a jackknife is important.

Experience and practice count. Drivers with the most experience have greater confidence and better control. Directional control is best with all the wheels rolling.

The tractor is most likely to jackknife when the drive wheels of the tractor are locked and the front and

trailer wheels are rolling. When the trailer wheels are locked, a trailer jackknife can also develop.

Brakes on empty vehicles still have all the power necessary for a full load. When the truck is unloaded, it's easy to overbrake. So, when driving on a light or empty unit, brake with extra care.

Power should be applied cautiously. Spinning the drive wheels risks a jackknife. This can easily occur on icy uphill grades and usually result in a tractor jackknife which blocks the road and ties up traffic.

Jackknifing often develops while braking for a curve. Do your braking or gearing down well before the turn, get down to a safe and easy turning speed, then take the turn with all the wheels rolling. □

– Michael Burke is president and CEO of the Transportation Health and Safety Association of Ontario. For more tips on winter driving and other transportation workplace safety topics, visit: www.thsao.on.ca.



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Safety

The cold winds are coming, but is your fleet ready?

As the leaves change their colours and temperatures begin to drop, experienced truck drivers begin to shift their thoughts to the most challenging season of all. Yes, it will not be long before today's dry pavement is covered in snow and ice.

While the realities of winter are impossible to escape, there are steps that fleets and drivers can take to address the threats that accompany the onset of colder weather.

Have your equipment thoroughly checked and prepared for winter – this includes tire tread, the braking system, batteries, and coolant strength, among others.

There should be little surprise that slicker surfaces can have a dramatic impact on a vehicle's handling characteristics; we must be ready for quickly changing conditions. A tractor-trailer that is traveling 100 km/h may stop within



Ask the Expert
Robert Spencer

approximately 600 feet on a dry road, but the distance can be double that amount when travelling on snow. Add black ice into the mix, and the stopping distance can be three times as long.

Of course, drivers of every sort need to be extra vigilant in these conditions, and that will contribute to the levels of stress and anxiety. Fatigue management practices such as regular sleep, frequent breaks, and trip planning are much more important.

A commitment to the principles of defensive driving will also help to ensure that speeds are adjusted

when heading into any intersections, ramps or bends in the highway with reduced visibility and traction.

Trip planning initiatives play their own role in ensuring that changes in the weather do not come as a complete surprise. Drivers who check their routes will be able to identify areas such as mountain passes that are more prone to bad weather, and further warnings can be collected by monitoring forecasts or even speaking with drivers who have recently passed through the same areas. Know where your safe havens are located and always try to leave yourself a way out.

When they encounter the deepest snow, drivers will also need to know about a fleet's policies and procedures surrounding the use of snow chains. Some fleets simply ask their personnel to pull off the road

when they see a warning to "chain up," but those who use the chains will require training in the way the devices wrap around tires and clamp into place.

Even when they are locked in position, chained tires are also accompanied by reduced vehicle speeds, such as limits of 35 km/h in deep snow and 15 km/h when the snow begins to melt. Familiarize yourself with the snow-chain regulations for the jurisdictions in which you operate.

The simple addition of a snow brush, shovel and ice scraper will help to ensure that circle checks can be properly conducted.

Drivers may need to clear ice and snow away from LED lights, since these bulbs do not heat up as much as their incandescent counterparts. The build-up of ice and snow may make it difficult to properly inspect your vehicle, and may affect your gross weight. You may then have to adjust your payload accordingly.

Other low-tech supplies can make the difference between being stranded and continuing a trip. Some additional washer fluid and wiper blades, for example, will ensure that the view of the road is as clear as possible.

A bag of kitty litter can provide some welcome traction in a slick parking lot, and it will be easier to carry and handle than a bag of salt or sand.

Even the choice of fuel can lead to a stranded vehicle. The long-haul drivers who fill their saddle tanks while driving through the southern US could end up with some of the summer diesel fuel that is more prone to waxing when it is exposed to freezing temperatures.

Moisture will present a challenge of its own. Those who allow fuel levels to drop too low will face struggles around the condensation that forms in the empty space of your saddle tanks.

The air brake system needs to be dry in order to perform properly. The system can be protected by draining air tanks at every opportunity, keeping air dryers in good repair, and topping up the airline antifreeze that is fed through any automatic injectors.

So let the cold winds blow. With some extra caution, common sense and a handful of supplies, professional drivers will be safely prepared for the days ahead.

– This month's contributing expert is Markel Safety and Training Services trainer Rob Spencer. Coming from a family of truck drivers, Rob grew up with trucking and has more than 10 years as both a driver and a trainer. He has now been sharing this expertise as a Markel trainer for four years. Markel Safety and Training Services offers specialized courses, seminars and consulting to fleet owners, safety managers, trainers and drivers. Send your questions, feedback and comments about this column to info@markel.ca. To read about more industry hot topics, visit Markel's Web site at www.markel.ca and click on the Articles & Essays section.

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TODAY!

Yokohama inks major deal with NationaLease

LANGLEY, B.C. – Yokohama has inked a deal with NationaLease to meet the leasing company's commercial tire needs.

Under the deal, Yokohama and its dealer network will provide tires and tire service to NationaLease's customer fleet, the companies announced.

NationaLease has more than 700 full-service locations in Canada and the US and more than 150,000 trucks, tractors and trailers. The deal covers the entire Canadian fleet as well as the US fleet when running in Canada.

"This agreement builds on Yokohama Canada's commitment to the country's commercial fleet operators," says Eric Dedoyard, national sales manager. "With a strong dealer network, new products like the next-generation tires from the Z.environment series and the blessing of key products by the US SmartWay environmental management program, our customers know we stand behind them." □

Detroit Diesel files for EPA certification

PORTLAND, Ore. – Having racked up more than 25 million miles of testing for its BlueTec selective catalytic reduction (SCR) emissions control system, Detroit Diesel has now submitted applications to the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for formal approval.

The DD13 and DD15 engines have been submitted for EPA certification already, with the DD16 to follow next month, according to the company.

"The submission of our 2010 certification applications, based on successful completion of our emissions and OBD certification testing, is a key program milestone for us. We have millions of test miles under our belt, including 'real world' freight hauling experience in customer trucks as well as our own testing in extreme ambient conditions and di-

verse operating conditions. We are pleased with test results confirming that our Detroit Diesel engines with BlueTec consistently meet the 2010 emissions standards," said Rakesh Aneja, 2010 program manager, Detroit Diesel.

"In addition to being good for the environment, BlueTec allows the performance of the engine to be optimized, thereby meeting customers' need for fuel efficiency, drivability, reliability, simplicity, and convenience.

