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Gord Cooper raced the Smokin' Gun to a Hot Rod Semi World Record 11.403 second quarter-mile run at the Castrol Raceway.

Curbing GHG emissions

BCTA says industry doing what it can, wants more from government

By Derek Clouthier

LANGLEY, B.C. – The government of British Columbia announced its Climate Leadership Plan Aug. 19, and despite a desire for more to be done, the provincial trucking association believes the two parties are quite sympatico in the effort to curb greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

"The industry's goals, from a financial perspective, and the government's goals, from an emissions perspective, are completely aligned," said B.C. Trucking Association (BCTA) president and CEO Louise Yako. "I think industry is going to do what it can and as quickly as it can to reduce greenhouse gas emissions because reducing greenhouse gas emissions also means reducing fuel usage, and since fuel usage is typically the second largest operating cost for trucking companies, they have an incentive to do that in any case, regardless of the climate plan."

The BCTA, however, does have its grievances with how some of the government's initiatives have been rolled out.

The percentage of biodiesel the government currently requires a company to sell is 4%, but as Yako pointed out, that number is based on a yearly average, meaning a company could at one point sell 100% diesel, then turn around and sell a blend with up to 20% biodiesel, as long as it comes out to 4% at the end of the year.

But with higher percentages of biodiesel come issues for today's truck engines with warranties, performance and maintenance.

"For us, the concern is that if it goes above 5%, there are some engines that don't have a warranty above 5%," Yako said. "We think over time those engine standards will change, and as biodiesel becomes more available and as engine standards change, then the industry

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Well-deserved recognition

Gord Cooper sets new world record with Smokin' Gun

By Derek Clouthier

NISKU, Alta. – With the rpm blasted to 2,300 right from the start line, it's no wonder the front wheels of the Smokin' Gun were carried off the track for more than 50 feet during its world record run Aug. 6. For 15 years, Gord Cooper has been racing the Smokin' Gun, initially as a 'modest' 18-second quarter-mile vehicle when he purchased the truck in 2001 and brought it to B.C. for its first shot at glory.

But at the onset, the Smokin' Gun didn't quite feel at home on the racetrack. In fact, Cooper had bought the vehicle to be a unique 'limo' for his younger son's high school graduation.

"I had done something different for each of my kids," Cooper said, explaining how he had taken his older son to his graduation in his vintage '57 Kenworth and daughter in a Hummer.

"The Smokin' Gun ended up as a show vehicle, it wasn't a race vehicle at the time," Cooper said. "It had a hydraulic opening hood and a hydraulic

raising body. I purchased it from Tristan Jackson, a local friend (from Strathmore)."

Cooper said he has always enjoyed going to truck shows with his collection of eclectic trucks, and many had commented on how special the Smokin' Gun was, with its 380 Cat engine, a 15-speed transmission with a single axle.

It is also a 'Canadian Kenworth,' as it was built in the Vancouver area in 1968. In its working life, the Smokin' Gun was a tandem water truck, which Cooper said Jackson had rebuilt, bringing something unique to the vehicle, transforming it into a show vehicle. The truck now sports an 8v92 Detroit, a Detroit Diesel Series 92, two-stroke cycle, V-block diesel engine, which was built by Wayne and John Talkington of TNT Racing in Fontana, Calif. in 2006.

"I noticed that their technology got much better there," Cooper said, adding Wayne is the operator of the Lucas Oil truck for the Lucas Oil Drag Truck Team. "When I was racing against them six to

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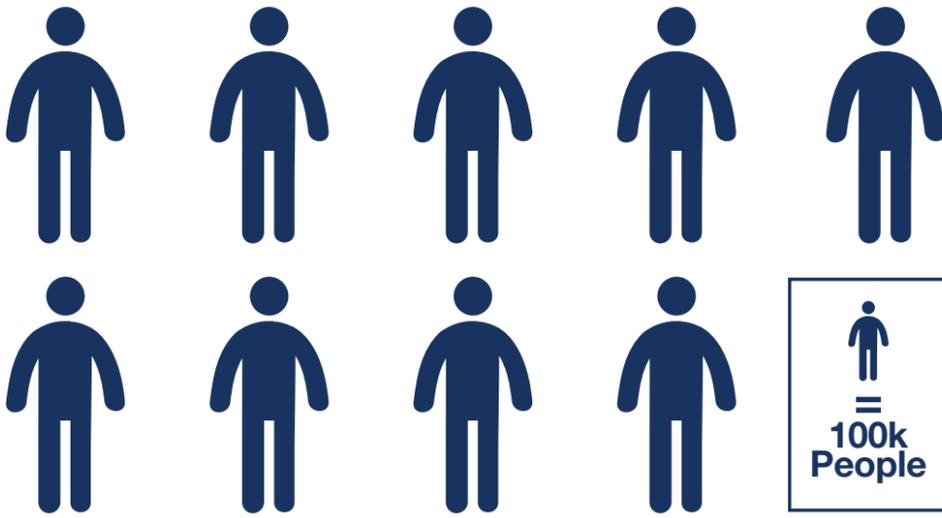
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How well will truck drivers react to having an assistant?

I was recently south of the border doing a test drive at the Paccar plant in Washington State when I had one of a few opportunities lately to ride in a truck equipped with some of the latest technology in driver 'assistance.'

I emphasized the word 'assistance' because that is what the developers of the technology did - stress how when it comes to notifying drivers of a stopped vehicle ahead, a person crossing the road, an unexpected lane change, driving over the posted speed limit, tailgating and even braking to avoid a collision when the driver fails to do so, the system is not intended to replace the operator, but assist them. Anyone who has developed these kinds of technologies will tell you the exact same thing.

Driver assistance technology is an amazing advancement that will hopefully (and most likely) reduce the number of collisions on the road. It helps the driver with so many things, as I mentioned above. But of course, there is a 'but.' At what point does this type of technology inadvertently create what I'm going to call a lazy driver?

Anyone who has had their driver's licence for even a few years can attest to the fact that many of us drive like it is second nature. We daydream while behind the wheel about any number of

Derek's deliberation

Derek Clouthier



things that are going on in our lives at the time, or even about what we're going to order at the coffee shop... 'should I get just a regular coffee or splurge on a latte today? Decisions, decisions.'

There are times when we drive from point A to point B and can barely recall how we even got there.

So, although driver assistance technology will help avoid some collisions from ever happening, is there also a chance it will cause accidents that would have never occurred in the first place?

If a driver becomes too comfortable behind the wheel of one of today's hi-tech tractor trailers, relying heavily on the vehicle's computer system, equipped with a camera and radar system to detect almost anything around them, including distance, speed, movement and overall level of danger, will some become less attentive to the road?

I asked this question a few times when being shown various driver assistance systems in action, as this type of technology is all the rage right now and every-

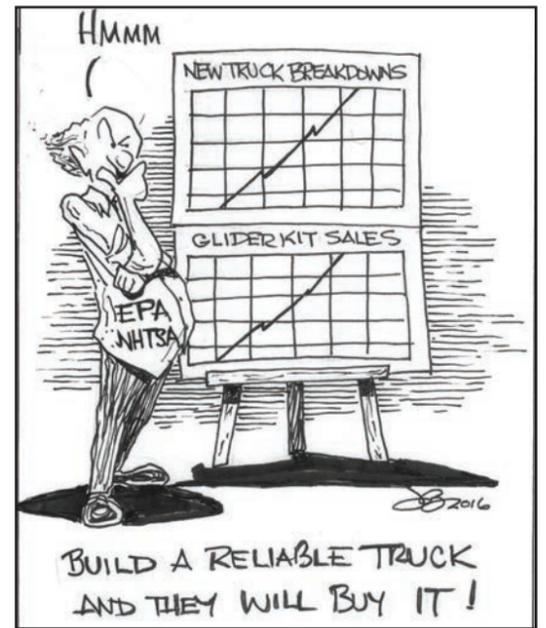
one wants to show you how their works. I got the same response each time; that the system was intended to 'assist' not 'replace.' But sometimes intent does not equal the result.

It's way too early to determine how people will react to this relatively new safety technology (which is also in many everyday passenger vehicles), but like anything that comes out these days, it will only become more and more advanced each year.

This will eventually lead to fully autonomous trucks - which, yes, are already out there - becoming a common sight on our highways, platooning down the road with no driver in sight.

Perhaps this is where the industry must go if the truck transportation sector is to thrive in the future, considering there seems to be a challenge getting the new generation interested in driving as a career choice. Your phone calls and letters - and thank you all very much for taking the time to call or write about this issue - have certainly indicated that many of you who currently drive for a living are far from confident in a new crop stepping up to take over when you retire.

So, though it may be driver 'assistance'



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right now, this is likely just the first step of many toward a technological answer for the driver shortage, one that may be necessary, but must also be approached with caution. For now, we'll simply have to wait and see just how well drivers react to having an assistant. **TW**

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Small carriers: How well do you know your operation?

Know what one of the biggest differences is between large carriers and small carriers? It's not equipment; I've seen small carriers invest in equipment that's just as good as that of their bigger competitors. It's not people; although large carriers likely pay better on the average - there are many reasons beyond pay that make some of the industry's sharpest minds choose to work for smaller carriers. And it's certainly not service; our annual Shippers Choice Survey, conducted by our sister publication *Canadian Shipper* for over a decade, affirms that small carriers can wow their customers with service delivery just like their larger counterparts can.

It's data: Large carriers are better at generating it, accessing it and using it to make meaningful decisions. That's an important advantage when you con-

The view with Lou

Lou Smyrlis



sider how important understanding your essential performance indicators (EPIs) are to improving profit, particularly during challenging, slow-growth economic periods like the one we are stuck in now.

I'm talking about EPIs such as your revenue per truck per week, your maintenance cost per mile and your variable equipment operating expense per mile. Last year, I introduced you to the folks from inGauge, who are making it easier and more affordable for small carriers to gather, understand and keep a close eye on such EPIs. You would be amazed

at the difference among the poor, average and top performers and the resulting impact on profitability.

Now I want to introduce you to an important new development geared towards helping the industry's small carriers - the heart of our industry - make the best business decisions possible when leveraging benchmarking performance metrics on a monthly basis. I'm proud to say I've played a role in bringing together inGauge and its treasure trove of performance indicator data with Castrol, a well known industry lubricant supplier looking to help small carriers reach a higher level of decision making. Every month till the end of the year in the pages of *Truck News* and *Truck West*, Castrol and inGauge are bringing you a new EPI, explaining how it's calculated and outlining the poor, average and

top performance metrics. It's definitely worth following.

There's more. To raise awareness and encourage participation, Castrol is offering a grand prize to small carriers (35 trucks or less and registered in Canada) who submit their scores for all six EPIs. The winner gets three months of free oil changes and six months of LabCheck services. That's a value of about \$15,000 if you've got about 20 power units. On top of that is the bragging right to being named the 2016 Castrol Small Fleet Efficiency Award winner.

We will be announcing the winner in January. To submit your EPI for each month go to www.castroldiesel.com or call 1-888-CASTROL. **TW**

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Smokin' to a new world record

Continued from page 1

seven years ago, their engine looked really clean on the track. I watch how other guys are doing when I race against them. The Detroit that I had in (the Smokin' Gun), I was running some marine technology from Oregon and was showing an awful lot of diesel smoke."

Back then, Cooper was running the Smokin' Gun in the 13-second time bracket, but eventually got down into the 12-second range.

"It takes a lot to get into the 12-second bracket," Cooper said. "It's really a development and you have to learn how to put everything together properly with a weight balance and everything else."

Despite not having to do any work on the Smokin' Gun for the last four years, Cooper has done a lot to the truck, including shortening it by 50 inches, moving the radiator from in front to behind the cab, custom building the disc brakes and installing twin turbochargers. And now, all that hard work has paid off, with the world record in his hands.

Cooper was going up against a Freightliner truck in the quarter-mile, straight-line race, and said the duel was really a comparison between what the Smokin' Gun was originally and what it is now, as the Freightliner was more of a show vehicle than anything else.

"I was racing against the clock," Cooper said. "I was in it to set a new record."

The Smokin' Gun broke the National Hot Rod Diesel Association (NHRDA) Hot Rod Semi World Record set by Wayne in the Lucas Oil truck, which had been held all summer at 11.75, with a time of 11.403 seconds at a speed of 119.17 mph.

"That's a pretty tough one to match," Cooper said of the 11.40 mark. "Wayne, when he's ready to push his engine further, he could very well do something with my 11.40, and I think I can push that 11.40 a little further as well."

Cooper said this is the first year there has been a recognized NHRDA Hot Rod Semi class, with last year offering only a demo class. "I figured I had the record then," Cooper said of 2015, "because I ran an 11.49, for the very first time under eleven-and-a-half seconds, and it wasn't recognized because it was an exhibition class last year."

Cooper races up to six times each summer, and was consistently running around 11.5 seconds last year before setting the record this August at Castrol Raceway in Nisku, Alta. He had even gone up against a Lamborghini during an air show, which Cooper said he proceeded to 'embarrass the hell out of.'

"The fella was fairly gracious about it," he said, "but he couldn't believe that I had blown his doors off over the half-mile airport course. I had a hard time getting my helmet off; it was stuck on there for a while with my head getting so damn big."

Cooper and the Smokin' Gun will be heading down to Ennis, Texas for the NHRDA World Finals Sept. 30-Oct. 1. Our press deadline fell prior to the results of the race.

"I wasn't going to go until I could prove that I had the record, and I think I've done that," Cooper said. "My expectations are to go down and have a hell of a good weekend and have fun."

From a business standpoint, Cooper said the past year-plus has been difficult with Alberta's flailing economy, and it

has been a challenge to keep his specialized hauling business afloat.

He has been running O.C.E.A.N. Hauling and Hotshot out of Calgary since 1981, providing transportation of oversized, heavy and delicate loads in Western Canada. But regardless, Cooper and his wife plan to take a few days off for the championships in Texas and have some fun "rolling a little bit of coal" on the racetrack and hopefully get some extra reputation for the Smokin' Gun south of the border. Cooper said much of the success the Smokin' Gun has achieved is thanks to his co-sponsors – BD Diesel Performance, Wajax Power Systems, Capstan Hauling, West Country Supervision, Truck Spa, Bandag and Greatwest Kenworth. "The recognized world record is cool," Cooper said, "but that and two bucks will buy me a Tim Hortons' coffee." **TW**

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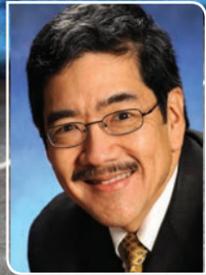
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Living in harmony

MTA stresses to government the importance of national and international harmonization

By Derek Clouthier

WINNIPEG, Man. – Manitoba Trucking Association (MTA) executive director Terry Shaw met with a pair of government officials in mid-August to discuss some of the regulatory barriers facing the trucking industry in the province and beyond. Speaking with Manitoba's minister of infrastructure, Blaine Pedersen, and minister of growth, enterprise and trade, Cliff Cullen, Shaw iterated several opportunities he said would help reduce the 'burden of the industry's regulatory environment.'

"That said, I did start the meeting by suggesting that while we're pleased to

be working with them at the (New West Partnership Trade Agreement) NWPTA level," Shaw said, "all parties need to remember that national and international harmonization should be the goal."

The NWPTA is a partnership between the provincial governments of British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan with the goal of creating Canada's largest, barrier-free, interprovincial market. Each of the three jurisdictions commit to full mutual recognition of reconciliation of their rules affecting trade, investment or labor mobility in an effort to remove barriers to the free movement of goods, services, investment and people within the participating provinces.

Manitoba is not part of the NWPTA, and though the MTA does support coordination 'to the highest level,' it does not have a specific position when it comes to Manitoba's involvement with the NWPTA. Shaw said both ministers were receptive to his desire to achieve better national and international harmonization, but that several challenges for the trucking industry remain.

"We believe discussions on our regulatory environment at the NWPTA level might afford our industry some relief," Shaw said, "and might also set the stage for less difference nationally, which would benefit not only our members, but industry nationally."

The MTA put together a nine-page briefing note prior to the meeting with ministers Pedersen and Cullen highlighting a wide variety of what the association sees as being internal barriers that are currently hindering the trucking industry.

Shaw said some of what was highlight-

ed was not necessarily regulatory in nature, but rather differences in provincial interpretation and practice.

"This means that if there's political will across NWPTA members, we could see a variety of these barriers reduced rather quickly and easily," Shaw said.

