

TRUCK NEWS

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Firing on all cylinders

The U.S. trucking market is hot, thanks to a strong economy and constraints on capacity.

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A new Sprinter

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A special section on human resources-related issues in the trucking industry.

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Automatic decisions

The secondary truck market is warming up to automated transmissions, as reliability has improved.

Pay day

Carriers increasing driver pay to take advantage of strong market

By James Menzies

TORONTO, ONTARIO

Driver compensation is on the rise in 2018, as fleets in Canada and the U.S. compete for drivers to take advantage of a strong market.

"Everybody is upping their pay. Everybody," said Jane Jazrawy, co-founder of Carriers Edge, which runs the Truckload Carriers Association's Best Fleets to Drive For program. She was in the process of evaluating driver and fleet surveys for the 2018 program and said driver pay among the Best Fleets nominees rose 3.61 cents per mile (U.S.) from 2017 to 2018, from 50.71 cents in 2017 to 54.32 cents in 2018. That's an extra \$21.66 for a 600-mile day.

Average pay for owner-operators also climbed slightly, with revenue up about 1% on 2% fewer miles.

Jazrawy said more of the Best Fleets are also offering some form of guaranteed pay, which appeals to drivers by eliminating uncertainty and inconsistencies in their pay expectations.

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Kriska professional driver Louis Carette shows federal Transport Minister Marc Garneau how electronic logging devices work.

On the clock

Canada to require ELDs by 2020

By James Menzies

BRAMPTON, ONTARIO

It's official. On the day the U.S. electronic logging device (ELD) mandate went into effect Dec. 18, Canadian Transport Minister Marc Garneau gathered with trucking industry leaders bearing an early Christmas gift, in the form of a law that would by 2020 require ELDs to be used in Canada as well.

"We're constantly looking at how technology can improve road safety, and electronic stability control and electronic logging devices fit the bill," said Garneau. "These new measures not only make trucks and buses safer, but they also have a trickle-down effect of making the roads safer for all Canadians."

It was a long-awaited and welcome announcement for many in the trucking industry, but a contentious requirement that is still loathed by many owner-operators, drivers, and small fleets. Garneau was accompanied at the launch, hosted by Trailcon Leasing, by Ontario Transport Minister Steven Del Duca, the only provincial transport boss who has yet publicly endorsed the mandate.

"Ontario has a strong record of adopting and supporting initiatives that further improve road safety. Three years

ago, our government became the first in Canada to publicly endorse the use of electronic logging devices," said Del Duca. "I commend Transport Canada for taking this important step toward making these devices mandatory."

"Minister Del Duca has been a great partner for OTA in improving truck safety. ELDs are going to reduce fatigue in commercial drivers, which will have a positive impact on reducing distracted driving collisions and increasing safety for our sector," added Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) president Stephen Laskowski.

The OTA and Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA) have been pushing for an ELD mandate in Canada for years, and OTA said after the announcement that it wants to see the regulation enforced as soon as possible. That wish was echoed by CTA chairman Gene Orlick.

"CTA knows Minister Garneau wants to see enforcement of this important safety regulation as soon as possible. During the comment period of the *Canada Gazette I* process, our sector will be working with all provincial stakeholders to support Minister Garneau's safety vision," said Orlick, who is owner and president of Orlicks Inc. in Calgary, Alta.

"The U.S.'s experience in implementing ELDs has shown us that even with two years to prepare, there

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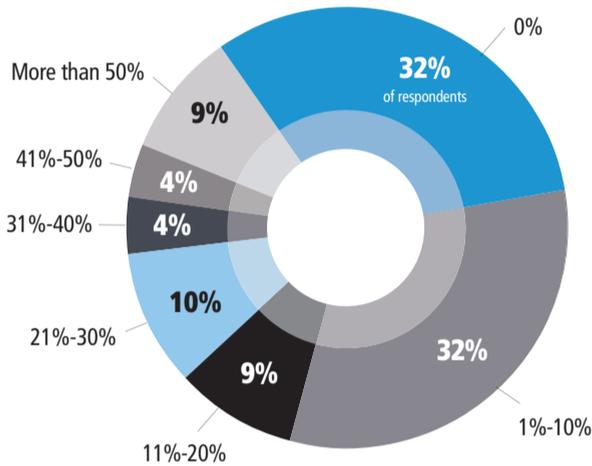
What's working against higher truck rates during the economic expansion

Tightening capacity during an improving North American economy is helping Eastern Canada's motor carriers push for higher rates, according to our annual Transportation Buying Trends Survey. As shown in our last issue, the majority of Eastern Canada shippers believe rates will rise across all modes in 2018 but expect TL and LTL trucking to pose the greatest pricing pressure. However, our research also shows that when shippers have a choice they will shift at least some of their freight from truck to rail in response to higher pricing.

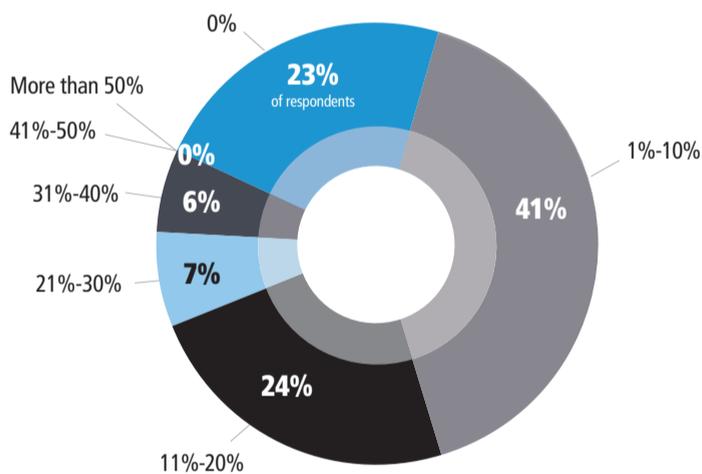


Follow Lou on Twitter @LouSmyrlis.