"We are satisfied with the readiness of our engine and aftertreatment system for production launch – in fact, pre-production of our 2010 trucks and engines is already underway. We remain excited at the prospect of offering a paradigm-changing product to our customers." □

Deserving driver to win a second chance

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – It's an American program for American drivers, but it's nonetheless a noble award that will change somebody's life for the better. Arrow Truck Sales has once again launched its Back on the Road program, which will help a down-trodden truck driver get back on his or her feet and back behind the wheel of their own rig.

The award, now in its third year, looks to award a trucker who "consistently and unselfishly" helps others in need or otherwise supports the trucking industry. It has a celebrity spokesperson, country music star Aaron Tippin and a strong partner in Volvo Trucks.

Arrow is now soliciting stories about American truckers who may have lost their truck (and livelihood) through unfortunate circumstances beyond their control, and

are deserving of a second chance.

The winning nominee will receive a 2007 Volvo VNL670 from Volvo, a one-year work agreement with Heartland Express and an assortment of other prizes.

"Over the past two years, we've received a number of heart-warming stories of truckers helping others in need. So, we felt we should recognize these individuals, and their acts of kindness and consideration, as part of this year's campaign," said Carl Heikel, CEO of Arrow Truck Sales. "We believe the Back on the Road campaign has not only had a positive influence on those we've selected as winners, but on the trucking industry as a whole."

So if you've got an American buddy who's down on their luck and may be considered for the award, you can nominate them at www.BackOnTheRoad2010.com. □

Class 8 orders continue slow climb

NASHVILLE, Ind. – North American Class 8 net orders were up for the fourth consecutive month in September, according to preliminary figures from industry forecaster FTR Associates. The North American OEMs totaled 10,817 units in orders in September, the report says, which marks the fourth consecutive month-over-month gain. The total includes orders for the US, Canada and Mexico as well as exports.

Year-to-date orders are now 5.2% better than last year, according to FTR, marking the first year-over-year improvement since June 2008.

"FTR still believes that any increases we are seeing now are partially driven by abnormal industry activity ahead of the 2010 EPA emissions mandate," noted FTR president Eric Starks. "The data we track does not support any significant purchasing activity driven by increased freight demand any time soon. We continue to advise our clients to expect a continued soft recovery at least through 2010." □

Are August Class 8 sales sign of recovery or just a mirage?

By Lou Smyrlis

LAS VEGAS, Nev. – Class 8 truck manufacturers, battered like never before by the worst global economic malaise since the Great Depression, just may be starting to see a glimmer of light at the end of tunnel, according to Andreas Renschler, head of Daimler Trucks.

Then again, it may be a mirage.

Here's what's going on that has Renschler being very cautiously optimistic.

August showed an uptick according to worldwide sales figures for his company that he presented in conjunction with the annual American Trucking Associations conference in Las Vegas.

Specifically, Daimler truck sales in the NAFTA region showed a 9% increase versus July.

Sales were also relatively strong in the European Union and in Brazil August proved to be the best sales month of 2009 so far. In Asia August was the second best month of the year.

Welcomed news in a year where the truck market imploded worldwide but for North America at least it may be a mirage.

The upturn in Class 8 sales may simply be reflective of the weak pre-buy before the 2010 engine emissions deadline. Renschler acknowledged that if that's the case, the final quarter of the year could prove very slow.

Both Renschler and Martin Daum, the new president and CEO of Daimler's operation in North America, believe the North American market will improve in 2010 but it won't be much to get excited about.

They are basically banking on a 10% improvement in sales over the horrible year that was 2009.

"We see very, very moderate growth, based on a U-shaped economic recovery that will climb slowly. It will certainly not be V-shaped. If I had three wishes, that would be one of them but we are not living in a fairy tale," Daum said.

The past year has certainly proven a nightmare ending to the fairy tale growth in Class 8 sales shown during the decade.

As Renschler pointed out this is the first time all regions his company is involved in have experienced sizeable drops at the same time.

And those drops are significant. So far sales in North America for Daimler products are down 45% compared to 2008, which was not a particularly strong year in itself.

In Europe sales are down 46%, in Asia 51%. Overall, Daimler Trucks sales worldwide are down 48%.

"The current market situation is not a walk in the park even for us, the market leader," Renschler acknowledged in the understatement of the month.

"The markets will not return to previous sales levels in the near future and there is a lot of pressure on pricing. But we have no intention to enter the discount race and we are flexible enough to last this out...Cash flow is the name of this game and we are still in a positive position."

Daimler has taken decisive steps to manage the situation. For example, manpower levels in the NAFTA region were almost halved between December 2006 and June of this year.

In fact, in August they were able to slightly add to their workforce. Also in April, everyone from the president on down took a 10% pay cut.

Renschler believes growth in the near future will come from the emerging markets and Daimler is positioning itself to be a bigger player in these areas.

Daimler is in a strong position in Brazil, having been there for 55 years, but is looking at partnerships in other countries.

Daimler is cooperating with the heavy-duty market leader in Russia to enter the local volume market and recently announced a common project between Kamaz, MFTBC and JV for production and sales of Fuso trucks in Russia. Daimler is also planning to enter the volume truck segment in India, starting in the construction sector.

It's also looking to make moves in the Chinese marketplace, Daum said. □

Canadians among top Bendix distributors

ELYRIA, Ohio – Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems has awarded its top distributors with platinum designation.

A total of 37 companies have earned the highest ranking in Bendix's Premier Distribution Program, including seven Canadian distributors.

This year's Canadian platinum distributors are:

- **Buy-Rite Truck Parts** – Mississauga, Ont;
- **Fort Garry Industries** – Winnipeg, Man.;
- **Harman Heavy Vehicle Specialists** – Kitchener, Ont.;
- **Macpek** – Ste-Foy, Que.;

- **Malmberg Truck Trailer Equipment** – Ottawa, Ont.;
- **Parts For Trucks** – Dartmouth, N.S.; and
- **Ressorts Maska** – St. Hyacinthe, Que.

To achieve platinum status, distributors must place in the top 10% of the comprehensive Bendix independent aftermarket distributor network, which covers the US and Canada.

Distributor performance is evaluated in six business performance areas and each distributor's score places them in one of four categories: bronze, silver, gold, or platinum. □

New Products



Accessories

Problems with the ETR407? Help is now available from HTS to manage Canadian **toll highway invoicing**. The company says it works with toll operators to resolve problems, settles outstanding balances, offers dispute resolution, corrects improper invoicing and assists with plate and transponder management. The company also provides detailed monthly breakdowns of your charges. For more info, contact HTS at info@highwaytollservices.com or call 416-986-9062.