In addition to issues surrounding cargo securement and national safety code (NSC) audit practices, an example of these variations in provincial practices is the long combination vehicle (LCV) standard, and the fact that in Alberta, this matter is dealt with differently from other provinces, like Manitoba.

In Alberta, anyone wanting to operate a LCV must have a 'satisfactory' safety rating, but in other western provinces it is acceptable to have a 'satisfactory un-audited', 'conditional' and 'satisfactory' rating. Alberta also allows a carrier to make corrections or adjustments after failing an audit in order to achieve a 'satisfactory' safety rating, where other provinces require a complete facility audit to have the rating changed to 'satisfactory.'

Truck West contacted the Alberta Motor Transport Association for comment on the province's LCV standards, but did not receive a response by press time.

Shaw said the MTA is presently discussing the matter with the AMTA.

"We'll allow them to advocate for change in Alberta should they choose to," Shaw said, "but we're hoping to collaborate with them on a mutually agreeable outcome to this concern, which is significant for our Manitoba members."

In addition to Shaw's recent meeting with the ministers, the MTA has had meetings on this matter with other Manitoba government partners, including enforcement staff.

"While they obviously don't have the authority to address change in another province," explained Shaw, "they can choose to influence certain items with their government peers, as we are with our industry peers."

Another vital issue for the MTA is the absence of safety rating reciprocity between Canada and the US.

"It has been suggested that the lack of a national harmonization in Canada regarding carrier profile and safety rating systems may be on the reasons the US hasn't welcomed reciprocity on Canadian safety ratings," Shaw said.

The MTA still feels that any US carrier operating on Canadian roadways should be held to the same safety fitness framework as Canadian carriers, which is currently not the case in Western Canada.

"As of today, no US companies operating in Western Canada need an NSC number in order to operate heavy commercial vehicles," said Shaw. "This means that despite their on road activities, these US companies will never be subject to audit or other safety intervention measures."

Shaw said this matter has been discussed at the national level for years, and the MTA would like to see a resolution in the near future.

During his meeting with Pedersen and Cullen, Shaw also underscored a handful of initiatives the MTA board has been advocating for, including working with Manitoba Infrastructure on a scale bypass program.

Other topics discussed included the mandated use of electronic logging devices (ELDs) and entry-level driver training, two items Shaw said would bring improvements economically and from a safety standpoint to the industry. **TW**

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B.C. talks emissions reductions

Continued from page 1

will be able to use biodiesel with complete confidence, and today that is not necessarily the case."

B.C.'s Ministry of Environment said the province's fuel requirement for diesel has not changed from the current 4% in its new plan, and that in 2015, fuel suppliers incorporated an average 6.2% renewable content in diesel-finished fuel blends, including what it called a "3.4% drop-in renewable diesel (HDRD) and 2.8% biodiesel (FAME) with no reported operational issues."

Yako said at present, it is difficult for today's engines to go back and forth from using full diesel to a biodiesel blend, and that in cold weather, the higher concentration of biodiesel results in thicker fuel, making passage through the engine less efficient. Relying on findings from various research companies on the effects of biodiesel to arrive at their conclusions, Yako said the mandated use of biodiesel becomes a problem when the industry is asked to adhere to certain rules in advance of the proper technology and availability of the fuel.

Biodiesel concerns

"Once the engine manufacturers say they are able to warranty and guarantee to 10% or 20%, and the fuel is readily available, then that's fine with the industry," Yako said.

B.C.'s Ministry of Energy and Mines said it understands that diesel truck engine warranties do not identify limits for the use of "drop-in" renewable diesel (HDRD), but that many identify limits for the use of biodiesel (FAME), and that many of these warranties identify 20% biodiesel as the acceptable content limit.

The ministry also said it was aware that the trucking industry in B.C. would like to see progress in the testing and demonstration of biodiesel under various road conditions, which is why the Low Carbon Fuels Branch's Part 3 Agreement Program for 2016 provides specific incentives to fuel suppliers for things like testing bio-diesel in cold weather and supplying bio-diesel with higher than 5% blends in any conditions.

Looking for incentives

The Ministry of Environment added the government would be amending its greenhouse gas reduction regulation to allow utilities to double the total pool of incentives available to convert commercial fleets to natural gas, when the new incentives go towards vehicles using 100% renewable natural gas.

"Vehicle incentives and investments to support natural gas fueling stations are allowed under the greenhouse gas reduction regulation, which enables utilities to make time-limited investments to encourage conversion to natural gas for emission reductions," the ministry told *Truck West*. "The policy removes a significant barrier for adopting renewable natural gas in medium and heavy duty vehicles, by supporting incentives specific to renewable natural gas. The diversification of fuels to more renewables is expected to result in emission reductions of about 40,000 tonnes per year by 2050."

The BCTA has iterated to the government that it should offer an array of options for the reduction of GHG emissions because not every opportunity would be available to every company.

"We offered a whole series of things in our recommendations that would require regulatory changes and policy changes," said Yako, "and in some cases, possible legislative changes in order for the whole suite of options to be available."

Yako said the government has made some efforts to allow the industry to lessen its GHG emissions, such as weight allowances for auxiliary power units (APUs), changing regulations to allow for full-sized boat tails and increasing the long combination vehicle (LCV) network in B.C.

Smart liftable axles and wide-based single tires, on the other hand, are two things the government has not permitted the trucking industry to use, which the BCTA said would also help reduce GHG emissions.

"Those two items will require regulatory changes," Yako said. "They would also benefit from having other provinces agree to those same changes."

The province of Alberta is currently in the process of conducting a wide-base tire pilot project, and Yako said they have been keeping an eye on how the effort has been going.

"We're very hopeful if the results in Alberta are positive, and we absolutely expect them to be, then B.C. will take notice and make modifications and recognition that if Alberta goes, it makes sense for all of the western provinces to go."

B.C.'s Ministry of Transportation and

Infrastructure has indicated that smart lift axles are a relatively new technology, and that there are potential improvements the government could make with regards to their permitted use, which is currently under review, but their use remains restricted in the province.

The ministry also said it was trying to determine whether the use of wide-based single tires would result in reduced fuel consumption for trucks.

"Our current axle load limits on these tires are in accordance with a national memorandum of understanding on vehicle weights and dimensions," the ministry said. "We understand these tires have a greater impact on pavement when compared to dual tires, possibly resulting in more frequent highway repaving depending on industry uptake and tire loading."

The BCTA also supports mobility pricing in urban settings, which is a means to directly charge levies for the use of roads and other transportation infrastructure. It can include tolls, distance or time-based fees and congestion charges.

This past June, B.C.'s Chambers of Commerce passed a policy calling for the provincial government to employ an urban mobility-pricing model.

"B.C.'s transportation infrastructure is a cornerstone of our economy," said Maureen Kirkbride, B.C. chamber interim CEO, in a release. "As regions such as the Lower Mainland prepare for significant population growth, we need a reliable source of transportation funding that also fights congestion. Mobility pricing is a complex issue. But with

B.C.'s rising transportation infrastructure needs, it's clear there's no time to lose. We need to identify the best way to implement this in urban centers across the province - and then we need to get it done."

But Yako said the kinds of changes needed help reduce traffic congestion in urban areas are not easy to make, and require the cooperation of municipalities.

"It's one thing to say you can now use this magic technology that will help reduce fuel usage and GHG emissions," Yako said, "it's another thing entirely to try to change people's behavior, and that's what reducing traffic congestion in urban settings means."

Yako said one of the most significant changes the B.C. government could make, but has not, that would have the largest benefit would be a tax change to invent faster turnover of truck equipment by allowing for input tax credits for tractors and trucks, which enables companies to deduct the provincial sales tax from the purchase of a tractor or truck.

"It's been proven that those kinds of tax changes encourages faster turnover," she said, "and faster turnover is important because newer equipment is more fuel efficient."

The B.C. government claims its Climate Leadership Plan will lead to the creation of 66,000 jobs over the next decade, while reducing net annual GHG emissions by up to 25 million tonnes below current forecasts by 2050, or an 80% reduction from 2007 levels. The government will also hold its \$30/ton carbon tax rate until it says 'others catch up.' **TW**

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ICBC's new numbers game

Have you ever been blindsided by a rule you didn't know existed? Like, 'Officer, honestly, I didn't know this was a school zone.' Or, 'You mean this contract is for three years?'

Recently, I was blindsided myself by a rule in a game I play. It was a procedural penalty for – and I am not making this up – the tip of my finger touching my arm, which was deemed to give me extra stability and an unfair advantage. Really, the tip of my finger?

Once you've had your knuckles rapped for violating some obscure rule, you never forget it.

I'll bet some of you have been surprised to learn that you need something called a financial responsibility number (aka FR number) before you can bring commercial loads into British Columbia.

The B.C. Motor Vehicle Act requires out-of-province commercial vehicles to be insured to a set of minimum requirements. Vehicle owners or lessees can meet these requirements by having their insurance company file a financial responsibility certificate with the Insurance Corporation of B.C. (ICBC). The certificate guarantees you have third-party liability insurance that meets B.C. standards and covers all vehicles owned and operated and/or leased and operated in your name.

If you don't have an FR certificate on file with ICBC, then you have to buy basic insurance from ICBC when you buy your non-resident commercial permit (trip permit).

More than a few drivers with out-of-province carriers have been asked to produce an FR number as proof of insurance during enforcement stops.

More than a few have looked quizzically at the officer before rifling through their documentation in search of the right piece of paper.

And more than a few have complained about it. The current paper-based process is inefficient, unwieldy and frankly a pain to administer.

New procedure

The good news is that ICBC has made procedural changes that should make it easier for you to comply with the rule.

While you still have to file proof of insurance and get an FR number from ICBC, you no longer have to carry a paper copy in the cab. Out-of-province operators may quote the FR number issued by ICBC as proof that B.C. insurance requirements have been met.

The FR number can be validated electronically by officers at weigh scales, the Provincial Permit Centre and during roadside enforcement. FR filings may also be validated electronically when you provide the name of the vehicle owner or lessee (the carrier that filed the FR with ICBC).

If you're not based in B.C. and don't already have an FR number, ask your insurance company to file for one. The

Permits & Licensing

Sandy Johnson



fee is \$30 and the process can take several days.

Tips for owner-operators

If you're an owner-operator under a lease agreement with a carrier, you can provide the FR filing number of the carrier you're leased on to. Since

the FR certificate covers all vehicles owned and operated and/or leased and operated in the name of the insured, you must also provide documentation to verify that your vehicle is leased to the carrier.

The following documents may be accepted:

- A cab card identifying the vehicle owner and the carrier. This is going to get tricky for Alberta-based owner-operators since Alberta no longer lists the owner-operator on the registration or the cab card.

- A lease agreement or statement of lease between the carrier and the vehicle owner. Alberta carriers, this might be your best option.

- For Americans, a state-issued document that identifies the vehicle owner and the carrier. For example, the Oregon weight receipt and tax identifier, or your vehicle registration and cab card.

If you have questions about FR filings, contact the ICBC Prorate Licensing & Financial Responsibility Department at 1-800-661-1866 (or 1-800-665-4336 if you're in B.C.). You can also visit icbc.com and search for 'compliance circular 07/16.'

Whether you're playing a game for fun or driving down the highway, it can be expensive to not know the rules. Make sure you have your insurance paperwork in order or ICBC will put the touch on your pocketbook. **TW**

Sandy Johnson has been managing IFTA, IRP, and other fleet taxes for more than 25 years. She is the author of the free book 7 Things You Need to Know About Fleet Taxes and operates FleetTaxPro.com, which provides vehicle tax and licence and compliance services for trucking operations. She can be reached at 1-877-860-8025 or www.FleetTaxPro.com.

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Breakdowns put a dent in retirement plans

I have finally experienced something I thought would never happen. I got a phone call from my repair shop giving me an update on my truck and they told me something that made me feel all warm and fuzzy. The magic words were: "Don't worry, Mark, it's all taken care of under your warranty."

After the last couple of months, that was music to my ears.

Between the two trucks I've had work done on: the air-conditioning, a new heater core, a pair of radius arms, starter motors, AHI modules (whatever they are), an ongoing problem with the engine brake that will hopefully be solved by the warranty job and the usual preventive maintenance and servicing requirements, every one of which had me digging deep into my retiring on a Caribbean island and drinking rum for the rest of my life fund.

Last month, I wrote about the difficulty in deciding whether to keep my current trucks or trade them in.

That conundrum was no longer keeping me awake at night, as I had

**You say tomato
I say tomahto**

Mark Lee



decided to sell them both and become a greeter at Walmart.

I looked into it and unfortunately I don't have enough qualifications for that, so I'm stuck with the trucks for now.

'Unless you have a real lemon, the increased efficiency of the new trucks will put more money in the bank. Plus, an older truck is a lot less comfortable than a newer truck.'

If I could've made a snap decision, I would've sold them both and bought older trucks that I could fix myself with a hammer and a 9/16th-inch wrench.

At the time, that appealed to me, as I was sick of all the niggles and even more annoyed at the constant

swiping of my debit card. However, I wasn't in a position to do that and I'm happy about that.

An older truck may not have so much technology to go wrong, but because they lack that technology they are also less efficient and unless you have a real lemon, the increased efficiency of the new trucks will put more money in the bank.

Plus, an older truck is a lot less comfortable than a newer truck.

They're louder and ride harder

and after almost 30 years behind the wheel, I think I deserve a few creature comforts.

I also don't want to be slipping on coveralls and fiddling with trucks when I'm not driving them.

Even though I enjoy turning wrenches, I don't want to have to do

so on a regular basis and that is exactly what an older truck needs.

Instead of AHI modules, it will be alternators, compressors, wiper motors, steering and suspension components and stuff like that.

These things all wear out and although they're not as technical and complicated as modules, they still put the truck off the road and they will still keep my retiring on a Caribbean island and drinking rum fund from growing.

So I'm back to sleepless nights again, except I'm not.

I still don't know which direction I'm going to take with my business, but I do know it will be a decision that is made for me.

It's quite simple, really, and all about the numbers. If trading up to a new truck is going to get me closer to that bottle of rum, then that's what I'm going to do.

If keeping my current trucks will get me on that beach sooner, then that's the decision I will make and there's always the possibility of doing both.

The way it's been going lately, the trucks I have now will be like new as I replace one part at a time...salute. **TW**

A fourth generation trucker and trucking journalist, Mark Lee uses his 25 years of transcontinental trucking in Europe, Asia, North Africa and now North America to provide an alternative view of life on the road.

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Kenworth introduces new T680 Advantage day cab, to retire T660

By Derek Clouthier

KIRKLAND, Wash. – Kenworth held a press event at its Kirkland, Wash. headquarters Aug. 12, where it highlighted several company initiatives, including the launch of a more fuel-efficient T680 Advantage day cab, bidding adieu to an old favorite and how the year has been shaping up so far. Mike Dozier, general manager of Kenworth and vice-president of Paccar, said the first half of the year has been profitable.

“We feel very good about the first half,” Dozier said of Kenworth and Paccar’s 2016 numbers.

Dozier said the company’s year-end sales numbers have been adjusted to better reflect the current market, with initial overall sales estimates going into 2016 between 260,000 to 280,000 units being downgraded to between 220,000 to 240,000. Kenworth also made a number of adjustments on the manufacturing side to be ‘well positioned’ to fit production with where the market sits.

Dozier said fleet profitability has continued to be positive, despite not being on the same level as 2015. Part of the growth seen this year, Dozier said, is thanks to positive performance in the construction sector. Freight tonnage also continues to climb, but rates can be a concern for some.

“We noted freight rates in yellow,” Dozier said. “That’s one thing we hear from customers, that the common theme is rate pressures. That highlights that it’s so important to be close to the customer and understand their businesses and how we can help them be more successful, because those rate pressures obviously translate into the overall success of their businesses.”

T680 Advantage day cab

Kenworth highlighted its new T680 Advantage day cab, which offers an optimized powertrain with the 2016 Paccar MX-13 engine or Paccar MX-11 and the Eaton Fuller Advantage Series 10-speed automated transmission.

It also features superior aerodynamics to help the powertrain with improved fuel efficiency, which Kevin Baney, Kenworth chief engineer, said offers a 6% improvement, 5% coming from the powertrain and 1% from aerodynamics.

“We’ve leveraged some of the key fu-



Kenworth is introducing a new T680 Advantage day cab that will boost fuel economy thanks to improved aerodynamics.

el-efficiency optimization specifications and special aerodynamic treatments on the Kenworth T680 Advantage 76-inch sleeper – our most fuel-efficient truck – and brought them to the day cab market,” added Kurt Swihart, Kenworth marketing manager. “Customers who purchase new T680 day cabs will receive real-world, fuel economy benefits from these specifications and key aerodynamic features designed to help maximize operating efficiency.”