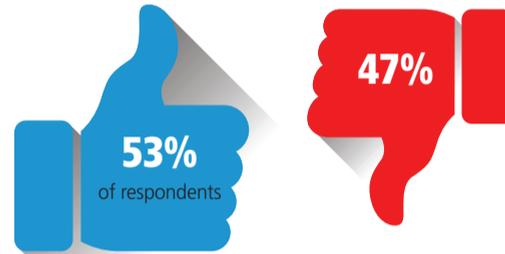
Percentage of current rail shipments Cdn shippers consider trucking to be viable alternative



Percentage of current truck shipments Cdn shippers consider rail to be viable alternative



Higher rates and/or surcharges have affected use of transportation modes



Main reasons for diverting freight from rail to truck

To service new markets	13% of respondents
Responding to customer requests	38%
Increasing rail prices	7%
Decreasing truck prices	2%
Faster inventory times	10%
Poor rail service or coverage	35%
Other	22%

Main reasons for diverting freight from truck to rail

To service new markets	12% of respondents
Responding to customer requests	30%
Increasing truck prices	30%
Decreasing rail prices	16%
Faster inventory times	4%
Poor truck service or coverage	12%
Other	16%

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Make hay while the sun shines on trucking

All signs are pointing towards a strong 2018

I've been accused, at times, of being a little too cynical. Yeah, maybe I'm a bit jaded. You have to be in this business.

But despite that, it's hard not to be optimistic about 2018 and what it'll mean for the trucking industry. All key indicators are pointing towards a fantastic year for freight volumes and trucking rates. Orders for new trucks and trailers are setting highs not seen in several years, signaling optimism among trucking providers. This potential year of prosperity must and will trickle down to the professional drivers and owner-operators who keep the freight moving.

I've watched these cycles play out before, and they usually begin with the arrival in my inbox of press releases from U.S. carriers boasting of significant signing bonuses and pay increases. I remember in the last cycle being wowed by an offer of \$10,000 for new teams from one large carrier. Just a couple weeks ago, Covenant Transport sent out a release promising team bonuses of \$40,000. That's a lot of money.

It cited a rise in demand for team freight, which makes me wonder if we aren't already seeing some impact of the U.S. electronic logging device mandate on trucking industry productivity. (Are loads



that previously got done by solo drivers now requiring teams to meet the same delivery schedules, thus shifting more freight to carriers with team capacity)?

These types of aggressive sign-on bonuses will predictably cause more

driver churn within the industry, and force other carriers to step up their own pay packages or find other creative ways to attract and retain drivers. (Another U.S. fleet equipped all 250 of its trucks with satellite television, for example).

And the trend is not limited to the U.S. We have also seen announcements from several Canadian carriers that they, too, are increasing driver pay. I don't think for a moment this is some altruistic act on their parts. (There I go, being cynical again). It's just sound business management.

With rising freight volumes, tightening capacity, and, finally, a potentially greater acceptance of rate increases from the shipper community, trucking companies that have been around this cyclical business for any time at all realize the importance of making hay while the sun shines.

And you can't make any hay without professionals to operate the equipment.

I believe 2018 will be a good year for the industry, and especially for drivers, who in most cases were due a pay increase. But that's not

to say the year will be without its challenges. Fleets and owner-operators will also be dealing with rising input costs, such as fuel and higher equipment costs, especially if the Canadian dollar weakens further. As of this writing, the uninterrupted continuation of NAFTA remains very much in doubt, with U.S. President Donald Trump cranking up the rhetoric once more. And the Canadian economy, while in slow, steady growth mode, doesn't exactly inspire a ton of confidence that a long-lasting run is in the cards.

But for now, the sun is shining on trucking. Let's all make some hay. **TN**



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ELDs in Canada

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will be some in our sector that never choose to comply in time. While we need to be respectful of the transition time requirements of ELD implementation to businesses and governments, we also must not manage to the lowest common denominator and ensure everybody is fairly complying with the rules.”

However, the Canadian mandate, as proposed, won't require ELDs to be used until 2020, with existing devices permitted until 2022. While that may seem too far in the future to some, domestic fleets shouldn't drag their fleet, warns Marilyn Daniel, chief operating officer of Titanium Transpor-

tation, which has rolled the devices out across its operations. She said Titanium implemented ELDs over a two-year period, and learned lots along the way.

“We started off with volunteers and worked our way through the fleet piece by piece, in terms of sectors (U.S., local, flatdeck, etc.),” she explained in an interview with *Truck News*. “Using ELDs for the driver was not hard. Most drivers like it better than having to worry about their paper. That's the easy part.”

The bigger challenge, she acknowledged, was improving dispatcher coordination, since drivers were no longer able to make up for dispatch inefficiencies with tweaks to their paper logbooks. Daniel said the impact on drivers at Titanium has been minimal since transitioning to e-logs.



Federal Transport Minister Marc Garneau fields questions from the media, while his Ontario counterpart Steven Del Duca (on his right), looks on.

“The only way I've seen it really affect drivers, is changing their habits in how they start their day and end their day,” she explained, noting

the clock starts ticking the moment the truck is started. “They have to start their day ready to go to work, where in the past they may start the truck and move it to the shop and may not get going for another hour. That was the luxury the driver had. Today, it's going to cost them working time.”

Like fleets that attended the Canadian announcement, Daniel said she wishes the mandate here would be fully implemented sooner.

“I wish it was coming to Canada sooner than it is,” she said. “I wish it was starting earlier, and that it was in conjunction with the U.S.”