A former truck driver, driver-instructor and commercial driver examiner has authored an **electronic textbook** on gear selection and shifting. *Practical Tips to Shifting for Students of Truck Driving Schools and Truck Drivers* (ISBN: 0-9684939-0-4), is a textbook fea-

turing 140 pages and more than 100 graphics, covering comprehensive, step-by-step instructions on gear shifting in a wide range of applications, according to the author, who claims it will help drivers achieve a greater level of shifting proficiency. The book is being marketed direct online and is available as a .PDF file from the author. Payment of \$9.95 is accepted via PayPal. For details, send an e-mail to the author: truckgearshiftingtips@gmail.com.

Imperial Oil has introduced a new Mobil Delvac 1 ESP SAE 0W-40 **heavy-duty synthetic motor oil** which it says will offer added engine protection, particularly in cold weather. The company says the oil has proven in testing to reach even the furthest parts of the inside of an engine within the first minute of start-up, even at temperatures as cold as -43 C. Conventional oils thicken in the cold and allow metal-on-metal wear and tear during cold starts, the company claims,

whereas its new synthetic moves into action as soon as the ignition is turned. Imperial Oil says its newest product also delivers and maintains a strong, stable film of protection under heavy load and in high-temperature operations. It's also more resistant to the formation of sludge and deposits as well as viscosity breakdown than conventional motor oils. Customers using the new synthetic oil can also extend drain intervals and reduce maintenance costs, Imperial Oil says. The new oil is available through Imperial Oil's national network of branded distributors. More info is available by calling 800-268-3183 or visiting www.imperialoil.ca.



Lighting

Peterson Manufacturing has introduced a new **LED tunnel light**. The new 274 Series tunnel light is a



two-inch round, grommet-mounted accessory light for trucks and trailers. It complements the company's 179 Series, which it dubs the "ultimate accessory light." The light features a unique 3D tunnel effect, which led to its name. The two models now available feature an operating range from eight- to 16-volts and are available in amber and red. For more information, visit www.petersonmfg.com.

Phillips has come out with a new **trailer dome lamp** it claims to be the brightest trailer interior lamp on the market. Phillips says its Permalite XB trailer dome lamp boasts twice the light output of competitive lamps and its 175-degree light spread illuminates the trailer more thoroughly so pallet documents can be read anywhere within the trailer. The lamp draws only 1.8 amps at 12-volt DC, according to the company. For more info, visit www.phillipsind.com.



Components

Haldex has announced it is now offering **service parts for the Dana ESD-225 air disc brake caliper**. The service kits include all the necessary parts required to service the Dana Spicer ESD-225 Air Disc Brake Caliper and are conveniently packaged for order, stock and identification, according to Haldex. The kit is available from Haldex distributors or by visiting www.haldex.com. Also new from Haldex is a **heavy-duty clutch guide wall chart and clutch guide/cross reference brochure**. The wall chart and brochure include new and remanufactured parts numbers, product photos and specifications. The wall chart and brochure are available from Haldex distributors or by calling 800-267-9247 and providing order code LL60059 (wall chart) or LL20649 (clutch guide/brochure).

Thermo King dealers are providing rebates of up to \$1,000 on qualifying **Espar heaters** up until Dec. 31, the company has announced. Airtronic D4 and D2 truck kits are included as are Airtronic D2/Hydronic 5 combo truck kits and Hydronic D5 truck kits. Customers can find out more by visiting a local Thermo King dealer.

Alliance Parts and ArvinMeritor have teamed up to offer cost-effective **remanufactured brake shoes**, the companies have announced. The Alliance reman'd brake shoes offer value for any make or model of commercial vehicle, the companies claim, noting they're still engineered to strict standards. The shoes are manufactured by ArvinMeritor and feature the company's Platinum-Shield advance shoe coating to prevent rust-jacking. They're available from Freightliner and Western Star dealers. □

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Every year the Canadian Business Press recognizes publications that excel in writing and graphic design. The Transportation Media Group is proud to be part of an elite group.

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Top five finish in the Best Resource/Infrastructure Article:
James Menzies, Truck West

Top five Canadian Business Website:
Canadian Transportation & Logistics: ctl.ca

Gold Award in the Best Resource/Infrastructure Article:
Adam Ledlow, Canadian Transportation & Logistics

Silver Award in the Best Cover Category:
Mary Peligra, Adam Ledlow, Lou Smyrlis, Motortruck Fleet Executive

Canadian Transportation & Logistics and Motortruck Fleet Executive were the only two transportation publications to receive gold or silver honours during the 2009 awards ceremony.



Shell injects 'Energized Protection' into new oil line

By James Menzies

TORONTO, Ont. – Shell is completely revamping its heavy-duty engine oil (HDEO) portfolio to offer improved protection and performance while at the same time reducing customer confusion by eliminating some of its brands.

Gone are Quaker State, Pennzoil and Rimula brands. In their place is a more complete portfolio of Shell's more popular Rotella brand. Shell explained the changes to the Canadian trucking press during a recent unveiling in Toronto. The new portfolio boasts several performance and protection improvements and is now dubbed Shell Rotella Energized Protection.

The new portfolio, comprised entirely of CJ-4 formulations, includes: Rotella T1, a straight grade engine oil available in SAE 30, 40 and 50 grades; Rotella T3 15W-40 which Shell says offers maintenance savings; Rotella T with Triple Protection, which promises a 22% reduction in engine wear over the previous Rimula Super 15W-40; Rotella T5 Synthetic Blend, which is available as a 10W-40 or 10W-30 and offers increased protection and fuel economy over a conventional 15W-40 oil; and the most premium of them all, Shell's Rotella T6 Full

Synthetic SAE 5W-40 which offers the most advanced low-emissions technology for aftertreatment systems as well as fuel and maintenance savings, according to the company.

"The strengthening of Rotella synthetic product offerings, along with moving to strictly CJ-4 products, further reinforces the technological leadership position of Shell Lubricants and will enable Shell Rotella to continue to build on its position as the number one heavy-duty engine oil in terms of market share, brand preference and brand awareness in North America," said Diane McFarlane, general manager, Shell Canada Products' Lubricants' business. "These products are proven on the road, not just in the lab, and are backed by over 40 million miles of punishing on- and off-highway testing."

All of the products that comprise the new portfolio are compatible with EPA2010-compliant engines and are also completely backwards-compatible for use with current and legacy engines. Especially noteworthy to fleets and owner/operators may be the fuel-saving potential of the Rotella T5 synthetic blend and the T6 full-synthetic. Dan Arcy, Shell's OEM technical manager, pointed out fuel savings of 1.5% are

possible by moving to the T5 or T6 from a conventional CJ-4 HDEO. That can amount to about \$800 per truck each year based on 120,000 miles per year averaging 6 mpg.