Baney said the company delivered an improvement of 15% when it comes to fuel efficiency since 2013 and has more planned for next year. Kenworth has also optimized the trailer gap on its new models, releasing flared fairings, and placed the fuel fill under the sleeper to allow more space around the frame rail.

“This year, we’ve done a lot for customers that needed flexibility,” Baney said. “One of the things we’ve heard loud and clear from customers is that they need the ability to package around things like chain anchors and APUs.”

Kenworth’s T880 day cab also features enhanced aerodynamic and powertrain features, and was launched Aug. 22.

TruckTech+

Kenworth has also improved its diagnostics with TruckTech+.

“I think the key to TruckTech+ and the beauty of the system is in its simplicity,” said Jason Skoog, Kenworth assistant general manager for sales and marketing.

The program offers diagnostics on the vehicle in real-time, allowing the driver to avoid serious damage to their truck as

a result of driving the vehicle while there is a fault that needs addressing.

“Our customers tell us that a lot of times what happens before you get remote diagnostics is you get a driver who sees a light and they do one of two things – they take immediate action, which can potentially be an overreaction, or they do the opposite and they ignore it, and they continue driving, which can cause a major problem down the road,” Skoog said.

He added that due to the simplicity of TruckTech+, drivers tend to take the right action, which leads to better uptime for the entire fleet because they don’t run into a major scenario that can sideline a truck. Kenworth now has 18,000 units with TruckTech+, and a vehicle lineup that has logged more than 600 million miles.

Farewell, old friend

Kenworth announced the end of one of the company’s biggest sellers – the T660. After a decade in production, only 500 more units of the T660 will be produced before the sun sets on the vehicle by the end of 2016.

“The Kenworth T660 has been a fantastic truck for our customers with more than 60,000 T660s sold since its introduction in 2007,” said Skoog. “Due to its popularity, we continued to offer the T660 after introducing the award-winning T680 four years ago. Since that time, more and more T660 customers have converted to the T680. We want to give our excellent customers one last chance to own this industry favorite.” **TW**

Playing God at the Paccar Technical Center

MOUNT VERNON, Wash. – Imagine having a room in your house where you had full climate control over; not just adjusting the temperature by a few degrees to remain comfortable, but being able to simulate intense heat and hours later severe cold with strong winds at high altitude. This is exactly what can be done at the Paccar Technical Center in Mount Vernon, Wash., with its latest addition, the climatic control dynamometer.

“What this allows us to do is summer and winter tests all year long,” said Kevin Baney, chief engineer for Kenworth, a Paccar company. “We can actually simulate summer testing in the desert, as well as full winter testing at altitude in the mountains.”

Paccar invested over \$50 million into the climatic control dynamometer, which Baney said was one of only two in all of North America.

Aiolos Engineering, a Canadian company headquartered in Toronto, Ont., was hired by Paccar for the turnkey design,

fabrication, installation and commissioning of the climatic wind tunnel in October 2015.

Aiolos is also one of only two companies in North America that specializes in the design and development of climatic wind tunnels. Paccar keeps much of the climatic control dynamometer’s design and operational details close to its vest to avoid any trade secrets getting into the wrong hands, but the company did give a group of editors, including myself, a tour of the facility Aug. 12, and the wind tunnel was quite impressive. Inside, the temperature was around 100 degree Fahrenheit (38 degrees Celsius), and a truck was sitting facing the large wind tunnel.

It takes roughly six hours to turn the temperature in the room from a sizzling 100 to -20 degrees Fahrenheit.

“If you can imagine a full-sized truck inside this massive wind tunnel, it’s a really impressive (sight),” Baney said.

In addition to temperature, climatic wind tunnels also simulate altitude, humidity, wind speed, rain and snow. **TW**

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Testing your faith in technology

Riding in a Kenworth truck equipped with Bendix Wingman Fusion a jolting experience

By Derek Clouthier

MOUNT VERNON, Wash. – During a press demonstration in the Seattle, Wash. area Aug. 11-13, Kenworth gave attendees the opportunity to hop in a truck equipped with Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems' Wingman Fusion, a driver assistance product aimed at increasing the safety and braking abilities of commercial vehicles.

We've all read about the move technology has been making toward a fully-automated system, and the challenges that have accompanied the effort – one needs only look at the incident in Florida last May, when a person was killed after putting their Tesla vehicle into autopilot mode and the car failed to recognize a white tractor trailer against a bright sky. But the Wingman Fusion is not intended to operate a truck, it's only meant to assist the driver when danger lies ahead.

"This system is designed to help drivers keep their trips safe and uneventful, and do it with minimal interference," said Jason Skoog, Kenworth assistant general manager for sales and marketing. "Bendix Wingman Fusion can help drivers maintain safe distances, mitigate collisions with other motorists who change lanes suddenly, and safely operate in rapidly changing and difficult-to-see conditions like snow, rain, fog, dust, or smoke."

I was able to experience the Wingman Fusion in action first-hand, and not just from a spot on the side of Paccar's test track in Mount Vernon, Wash., but from inside the truck.

The first of many features of Wingman Fusion I was able to see, was what happens when a driver is following another vehicle too closely.

Using radar, a camera, the vehicle's braking system and Bendix's SafetyDirect system, Wingman Fu-

sion quickly recognized the car in front by detecting the distance between the truck and other vehicle. Suitable following distances can be set to nine different distances to fit a fleet's specific needs. It also changes from city to highway mode once the truck reaches a traveling speed of 37 mph (60 km/h).

When the alert was ignored, and the truck continued at the same speed approaching the slower-moving vehicle, it automatically braked to avoid a rear collision.

Next was speed recognition. As we

traveled around the 1.5-mile track at 37 mph, we passed a speed sign that indicated a 30 mph limit, which Wingman Fusion acknowledged, notifying the driver that he was driving too fast. Though Wingman Fusion does recognize speed limit signs in Canada, the US and Mexico, it does not identify limits in construction or school zones.

Fusion also tells the driver if they make a lane change without signaling, which could indicate the move was unintentional. The most dramatic moment during the three-lap demo around the track was stationary vehicle braking to avoid a rear-end collision.

This was partially exhibited during the first and second loop – the first traveling rather slowly and the other allowing the driver to maneuver around the parked vehicle – but for the final demo, we were traveling around 37 mph and came to a hard stop to avoid a collision.

As Skoog mentioned, Wingman Fusion can detect stationary items and

issue following distance alerts even in low-visibility situations by using the radar, but the camera sees what the driver would see, so caution is recommended when driving in fog, snow or smoke.

I asked whether Fusion, given the hard-braking nature of the track demo on dry pavement, would work well in Canada's snowy conditions, where slick, icy, snow-covered roads are an issue for a good part of the year.

I was told because the detection distances can be adjusted to assorted distances, Wingman Fusion can help initiate the braking system much sooner on slippery roads.

But, because the system is not intended to replace the driver, but rather help them drive safer, different road conditions tender varying results.

Wingman Fusion is an evolution of the previous Wingman Advanced. Though it is not standard in Kenworth's Class 8 trucks, Fusion is in about 30% of T680 models. **TW**



A Kenworth truck equipped with Bendix Wingman Fusion automatically comes to a stop to avoid a collision with a vehicle.

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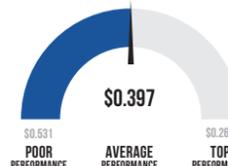
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Kenworth welcomes Dozier back to US soil

By Derek Clouthier

KIRKLAND, Wash. – “It’s good to be back in Seattle,” avowed Kenworth Truck Company’s recently-appointed general manager Mike Dozier during a press event Aug. 12 from his new office in Kirkland, Wash.

Dozier, who is also vice-president of Paccar, returned to US soil in April following a three-year stint Down Under as the managing director of Paccar Australia, where the 28-year Paccar veteran said he learned a great deal about the company and its customer base.

“Short from my first year, it was the first time in my career where essentially everything was new,” Dozier said of when he initially arrived in Australia. “It was new customers, new dealers (and) from a supply base, it’s all new contacts, so that was an opportunity to really learn, so my approach was that I spent a lot of time on the road.”

Through his travels, Dozier said he came to realize just how large the country of Australia really is; essentially the same size as the continental US, but with a fraction on the population.

“That scale and population density,” he said, “you begin to understand how the transport industry had evolved in Australia in comparison to North America.”

Though he said ‘road trains’ do exist in Australia, they are not the predomi-

nant mode of commercial vehicle transportation in the country.

“Multi-combinations, doubles and triples are very prevalent,” Dozier explained, “and you begin to understand why, with the low population and mass distances to cover with a road infrastructure that is good, but not as developed by any means as what we have in the US and lower portions of Canada.”

With the predominance of doubles and triples, Dozier said hiring practices in Australia are a bit different from back home, as drivers need to be more “highly trained” to drive the common 65-90 metric ton B-doubles.

From December 2004 to August 2008, Dozier was Kenworth’s chief engineer, and as an engineer, he said he is passionate about the product.

“I like trucks and I always have and so it’s an opportunity to really get in and understand how transport companies run their businesses a little bit differently,” he said of his time in Australia.

While an engineer with Kenworth, and prior to his departure for Australia, Dozier worked on the project that resulted in the release of the company’s T680 and T880 models, which have become such popular vehicles for Kenworth that it announced it would cease production of the admired T660 truck at the end of 2016 (see pg. 20).

“It’s not often in a career in this industry you get to see an entirely new



Mike Dozier

product platform come to life,” Dozier said. “The growth of those products to essentially 80% of what we build today, being those 680 and 880 platforms...it’s something we are very proud of.”

Asked about the attitude Down Under compared to North America when it comes to the acceptance and availability of new technologies, Dozier said with 16 heavy-duty manufacturers selling in the country, the vast majority not only provide similar technological options as in the US and Canada, despite

not having as dense a population, but offer a larger pool of choices.

“The major players in all markets are there with their heavy-duty products,” Dozier said. “So what you see is more of a comparison and assessment of technologies...so it is arguably one of the most competitive markets in the world.”

Speaking about matters closer to home, Dozier said the outlook for the company looks stable.

“We came off of 2015, it was a big production year for everybody...the fleet is as new as it’s been in a long, long time,” he said. “We had some softening of the economy and I don’t think we’ll see any radical changes there, but I think we’ll see 2017 being a continuation of 2016 as we normalize those numbers of new versus used.”

With revenue so far of \$8.7 billion, Dozier said he feels good about the first half of the year, which capped off 111 years for Paccar of ‘very superior performance’ and the 77th year of net profit.

“I think we’re certainly looking at 2016 as a good year,” he said, “but requiring more focus than perhaps last year did. With the year overall, we’re looking at a good year. Certainly things have come off slightly since last year, but from a standpoint when we look at the metrics, fundamentals, GDP growth through the second quarter, we do have growth...we have an economy that continues to grow.” **TW**

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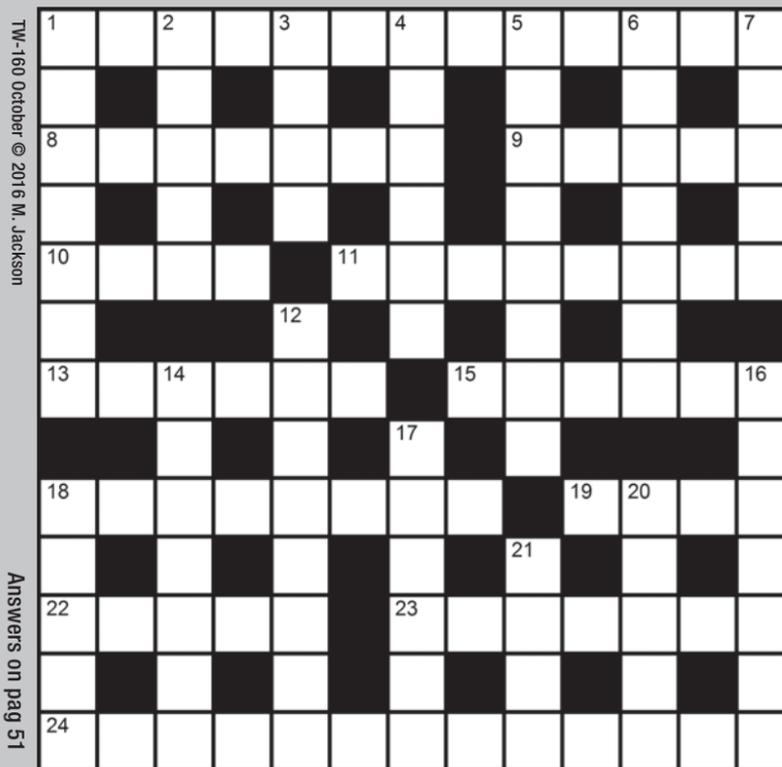
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THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD PUZZLE



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Answers on pag 51

Across

- 1 Careful drivers' rewards, perhaps (6,7)
- 8 Off-recycled lube bay liquid (4,3)
- 9 New-truck deal factor, perhaps
- 10 Truck auction units
- 11 Sent via a detour
- 13 Dangerous goods designation, briefl
- 15 M-B cargo/passenger van
- 18 Dawson City to Inuvik highway
- 19 Canadian diesel brand, not U.S.
- 22 Big road hazard beast
- 23 Goods in excess of Bill of Lading
- 24 Logbooks, slangily (7,6)

Down

- 1 CB radio button
- 2 Carrier's vehicles, collectively
- 3 Palindromic horn honk
- 4 '07-'09 Sterling Class 4/5 model
- 5 Decorative wheel trim item (3,5)
- 6 Key activated component
- 7 Radar gun reading
- 12 Dodge pickup emblem (4,4)
- 14 Specialized rink rig
- 16 Truck stop facilities, often
- 17 CB radio signoff (2,4)
- 18 Test-drive trucks, briefl
- 20 Roadside weigh station
- 21 Engage like gears

Ritchie Bros. buys IronPlanet, enters into strategic alliance with Cat

VANCOUVER, B.C. – Ritchie Bros. announced Aug. 29 that it will acquire IronPlanet, an online marketplace for used and heavy equipment, for approx-

imately US\$758.5 million, subject to customary closing adjustments.

Ritchie Bros. also said it would enter into a long-term strategic alliance with Caterpillar to be its preferred global partner for live onsite and online auctions upon completion of the IronPlanet acquisition.

“This transformative transaction is the logical next step for Ritchie Bros., building on our multi-channel platform, global reach and long-standing customer relationships,” said Ravi Saligram, CEO of Ritchie Bros.

Saligram added that Ritchie Bros. was proud to enter into an historic alliance with Caterpillar, which will strengthen the two companies’ relationship. **TW**

BCTA lauds Hwy. 13 upgrades

LANGLEY, B.C. – The British Columbia Trucking Association (BCTA) is applauding the provincial government’s announcement that approximately \$25.5 million will be allocated to widen Hwy. 13 to support border enhancements at the Aldergrove/Lynden crossing. The upgrades will include widening Hwy. 13 southbound from one to three lanes to accommodate a separate Nexus and truck lane, as well as adding a northbound truck-climbing lane. A new two-lane east-west connection will also be added at 3B Ave., extending from Hwy. 13 to 264th Street.

Though the effort to support the new commercial facility was commended, the BCTA remains hopeful there will be some additional expansion of Hwy. 13 between 8th Ave. and the Trans-Canada. The announced upgrades are expected to provide mobility benefits, such as reduced wait and idle times at the border and less overall delays on the corridor.

The BCTA said it led efforts to keep the Aldergrove/Lynden crossing open to commercial traffic when the Canadian Border Services Agency had considered closing it in 2008, and that the commercial facility is the result of that advocacy. Currently in the design phase, construction is expected to begin once the B.C. government has awarded the construction contract following tender in the spring of 2017. **TW**

US driver turnover decreases

ARLINGTON, Va. – The American Trucking Associations (ATA) revealed Sept. 1 that the turnover rate at truckload fleets fell six points to 83% in the second quarter – the lowest point since the second quarter of 2011.

“The continued decline in the turnover rate reflects the continued choppiness in the freight economy,” said ATA chief economist Bob Costello. “As we hopefully approach the end of this period of elevated inventories later this year, freight demand will pick back up leading to increased demand for drivers and higher turnover rates in the future.”

The turnover rate at smaller truckload fleets fell nine points to 79%, its lowest point since the third quarter of 2015. Turnover at LTL carriers rose four points to 12%.