She anticipates fewer drivers will want to run the U.S. with the mandate already in effect there, which could put pressure on domestic rates.

“I'm seeing drivers that are willing to go to the U.S. are harder to find,” she said. “More drivers want to stay in Canada, and I think that's going to affect Canadian rates. I would say, local or Ontario-only or Canada-only drivers and freight will be negatively affected by this, whereas on the U.S. side we will see a significant increase in rates, which lets U.S. drivers perform significantly better.”

In addition to Orlicks, other carriers were also represented at the announcement, including Kriska, Onfreight Logistics, Arnold Bros. Transport, and Kenan Advantage Group. The Private Motor Truck Council of Canada (PMTCC), which represents private fleets and has been a longtime proponent of e-logs, also welcomed the announcement.

“The PMTCC and its members are extremely pleased about this announcement,” said PMTCC president Mike Millian. “Our membership has been involved in the consultations with the department and are firm believers that this regulation will benefit the entire industry. Electronic logs will make compliance easier to verify, ensuring all carriers are following the hours-of-service rules. This will result in a leveling of the playing field within the industry and improved road safety for all.”

The regulation was posted in *Canada Gazette 1* and can be viewed in its entirety at: www.tinyurl.com/CanadaELD TN

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U.S. ELD mandate arrives

WASHINGTON, D.C.

A much-anticipated law mandating the use of electronic logging devices (ELDs) to track commercial truck driver hours-of-service took effect in the U.S. Dec. 18, as planned.

The American Trucking Associations (ATA), which lobbied for the mandate, welcomed the implementation of the law.

“Electronic logging devices have been legislated, promulgated and litigated – with Congress voting three times in the past five years in favor of this requirement and a federal court rejecting a challenge to the rule. The time has finally come to retire decades-old, burdensome paper logs that consume countless hours and are susceptible to fraud and put the safety of all motorists first. The benefits of this rule exceed the costs by more than \$1 billion, making it a rule the ATA can firmly support and easily adopt,” said ATA president and CEO Chris Spear. “Today marks the start of a new era of safety and efficiency for our industry and we thank the champions in the Department of Transportation and Congress who have gotten us to this point.”

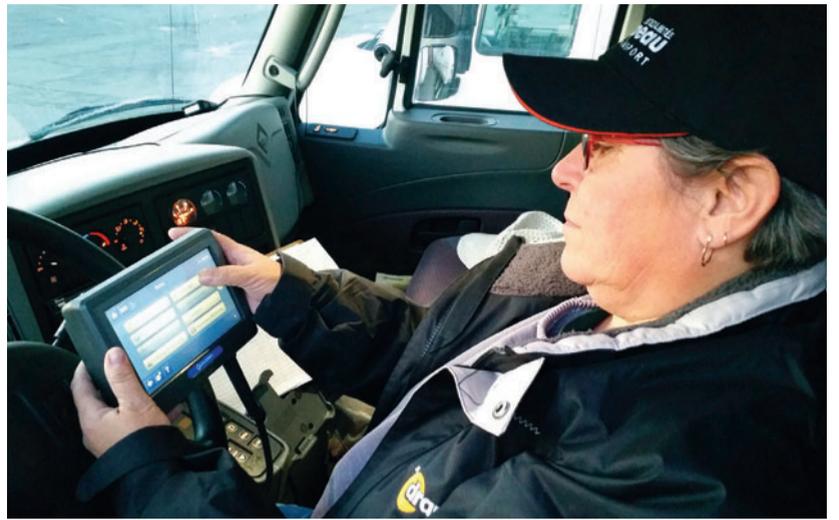
The rule was first proposed in 2007, and was finalized in 2010.

“With the support of law enforcement groups and trucking industry groups like ATA that are concerned with the welfare of the motoring public, this requirement is now in the rearview mirror and we can turn our attention to other important safety matters surrounding the hours-of-service rules,” said ATA executive vice-president for advocacy, Bill Sullivan. “Having good data from the use of ELDs will make it easier for ATA to make the case for technical corrections to the hours-of-service rules in areas like detention time, split sleeper berth and more. Simply put, with this requirement in place we can now move forward to a safer, better future for our industry.”

The requirement isn’t as popular with some small fleets and owner-operators, some of which have threatened to leave the industry once the mandate goes into effect. This created an expectation that trucking capacity could tighten, putting upward pressure on rates.

Avery Vise, vice-president of trucking research with industry analyst FTR, said it’s too soon to determine if this is in fact the case.

“Anecdotally, we have heard that some owner-operators and small



Commercial truck drivers in the U.S. must now use electronic logging devices to record their hours-of-service.

fleets are calling it quits,” he said during a recent *State of Freight* webinar. However, he said the full impact may not be felt until April, as that is when enforcement agencies will begin placing drivers who aren’t in compliance with the mandate out of service.

“Presumably, most would hold out at least until April, as that’s when enforcement is going to become strict,” Vise said. “We would assume any impact from carrier failures has not been totally seen at this point.”