Shell's new trademark "Energized Protection" refers to the extra protection the new portfolio offers against harmful acids, deposits and wear. Company officials said more than 40 million miles of testing went into developing the new product line and the results have been impressive.

Shell officials spent much of the press conference highlighting the performance improvements of its higher end options. Rotella T with Triple Protection boasts an average of 50% less wear than its CI-4 Plus predecessor in industry-recognized engine tests, we were told. It also boasts up to 38% less iron wear than the soon-to-be discontinued Rotella CI-4 Plus 15W-40 and 22% less iron wear than Rotella T3 15W-40.

Stepping up to the synthetic blend

Rotella T5 allows fleets or owner/operators to extend drain intervals and improve fuel mileage. In testing, a fleet of medium-duty trucks performing city and on-highway deliveries achieved 1.6% better fuel economy using Rotella T5 than a conventional 15W-40. Rotella T5 is especially strong in the areas of wear and deposit control as well as piston cleanliness, Arcy explained, and it's specially designed for use with diesel particulate filters (DPFs).

Shell Rotella T6, a full-synthetic 5W-40 sits at the top of the new portfolio's food chain, delivering the best overall performance as well as: extended drains; fuel economy; engine cleanliness; wear protection; and high- and low-temperature flow. Compared to Shell's previous 5W-40 formulation, T6 offers, on average, a 34% improvement in wear. Shell officials also claim Rotella T6 can extend starter and battery life in cold weather. For more, visit www.shell.ca/rotella. □

Freightliner introduces vocational Coronado

PORTLAND, Ore. – Freightliner has introduced a new severe-service version of its Coronado truck.

The Coronado Severe Duty (SD) is aimed at the toughest vocational applications, the company announced when unveiling the new model at the International Construction and Utility Equipment Exhibition.

"The flagship vocational product for Freightliner Trucks, the Coronado SD encompasses Freightliner's most advanced technological innovations, resulting in a versatile product that is built to perform and work," said Richard Shearing, director of product strategy for Freightliner Trucks.

The Coronado SD is available in set-back and set-forward axle configurations. Features include a durable fiberglass hood and fenders made of impact-absorbing material to minimize the risk of damage and cracking. A one-piece stainless steel grille surround is accented with chrome steel horizontal bars.

New headlights feature single, high-tech reflectors for improved lighting. The new truck also has new doors that the truck maker says are built lighter yet sturdier, to minimize mirror vibration.

"We created a truck strong enough to tackle the most extreme elements," said Shearing. "Everything about the Coronado SD was carefully developed and built to keep it running and earning revenue in any environment."

"We understand that every minute counts, so we developed the Coronado SD to keep customers out of the shop and on the job longer," added Melissa Clausen, director of product marketing for Freightliner Trucks. "Our new design elements enable drivers to easily make adjustments on their own, keeping repair costs and downtime to a minimum." □



The Coronado SD retains the Coronado's distinctive chrome steel intakes on either side of the hood, however the intakes are aerodynamically-designed, the company points out. The Coronado SD also features a new single air filter with improved filtration capabilities. An optional pre-cleaner creates a vortex effect to spin dust and heavy water particles out of the air and away from the engine.

User-friendly features include a 90-degree hood tilt for easy access to engine components and easily-replaceable headlight bulbs.

"We focused on and have delivered what is needed to get the job done – a resilient and sturdy truck that is easily maintained out of the shop," said Clausen.

Inside the cab, the Coronado SD boasts a new dash design with well-lit gauges and controls and switches strategically placed within easy reach of the driver, Freightliner claims. It also reduced the number of joints in the dash to cut down on squeaks and rattles.

"Vocational applications are often loud, dirty and distracting at job sites, so we created a quiet interior for drivers," said Shearing.

The new Coronado SD will be available with Detroit Diesel DD13, DD15 and DD16 engines as well as the Cummins ISX. □

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WOWTRUCKS - Canada 2008

An Image Tribute to the 2008 Show 'n' Shine Season

By David Benjatschek

This book, created in conjunction with Pro-Trucker Magazine and Truck News, is an image tribute to 525 trucks met at several major Show 'n' Shine competitions across Canada in 2008.

Trucks covered are from the following shows:

- The Pro-Trucker Alberta Big Rig Weekend
- The Pro-Trucker BC Big Rig Weekend
- The Fergus Truck Show
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Also including: the Vancouver Island Truck Show and the Northern BC Show 'n' Shine.

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Road Test: Eaton's UltraShift Plus transmission

It's a smarter, more diverse UltraShift. Will it be smart and diverse enough to pry Canadian truckers' clenched fists from their beloved sticks?

By Paul Hartley

MARSHALL, Mich. – Eaton's recent introduction of the UltraShift Plus, an improved automated transmission "family," is the latest corporate attempt to pry North American truckers' clenched fists from their beloved manual shift sticks. These new products, awash with convenience and safety features, might just do the trick.

Heavy-duty automated transmissions have been around a while. Eaton has been building them for some 25 years. The company's previous generations, however, had their limitations and peculiarities. They

were primarily intended for the line-haul crowd, and they relied on a centrifugal clutch for launching and shifting. Unfortunately, that technology didn't always provide the sophisticated executions users wanted.

The release of the UltraShift Plus changes the game entirely. First, it comes in six versions, covering 98.37% of all trucking applications known to man. There is the LAS for linehaul, the VCS for vocational construction, the VXP for severe heavy-duty, the MHP for ... well, you get the idea. The Plus line also features a new electronically activated two-plate ceramic clutch that's

operated through the transmission's own control module.

This pair of gadgets works in tandem – using info provided by the engine ECM – to deliver silky smooth launches and precise, rapid shifts. Thanks to the assistance from a newly relocated inertia brake – or "I Brake," to use an Eatonism – gear changes are accomplished in roughly half a second.

As if that weren't enough, the Plus trannies also apparently know the appropriate gear for launching – their thoughtful selections based on vehicle weight, grade and available power – when to skip-shift, when to activate an engine brake, when to "creep" and, just as importantly, when to completely ignore the driver.

"If you try to make one of these do something it's not supposed to do, it will just beep at you," said Samir Mazahem, Eaton's heavy-duty transmission division chief engineer.