“Though the turnover rate continues to fall at truckload carriers, finding enough qualified drivers remains a concern for many carriers,” Costello said. **TW**

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Volkswagen takes minority stake in Navistar

LISLE, Ill. – Volkswagen has bought its way into the North American truck market, taking a 16.6% stake in Navistar and will deliver an integrated powertrain in International trucks by 2019.

The strategic alliance was announced Sept. 6. Volkswagen Truck and Bus will invest US\$256 million in Navistar and will appoint two directors to its board. Navistar board members James Keyes and Michael Hammes have resigned from the board to make room.

“We are very pleased to partner with a global leader who shares our view of the world, in an alliance that will deliver multiple benefits and is consistent with our open-integration strategy,” said Troy Clarke, president and CEO, Navistar. “Starting in the near term, this alliance will benefit our purchasing operations through global scope and scale. Over the longer term, it is intended to expand the technology options we are able to offer our customers by leveraging the best of both

companies and enabling Navistar to deliver enhanced uptime. Volkswagen Truck and Bus’s equity investment will strengthen our liquidity position and expand our financial flexibility, while aligning us with a valuable strategic partner.”

“Closer collaboration among our existing brands was a top priority for our commercial vehicles business and we are well on track in this context,” added Andreas Renschler, CEO of Volkswagen Truck and Bus and member of the Board of Management of Volkswagen AG responsible for commercial vehicles. “We are now taking the next step on our way to becoming a global champion in the commercial vehicles industry. The strategic alliance with Navistar is an important milestone and will be very beneficial for both sides.”

There was no immediate word on what the newly formed strategic alliance will mean for Cummins, Navistar’s current third-party engine supplier.

“Cummins is a great partner for us and the Cummins engine in our product is an outstanding product,” said Troy Clarke, president and CEO of Navistar. “I anticipate we’ll continue to offer Cummins products for a period of time...we’re not speculating or making announcements in that regard today.”

The two companies said adding global scale will deliver cost savings for both organizations.

“We believe working collaboratively, the two companies can optimize the capital and engineering expenditures associated with next-generation truck and bus engine development, while providing both Navistar and Volkswagen Truck and Bus with opportunities for substantial procurement savings. This alliance marks another step in Navistar’s journey to be a stronger, more profitable company,” said Walter Borst, executive vice-president and chief financial officer with Navistar.

The deal includes a procurement joint venture, which will allow the companies to source parts collectively. The two truck makers will also share technologies and collaborate in the development of advanced driver assistance systems, connected vehicle solutions, platooning and autonomous

technologies, electric vehicles and cab and chassis components.

Renschler said the time was right to partner with Navistar, because of where Volkswagen is in the production cycle of its next generation powertrain. Partnering now allows the companies to work together on development of the powertrain and integrating it into International trucks in North America.

“For us, it was the right timing,” said Renschler. “Because we are at the moment designing new powertrain components for the whole world...now Navistar joins us at the right time so we can develop them together and start to see real economies of scale.”

For Navistar, the move should boost customer confidence, Clarke said, since the company is now on more solid financial footing and partnered with a major global OEM.

“This will relieve anxiety on the part of some of our customers,” he said. “I fully anticipate we’ll increase consideration of our products, which will drive market share...it gives us the opportunity to get on the balls of our feet again.”

While North American truck orders are currently soft, Clarke said Navistar has increased its order share for eight consecutive months. Bringing a vertically integrated powertrain to its products with the help of Volkswagen will benefit customers, Clarke said.

“There is a well established trend in the industry globally along vertical integration,” he said.

“We can deliver a captive powertrain for Navistar,” Renschler added.

In the meantime, Navistar continues to update its complete product line. Clarke said the first vehicle to be launched as part of its Project Horizon initiative will be revealed later this month.

Renschler predicted the partnership will make Volkswagen one of Navistar’s most important technology partners going forward.

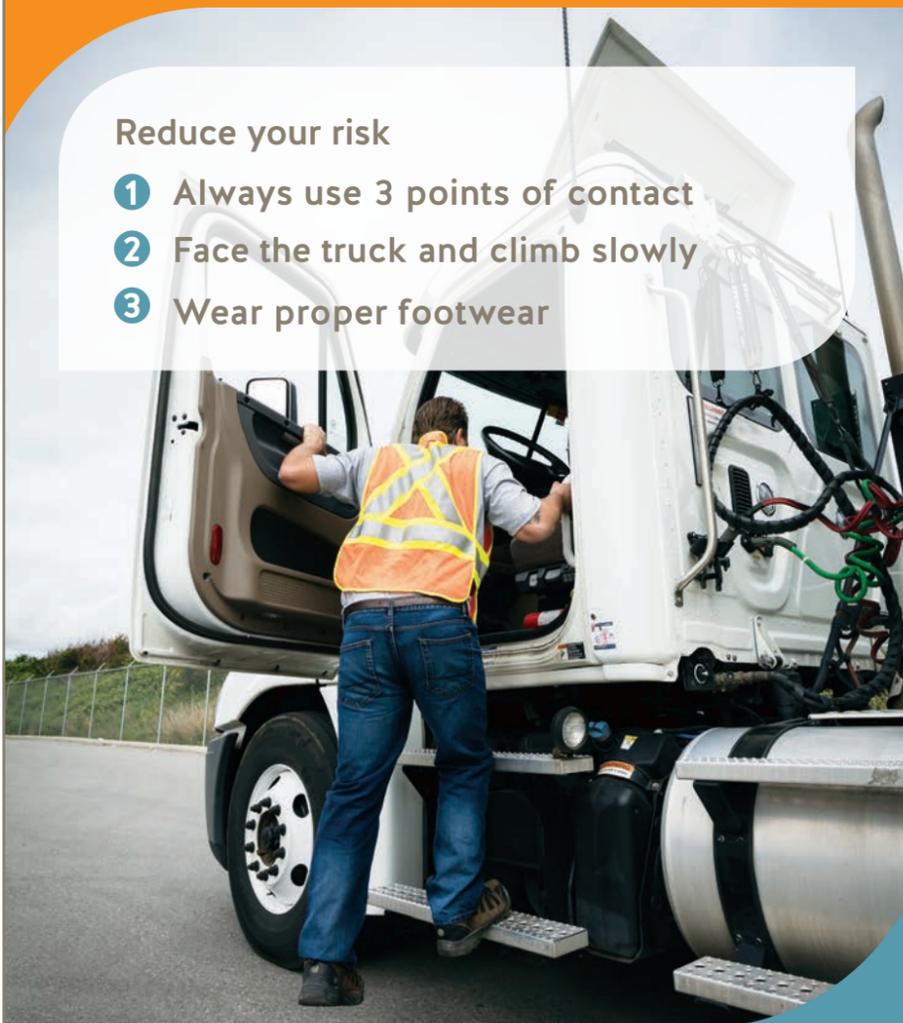
With the alliance announced, the two companies will begin working together on product development that will include not only the engine, but also axles, transmissions and after-treatment systems, Renschler said.

The two truck makers now boast global truck and bus production of about 260,000 units per year. **TW**

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Driving the Peterbilt 567 Heritage truck

Old meets new with classic-styled throwback

By James Menzies

MOUNT VERNON, Wash. – The Peterbilt truck brand was born to meet the needs of northwestern US loggers, so it was only fitting that my opportunity to drive the 567 Heritage came to fruition at the Paccar Technical Center in Mount Vernon, Wash.

The 567 Heritage resurrects the classic styling drivers and owner-operators fondly remember, in a package that's also decked out with modern features that make the truck comfortable and efficient to operate compared to the good ol' days. It's the best of both worlds, really, and if drivers don't mind sacrificing a little bit of on-highway fuel economy compared to the ultra-aero 579, it's a truck that's fit to do a wide variety of jobs, while looking good doing it.

"Peterbilt's Model 567 Heritage elevates the classic styling of Peterbilt with a package of unique features that will command attention on highways and jobsites," said Darrin Siver, Peterbilt general manager, when the truck was introduced this June.

This is a custom truck for those who want to leave the customizations to professional designers and order style in one convenient package. It's a set-forward front axle (SFFA), which Peterbilt claims makes it the industry's most modern SFFA truck. Modern and classic are terms that can both be used freely when describing the 567 Heritage.

The truck can be ordered as a day cab or with a 72- or 80-inch sleeper. My 567 Heritage (for the day, I can only wish it was permanent) had a spacious, well-appointed 80-inch sleeper. There was no mistaking this was no ordinary truck. Everything from the wood paneling on the dash was upgraded in this model. The high-end leather seats served as a constant reminder that I was operating a luxury vehicle. Accent stitching could be found on the steering wheel and seats while the Heritage logo was embroidered into the head-

rests and back of the bunk. Door pads with wood brown trim rounded out the interior design.

The exterior was painted in Peterbilt's newest color: Legendary Red. This color has a certain glimmer-effect that other reds just don't match. It was achieved by mixing tiny glass particles into the paint, giving it a bass boat-type shimmer. It really sparkled under the bright sun.

The exterior of the 567 Heritage is sure to turn heads. It features subtle Heritage badging (the first 567 will be numbered) and not so subtle splashes of chrome, including the air intake bezel and metal hood latches. A bright bumper, grille bars, exhaust stacks, mirrors and sun visor add to the truck's distinctive exterior. Every bit of this truck's exterior shined.

It also featured pod-style headlights, which allow for easy bulb replacement and give the truck a bold face.

As for how the truck drove, no question there, handling fell into the modern category. We sought out some of the roughest country roads near the Tech Center and the Peterbilt front air leaf suspension evened out the bumps as well as could be expected. We were pulling a loaded 48-ft. van trailer. On the highway, the truck offered a smooth, quiet ride.

Power came from the Paccar MX-13 engine rated at 500 hp and 1,850 lb.-ft. of torque, but Cummins engines are also offered. Disc brakes on the front and rear axles provided exceptional stopping ability, but the brakes were rarely needed on this drive thanks to the excellent engine braking capabilities of the MX.

The transmission was an Eaton Fuller MXP-series UltraShift Plus, designed for heavy-duty performance. This transmission can handle anything you throw at it, and has no published maximum GVWR. The dash-

mounted shifter opened up plenty of room between the seats for a cooler or unimpeded access to the sleeper. The bunk is another area where modern trumps classic, with a flat panel TV mount and 1.8 cubic foot refrigerator.

Visibility out of the expansive one-piece curved windshield left no room for complaint. The brightness of the digital gauges – everything from engine oil temperature to air suspension pressure – on the SmartNav screen popped out. But the driver can also use SmartNav for navigation or information purposes.

Peterbilt expects this truck to be popular in vocational applications where the majority of time is spent on-highway. Think tanker, flatdeck or oilpatch. You'll surely see a few of these in Alberta when commodity prices recover. It's also an attractive reward truck that image-conscious fleets could hand over to their top-performing drivers. It's hard to imagine a frowning face behind the wheel of the 567 Heritage. Peterbilt is now taking orders for and producing the 567 Heritage. **TW**



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US finalizes Phase 2 greenhouse gas regulations for trucks, trailers

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the US Department of Transportation’s National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) revealed the final Phase 2 greenhouse gas rules for heavy-duty trucks and engines Aug. 16.

The final rule is a whopping 1,650 pages and aims to further reduce greenhouse gas emissions and fuel consumption by medium- and heavy-duty vehicles and engines. The new rule outlines four separate standards for each of the regulatory categories of heavy-duty vehicles: combination tractors; trailers used in combination with those tractors; heavy-duty pickup trucks and vans; and vocational vehicles. As well, the rule outlines separate standards for engines that power combination tractors and vocational trucks. It also clarifies the classification of natural gas engines.

The new rule will be applied to medium- and heavy-duty vehicles manufactured for model years 2019 through 2027. The EPA and NHTSA have esti-

the new standard will save medium- and heavy-duty truck owners \$170 billion over the life of the standards.

Both agencies say the final standards are cost-effective for consumers and businesses, adding the buyer of a new long-haul truck in 2027 will recoup the investment in fuel-efficient technologies in less than two years through fuel savings. Following the announcement, many US trucking companies and associations applauded the rules.

The Heavy Duty Fuel Efficiency Leadership Group – comprised of six major American heavy-duty fleets – released a statement that outlined their

praise for the final rule.

“The continued focus on improving fuel efficiency will unlock new innovations that protect our environment and spur economic growth,” said Indra K. Nooyi, chairman and CEO of PepsiCo. “The steps we have taken to boost the efficiency of our fleet across PepsiCo have significantly reduced emissions while lowering our operating costs, and we are committed to doing much more.”

“We’ve long supported standards that reduce emissions and improve the environment, particularly in the communities where we operate. That’s why we support the new Phase 2 standards for medium and heavy-duty trucks. It’s a win-win for our industry, our customers and communities – reducing emissions and saving fuel and money,” added David Steiner, CEO, Waste Management. “Having invested in approximately 6,000 natural gas trucks so far, we’ve already seen the benefits of new advanced technologies and have eliminated the need for 8,000 gallons of diesel fuel per year, per vehicle. We’re fully committed to continuing the transition of our fleet to natural gas.”

The American Trucking Associations added it was “cautiously optimistic” about the Phase 2 rules achieving the targets set out by the administration.

“While today’s fuel prices are more than 50% lower than those we experienced in 2008, fuel is still one of the top two operating expenses for most trucking companies,” said ATA president and CEO Chris Spear. “That’s why our industry has worked closely with both the Environmental Protection Agency and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration over the past three-and-a-half years to ensure these fuel efficiency and greenhouse gas standards took into account the wide diversity of equipment and operations across the trucking sector.”

ATA vice-president Glen Kedzie added he is pleased the ATA’s concern with adequate lead-time for technology development and flexibility have been heard and included in the final rule.

Truck maker Daimler Trucks North America (DTNA) also voiced its approval for the new standards. It stated the company is pleased the new standards allow the industry a decade to phase in technical changes.

“The US is facing significant challenges regarding GHG reduction as well as its continued dependence on foreign oil. DTNA will continue to work closely with the EPA, NHTSA, and our partners to develop new solutions that will have a positive environmental impact and fuel efficiency gains for our customers that are harmonious with the Phase 2 standards,” said Martin Daum, president and CEO, DTNA.

Canada is adopting its own GHG rules, which are expected to widely mirror those implemented in the US. However, concerns remain that the Canadian rules will not adequately take into consideration the wider variety of configurations allowed here.

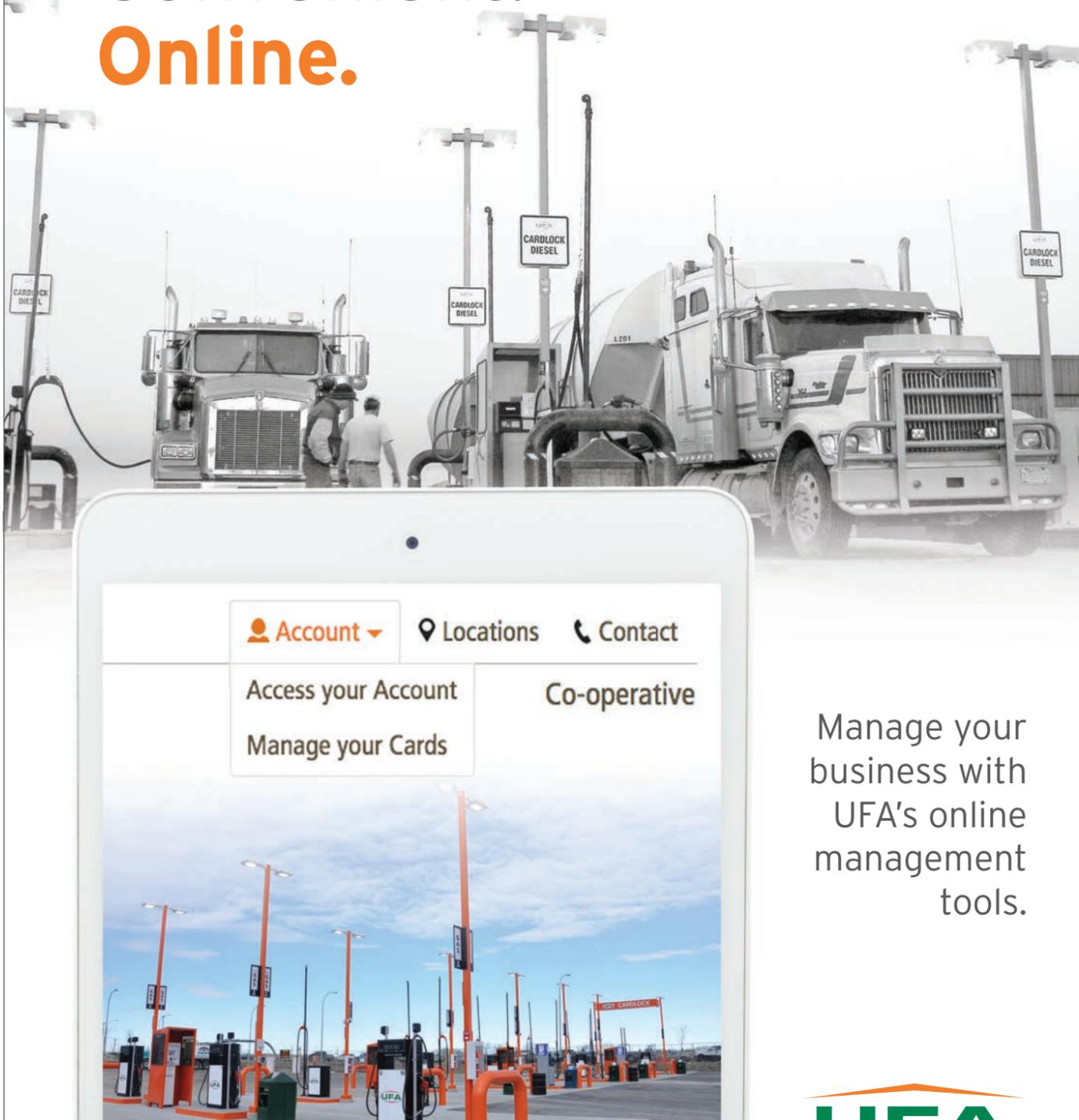
“We have to go about it intelligently,” Canadian Trucking Alliance CEO David Bradley told an audience at a People-Net conference late last year. “Canada is way behind in terms of developing the policy and framework and I, for one, don’t like Canadian laws being developed by US congress.” **TW**

‘I don’t like Canadian laws being developed by US congress.’