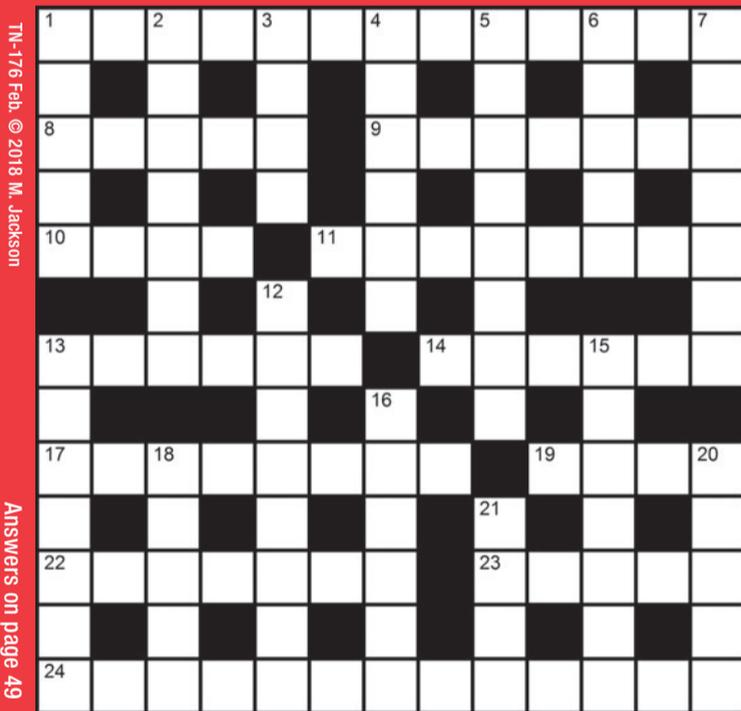
He also said carriers that already implemented ELDs ahead of the requirement and made any necessary adjustments to their operations, stand to benefit.

“Carriers that adopted these several years ago are now in a position to reap the rewards, having made that investment,” he said. “The most immediate benefit is, unlike carrier that haven’t had electronic logs and haven’t been obeying strictly to (hours-of-service) limits, they won’t have the same kinds of disruptions.”

Another potential outcome, Vise speculated, is that some owner-operators may transition to become company drivers, so they don’t have to administer an ELD program on their own.

“Some of them may be willing to live with this, but don’t want to manage it themselves,” Vise said of owner-operators. **TN**

THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD PUZZLE



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Ontario courts electric truck buyers, makers



Kathleen Wynne, Premier of Ontario (middle) and delegation meet with BYD executives in China.

BYD Company officials recently met with Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne in China to discuss the opportunities.

“The strength of our technology and commitment to localizing the supply chains explains why we have won over governments and private consumers from our home base in China to Canada and Australia,” said Ted Dowling, vice-president of BYD Canada. “We look forward to working together with the Ontario government to provide environ-

mentally friendly transportation and energy storage options for its residents.”

BYD said in a press release that it is working on many orders that will bring final assembly to the province of Ontario. It said it has partnered with Loblaw to help electrify its fleet. *The Globe & Mail* reported the company will start its production in Ontario by shipping technology and components from China that will allow it to build garbage and delivery trucks here. **TN**

TORONTO, ONTARIO

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) has released details on the Green Commercial Vehicle Program, including heavy subsidies for electric trucks.

The program will provide: 50% of the incremental cost for a new electric truck; 30% of the incremental cost for a natural gas vehicle; 15% towards dual fuel and conversion kits; 30% towards APUs, and up to 50% for electric APUs; and 30% towards cab heaters and coolers.

The Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) welcomed the incentives.

“(Transport) Minister (Steven) Del Duca has once again shown leadership by reinvesting carbon fees paid by our industry back into our sector, so that our industry can continue on the path of environmental advancement in Ontario,” said OTA president Stephen Laskowski. “OTA has been lobbying for the creation of this fund for over two years. We are delighted to see the program become a reality.”

Rebates are retroactive to Sept. 1, 2017.

The province also has taken steps to attract electric vehicle manufacturers to the province, including Chinese truck maker BYD Company. The company is considering setting up a plant in Ontario, where it may produce electric-powered refuse and delivery trucks, among other electric vehicles.

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- ◆ Ministry of Transportation MELT Update
- ◆ Current TTSAO Student Panel
- ◆ Insurance Professionals Panel
- ◆ Young Leaders in the Transportation Industry Panel
- ◆ The Future of Trucking (featuring Lou Smyrlis)

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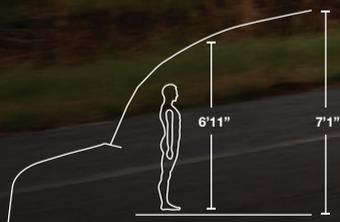
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N.B. announces carbon pricing program

DIEPPE, NEW BRUNSWICK

New Brunswick has announced its carbon pricing model, which took effect at the beginning of 2018.

The program is a carbon levy that will be taken from the fuel and diesel tax in place today. The money collected from the levy will go into a climate change fund to be re-distributed to industry emitters to invest, in order to reduce their carbon footprint.

"This is a great approach from the province and we applaud the Gallant government for introducing a program that will not be just a cash grab. This model will collect money towards a climate change fund in order to invest in new technology and change behavior," said Jean-Marc Picard, executive director of the Atlantic Provinces Trucking Association (APTA). "It will capture a carbon price and at the same

time will not buckle the industry or the general public with another tax. Since we have the highest diesel tax in the country, we feel that this is a great approach showing a good vision by the premier."

As part of the program, new industrial performance standards will be implemented as well and administered by the federal government for large emitters of GHG.

"Over the past few years, the trucking industry in Atlantic Canada has already invested millions in technology on our trucks that helped reduce the carbon footprint, therefore we have already contributed significantly towards the goals set out by government," Picard added. "We believe this approach is exemplary and should be adopted by other provinces." **TN**

NRCan updates SmartDriver program

OTTAWA, ONTARIO

Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) has updated its popular SmartDriver for Highway Trucking program, to help commercial truck drivers achieve better fuel economy.

The program was developed in consultation with the trucking industry, NRCan reported, providing drivers will tools needed to prepare for the demands of modern trucking. The course will be provided online and in the classroom, with on-road training materials also provided.