Mazahem was one of six test-truck chaperones accompanying media folks during an outdoor, hands-on product introduction at Eaton's spacious, scenic and comprehensive proving grounds near Marshall, Mich., in early September. He was in charge of a Pete Model 379, powered by a Cummins ISX (rated at 600 hp) and grossing roughly 160,000 lbs. I joined him for the paved-hill portion of the company's nearly day-long demonstration. This roughly two-mile route included two stiff grades: one 8%, the other 15%.

Releasing the parking brake and moving the 'driver interface' to D, I noticed that the transmission picked third as our launch gear. I thought the choice was a bit tall, but

Mazahem said we could have overridden the system and used an even higher gear.

"It would probably handle fourth here because we're on level ground," he said. "Fifth would have been too much, and the transmission would tell you that. It won't allow you choose an improper gear. It knows its capabilities."

We rolled forward smoothly with no driveline shudder nor faint whiff of cooking clutch. Mazahem said Eaton engineers spent a lot of time mapping the torque transfer on each clutch plate in a multitude of scenarios, and they programmed that information into the transmission's software. This code, along with other mechanical advances, allow clutch plates to open and close independently of each other, offering flawless launches in any imaginable condition.

Heading toward the hill, I mashed hard on the accelerator, and the transmission responded accordingly, shifting from third to fourth to sixth to eighth to tenth to twelfth to fourteenth. We were soon halfway up the short 8% grade, and the engine speed began sagging. The tranny dropped one gear at 1,300 rpm; then it went through a quick series of two-gear downshifts as our momentum slowed, and the need for torque greatly increased.

I was impressed with the system's performance. It not only knew when to shift, but also how many gears to take each time to keep the engine within its power band. Mazahem credits the box's "skill" to the newly added inclinometer, a device that measures road grade, and good software programming.

"When writing the code, we always determine when to downshift

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based on a projected point where the engine can recover an adequate amount of torque to continue pulling the weight forward," he said. "We know where the engine rpm will be in every gear based on road speed. The goal is to choose a ratio that provides the best power."

Of course, it also helps to make these decisions in nanoseconds and execute them in half-seconds, regardless of the seat cover in a passing car, the interesting chatter on a CB or what just fell out of a shelf in the bunk.

I brought the truck to a stop just past the summit so Mazahem could demonstrate the transmission's downhill abilities. He said I should shift to third gear in the manual mode, release the brakes and keep my foot off the accelerator and brake pedal. I did as instructed, and we began rolling forward. The engine retarder, which was set to medium power, immediately activated and curbed the truck's speed somewhere around 10 mph – not bad, considering that we were descending a 15% slope carrying 160,000 lbs. Mazahem reached over and switched the retarder to low. Our velocity gradually increased. When the engine reached about 2,100 rpm, the transmission flipped into automatic mode and started upshifting – first in single steps, then two and three at a time – to protect the engine from over-revving.

The final display of technical wizardry in Mazahem's Pete occurred on our way back up the hill's steep side. He'd told me to back off the throttle about halfway up the ascent. The tranny had already downshifted from 14 to 13 in an effort to keep us moving. When I took my foot off the accelerator, though, our speed sunk fast, and the little UltraShift Plus gnomes under the floorboards went straight to eighth then, after a lazy second or so, to first. At that point we were pretty much just idling up the remaining few yards to the top. I'd challenge any seasoned gear-jammer to match that maneuver without coming to a complete stop.

Following my heavy-haul trip, I spent some time on the facility's hilly, winding off-road course, first with a Cummins-powered cement mixer then a pair of Cat-powered dump trucks: all Kenworth T800 models. Their transmissions shared many of the same characteristics I'd experienced in the Pete, but they were fine-tuned for vocational needs. Eaton officials say that any of the Plus models can be easily customized for buyers' unique needs. This is done through the Service Ranger software package, which is currently available only to dealers and the company's largest customers. Wider distribution might be possible in the future, said Michael Holahan, Eaton's program manager for the UltraShift Plus.

"The challenge is making sure people would know how to correctly use it."

My last romp of the day was on the facility's oval road course, driving a Kenworth W900, Cummins powered and grossing 129,000 lbs. I was accompanied by Rose Gould, an Eaton test pilot.

Rounding the track's final turn we were cruising at roughly 55 mph, and she suggested I shift the transmission to the low mode – as in first gear



MAKING MOLEHILLS OUT OF MOUNTAINS: The UltraShift Plus's diversity makes it suitable for a wider variety of applications. *Photo by Paul Hartley*

– to check out its ability to slow our speed.

I was reluctant, imagining the awful grinding sound that might ensue, but I followed her recommendation anyway. Instantly, the engine brake

came on at full power. As soon as a downshift was possible, the transmission grabbed a gear, and it continued grabbing gears until we were down to 15 mph, at which point I switched the box back to automatic

and began accelerating. Gould said the technique is a good – and safe – way to achieve maximum slowing power without touching the foundation brakes.

Eaton executives said the UltraShift Plus was in development for nearly seven years – a long time, to be sure – and extensively field-tested during the last two.

The company has clearly done its homework to ensure the product delivers on its promise. Still, the question arises: "Can we beat the very best drivers in North America?" Michael Holahan rhetorically asked during the press event. "To be honest, we're still learning from them. But we can beat a whole lot of others, enough so that fleets installing this transmission will notice a significant uptick in their fuel economy and corresponding decrease in their driveline maintenance costs."

Now if they can just figure out a way to peel those diehard truckers' fingers away from their beloved manual shift sticks. □



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Hands On Trucking

By Edo van Belkom

The Story So Far...

Before making a delivery of hardwood flooring to a big warehouse, Mark jumps from his cab and injures his knee. Working through the pain, Mark is told by the shipper that all the warehouse workers are gone, so if Mark wants his truck unloaded he'll have to do it himself. Mark wants another load so he unloads it himself. His knee aches.

Mark's knee is sorer than ever, but he keeps working. He gets another load to the same warehouse and there are still no workers to unload his truck. Unhappy, Mark unloads his trailer wondering how he could be so unlucky to make two deliveries when no-one was around...

Mark awoke the next morning with still more pain in his knee. He could bend it well enough but there was a constant ache that didn't want to go away – it was there at rest, under load... always. 'I've got to get this checked out,' thought Mark.

And so he decided to put off calling Bud for a load and use the time to see a doctor instead. Because Mark was on the road so much, he really didn't have a regular "family" doctor, but he did visit a walk-in clinic near the airport where a lot of drivers went because it was so close to a lot of the container yards in the area. Hopefully he'd be able to see a doctor without too long of a wait.

When he arrived at the clinic it was just after nine and there were already three people in front of him. He filled out the forms the nurse provided him, presented his provincial health card and waited.

Halfway through a Maclean's magazine article about the rising cost of everything, he was called in to see the doctor.