David Bradley, CTA

ated that over the life of the Phase 2 rules, more than a billion metric tons of CO2 and two million barrels of oil per day by 2027 will be saved. They added

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Chevron introduces CK-4/FA-4 engine oils

By James Menzies

DALLAS, Texas – Chevron revealed on Aug. 25 at the Great American Trucking Show its new line of CK-4 and FA-4 engine oils, which it claims to be the most “comprehensive and technologically advanced” oil line in its history. The new oils are the culmination of five years of development and will provide stronger performance than today’s CJ-4 oils in key categories, including oxidation stability, piston deposit control and wear. CK-4 oils in the lineup are a straight replacement to today’s CJ-4 oils and can be used in new and existing engines. Chevron’s new Delo 400 ZFA 10W-30 Synblend FA-4, the sole FA-4 oil to be offered initially, has been specially designed for even greater fuel efficiency in 2017 and future engines. Chevron also has in the works a new Delo 400 ZFA 5W-30 FA-4 oil that will help engine manufacturers meet future emissions standards, announced Doug Hinzie, vice-president, Americas, with Chevron.

“Our next generation product is already developed for that future work,” Hinzie said during a press conference. “OEMs know they have got to meet those regulations coming up in the future and we are already investing heavily in our HDMO (heavy-duty motor oil) product line. As we get to these ultra-thin, ultra-low-viscosity products, Chevron is working continuously to be a leader in that technology.”

But most customers, Chevron officials acknowledged, are likely to initially adopt a single oil strategy and will use CK-4 oil across their entire fleet. Chevron has come out with a full line of CK-4 products to meet these requirements. They include:

Delo 400 XSP 5W-30 synthetic: Chevron claims this oil will offer excellent low-temperature performance and the longest oil drain intervals in the product line, as well as maximum fuel economy among CK-4 oils. “If you’re operating in Northern Canada or Alaska, this offers fantastic start-up capability, especially in the dead of winter,” said Len Badal, global Delo brand manager. He said the oil will offer up to a 2% fuel economy improvement over today’s CJ-4 oils. It can also be used in medium-duty vehicles and cargo vans with gasoline engines.

Delo 400 XSP 5W-40 synthetic: An oil that boasts 20% improved oil oxidation resistance and 50% reduction in wear compared to today’s CJ-4 equivalents, Badal said this oil has been compared to competitive 0W-40 viscosity oils and has shown equal pumpability at low temperatures.

Delo 400 XLE 10W-30 Synblend: An update to its current CJ-4 product, Chevron is claiming a 1% fuel economy improvement. It has also been enhanced for off-road applications, Badal said, bringing the same performance benefits to off-highway users that aren’t bound to the same emissions-reducing requirements as on-highway fleets. Mining, agriculture and heavy construction are a few of the applications this oil will fit into, in addition to on-highway trucking.

Delo 400 XLE 15W-40 Synblend: Badal said this is the first 15W-40 ever to meet Mercedes’ stringent MB228.51

piston cleanliness requirements. It also offers an opportunity to extend drain intervals 25% further than the maximum OEM-published drain intervals.

Delo 400 SDE 15W-40 Premium Conventional: Expected to be the top-selling of the new Delo oils, this offering boasts a 38% improvement in wear performance and 20% increase in total engine life to rebuild compared to CJ-4 oils.

To help customers select the most appropriate oil, Chevron is launching a new Advisor Service program, which will pair customers up with Chevron product experts. Those advisors will analyze the fleet’s needs and operating requirements and then suggest the best oil. The program will launch later this

year and be expanded with new features in 2017. Unique packaging has also been rolled out to help avoid confusion in the marketplace. CK-4 oils will have red caps while FA-4 will have yellow. Additional identifiers will be found on the labels to prevent misfills.

However, Chevron officials pointed out putting FA-4 oil in an older engine will not likely result in catastrophic damage. After all, noted Badal, 2017 engines weren’t available for testing when FA-4 oils were developed, and no signs of inadequate protection emerged when these oils were heavily tested in EPA10 and EPA13 generation engines. Still, he added it’s best to check with engine OEMs to ensure they permit FA-4 oils before using them in older engines. Backwards compatibility remains a mystery, but Badal said he’s aware of at least one engine manufacturer that will be factory filling with FA-4.

The new oils have undergone more extensive testing than any previous fam-

ily of Chevron oils, according to Shawn Whitacre, senior staff engineer for lubricant technology with Chevron. Nearly 1,000 pieces of equipment were included in the test phase. Whitacre said he’s confident the comprehensive testing will separate Delo oil from others in the marketplace. Hinzie agreed, taking exception to the attitude that oil is oil, and all offerings are designed to the same spec’.

“As you start getting into the ultra-low-viscosity thin film capability, oil is not an oil. How you formulate it is extremely important. Making sure you protect that engine and get the key benefits the OEM wants, the customer wants and the market needs is really critical,” he said.

One customer that has bought in is Glen McDonald, director of maintenance at Ozark Motor Lines. He has been running Delo 400 XSP 5W-30 CK-4 oils as part of Chevron’s field test program and said he’s convinced of the benefits. He has stretched oil drain intervals in his Freightliner fleet out to 80,000 miles. **TW**

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The new Cascadia offers significant fuel savings over even the Cascadia Evolution, Freightliner announced.

A new Freightliner Cascadia is born

By James Menzies

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. – Freightliner has completely redesigned its top-selling truck with the introduction of the 2018 Cascadia.

The company showed the ‘new Cascadia’ – as it has officially been dubbed – for the first time to customers, dealers and truck press at a special event here this Aug. 30-Sept. 1. Twelve carriers, including Bison Transport, that have collectively spent US\$9 billion on some 60,000 Freightliner Cascadias over the last six years, were the first to receive the new model.

“You don’t spend \$9 billion on a good vibe,” said Martin Daum, president and CEO of Daimler Trucks North America. “What sells a truck is to have the absolute best product in the market.”

Freightliner wasn’t content to have the top-selling Class 8 truck in its stable; it set out to improve fuel economy by 5% compared to the Cascadia Evolution. A real-world coast-to-coast trip from Detroit to Portland yielded an 8% fuel economy advantage for the new Cascadia, exceeding the company’s own expectations.

Gains came from improved aerodynamics, enhancements to the DT12 automated transmission, elliptical-shaped mirrors, a new upper door seal and integrated antennas.

Freightliner will continue to offer the current Cascadia and the Cascadia Evolution, giving customers a choice from a range of on-highway trucks that span a fuel economy breadth of 19%. This marks the most expansive line of on-highway tractors in Freightliner’s history, noted Richard Howard, vice-president of sales and marketing. He acknowledged the Cascadia helped DTNA grow its Class 8 market share from 34.5% in 2007 when it was launched, to 42.6% through July of this year.

“Starting with the best truck is the best place to start,” he said of the redesigned Cascadia, noting nearly everything inside and outside the truck has been changed. The redesign was comprehensive enough to justify a name change, but officials said they didn’t want to lose the brand equity they’ve built with the existing Cascadia.

The engine has been lowered thanks to a splayed frame rail, which also offers better access to underhood components. The lower seating of the

engine allows for a rounder, more engine-hugging front end of the truck, which differentiates the new Cascadia, giving it a more modern – but not radically so – look. The new Cascadia is available in Professional and Elite trim and with optional Aero and AeroX aerodynamic packages. Every truck will come loaded with Detroit Connect telematics and will be constantly connected, Howard explained.

“The biggest mobile device on the road will be the new Freightliner Cascadia,” he said. Detroit is upgrading its telematics with the launch of a new portal that will allow customers to manage Virtual Technician remote diagnostics and monitor key data points. For example, they’ll be able to easily identify performance outliers within the fleet and investigate poor performing trucks.

Virtual Technician will be offered for five years on the new Cascadia with no subscription fees. Customers will also be able to receive remote engine updates and will be able to select a new Detroit Analytics service that aims to convert data from the fleet into meaningful information.

The interior has been completely redesigned. Kary Schaefer, general manager, product marketing and strategy, said Freightliner worked closely with interior design firm Teague, which specializes in designing small spaces and has done such work with Boeing. LED lighting is standard on the interior and exterior of the new Cascadia and dimmer switches allow drivers to adjust the bunk lighting.

Two seats and a table provide a comfortable workspace or dining area, but they fold away to allow a Murphy bed to be deployed in about six seconds. In single bunk sleepers, drivers enjoy a redesigned “loft” area with ample upper storage and larger areas for clothing, TV, microwave and refrigerator.

“Driver turnover and wages are a big part of fleet costs,” said Schaefer. “We wanted to develop a truck that drivers are proud to drive. We want to think of it as a tool for attracting and retaining new drivers for fleets.”

The sleeper is also configurable for team drivers. A new telescoping ladder allows safer and easier access to the top bunk and folds neatly away when not in use.

The new driver display is extremely vibrant, and uses bright colors to communicate important messages to the

driver. Fault code information is presented in plain English (or French, or Spanish) instead of by code. Also new is a fully adjustable steering column.

“We spent a lot of time on the dash layout trying to understand where the placement of switches and gauges need to be for different heights and sizes of drivers,” Schaefer noted.

A third door seal has been added to reduce noise and a redesigned suspension offers a smoother ride. A new thin-sulate insulation package is also now available. The AeroX package offers a full set of low-to-the-ground fairings, which would appear at first glance to be impractical in a Canadian winter. But officials said the low front air dam

was tested extensively in a Minnesota winter and it was able to snap back into place undamaged after making contact with snow and ice. The truck can be ordered without the low air dam but it contributes up to a 1% improvement in fuel economy.

The new Cascadia will be available with Detroit Assurance 4.0, an updated collision mitigation system that will now be able to identify pedestrians and apply partial braking. The radar range has been extended by 50 meters.

The truck was also built for easier serviceability. The input of technicians was sought and applied to the design, according to Toby Faulkner, program leader for the new Cascadia. Some of the design attributes that were based on technician feedback include a two-piece, easy to remove front bumper that can be removed in two minutes. All electronic control units (ECUs) are now housed together in an electronics vault accessible from inside the cab. The HVAC is also easier to get at through a panel on the top of the dash.

The new Cascadia will enter production in early 2017 with production ramping up in the second quarter. It will cost approximately US\$15,000 more than today’s basic Cascadia model, depending, of course, on how it is spec’d.

But even with the upcharge, a 19% fuel economy improvement from the original base Cascadia is something many fleets will find difficult to ignore. And the gap could widen.

Schaefer said the truck was built with the potential to add further fuel economy improvements every couple years. **TW**

Detroit Assurance 4.0 debuts in new Cascadia

By Derek Clouthier

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. – As part of the unveiling of its new Cascadia truck, Freightliner launched the latest version of Detroit Assurance 4.0, a suite of active safety systems. Detroit Assurance 4.0 offers customers several driver-assist controls, an interactive dash display, as well as safety features like active brake assist, adaptive cruise control and lane departure warning.

“We are driven to find and develop the right solutions that maximize truck, powertrain and driver performance,” said Kary Schaefer, general manager of marketing and strategy for Freightliner. “That dedication goes beyond fuel savings; it also centers on active safety systems like Detroit Assurance that protect everyone on the road.”

Assurance is integrated with the Detroit engine, transmission, braking system and dashboard to provide drivers with enhanced safety and collision mitigation technology. There is also an optional video-capture feature which records safety-related events for 20-30 seconds before, during and after an incident that is available through the Bendix SafetyDirect web portal, which the company said helps inform fleet managers of possible driver training opportunities.

“There are so many challenges that drivers face on the road today, including the performance of other drivers and road conditions,” said Schaefer. “We will continue to improve our safety offerings to help drivers return home accident-free.”

I was part of a test drive that demonstrated Detroit Assurance 4.0 in action in a Freightliner Cascadia in Colorado Springs, Colo., Sept. 1, and along with providing a smooth ride, the vehicle, while utilizing the adaptive cruise control feature, was able to maintain not only a steady speed on various road grades, but also a safe distance from other vehicles on the highway, all while in cruise control.

Even coming off the highway on an exit ramp, Assurance was able to continuously reduce the speed of the Cascadia, recognizing the slower-moving vehicles ahead.

The truck was able to maximize its fuel efficiency by lowering its rpm depending on the grade of the road, minimizing them while on a down or level slope and producing more power while traveling uphill to maintain the set cruising speed.

When the driver approached a vehicle from behind, Assurance was able to provide a notification when they were traveling too closely and reduce speed to back away and maintain a safe distance. Fleets can set a following distance with the adaptive cruise control feature between 2.6 and 3.4 seconds in set intervals, depending on various driving conditions. Assurance 4.0 tracks up to 40 objects simultaneously, up to 825 feet in front of the truck. Coming standard is the radar system, with active brake assist, full braking on stationary objects, moving pedestrian warning, adaptive cruise control and tailgate warning. The camera system is optional, which provides lane departure warning and video capture via Bendix SafetyDirect.

Detroit Assurance 4.0 integrates into Freightliner’s new Cascadia equipped with a Detroit engine with either a DT12 or manual transmission. **TW**

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Sometimes, timing is everything

There are nearly 200 days until the deadline to file your personal income tax return. It feels like it's a long way off - heck, it's not even Christmas yet. But whether you operate one truck or a small fleet, you should take time now to minimize the tax you owe.

While everyone traditionally circles April 30 on their calendar, for most the more pressing deadline of Dec. 31 is just three months away.

Dec. 31 is the deadline for personal deductions. If you are a sole proprietor, then it is also an important deadline for business decisions. If you are incorporated, then your business year-end date is also a critical deadline.

Planning ahead

Effective tax planning requires a three- to six-month cushion so you have time to take advantage of every opportunity for tax savings.

Right now, we're reviewing our clients' first nine months of operation and preparing tax estimates so they can have peace of mind and adequate cash flow when their returns are due.

For example, there's a rule of thumb in accounting that says the best time to acquire new equipment is at the end of your tax year. It's generally true, as long as you're financing the vehicle with a loan and not a lease.

That's because CRA lets you expense a half-year's depreciation on the asset purchase even though you may have only owned it for a month or two.

Since CRA allows a 20% depreciation expense during a truck's first year, that's a good chunk of change on a new vehicle. You could be writing off far more

'Instead of circling a date on a calendar and scrambling to fill out your returns, insist on sessions with your accountant throughout the year.'

than you actually paid out during the short time you've had it. Leasing a new asset close to year-end doesn't offer the same tax-related benefit.

That big initial lease payment is considered to be a pre-paid deposit which you cannot expense all at once. You have to divide the deposit by the number of months in your lease contract and expense that amount each month in addition to your regular lease payment.

People in trucking tend to use the words "buying" and "leasing" interchangeably. If your accountant advises you to buy a new truck, don't go out and lease one. Purchasing and leasing have totally different effects on your tax planning.