NRCan says heavy-duty vehicles account for about 37% of GHG emissions from the transport sector, and that fuel-efficient equipment and driving practices highlighted by the SmartDriver program can help drivers reduce their fuel consumption by up to 35%.

"This program will help meet the trucking industry's growing demand for safe, fuel-efficient drivers, while educating existing operators on improved driving techniques. The real savings come in the form of reduced greenhouse gas emissions, helping meet Canada's domestic and international climate goals," said Jim Carr, Canada's Minister of Natural Resources.

"Natural Resources Canada's SmartDriver for Highway Trucking program has been a key component of the Ontario Truck Training Academy's (OTTA) entry-level commercial driver training program for over a decade," added Yvette Lagrois, president of the OTTA. "This modernized program will help OTTA continue to outline the benefits of fuel efficiency and educate drivers on the impacts of safe, energy-saving driving behaviors."

The program is free of charge. For more info, visit www.FleetSmart.NRCan.gc.ca. **TN**

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U.S. trucking market remains hot

All signs point towards a strong year for trucking in the U.S.

By James Menzies

WASHINGTON, D.C.

A market demand index created by industry analyst FTR reached unprecedented highs to start 2018, meaning demand for trucking ser-

vices is surging. Spot market prices are also up sharply, with contract rates expected to follow.

It all points to a strong year for trucking in the U.S., which should also benefit Canadian cross-border carriers.

“Things are obviously getting tighter,” Jonathan Starks, chief operating officer of FTR said of capacity in the U.S. during a recent *State of Freight* webinar. “The market is getting tighter and is at record levels right now.”

He said FTR expects “a very strong spot market as we go through 2018.” While fuel costs are on the rise, Starks said they’re not a primary concern at these levels.

Avery Vise, vice-president of truck research, indicated the U.S. market is at nearly 100% truck utilization rates.

“It very rarely hits this 100% level,” he noted. As a result of nearly full utilization, Vise predicted the competition for drivers will continue to heat up.

“We see right now that it’s the driver, not necessarily the equipment, that is the biggest constraint in this active capacity,” Vise explained. “It’s not necessarily that there are not enough trucks, it’s that there are not enough drivers. Both can be addressed through investment and spending, and we anticipate that is going to happen.”

FTR is predicting the year-over-year pricing increases will moderate this year, mostly because of very strong comparables in 2017.

“But a robust spot market will continue to translate into growth in contract rates,” Vise predicted.

Fleets, however, will have to contend with some new challenges that come with a hot trucking market, including higher driver compensation expectations, higher equipment acquisition costs, and rising fuel prices. Still, FTR is optimistic this will be a strong year.

“We are already in a pro-carrier environment and we think this will continue for quite a while,” Vise said.

That theory is supported by FTR’s Trucking Conditions Index (TCI). It

spiked in October, with a reading of 9.48, up from 3.5 in September. The index rose on a strong U.S. economy, capacity pressures resulting from hurricane recovery efforts and the electronic logging device (ELD) mandate.

“The TCI is nearing a double-digit number, which indicates that there are big opportunities for carriers with regard to both rates and the loads they choose to carry. Of course, there are still quite a few ‘ifs’ in the near future,” explained Starks. “If the economy can continue to grow at around a 3% rate... we will see freight demand maxing out any excess capacity. If the ELD implementation and enforcement stay on track, the spring will bring capacity utilization over 100% and the freight transportation market will be scrambling to align loads and trucks. If severe winter weather comes into play, transportation managers will be facing their toughest year since 2004. Carriers should be prepared for big changes, and big opportunities.”

A similar index, created by ACT Research, was equally bullish. The ACT For-Hire Trucking Index rose faster than capacity for the 11th straight month in November, and the industry forecaster predicted contract rates will continue to rise.

“The wide spread between freight and capacity additions bodes well for continued strength in freight rates into the new year,” said Kenny Vieth, ACT Research’s president and senior analyst. “Clearly, truckers are entering 2018 with an upper hand in negotiations with shippers.”

When respondents to a recent ACT Research survey were asked what their expectations for 2018 contract rate increases were, the average was 7%.

“Contract rates will continue to receive upward pressure as capacity tightens and adjustments are made to ELD mandates,” said one fleet executive. “Expected increases of 5-10% are anticipated, with greater increases experienced in spot market situations.”

Tonnage also continues to grow in the U.S. In November, the U.S. For-Hire Truck Tonnage Index, compiled by the American Trucking Associations, rose 2.3%. The index was up 7.6% year-over-year in November, and up 3.5% year to date.

“The freight market is really strong,” said ATA chief economist Bob Costello. “The solid truck tonnage figures over the last four months suggest to me that this holiday spending season might be better than many expected, and the best in several years. The strength in tonnage also shows that other parts of the economy are doing well, too, including business investment, factory output, and even construction.” **TN**



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How to prepare for trial after an accident

By Sonia Straface

MISSISSAUGA, ONTARIO

Preparation and oversharing is key when preparing for a legal trial after one of your trucks has been in an accident, said John Weston, a partner at Secrest Wardle law firm.

Weston spoke at the Fleet Safety Council's annual conference in Mississauga, Ont., and outlined what carriers should do to help make their next trial involving one of their drivers that has been in an accident, a success.

"Don't tie your attorney's hands," Weston stressed. "Allow them access to your records."

Often, Weston said, carriers will tell the attorney they will compile a list of records for them and send them over. This is a mistake, Weston said, as attorneys should be going through the records themselves for best results.

"It's critically important that the person who defends your claim, is the person who looks at the record," he said.

In addition, to help bolster your reputation as a safe carrier, Weston advised that all safety training and other ongoing training should have an attendance and completion form that drivers must sign.