Doctor Dhillon was of South Asian descent and spoke Punjabi as well as English, which made him a favourite among the ethnic drivers who worked in the area.

The doctor looked at the clipboard in front of him. "And your name is..."

"Mark."

"Mark who?"

Mark wondered if Bud had given the doctor a call. "Mark Dalton."

"Uh-huh." He nodded his head and continued looking over the information on the clipboard.

"I hurt my..."

The doctor put up his hand to silence Mark. "Let me guess... You are a truck driver. And you hurt your knee jumping down from your truck."

"That's right. How did you know?"

"I have drivers coming in here every day with knee and ankle injuries they sustained by jumping rather than stepping. Which leg is it?"

"This one," Mark said, putting his bad leg up on the bench.

The doctor put one hand under the knee and another on the ankle and began to bend the leg slowly.

Mark felt no pain at first, but then... "Ahh!"

The doctor eased up on the leg, then slowly straightened it, until... "Ahh-ahh!"

He put down the leg.

"You've put a strain on it for sure, maybe tearing the ligament, maybe the tendon."

"You don't know?"

"I could cut your knee open and take a look for sure, but that would make it worse... A few weeks of rest and your pain should be gone. A few more weeks and you'll be as good as new. If not, and the pain persists, you'll need surgery."

"Aren't you going to tell me to take some time off?"

The doctor shook his head. "I tell the drivers who come to me to rest as best they can. They all have to make a living after all."

Mark shook his head. "But how could this happen, I just jumped a few feet?"

The doctor nodded. "You weigh about 200 pounds, right?"

Mark nodded.

"You jumped maybe two, three feet, but you landed on one foot with all your weight, putting a force of many hundreds of pounds on your poor knee. It was designed to bend, not take a load, so something broke."

"But it was just a few feet."

"Okay, let me ask you this. Would you put a three-tonne load on a trailer that's rated for one tonne?"

"No, something would break," Mark said with a mix of realization and frustration.

"I will give you something to keep the swelling down, and for the pain. But the best thing I can give you is advice. Are you aware of the principle of three-point contact?"

"I'm not sure. It sounds familiar."

"It's easy to remember. Any time you are getting in or out of your truck, make sure you have three points of contact – two hands, one foot; two feet, one hand. If you do that, you'll always be stable and will never slip or fall."

"I'll try it."

"Don't try. Do it! Your truck has all the steps and handholds you need. Use

them!"

Mark bent his knee and felt pain flare in the joint. "I will," he said.

Instead of calling Bud for another load, Mark left the walk-in clinic and got his prescription filled at a nearby pharmacy. The prescription's instructions said he should take the medications with food, so he drove to a nearby Tim's where it looked like a lot of truckers stopped for coffee and snacks.

When he entered the coffee shop he was greeted by a couple of smiles and a few familiar faces.

"That's Mark," someone said.

"Mark who?" said another.

Mark walked over to the table and said hello. "You look familiar," he said to one of the drivers seated at the table. "Didn't we meet on the road outside of..."

"Timmins," said the first driver.

"And I remember you from Halifax. You warned me about some loose strapping on my load."

"I did?" Mark asked.

"Yes sir. Saved me a lot of money... not to mention grief."

"Well, what do you know?" Mark said. He didn't remember the incident, but he'd helped a lot of people over the years and it was quite possible he'd helped this guy too.

"My name's Josef, by the way."

"Oh yeah, Josef." Mark still didn't remember the man. "How you doing?"

"Fine. What do you drink?"

"Large double-double."

"Hey Vito," Josef called over to another driver at the cash. "Bring another double-double." Then he turned his attention back to Mark. "So what are you doing here? I thought you did just long-haul stuff."

"Things are slow, so I'm doing a bunch of loads to this flooring warehouse. You know... hardwood, ceramic. Stuff like that."

"Don't tell me. You've been unloading your truck yourself, right?"

Mark just looked at the man. "How'd you know that?"

The other driver arrived at the table with his coffee then.

"Hey Vito. He's delivering flooring to



our friend, the crook."

Vito looked at Mark and smiled, revealing a row of picket fence teeth. "Union meeting?" he said.

The drivers around the table laughed.

"Out to lunch?"

More laughter.

"Off sick. Taking a kid to the dentist."

Roars this time, and Mark could feel his face getting red. "What's so funny?"

"That guy doesn't have any workers. He counts on truckers to unload their own trucks because we all just want to get on our way."

Mark said nothing at first, seething in anger over being so easily taken for a fool. "I had a feeling something wasn't right."

"How many deliveries did you make?"

"Two."

"You're lucky," Josef said. "I made four before I caught on. Vito did three, and Sal over there, well, he made six deliveries before we stopped him."

The driver named Sal shrugged his shoulders. "I'm not as smart as these two, I guess."

Mark smiled in Sal's direction, but on the inside he was angry with himself for being had, and with a shipper who would try and make money by ripping off hard working people who were just trying to make a living.

"So where are you heading next? Vancouver? Montreal? Maybe the States?"

Mark thought about it for a second, then said. "Nah, I might stay in town for a little while longer."

Like maybe for one more load. □

- Mark Dalton returns next month in the conclusion of Hands-On Trucking.

The continuing adventures of Mark Dalton: Owner/Operator
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People

Four Manitoba drivers receive awards

WINNIPEG, Man. – The Manitoba Trucking Association and Custom Truck Sales named the first four winners of the newly-formed Industry Excellence Award.

Bruce Wright of Northern Deck, Robert St. Vincent of Bison Transport, Doug Ducharme of Arnold Bros. and Fred Barnett of Len Dubois Trucking were the first to receive the honour.

The award goes to drivers that demonstrate excellence in four categories: commitment to the industry; commitment to safety; commitment to customer service; and acts that go beyond what is normally expected of drivers in day-to-day operations.

Recipients will then be considered for the MTA-Volvo Trucks Canada Manitoba Driver of the Year award, according to the association.

Northern Deck driver Wright, earned the award based on rave

reviews from his employer, a division of Gardewine North, where he has spent the last 14 years of his career.

He's been described as a "consummate professional" and goes "above and beyond even our highest level," according to company officials.

He's been trucking since 1987 and before that worked in the shop as a mechanic and general labourer.

Len Dubois Trucking's Barnett won the award based largely on his customer service abilities, according to the MTA.

He has been an owner/operator with Len Dubois for six years and has often been acknowledged by customers for his professionalism. Barnett excels at multi-drop and job-site deliveries and on-time service according to his employer.