Tax Talk

Scott Taylor



No surprises

Even the timing of a medical expense can be a tax-planning issue.

Medical expenses are deductible when they're paid, not incurred. Plus, there is a medical expense cap that allows you to only claim expenses great-

er than 3% of your net annual income.

If your kid needs braces it may be better to do it now and pay as much of it as you can before Dec. 31 in order to make sure your medical expense exceeds that 3% threshold. Paying a portion this year and another next year may mean that as a percentage of your income your medical expense is too low to qualify for a tax deduction.

The opposite is true for business expenses. Business expenses are deductible based on the invoice date, not when they are paid. If you have tires to be replaced or other pending repair work, doing so before Dec. 31 can save you money now. Spending \$3,000 on tires before December could save you \$900 in tax this April. Buying those tires in February will delay your tax savings to April 2018.

Put your refund to work

Want to make a great start toward pay-

ing your 2016 taxes? Set aside your GST/HST refund from July to September and October to December as income tax payments.

Your GST/HST refunds can be deposited into a separate bank account from your business account. This will ensure it doesn't get lost in your everyday business activities. Nobody likes the surprise of a big tax bill.

Instead of circling a date on a calendar and scrambling to fill out your returns, insist on sessions with your accountant throughout the year so you can plan, prepare and budget for April 30, but for Dec. 31 as well. **TW**

Scott Taylor is vice-president of TFS Group, providing accounting, bookkeeping, tax return preparation, and other business services for owner-operators. Learn more at www.tfsgroup.com or call 1-800-461-5970.

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Let's talk about mental health

I have something difficult to share. A driver that I had run down the road with several times over the years and had come to know as another one of the hardworking decent guys that are the mainstay of the Canadian trucking industry, took his own life in early August.

None of us who knew him as I did saw it coming.

That's why I have decided to share a few thoughts about something we rarely discuss in this industry, men-



Over the Road

Al Goodhall

tal health.

I don't have any expertise whatsoever in the field of mental health, so I'm not trying to provide any answers or solutions to the stresses we face as drivers.

But I do know how I feel every Saturday morning when I pack the car

in preparation for another five days on the road and then kiss my wife good-bye.

We need to have a conversation about that.

It's not easy just getting through the day. Anxiety, anger and feelings of depression find fertile ground to fester and grow in the mind of a long-haul driver.

For me, it is a constant struggle to keep the opposing forces of my work and personal life in balance.

It is my love/hate relationship with trucking and a constant source of stress in my life.

I love being out on the road, but it keeps me away from the one person I care about the most, while at the same time providing financial security and stability for us both.

Life is difficult.

Trucking is indeed a great life to live, as you explore the country and

the continent with the added bonus of getting paid well to do it.

For some individuals, this lifestyle is all they ever need - it fulfills their one great passion in life. They are the lucky ones.

But if the high turnover rate of drivers in this business is any indicator, they are also a minority.

At some point in a driving career you must grapple with the question, is there more to life than just rolling down the road? That feeling is all about the need for companionship and stability.

Those feelings run strong in me and probably in the people who find they can't continue to live on the road despite how much they may enjoy the trucking life.

In the macho world of trucking, we don't talk about our feelings. It's a sign of weakness to the male ego. We bottle up those feelings and put them on the shelf.

That's been the story for my generation.

That's probably why we accept the authoritarian structure in this industry without question and continue to wear hardship as a badge of honor. That's what real men do.

Of course nothing could be further from the truth. We all know we work in an industry that is classed in the Top 10 when it comes to physical danger.

But what about the dangers we face mentally and emotionally?

The personal example I shared of the big stressor I face every week is but one example of the thousands of mental stressors that haunt a driver as he or she rolls down the road.

The common thing all drivers share

'The hazards we face in our mental work environment are every bit as dangerous as the hazards we face in our physical environment.'

is the time alone and the long hours of uneventful driving time that the mind has to play with.

How mental health affects a driver's daily life is yet another topic that is not addressed in any type of ongoing training program for drivers.

The hazards we face in our mental work environment are every bit as dangerous as the hazards we face in our physical environment.

Let's talk.

That has been the rallying cry for the past few years in encouraging people to talk about their mental health issues, especially surrounding depression.

It's something we face as drivers on a daily basis even if we don't recognize it as such. So, let's talk. **TW**

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

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In support of e-logs

The move to electronic logging devices (ELDs) is a point of contention for some, but on the flip side, there has been a push towards this mandate to help level the playing field across the industry. There is a definite correlation between hours-of-service (HOS) and rates and it's widely believed we should see an increase in rates once ELDs are fully implemented.

Whether a driver takes the initiative to alter a logbook to gain drive time, or they are being persuaded by an avaricious carrier, the result can be downward pressure on overall rates. This creates a disadvantage for those who are compliant. Those following the rules can't compete. They can't afford to extend the same rates as the non-compliant carriers.

Some carriers find it acceptable for drivers to fudge their logs when they run out of hours close to home. This is one reason why ELDs are being mandated. There are certainly those who manipulate logbooks for financial gain, which is why ELDs were suggested as a way to help level the playing field. However, there are perhaps many more drivers who misrepresent time on manual logs for reasons like running out of hours a few miles from home.

Personally, I believe it is better to err on the side of honesty. If you are out of hours and 28 miles from home you have two choices: go into violation to get home and log the time truthfully or simply shut down. Having said that, it is important to acknowledge that each situation is unique and infractions come with potential consequences. If a driver goes into violation, they need to be prepared for what could happen.

It's unfortunate that drivers are inconvenienced on the job. Not getting home in time could mean they don't get to their kid's graduation or meet other important commitments in their life. There are pros and cons, like in any profession, and trucking is not for everyone. It's not my intention to sound harsh, but if you sign up to drive over the road, be prepared to take the good with the bad and adapt as the industry evolves.

There are many examples where drivers believe they have valid reasons for falsifying a log. Some argue that current HOS guidelines don't meet the needs of drivers and the realities they face on the job. Some believe they have no other choice but to alter their logs to account for delays and other factors beyond their control.

It has been suggested that HOS issues should have been addressed prior to mandating ELDs, however HOS rules are not changing anytime soon and ELD compliance will become reality, nonetheless. At the end of the day, I suggest that falsifying a logbook is never the answer. I don't believe it is OK to "fudge" a logbook to make more money or to get home. Industry regulations are in place to protect us all and circumventing the law is not the answer for any reason. I believe ELDs are good because they limit a

Guest Column

Natalie Martin



driver's ability to run illegal to a greater extent than manual logs. However, this will not solve the problem entirely. Enforcement must be made a priority and I'm deeply concerned by the lack of enforcement on the part of enforcement agencies when it comes to ELDs.

I've spoken to countless drivers on

e-logs and they have unanimously consented that there is considerably less review and scrutiny of their electronic logs by officials than when they were on manual logs. Come compliance day, I hope that officials don't take ELDs for granted. They must continue to monitor e-logs just the same as paper logs, especially if driver audits are not conducted more frequently than they are now.

Hours-of-service are no joke, and seemingly insignificant infractions can entail huge consequences. Take the cautionary case of Gary Blakley, an Ontario truck driver who was a mere 16 minutes over his HOS and driving with an out-of-date log in December 2013. He crashed into a police cruiser and ultimately killed a state trooper. The district attorney in the case stated that "the tragedy was avoidable" and that if "Mr. Blakley had decided to end his drive...we wouldn't be here today," according to media reports.

I'm sorry to say, this is not the only oc-

casion where an HOS violation resulted in disastrous consequences, and in this case, the driver was sentenced to three-and-a-half years in prison for aggravated criminally negligent homicide. ELDs will help drivers keep their logbooks current and will hopefully deter drivers from operating outside of their HOS.

The fact remains that ELDs are the new reality for the trucking industry. If their implementation means that unfair players can't compete anymore by running illegal, then I'm all for it. The time has come to eliminate those who undercut and devalue our industry as well as those who create unsafe situations by circumventing the law. **TW**

Natalie Martin is marketing and social media coordinator at JBT Transport, and is a member of the Women's Trucking Federation of Canada advisory board. Prior to her role at JBT, Natalie worked in dispatch, administration and 3PL logistics.

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That's a wrap



Why you should consider wrapping your trailer with graphics

Trucking is a very visual industry – for those who choose to make it so. While there are some trailers that roll down the road as a giant blank white canvas, there are others that act as rolling billboards for their respective companies.

Fleet graphics have come a long way with the advancement of technology. Gone are the days where graphics were painted on the trailer or could only showcase basic logos. Today, digital imaging has changed the game and fleets can design and place a visually stimulating image on their trailer to grab the attention of potential consumers on the road. Fleet graphics have become such an artform, that the Private Motor Truck Council of Canada (PMTCC) even distributes awards for the best looking fleets on the highway every year at its annual convention.

So it's no wonder more fleets are getting the message that trailer graphics are worth the investment and are wrapping their fleets accordingly. We spoke with a trailer graphics sales specialist and a fleet that believes in advertising via fleet graphics to understand why this is a medium more fleets should be taking advantage of.

SAFETY

While some fleets are concerned that putting a giant label on their trailer could attract thieves, Andy Walker, Ontario distribution manager for Molson Coors Canada, said he believes wrapping the trailer actually has the opposite effect.

"From my perspective, wrapping the trailer gives it visibility," he said. "From a security perspective, if we get a call that someone is dragging our trailer and it's not by a Molson tractor, then we know we have a problem and we can act on it. You can run a trailer around blank and no one will know there's beer on it, but for us, we know there's beer on it and we want everyone else to know there's beer on it."

Technology has also helped fleet graphics contribute to safety for the trucks and trailers, added Shelagh Morrison, senior sales executive at Turbo Images, which specializes in fleet graphics.

"One trend we're noticing is that a lot of fleets are now asking for reflective graphics," she said.

Reflective graphics allow trailers to be visible for 24 hours a day, so even when it's dark at night, companies can be assured not only are mo-

torists seeing their trailer's logo and brand image, but the actual trailer itself, which helps increase safety.

"The more reflective it is, the safer it is," Walker added. "Plus it's also nice to see the visual pop out at night because now when the trucks are driving at night, our brand and message is still out there for the consumer."

COST

Surprisingly, wrapping your trailer is quite cost-effective, said Morrison.

"Fleet wrapping is by far the most cost-effective medium out there from a marketing perspective when you think about cost per impression," she said. "It's a broad-reaching medium, especially if your target market is adults between the ages of 18-54. Fleet graphics really allow you to take your message right to the customer."

Essentially, fleet graphics can pay for themselves, Morrison said, when you consider how many eyes are on the trailers every day.

"Grocery stores love to use fleet graphics because people on the road coming home from work at the end of the day are wondering what they're going to make for dinner, and then they see a big Loblaw's trailer with dinner printed right there for them," she said.

Walker added the investment in trailer graphics is worth it because of how long some of the films last.

"It's such a big bang for your buck," he said. "The

amount of people that see it is way more than a parked billboard, and we keep them on for at least five years at a time."

Morrison said that while some fleets may choose to change their graphics every five years, some materials like 3M products can last up



to 10 years.

"But there are short-term film options," she added. "So, for example, Pepsi has their entire fleet wrapped in permanent long-term graphics, but for summer they had a promotion happening so we applied a temporary film over top of their back door to help them get their message across without re-



wrapping the entire fleet again."

DRIVERS

Fleet graphics also have the added bonus of making the driver feel more confident about their career, Morrison said.

"We hear from fleets sometimes that their graphics fill their drivers with a sense of pride," she said. "Many of our customers continue to use fleet graphics as another way to ensure driver retention and satisfaction."

Walker said that having wrapped trailers makes Molson drivers more than just drivers.

"With our trailers, our drivers are really brand ambassadors when they're out there on the road," he explained. "And when they're out there hauling a big branded trailer, it reminds them of what their responsibilities are because they're so visible to the public. We convey that to our drivers all the time – when they're out there driving, they are a moving billboard and we've seen that it helps them become aware of their behavior on the road."

BIGGER IS BETTER

If you decide to take the leap and invest in trailer graphics, Morrison said it's important to keep in mind how trailers are seen on a daily basis by the consumer.

So, when thinking about design, think big.

"There is a major shift towards digital imaging and large, lifestyle graphics," she said. "You have to remember and consider that the trailer is running down the highway at 100 km/h, so a bunch of tiny images or too much or too small text on the trailer isn't going to do much. A big provocative image, however, will really make an impression on the consumer. That's one of the biggest trends we've seen over the last few years – overall graphics are getting a lot bigger."

At Turbo Images, the company will work with a fleet from the beginning of the design process right up to installation.

"But sometimes we have customers who already have a design in mind, so we will work with them to make sure it's the best design for their brand," Morrison said.

"So when thinking about wrapping your fleet, remember it's not a detailed medium, so it's not one where you'd use fine print, but if you're looking for brand recognition or visual reinforcements, it's a great medium to employ." **TW**

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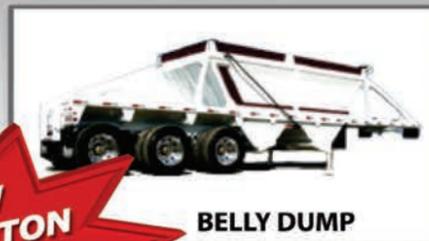
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GAS ENG; 6.4L, 325 HP, 15 SPD TRANS; LEAF SPRINGS SUSP; 201" WHEELBASE, 266,751 KMS, STK#421913. -115906

CALGARY



2008 HINO 338 STRAIGHT TRUCK (CAB AND CHASSIS)

HINO ENGINE; J08E-TA 220/2500, 220 HORSEPOWER, 5 SPD TRANSMISSION; LEAF SPRINGS SUSPENSION; 235" WHEELBASE, RED IN COLOR, 250,214 KMS, STK#463917 -115899

CALGARY



2013 KENWORTH T800 HEAVY-HAUL TRACTOR

CUMMINS ENG; ISX, 600 HP, 18 SPD TRANS; 14 & 46 W/ 4 WAY LOCKS (WIDE TRACK) AXLE(S), 3.91 RATIO, 807,000 KMS, STK#489879. -231377

SURREY



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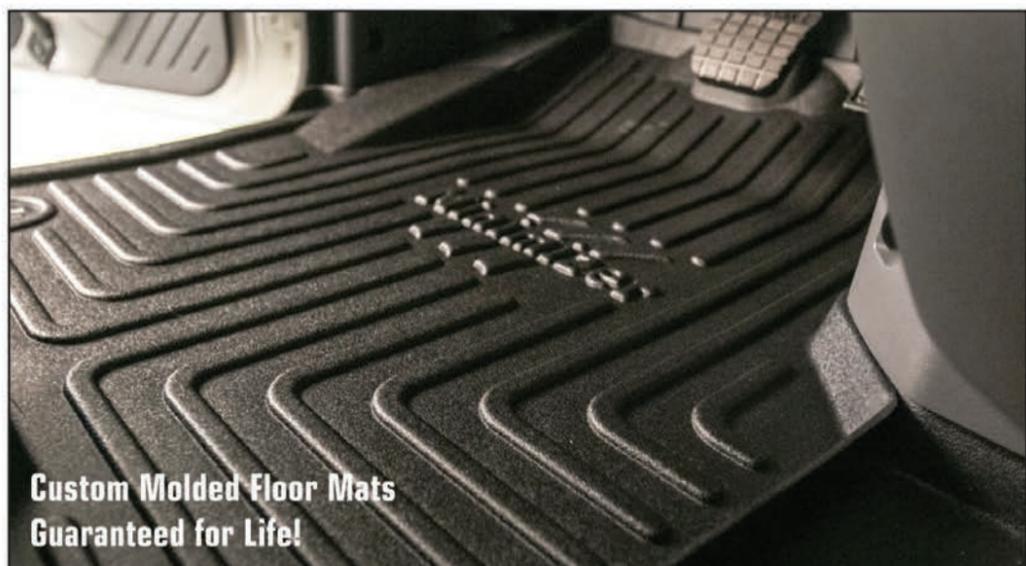
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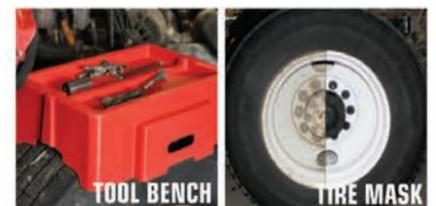


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MACK ENGINE; MP8, 505 HORSEPOWER, 18 SPD TRANSMISSION; 12,000 FA 46,000 RA AXLE(S), 3.58 RATIO, AL461 SUSPENSION; 213" WHEELBASE, WHITE IN COLOR, RAWHIDE PACKAGE, GRAND TOURING INTERIOR, STK#25910. -164831



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(2) 2017 MACK CXU613 HIGHWAY TRACTORS
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2017 MACK CXU613 HIGHWAY TRACTOR
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MACK ENGINE; MP8, 505 HORSEPOWER, 18 SPD TRANSMISSION; 13,200 FA 46,000 RA AXLE(S), 3.73 RATIO, AL461 SUSPENSION; 203" WHEELBASE, WHITE IN COLOR, STK#80285. -164837



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2016 KENWORTH T800 HIGHWAY TRACTOR
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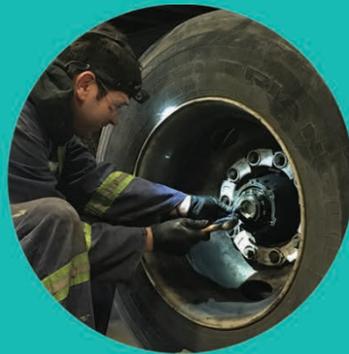
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Trailcon opens its Canadian West Coast location

SURREY, B.C. – Trailcon Leasing has raised its flag at the former Stewart Trailers' site in Surrey, B.C., launching the company's venture into trailer leasing and servicing on the West Coast.