Often in court, Weston explained, you'll hear a defendant say their fleet does conduct ongoing training, however, has no documentation to back it up. This gives a chance for the opposition to argue to the judge that there's no documentation because there's no ongoing training actually happening.

"Make drivers sign a policy manual and sign a no cellphone use while driving policy," he added, saying signatures are important, viable documentation in a courtroom.

And finally, always make sure you have one person within your organization as the point person to respond to inquiries from counsel.

"It's just administratively easier," Weston said. **TN**

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Girder migration

Huge box girders are converging on Montreal for the New Champlain Bridge

By Carroll McCormick

MONTREAL, QUEBEC

Dozens are packed in laydown areas, a couple wait on a barge and a few sit high in the air atop pearly white Y-shaped pier caps. These and hundreds more box girders will soon draw a brilliant white line from shore to St. Lawrence River shore as the superstructure of the New Champlain Bridge.

The bridge will require 601 of them. One hundred and sixty more are forming the superstructure of the nearby Ile-des-Soeur Bridge.

Groupe Bellemare has the contract to move around 500 of the beasts from where they are being fabricated to the New Champlain Bridge construction sites. They average 35 meters long, 3.5 meters high, and three to 4.5-meters wide. They weigh 50 to 80 metric tonnes apiece.

As far as weight goes, the box girders are nothing special to a heavy-haul specialist like Bellemare.

“But as far as quantity goes, it is major,” says Daniel Provost, transportation operations manager, Bellemare. And the sometimes double- and triple-handling of them makes the contract that much more challenging to execute.

Quebec City-based Canam Bridges is the contractor responsible for fabricating the box girders, but lots of finishing work is being done by two subcontractors: Marmen in Trois-Rivieres, and ADF in Terrebonne.

“Marmen has a plant to build them and another to paint them. A load could go from Canam to storage in the Port of Quebec. We could touch a girder three times,” Provost says. “We started hauling them in the second half of May 2016. We transferred some from Canam to Terrebonne for finishing. When Canam was too busy it sent some to Marmen and ADF for finishing. We started bringing them to the bridge in November, 2016. It’s a big challenge to think of moving them. When you think of moving one from Terrebonne to Brossard, it is a four-hour drive. You may have worked as much as two months preparing for that drive.”

Bellemare began planning the moves in April, 2016. One Bellemare staffer and one dispatcher are permanently assigned to the box girder moving contract. A steady stream of permit applications have been flowing to Transports Quebec (MTQ) for the routes and alternate routes: MTQ may demand last-minute route changes, and changes at road construction sites in The City of a Million Orange Traffic Cones (Montreal) can disrupt Bellemare’s carefully prepared plans. And then

there are changes to the bridge construction schedule that add a little pepper to the game.

“We have an erection schedule that changes every day. We know where each piece is coming from and where it is going to. Say they need a place in July, and then there is a delay. We apply right away for a new permit. Some permits are good for a week, some for a month. You cannot get extensions. You have to re-apply. There is a lot of re-applying and re-applying,” Provost says.

Loaded on trailers, the tops of the girders are 4.62 meters off the ground. Bellemare always uses the same drivers. “He knows where the loads go, where to turn, how to tie them down, they are trained to do it,” Provost says.

The typical load configuration, totaling 40 to 50 meters in length, is: tractor (four-axle) + three-axle jeep + six-axle steerable dolly; Bellemare has dedicated eight steerable dollies to the box girder contract. While one eagle-eyed writer saw some parked along the Autoroute 20, Provost says that most are moved on secondary roads where it is safer to poke along at 10 kilometers an hour over any bridges.



Groupe Bellemare is moving 500 box girders to Montreal for the New Champlain Bridge.

“With these types of heavy loads, we have a lot of slowdown restrictions. Crossing a bridge at 10 km/h is less damaging than crossing a bridge at 90 km/h. It is a bit more dangerous to slow down on the A20 than on a back road.”

Bringing the girders to the laydown areas is not the end of the road for Bellemare. Using a kind of self-propelled trailer called interlines, manufactured by Goldhofer, Bellemare moves the girders for assembly into end-to-end sets of three that may weigh 390 tonnes, be 90 meters long, and 14 meters wide.

The interlines are like segments of a caterpillar (the wiggly kind, not the yellow diesel kind). They come in different lengths, or lines; ie., two-axle and four-axle, and can

then be linked together to whatever weight-bearing capacity is required.

“We bought 24 new Goldhofer lines last year that turn 90 degrees. We bought four-axle blocks. Each line has its own diesel engine, operated by remote control. The newer ones we bought can synchronize two trailers,” Provost says.

The beauty of those turnable wheels is that the interlines don’t have to move in curved lines; for example, one could be driven around to spell the letter E with perfect 90-degree turns, or, say, a B.

Interlines are also being used in synchronized pairs – one under each end of bolted-together box girders – to reposition them to where giant cranes can hoist them up and onto the pier caps, and become part of the bridge. **TN**

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Gin-Cor buys Cross Country Trailers

MATTAWA, ONTARIO

Gin-Cor announced it has purchased Cross Country Trailers.

“We see tremendous opportunity in this facility and the workforce made up of people from a great community,” said Gin-Cor president and CEO Luc Stang. “We plan to maintain jobs, invest in the site, and to actually increase the workforce as we bring Cross Country into the Gin-Cor Group family. We will be reaching out to community partners and letting them know that we see great potential here.”

Gin-Cor began with a single facility four decades ago in the town of Mattawa, Ont., around 40 minutes outside of North Bay. In the last five years, the company has been ranked



Gin-Cor says its purchase of Cross Country Trailers should be reassuring to staff.

one of Canada’s Fastest Growing Companies, and staff numbers have grown from 40 to almost 500.

This past June, the company formed a partnership with and acquired DEL Equipment, which added seven new

locations and gives the company a coast-to-coast presence.