Arnold Bros. driver Ducharme boats a clean abstract thanks to



AWARD WINNERS: Pictured from left to right: Earl Coleman (president, Manitoba Trucking Association), Bruce Wright (Northern Deck), Fred Barnett (Len Dubois Trucking, Inc), Robert St. Vincent (Bison Transport) and Jim Clark (Custom Truck Sales Inc.). Missing from picture: Doug Ducharme (Arnold Bros. Transport).

his commitment to safety, which helped earn him the award.

He has already won a variety of safety awards and bonuses and Arnold Bros. officials say he also takes great care of his equipment.

Bison's St. Vincent won the award for his life-saving heroics when he had to maneuver his truck in icy conditions on a northern Ontario highway to avoid hitting two other motorists. The motorists later thanked him for saving their lives.

In a letter, the motorists acknowledged St. Vincent's heroics:

'Thank you with all my heart, Mr. Transport Driver, you saved my life. I would love to meet you in person and hug you. None of this was your fault, you did a great job at steering your rig as best you could under the circumstances. Thank you so much! You are my angel. Although I don't know your name, you will always have a place in my heart.'

The MTA continues to seek nominations for future awards.

Full details can be found online at the MTA's Web site: www.trucking.mb.ca □

Opinion

Let's hope for end to DriveTest strike

As Thanksgiving weekend came and went, there were a lot of Ontario families that had less to be thankful about due to an ongoing strike by employees of DriveTest.

I'm talking about the men and women who have been unable to get their A/Z licences and the people who train them, many of whom have been laid off due to this nearly two-month long (and counting) dispute.

I don't know enough about the situation to decide who's right and who's wrong.

It seems the employees, including driver examiners, have some beefs about working conditions – and they may well be legitimate.

What I do know is that the two sides need to get back to the table and work out a deal pronto, so that the innocent victims of this strike can get back to work.

Many of the victims of the strike are workers who have been displaced from manufacturing jobs at steel plants and other professions.

Now they're interested in pursuing a second career in our industry



Publisher's Comment
Rob Wilkins

(some even have jobs waiting for them) and they haven't been able to take their road test as their EI benefits trickled away.

Jobless rates have been climbing through the recession and we should be making it easier – not more difficult – for people to work. The most frustrating thing about the strike is that there seems to have been little progress in the negotiations.

In fact, the two sides have gone stretches of time without even negotiating at all.

One thing's for sure, two sides can't meet in the middle unless they're willing to sit down together and hammer out a compromise. Let's get at it! □

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

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BOWMANVILLE, Ont. – After announcing its decision to ban cell phone usage while driving several months ago, the Ontario government has finally tacked on an enforcement date: Oct. 26.

The new law will make it illegal to use a handheld communications or entertainment device while driving, in an effort to increase road safety. Temporarily spared from that list of handheld devices is the CB radio, which has a three-year phase-out period to allow time for hands-free alternatives to be developed (*For more on this story, see pg. 9*).

But how will drivers feel about the eventual ban on such a long-standing staple of the trucking industry? Might this spell the end of the CB for good? *Truck West* went to the Fifth Wheel Truck Stop in Bowmanville, Ont. to see how drivers feel about the new law.

Melvin McKinnon, a driver with Wadden Transportation in Sydney,



Truck Stop Question

Adam Ledlow
Managing Editor

How will the industry react to Ontario's cell (and eventual CB) ban?



Melvin McKinnon

N.S., says that while he agrees with the cell phone ban, he's wary of the what the eventual CB ban will mean for what he calls a "lifeline"

for truck drivers.

"(I use it) all the time. You need it for directions, accidents up ahead, brake checks. It's a necessity," he says.

When asked about using a hands-free device instead, McKinnon says he wouldn't consider it. "You've got something hanging off of your ear and something plugged into your ear, so you're not hearing what's going on around you," he said.

Kevin Harrison, a driver with Gunner Transportation in

Princeton, Ont., says he's sick of having car drivers talking on their cells phones passing his truck only to have them slow right down, so he's looking forward to the law's enforcement. "They should just set the bloody things down and drive."

As far as the CB radio is concerned, he admits he doesn't use it very often, other than listening to it from time to time, but that most truckers should be able to deal with the eventual handheld ban. "I don't see any problem with leaving CB the way it is, (but) if they can do a hands-free, it shouldn't bother anybody, I wouldn't think."



Gerard Desrosiers

Gerard Desrosiers, a driver with Robert Transport out of Boucherville, Que., says he is 100% behind the new law.

"If you drive, you can't take your hands off for everything. I think that's a good law," says the 46-year veteran. "I think it's nice to have a CB, but in the traffic, your eyes are on the road. When you speak with a friend (on the CB), it's not really correct."