The trailer rental, leasing and service company announced its acquisition of Stewart Trailers in July, and began operating as Trailcon Sept. 1, ending a 56-year run for Stewart Trailers in the Vancouver area.

"Adding more talented people to our team, along with an impressive facility in an accessible location, strengthens our operation in Western Canada in such a concrete way," said Alan Boughton, Trailcon founder and president. "I couldn't be happier about continuing our expansion because it means we are serving more and more customers at the highest level."

Trailcon's Surrey facility is located adjacent to the South Fraser Perimeter Road, just north of the Trans-Canada Highway.

Brian Jones is the company's Van-

cover branch manager and will be responsible for bringing the Stewart Trailers operation into the Trailcon family.

Randy Drake was at the helm of Stewart Trailers for 35 years, and prior to an Aug. 31 barbecue, ownership was transferred from the former company to Trailcon, with Drake continuing with the company as operations manager.

"I know I made the right decision," Drake said. "This is a quality company that's taken over my business and the integration has been smooth and seamless. I see a team of good people with a solid reputation, and their national reach makes for an exciting future. The legacy of Stewart Trailers is in good hands and will continue to flourish." **TW**



Randy Drake, left, of Stewart Trailers, and Alan Boughton of Trailcon Leasing commemorate the first days of Stewart Trailers operating as Trailcon.

PacFuel card makes filling up simpler

BELLEVUE, Wash. – PacLease and Comdata have re-invented their fuel card, which the companies say will offer lower fueling costs to their customers.

The newly branded fuel card PacFuel leverages the Comdata proprietary network and is accepted at all major truck stops, service centers and several independent stations.

"More than 5,000 fuel locations are in the network throughout the United States and Canada," said Michelle Harry, PacLease's director of marketing. "And by using the card, our customers will receive cash prices with deferred payments. The PacFuel card can provide better-than-cash prices through PacLease and/or customer negotiated prices."

Drivers fueling up will be able to enter their truck's odometer reading and trip report number when they swipe their card, which is coded with a specific vehicle.

Customers can also utilize PacTrac, which automatically sends fueling transactions to customers' fuel tax departments, streamlining the process and eliminating the need for drivers to submit fuel receipts and mileage.

"This is an exciting tool that lets the fleet manager rate each driver against other drivers within the same company," said Harry. "Managers can see where the drivers are purchasing fuel, and if they're purchasing at the lowest price in the area. Each transaction is then rated and, at the end of the month, the fleet manager can see how proactive each driver is in seeking fuel with the best prices. This will allow fleet managers to work individually with drivers who could do better with their fueling purchases." **TW**

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Volvo hits 13 mpg with new SuperTruck

By James Menzies

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Many of the improvements built into the newest Volvo trucks and powertrain can be traced back to the US Department of Energy's US\$20-million SuperTruck project. Volvo made the revelation when it took the wraps off its SuperTruck at a press event on Sept. 13 in Washington, D.C.

"Knowledge gained from the SuperTruck product is benefiting our customers today," said Goran Nyberg, president, Volvo Trucks North America.

Examples of enhancements that were developed on the SuperTruck and carried over to Volvo's production vehicles include: a new aerodynamic bumper;

flared chassis fairings on the VNL 630 and 670; and an aerodynamically enhanced roof for the 670. Airflow through the engine compartment has also been optimized.

As for the powertrain, Volvo's new patented wave piston design was validated on the SuperTruck, as well as its new common rail fuel injection system and turbo-compounding, which Volvo is rolling out on its D13.

The US Department of Energy gave Volvo \$20 million to work with and the truck maker matched the funding, and then some. The goal was to improve freight efficiency by 50%, but Volvo exceeded that, bettering it by 88%. It also reduced vehicle weight compared to a



Volvo's new SuperTruck

2009 model year VN by more than 3,000 lbs, reduced drag by 40% and improved

fuel economy by 70%. Nyberg said testing routinely showed the SuperTruck achieving more than 12 mpg, while loaded and with some additional tinkering it has now surpassed 13 mpg.

"We thought we had a tough goal of 50% improvement when we started the project but the project has delivered 88%, which is quite impressive," Nyberg said at the unveiling.

Volvo has secured an additional \$20 million in funding for its SuperTruck II project, which targets a 100% freight efficiency improvement compared to that same 2009 baseline. However, Nyberg explained the second project requires truck makers to demonstrate a one- to two-year payback on technologies used to get there, so it will have to eliminate some of the costlier systems that were deployed on the first SuperTruck.

Pascal Amar, senior project manager with Volvo Group North America, was in charge of overseeing the first SuperTruck project.

"SuperTruck was a chance to look into the future as a truck manufacturer," he said. "It gave us the possibility to look at what was coming and really start analyzing some of these trends we're picking up on."

Amar said the project began from the rear, with an analysis of the trailer and how the tractor interacts with it. Volvo chose to work with an existing trailer design rather than something more futuristic such as a teardrop-shaped trailer.

"We didn't want to go too crazy and design something that wouldn't be realistic," he noted.

Volvo worked with Ridge Corp. to design an aerodynamic gap fairing, side skirts and tail fairing.

"Once we had the most aerodynamic trailer we could find, we went on to what that meant for the tractor," Amar explained.

A lesson learned along the way was that the relationship between the tractor and trailer was more complex than first thought.

"We found things that we thought would help the tractor be more aerodynamic but they would only help if the trailer was a certain way," Amar explained, citing a lower front bumper fairing as one example that didn't pan out.

Volvo maintained its existing steel cab structure, but repositioned it. The cab sits about three inches higher and eight inches further forward and has a shorter hood. The rear cab wall was widened to better direct air around the trailer. The front grille was rounded slightly, the bumper made curvier.

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With truck aerodynamics addressed, changes to the powertrain were required. The sleeker truck sliced through the wind more easily and as a result, required less power to push it down the road. Volvo opted for a D11 engine.

“It’s really about right-sizing the powertrain,” Amar said. “Picking the size of engine that is just right for this truck so we can operate the engine where it’s efficient in the sweet spot.”

The Volvo powertrain achieved 50% brake thermal efficiency, compared to the baseline of about 42%, meaning about 50% of the fuel used is now converted to usable power.

Weight was reduced through the use of lighter-weight materials. The aluminum frame, for example, is 45% lighter than the 2009 production steel frame. But designers didn’t just swap out steel for aluminum, Amar stressed.

“The novelty is in how they used the material,” he said. “They designed the frame to take advantage of the properties of aluminum.”

The frame alone shaved 900 lbs out of the vehicle. A total of about 4,700 lbs was taken out, but the installation of new technologies put back about 1,500 lbs, resulting in a net weight savings of 3,200 lbs. While carbon fiber is known for its lightweight characteristics, it’s also known for its high price tag. Volvo sought alternative materials that were less expensive than carbon fiber.

The company also considered the driver. It designed a fully-integrated hotel load power system that provides temperature control and power for 14 hours without idling or depleting the batteries.

Volvo studied telematics-derived data to see how its trucks are being operated over the road and tailored its system to reflect these realities. Two belt-driven alternators engage when the truck is traveling downhill, is accelerating and slowing down and use this energy to keep the batteries fully charged throughout the drive cycle. When the driver stops, a full 14 hours of power and climate control are available.

The bunk windows were scrapped, because Volvo found they were a source of heat or chill loss. But a solar panel on the roof powers LED lights inside the cab that give the appearance of natural daylight. A hot air extractor on the roof also spits out hot air from inside the cab, keeping the inside temperature comfortable.

The SuperTruck was shown to US Energy secretary Ernest Moniz, who seemed genuinely impressed by the result. But despite exceeding the goals laid out through the project, Amar said Volvo isn’t calling it a day.

“Testing hasn’t stopped,” Amar said. “Our contract with SuperTruck I ended in June, but we haven’t stopped working on it. We keep finding new improvements and keep testing things. We have a lot of ideas we want to throw at it for SuperTruck II.”

The second SuperTruck project will build on lessons learned during the first project, but will result in a completely new truck. And because all technologies used must demonstrate a quick payback, it’s likely the second project will also see improvements carried over to production trucks. **TW**

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By Edo van Belkom

THE STORY SO FAR

Mark decides to sign up for Goober, a ridesharing service and make some extra money.

Mark's first ride is terrific – a young musician traveling the country. The second, however, is a strange moonchild. He hurries so much to get her to her destination and off his truck, he winds up with a speeding ticket. Mark's next rider was an elderly man heading across Winnipeg for a romantic encounter with his girlfriend, a woman nearly half his 75 years. Then it was a junior hockey player who had a rough time in Ontario and was looking for a fresh start in Calgary...

The last leg of the trip from Calgary to Vancouver would be easy, especially if the next rider was as interesting as the past four had been. This time, Mark got up early and made sure he had a full breakfast inside the Roadking Travel Centre on Barlow Trail SE.

After emptying his coffee cup, Mark left a decent tip (something he could afford thanks to Goober) and headed back to Mother Load eager to see whom he'd be riding with.

As he neared his truck, Mark felt a sinking feeling in the pit of his stomach. Sitting on the pavement at one end of the yard was a dishevelled man with a few day's growth of beard, clothes that looked as if they'd passed through a paper shredder, and a collection of bags that wouldn't look out of place on a curb.

"Please don't let this be the guy," Mark said under his breath.

He took a quick look around the lot and saw two other people milling about. One was a middle-aged man with a single tote bag over his shoulder and the other was a young woman with a backpack.

Either of those would be fine, he thought. Just don't let it be that hobo over there.

"Hey buddy!"

Mark looked left and right, then pointed at himself. "You talkin' to me?"

"Yeah." The man pointed at Mother Load. "That your truck?"

Mark's heart sank. He had put a description of his vehicle in his Goober profile, so there was no way a rider wouldn't recognize Mother Load when they saw it. There was also no way to get out of this fare without flat-out lying to the man. "It is."

"Then let's get to Vancouver."

Mark took a deep breath and let out a long, drawn-out sigh. He forced a smile. "Let's go."

The man looked like he smelled bad from a distance, but there was no way Mark could have known he smelled this bad until they were in the cab together. Wow, did he stink...like he hadn't showered in weeks and had spent all of that time sleeping in dumpsters and garbage bins.

"You know," Mark said, "the truck stop there has shower stalls and a laundromat."

"I saw that," the man nodded. "But I'm saving my money. That's why I'm riding with you."

"If you really want to save money, maybe you should

hitch-hike, you know... ride in the back of someone's pick-up truck."

He laughed. "That's how I got here. Took me three weeks from Moncton, but I did it. The last guy I was riding with was heading all the way to Vancouver, but he gave me seventy-five bucks to get out of his car. That's why I've got the money to get to Vancouver in style in your truck."

"What are you gonna do when you get there?" Mark asked, resisting the temptation to say, "Take a bath?"

"Don't know. Just getting there will be enough for now. I might hang out in Stanley Park for a while, maybe join a protest or two... you know, see what happens."

Some might call Mark's passenger a free spirit, oth-

Goober for hire



PART 4

er might use the term 'adventurer', but the only polite terms that came to Mark's mind were vagabond, drifter and tramp.

He was tempted to give the man money to get out of his truck, just as his previous driver had done, but Mark was out to make money at this, not spend it. And besides, if he refused a passenger it might end Mark's time with Goober before he'd given it a proper chance. And so, he rolled down both windows and headed west to Vancouver.

By the time they were driving the valley between Canmore and Banff, Mark had gotten used to the foul smell in the cab and was able to breathe easier. He couldn't be sure if the smell would linger once the man was gone, but if it did, Mother Load was due for an internal detailing anyway. At least this way Mark would be getting his money's worth out of the cleaning.

"Hungry?" the man said.

Mark looked over at him. "No, why?"

He opened the only bag Mark had allowed him to take with him in the cab and began searching around inside for something. "I'm a little hungry. Good thing I got some snacks."

Snacks? thought Mark. What kind of snacks?

"One good thing about sleeping outdoors, it gives you plenty of chances to find things." He pulled out some honey buns that looked as if they'd been in their plastic bag for weeks. "The restaurant threw these out the other night. Just a couple of days past their expiry date."

"That so?"

"Want one?" He thrust a honey bun in Mark's direction.

Mark glanced over long enough to see all kinds of crumbs slipping through his grimy fingers and ending up on the floor of his cab. "No thanks."

"More for me."

"I'd appreciate it if you were careful about the crumbs. I try to keep my truck clean."

"No problem." He ate the honey buns carefully, doing his best to brush the crumbs out the open window, but most of them were blown back inside by the wind. "Whoops," he said. "My bad."

"That's alright," Mark said. "I was planning on getting my truck cleaned anyway."

The man took a quick look around the cab. "It could use it."

Mark tightened his grip on the steering wheel to keep himself from pulling over and throwing the guy out onto the shoulder.

"Mind if I sleep for a while?"

"Be my guest."

And with that, the man leaned back and put his feet up on the dash.

Mark cherished the calm and quiet too much to say a word.

It wasn't until Kamloops that Mark noticed them on the center console. At first he didn't know what they were, but a long second glance allowed him to recognize them as a set of false teeth. Two to be exact, from the upper right side of the man's mouth.

"Hey," Mark said, "get those off there."

"What?"

"Those... teeth. Off."

"Why?"

"Because I don't want them there."

"If I was on a bus I could put them anywhere I like."

For an instant Mark wondered where else on Earth these things had been. "But you're not on a bus, you're on MY truck and I don't want those things there."

"Suit yourself," he said, picking them up and putting them back in his mouth.

And then came the final straw.

Without warning, the man farted. It was long and noisy and smelled as bad as you would expect coming from such a filthy human being.

Mark immediately started shifting down to cool off his engine.

"What's going on?"

"We're making a bathroom stop."

"I don't need to go."

"I beg to differ."

A pause. "Maybe you're right. I could probably do with dropping off a couple of kids at the pool."

"Exactly."

When they reached the Husky in Merritt, Mark pulled right up to the entrance closest to the bathrooms. And the moment the man went inside, Mark logged on to Goober and removed his profile for good. **TW**

Illustration by Glenn McEvoy

Let's talk about center-point steering

Dear editor:

I have my heavy-duty license after my years of Alberta Indentured Apprenticeship and all the time I don't remember ever getting any information on center point steering. However, when I was working in the repair/service of the trucking industry and later became an instructor of heavy-duty apprenticeships for a number of years, I did learn about it. It wasn't a commonly used system and I've seen it mostly on cabover engine (COE) trucks that hauled furniture inter-provincially.

I have researched the subject on the Internet and I can understand where you got the idea that 'Ackerman's angles' which we called 'principles' could be identified as center point steering. However, in the specifics of steering angles there needs to be given more clarity.

It is quite true that when a vehicle makes a turn that the wheels on the front steering axle do move to different angles and if you take a line of sight at 90 degrees from the side wall face of either tire and another line projected from the line through the back driving axle they will all come to a common point at some time. However, this intersecting point will change in its location when the front steering tiers change their steering angle when they make a sharp turn as verses a less sharp turn and also a change of length of the vehicle's wheel base will change the position of the center of turn. This whole concept is not definitive enough. Ackerman also said that if you

use a simple example of a two axle vehicle (one steering and one driving) and one takes a line from the front axle left kingpin and draw it to the center of the rear driving axle (the differential) and then do the same for the front axle right kingpin you will find that these lines set the angles of the vehicle's steering arms that are attached to the steering knuckles/spindles. This is the premise of the theory to Ackerman's angle/principle. These angles of the steering arms set the relationship of individual left and right front steering wheels on any given turn and reduce the possible scuffing due to the differences of turned angles.