“We know there has been some uncertainty for the community, and we look forward to moving ahead together and creating a new success

story for the men and women that make up the team here,” Stang said.

The company is currently updating and broadening its branding to be known as Gin-Cor Truck and Trailer Werx. **TN**



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Truck orders reach three-year highs

December also an 'awesome' month for trailer orders

Preliminary Class 8 truck orders in December reached levels not seen since December 2014, according to industry analysts.

ACT Research reported preliminary Class 8 orders of 37,500 units.

"The last month of 2017 was the best monthly order intake since December 2014," said Kenny Vieth, ACT's president and senior analyst. "December's order volume represents a sequential improvement of 15%, and a year-over-year gain of 76%."

FTR reported preliminary Class 8 orders of 37,200 units, marking the third straight month orders have surpassed 30,000 units. December order intake was the highest since the fourth quarter of 2014, noted Jon-

athan Starks, chief operating officer of FTR.

"ELD implementation is now in full swing and will continue through the initial enforcement phase of April 1 of this year. This is contributing to the tight capacity environment and is combining with strong freight activity to move freight rates higher. Our forecast continues to call for an increase in production for 2018, but market expectations are varied for 2019," Starks said.

Class 8 orders over the past 12 months have totaled 290,000 units, FTR reported.

Medium-duty vehicle orders were also strong. ACT Research indicated there were 58,800 Classes 5-8 vehi-

cles ordered in December, bringing the full year net order tally to 543,400. December's orders were up 11% from November and 35% year-over-year.

ACT warned that the Class 8 backlog likely grew by about 18,500 units.

Trailer orders have also been strong, hitting a new all-time high of 47,000 units in December, according to preliminary data from FTR. December's order intake was 10% above November levels and up 38% year-over-year. Total trailer orders for 2017 were 308,000 units.

"Fleets are ordering thousands of dry vans to deal with exceptionally tight trucking capacity pushed to the edge by the ELD mandate," FTR

reported. "Freight continues to grow without enough equipment to haul it. Carriers are resorting to much more drop-and-hook to compensate for the lack of drivers, and they need significantly more trailers to manage the demand."

Segments that are particularly strong include refrigerated and flat-bed. Higher crude prices are also reviving tank trailer sales.

"December was just an awesome month for trailer orders," said Don Ake, FTR's vice-president of commercial vehicles. "We have seen pressure build on equipment markets for several months, and this shows Q1 is going to be hectic as fleets scramble to keep up with freight demand." **TN**

Navistar returns to profitability

LISLE, ILLINOIS

Navistar International returned to profitability in the fourth quarter of 2017, reporting Q4 net income of US\$135 million on revenues of \$2.6 billion.

It wrapped up the year with net income of \$30 million, and improved its market share by 1.5% – including gains in all truck segments. The financial results were much stronger than in 2016, in which Navistar lost \$97 million.

Fourth quarter revenues were up 26% for the company, largely due to improved volumes in the U.S. and Canadian Classes 6-8 truck market. Revenue for 2017 was up 6% compared to the previous year.

"Our 2017 was a breakthrough year, as we returned to profitability and grew our market share 1.5 points," said Troy A. Clarke, chairman, president and CEO. "These results were driven by stronger sales, our steady investment in the industry's newest product lineup, early results from our strategic alliance with Volkswagen Truck & Bus and our ongoing focus on cost."

Looking ahead to 2018, Navistar is projecting retail deliveries of Classes 6-8 trucks and buses in the U.S. and Canada to be between 345,000 and 375,000 units.

"We think 2018 is shaping up to be one of the strongest industry years this decade, and we're positioned to make it a breakout year for Navistar," Clarke said. "We'll drive even greater customer consideration with our commitment to uptime and our ongoing cadence of new product launches, which will include the introduction of our new medium-duty vehicle, as well as new IC Bus offerings. At the same time, we will build on our alliance with Volkswagen Truck & Bus by investing in and collaborating on the major technologies that are reshaping our industry, including electric, connectivity and autonomous." **TN**

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Blackberry Radar now available to Pana-Pacific customers

WATERLOO, ONTARIO

Blackberry has partnered with Pana-Pacific to offer its asset tracking system to more than 2,800 commercial dealers across North America.

During the announcement, Philip Poulidis, senior vice-president and general manager of Blackberry Radar, said that although he believes his company is offering a “great product,” it means nothing if it is not properly distributed.

In addition to the U.S., Pana-Pacific has many dealers in Canada, including 152 in Ontario, 80 in B.C., 66 in Alberta, 24 in Saskatchewan, and 15 in Manitoba.

Blackberry Radar is a data-driven, trailer-tracking solution that provides near real-time information, such as

trailer location, route, mileage, temperature, humidity, door status, and cargo load status of mobile fleet assets on a single online dashboard.

“Blackberry Radar collects up to 100 times more data than conventional GPS-based track-and-trace solutions,” said Poulidis. “All data is stored securely on a platform which maintains the privacy of the user’s and customer’s information at all times.”

Poulidis said each device is virtually maintenance-free and can be installed in minutes, which gives owners instant access to a cloud-based information dashboard 24/7.

“BlackBerry Radar allows fleet managers and equipment owners to make smarter decisions for their business, saving time, money,

and resources,” said Poulidis. “We’re excited to partner with forward-thinking companies, like Pana-Pacific, who realize the value that technology and actionable data can provide to the transportation and logistics industry.”

John Trenberth, CEO of Pana-Pacific, said his company strives to offer unique products and programs that exceed the needs and expectations of their commercial vehicle customers.

“We decided to add BlackBerry Radar to our portfolio because we believe the near-real-time information it provides will empower our customers to make better business decisions and improve the overall performance of their transportation operations,” Trenberth said.