Daniel Fregeau

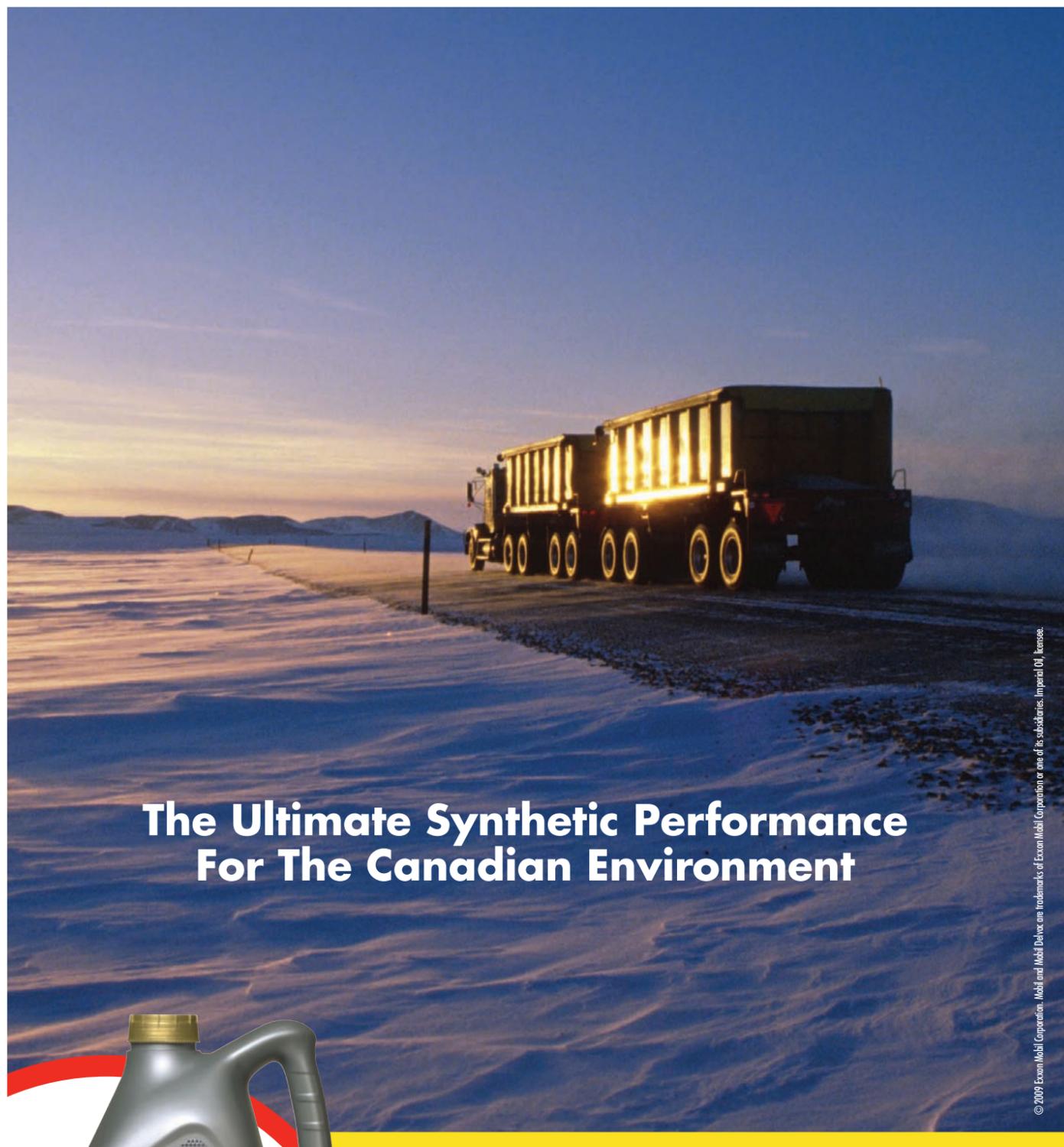
Daniel Fregeau, a driver with R.C. Mac Services in Summerstown, Ont., thinks the cell ban is great, but says that many smaller companies could be affected because of their dispatch procedures.

"It's a good law – nobody should be talking on the phone or texting on the phone, (but) a lot of smaller companies now have gone to texting as far as a dispatch system. Having to pull over to take a phone call or take a text – it's just time consuming," he told *Truck West*.

But as far as the CB ban is concerned, he says an uproar can be expected from the industry.

"It's not just nostalgia – it's our radar detector, it's our advanced warning system. It's been synonymous with our industry since day one," he said. "They want to make life tougher out there for us, basically. With the new technology, it's more of a cost to us to update and to go with the flow. No one's going to be happy with the new rules. They never are. It doesn't matter what it is, they never are." □

– Adam Ledlow is now on Twitter! Join today and follow his tweets at twitter.com/adamledlow.



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:nickel recovery

- flashlights
- gas detection
- chains & lifters



3:15 PM

Fort McMurray:AB
:vehicle maintenance

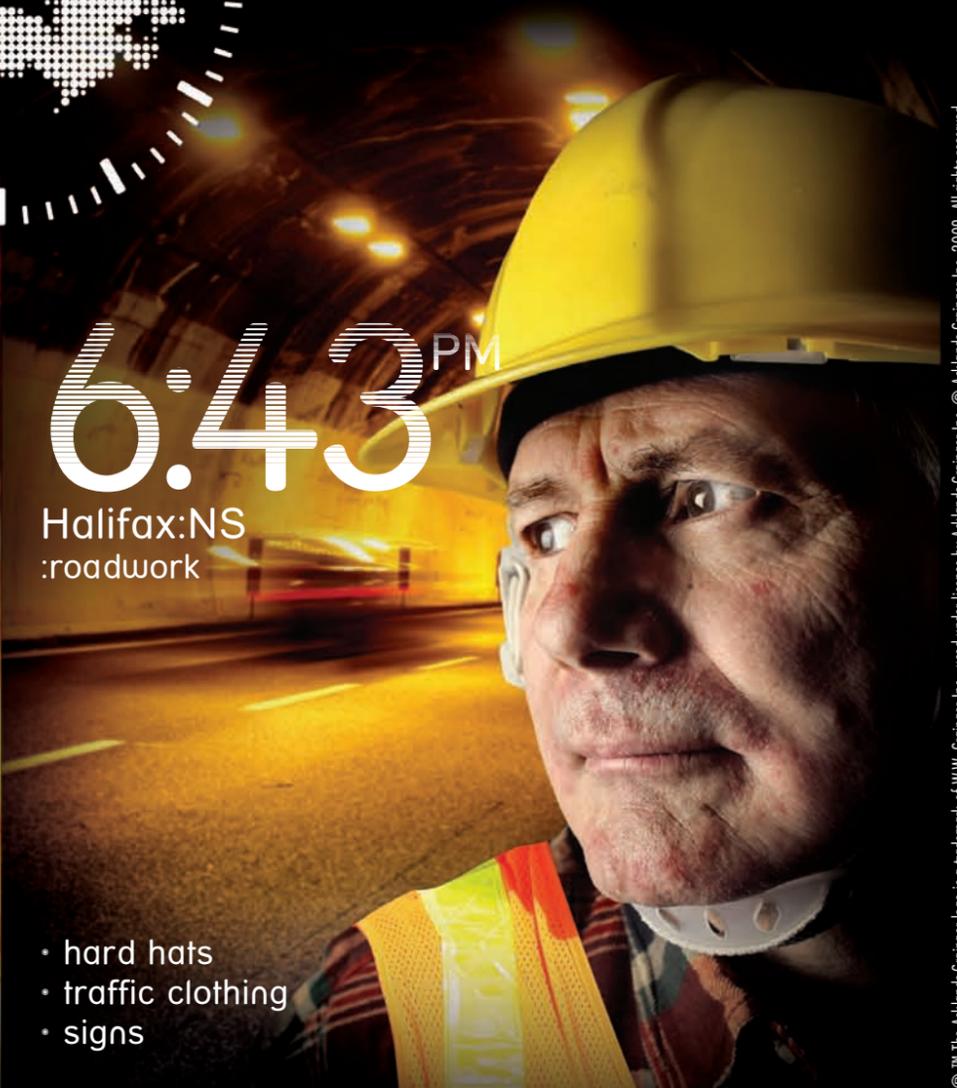
- vehicle lights
- fasteners
- batteries



8:39 AM

Yellowknife:NWT
:industrial fire containment

- high heat clothing
- respiratory protection
- SCBA's



6:43 PM

Halifax:NS
:roadwork

- hard hats
- traffic clothing
- signs



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