On Class 8 trucks (like Kenworth, International, Peterbilt, etc.) they often came from the factories with long wheelbases. If a customer wanted a shorter wheelbase the dealership could move the driving axle(s) ahead for the required wheelbase needed and the unwanted frame behind the axle would be cut off. However, I believe that there was a policy that if the drive axles were moved to a much shorter wheelbase, then the steering arms of the steering axle needed to be replaced with the correct ones from the factory. This wasn't always done.

Now to the other part of this story – the kingpin. If you were to go to an antique vehicle show, try to find an early model of Ford Model A. If you stood at the front of the vehicle and look at the front axle you would notice the kingpin was mounted in a vertical position (no angle). If you follow the parts through the steering knuckle to the spindle and

the center between the wheel bearings, which would be the center of the tread of the tire, you would find a distance of maybe four inches between the center of the tread to the center of the king pin. Soon after, the Ford Model T came out with a totally different design, which we use today. That is, the kingpin is now at an angle (to a vertical reference) and if you followed the imaginary line through the kingpin down to the road surface it would contact the road surface near the point of where the center of the tire would contact the road surface. This angle was to be a powerful change to the steering system and driver's responses. It reduced the thrust forces found on a rough road surface from the tire into the steering gear and it also allowed for a necessary steering road feel that we have in our vehicles today. In our lighter weight vehicles today they now use a MacPherson strut with one lower suspension ball joint. They call this "SAI" or steering axis inclination.

However, this newer design of positioning the kingpin created a high difficulty for the truck driver to make turns, especially if the vehicle wasn't able to move forward or backward or only could move a little. So truck engineering made a modified change. They moved the wheel bearings and spindle outward away from the center of the wheel/tire to allow a kingpin to again be positioned vertically, but now located in the center of the wheel/tire or to cause the tire to steer left or right with the center of the tire being always positioned in the center of the kingpin. Now we have a true reference to center point steering. But now the engineers had to face the fact that the

truck driver had no steering feel to the road. In other words, if the driver steered either direct on a turn, the driver had to work just as hard to bring the wheels back to the forward position.

Of course during this time of better steering options and road surfaces versus tire wear, our vehicles' steering systems also had to make design changes and incorporate caster angles, camber angles, spindle angles, toe in angles, etc. Probably the Ackerman's angles/principles included all of the above by a lot of people. However, if one person makes a statement often enough then he/she will start to think that is the truth and soon everyone thinks it is gospel. Isn't life interesting? But Ackerman's angles/principles were originally meant to refer to the angles of the steering arms.

I was raised on an Alberta farm where we had wagon that was horse drawn that used the front axle steering that we see today on our chuck wagons. Later, wagons could be purchased with what they called 'automotive steering' and the tongue the tractor pulled the wagon with also extended past the front wagon axle to connect via tie rods/tubes to steering arms on the left and right steering wheels. This gave the wagon corner support to the load that was being carried during a turn. A modern example is the all-terrain three-wheeled vehicle being more dangerous on turns than a four-wheel, all-terrain vehicle. That is why a three-wheeled Harley motorcycle is more dangerous on high-speed turns than a 'Spider' that has a two front wheel motorcycle. **TW**

Andrew Kohsel

Trucking shot itself in the foot

Dear editor:

I agree with what you wrote, but the industry over the years shot itself in the foot. With the mandatory entry-level training (MELT) program in Ontario, it's 20 years too late. For the 19 years I've been driving, all I've heard or read is the moaning about the driver shortage. As a company driver, in theory, I can earn \$51k to \$62k per year, but guess how? By being home three days a month...no layovers paid, no waiting time paid. I enjoy driving, but there is not one recruiter who will tell new drivers the truth. Why would a 20-year-old want to drive a truck given what you have to go through? Be it self-imposed pressure, deadlines, traffic, dispatch and planners. And for what, one year of experience and three days at home when you can earn a basic income and be home every night with weekends off?

I actually welcome electronic logging devices (ELDs) for the obvious reasons, but know I won't make any more money. **TW**

David Wale

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The Adventures of NEWLAND TRANSPORT

By Edo Van Belkom

Later that morning, Vic stops a court officer in the hallway and asks when his cousin might be up to court. The officer tells him probably not til after lunch.

"When is lunch?" Vic asks.

"Between one and two o'clock."

Vic is not pleased. He had thought he might lose a few hours bailing his cousin out of jail, but now it looks like he'll likely miss an entire day of work. He calls his dispatcher to let him know he won't be able to do any driving at all today.

After lunch, Vic's cousin is brought into court in handcuffs.



After causing an accident with his truck, Vic's cousin is held overnight at the police detachment on Highway Traffic Act charges, including Driving Under the Influence and Careless Driving.

Vic arrives early at the courthouse, well before the time he was told to attend. Eventually he is interviewed by duty counsel, fills out some forms and waits... and waits.



Vic is not impressed by the sight. He had always considered drunk driving to be a terrible thing, even more so for a truck driver, but here was a message to his cousin and everyone else that driving under the influence of alcohol was serious business and not looked upon favorably by the Justice System.

Vic's cousin smiles and waves at Vic, but Vic gives him a glare.



As the allegations are read into the record, Vic learns that his cousin swerved to avoid a car pulled over onto the side of the highway and then lost control eventually putting his truck into a roadside ditch. No one was hurt in the accident, but that was only by pure luck that the people in the stalled car weren't seriously injured.

On the stand, Vic is asked all sorts of questions about his relationship with his cousin.

Finally, the Crown asks, "If he doesn't follow your rules, or you find out he's been drinking and driving, what will you do?"

"I would call the police and remove myself as surety."

"You would call the police on your cousin?"

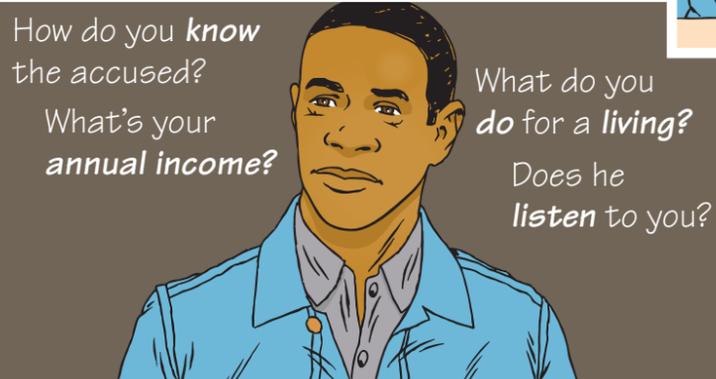
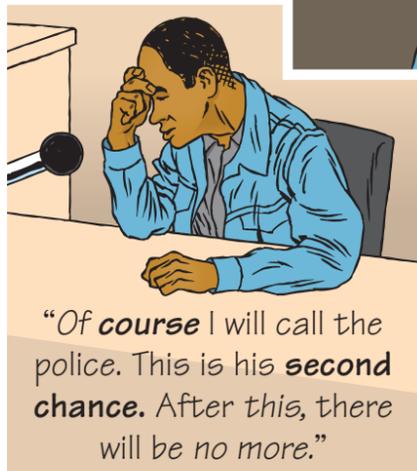


Illustration by Glenn McEvoy

But one night, Vic gets a call from his cousin's wife who tells Vic that the man has been drinking.

Vic goes to his cousin's house and finds him in his garage trying to start the family car with the wrong key.



The plan is to have Vic's cousin ride with Vic almost as if they are a team. Vic will do the driving and his cousin will ride with him until Vic can arrange for an inside trucking job, either shunt driving or on a loading dock somewhere. During that time, he will not be allowed to drink, and if he does drink, the cousin's wife has agreed to let him know. It all works out well for a while as Vic gets him a job shunt driving for the company Vic drives for.



Vic takes the key from his cousin and says, "This is the key to your house."

True to his word, Vic calls the police to report his cousin's breach of his bail conditions.



"I can't believe you did this to me," his cousin says.

"I can't believe you would do this to yourself," is Vic's answer.



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Trucking has 'gone to the dogs'

Dear editor:

It has taken me this long to finally get Wi-Fi at a location that actually works. Yup, I'm still on the road.

So your question was, 'Why do I like being a trucker?'

Well really there's a lot of ways that can be answered. To some it's a career, to others it's just a job.

For me, it was the best choice at the time and didn't take a lot of skill - well, a little bit. And I just like to travel; I got that from my dad.

In the song that says, "I've been everywhere" and I just about have. Coast to coast in Canada and 44 US states.

The one thing that makes driving the most interesting is the fact that I get to

meet so many interesting people from all walks of life. From the president of a major company to the lonely farmer trying to sell his grain, and just about all and everyone in between.

The sad part of it these days is that the industry itself has gone to the dogs, so to speak.

The one real complaint I have is the lack of training required.

Case in point: Last week (today is Aug. 10) a driver lost his brakes on the Coquihalla Highway between Hope and Merritt, B.C. A lot of people were badly hurt.

There's a lot more to talk about.

From the ice roads to Florida, and back again. **TW**

J. Roger Boudreau

The driver shortage isn't about a shortage of qualified drivers, it's about a shortage of pay

Dear editor:

In response to your request for feedback about that aged 'driver shortage' debate, I want to throw in my two cents.

Firstly, there is a general feeling among many truck drivers that you need to have some experience as a driver in order to offer any kind of valid opinion about any issue related to our occupation, but I disagree.

It definitely helps to be on the inside, but our job is not rocket science in that it doesn't take some kind of ex-truck-driver-turned-genius to make improvements.

As a driver, I like the short runs that get me home at least a few times per week.

Not to sound too cliché, but I like the freedom of the open road and the irregular schedule, which often gives me unexpected days at home with my family.

I also like my operations manager's positive attitude, which is a rather rare occurrence in this industry.

As for the now decades-old problem of the truck driver shortage, I would simply say that it has been miss-characterized by the trucking associations. It is really a shortage of pay.

Yes, some drivers earn over \$80k annually, but many earn only \$20k. I would venture a guess that the average is somewhere around \$50k.

Now, as you know, to simply quote annual figures is really misleading when it comes to truck driver pay because when you divide their annual pay by the number of hours they work (as opposed to the hours they log), you begin to get the real picture. They often work for less than minimum wage.

This is why the likes of (David) Bradley, our fearless national leader in the Canadian Trucking Alliance, are reluctant to quote hourly pay rates for truckers.

Nor do they ever mouth the words, 'Overtime pay for all truck drivers is long overdue!'

So therein lies the biggest problem: not enough pay for what is expected from us.

Drivers rightfully complain about endless regulations like electronic logging devices, lack of home time, tight delivery schedules, etc.

These are all completely legitimate gripes as evidenced by the shortage of truck drivers.

However, to put up with all of that crap, how would \$100k annual salary sound compared to \$40k or \$50k? I assure you, pay can make up for a lot of the downsides to this job and \$100k is not an unrealistic starting point if the problem is to be tackled seriously.

Trucking companies have been utterly unable to find solutions to this persistent problem, having put forward their very best efforts, which simply involve flashier recruiting posters, sexier female recruiters and in some cases, sign-on bonuses, not to mention endless solicitations to governments for more handouts and subsidies.

They do not want to talk about improving working conditions, provide incentives for driver retention or, God forbid, more pay.

It is much easier to access the temporary foreign worker program even though Canada's unemployment rate is close to 7%.

You would think there might be some potential truck drivers in that unemployed group of over 1.34 million people?

On the other hand, technology companies are busy planning for the deployment of autonomous or self-driving trucks.

Could this be the game changer that ends the driver shortage once and for all?

Perhaps in a few more decades, but until then, truck driver pay will need to increase substantially if the problem is to be tackled in a more serious way than what we have witnessed so far. **TW**

Jake Goertzen

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Innovation and expansion pays off for Gervee

By Derek Clouthier

ST. ALBERT, Alta. – Growth and innovation helped transform what was once a conventional trucking company into the diversified company it is today.

Gerald Verstraete got the wheels rolling on Gervee Trucking Ltd. in 1984 hauling feed and meal to the cattle industry before Collin Briault entered the picture 18 years later, and Gervee Group of Companies Inc. was born.

Wanting to tap into Alberta's oilfield service industry, Verstraete approached Briault in 2002, and the duo partnered up and built the first rod transfer unit (RTU) in North America.

"With this unit, we were able to haul and handle continuous rod very safely and efficiently to and from the lease," said Briault, CEO of Gervee. "This also allowed oil companies to reuse the continuous rod string assets in other wells for production."

Briault said the innovative effort helped bring some momentum to the company, allowing Gervee to expand its fleet 10-fold in the last decade and continue to work within the Western Canadian Sedimentary Basin (WCSB), with the Lloydminster, Alta. area being their primary focus.

The WCSB is an area spanning 540,000 square miles (1.4 million square kilometers) and includes parts of B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and the Northwest Territories, and contains one of the world's largest reserves of petroleum, natural gas and coal, which the oil sands are part of.

Today, Gervee is one of Western Canada's largest continuing rod hauling fleets, and operates both out of Lloydminster and Edmonton, moving reels continuous rod transport reels from the central fabrication facility in the province's capitol to local rod plants in Alberta and Saskatchewan.

But as with any economic downturn, challenges arise.

With Alberta's oil and gas sector suffering from one of the biggest hemorrhages in recent memory, Gervee has been forced to trim some of the fat from its business.

"Our team dug down deep into the

bowels and started from scratch and restructured the entire company," Briault said. "It wasn't an easy task, but in the end we are a much more efficiently run company with a very strong foundation and fundamentals moving forward."

Part of moving forward has been Gervee's expansion into trailer maintenance, specifically being able to secure a four-year contract for the repair and maintenance of what Briault called a 'very significant fleet of trailers.'

"This has helped us a lot during this downturn and has stabilized our business so we were not so susceptible to the cyclical nature of the oilfield," Briault said. "When you're not moving forward, things get stagnant, and before you know it things are stuck or moving backwards and opportunities get missed because you're not on the ball. Sometimes doors only open once and you have to take advantage of every opportunity that's shown to you."

For Gervee, drivers are also an important part of the equation when

'As a leader, you need to surround yourself with the best people to succeed. I believe I have done that, and it is an honor to move forward and grow with this great team.'

Collin Briault, Gervee

measuring success, and like so many in the industry, Briault believes the occupation should be recognized as a skilled profession with higher pay and a better quality of life for those who chose to get behind the wheel.

"In a lot of cases, drivers are not getting compensated for the hours they are putting in," said Briault, "and they spend most of their time away from home and loved ones. Helping this vocation become recognized as a profession would help attract new people into the space and driver retention would be a lot higher because they would have something solid to work towards for their future."

Briault feels that a standardized



Collin Briault, CEO of Gervee Group of Companies, knows that surrounding himself with quality staff is the key to success.

training program and a homogenous salary would be seen throughout the country if the driving profession were to be established as a skilled profession by the federal government, which would result in a safer industry that is based on a more solid foundation of education, awareness and quality of life for the driver.

"From a company standpoint," he added, "better training, awareness and employee quality of life equals a happier, healthier and more productive employee who is less prone to injuries and (Workers' Compensation

people need help, you help, that's just how it is, no questions asked. Plus, it feels really good to know that we are putting ourselves out there and not expecting anything in return."

Part of Gervee's philosophy is to take a slow and steady approach when it comes to growth, and with an eye on the future, the company is working toward continuing its pioneering ways with the development of new innovations that focus on personal and environmental safety within the crude oil loading and transportation sector.

"Along with our hauling and trailer maintenance divisions, we see these innovations as part of the future for Gervee to grow and expand and solidify our foundation for the future," Briault said.

And for a small-town Albertan, establishing a vision for the future has always been important. Briault started as an equipment operator, but said he soon knew he wanted to be an entrepreneur, and with the help of his family, and now his father-in-law, who he credits as his mentor and best friend, he was able to establish himself as a businessman and successful CEO of Gervee.

"Without these people in my life, I wouldn't be where I am today," said Briault, "and I am very thankful that they have a lot of patience to help me grow and learn."

Briault oversees all facets of the business, but acknowledges that the team around him is what makes Gervee a success.

"As a leader, you need to surround yourself with the best people to succeed," said Briault. "I believe I have done that, and it is an honor to move forward and grow with this great team." **TW**



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