“As part of the agreement, Pana-Pacific customers will have access to Radar M, which is the comprehensive feature-rich version,” added Poulidis, “as well as the recently released Radar L edition, which includes a lower price point and reduced features and is designed for rapid installation on flatbeds, chassis, containers, heavy machinery and other valuable transportation or non-powered assets.” **TN**

Daimler to print parts

PORTLAND, OREGON

Daimler Trucks North America (DTNA) has announced plans to make its first delivery of plastic parts produced using 3D printing as part of a pilot program.

The company says its confident these new technologies will soon play a significant role in the trucking industry. DTNA also says it sees 3D printing as an opportunity to better serve its customers, particularly those customers in need of parts that have been difficult to provide through traditional supply chain models, such as those for older trucks or parts with very low or intermittent demand.

During this pilot phase, DTNA will release a controlled quantity of 3D printed parts and will invite feedback from customers and technicians that receive them.

DTNA will also collect data on the parts’ performance as well as assess potential future demand for 3D printed parts.

The 3D printed parts have been validated to meet durability requirements and many will appear no different to the untrained eye. During the pilot phase, parts to be printed include nameplates, map pockets, and plastic covers. **TN**

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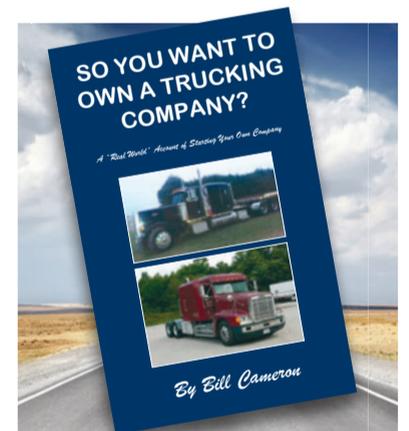


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Mack debuts refuse truck upgrades at Waste & Recycling Expo



Mack's new seat offers improved ergonomics in right-hand stand-up/sit-down configurations.

By James Menzies

NIAGARA FALLS, ONTARIO

Mack Trucks has introduced a more ergonomic seat for its LR model in right-hand stand-up/sit-down drive configurations, in response to complaints about the limited range of seating configurations available in the previous design.

Curtis Dorwart, Mack refuse product manager, said some of those complaints about ergonomics originated in Canada, making the Canadian Waste & Recycling Expo Oct. 25-26 a good place to debut the new seat.

It was designed in partnership with Sears Seating to accommodate a wider variety of driver sizes, Dorwart explained during a demonstration.

"Working with Sears Seating to offer a Mack LR model-specific seat will improve the driving experience for the LR model," said Dorwart. "The new seat is more ergonomic, more comfortable and can help improve driver productivity."

Mack also adjusted the angle of the pedals to be more ergonomic. The new seat offers multiple positions for greater comfort when standing or seated. Both the seat back and base are now adjustable.

"This is the third-generation seat," Dorwart explained. "The first was very binary – it had to be completely in sit-down position or stand-up position. We got feedback and came out with a different iteration and added a third position, but we hadn't hit the Goldilocks equation there. So we said, let's take some measurements, work with Sears Seating with a wide range of driver sizes and translate it into this particular product here that will offer adjustment points over the entire spectrum of drivers."

The new seat will come standard beginning in the first quarter of 2018.

Mack also announced at the show the LR and TerraPro models can now be ordered with the Cummins Westport L9N natural gas engine.

"Natural gas continues to be a viable alternative fuel, providing

a secure fuel supply and a steady price," said Dorwart. "With the L9N, customers can take advantage of natural gas' benefits and further reduce their environmental footprint."

The engine provides 320 hp and 1,000 lb.-ft. of torque and produces nearly zero emissions.

Mack also announced it has inked a Memorandum of Understanding with Lytx, to offer its DriveCam in-camera system as a factory-installed option.

The company plans to incorporate the camera systems into its LR and TerraPro refuse models. **TN**

Wabco takes stake in Nikola

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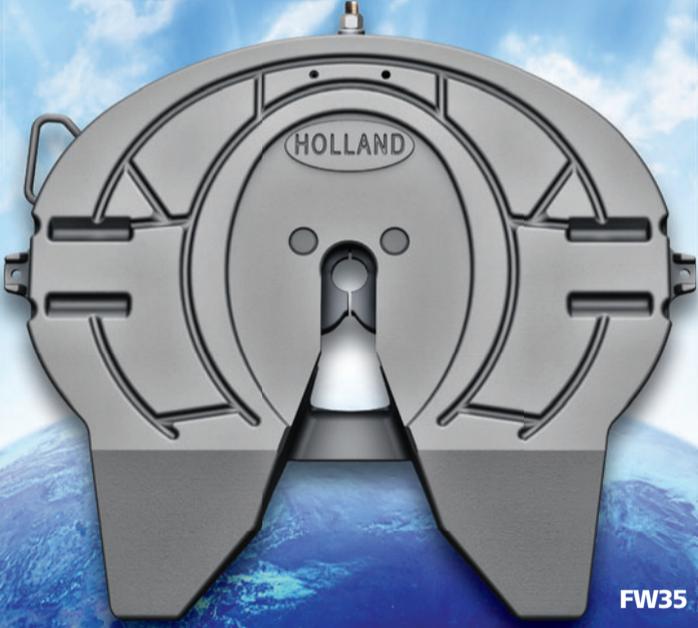
Wabco has announced it has made a US\$10-million investment to acquire a 1% equity stake in Nikola Motor Company, in an agreement it says will "accelerate the development of industry-leading safety technologies specifically designed for electric trucks."



"As vehicles become increasingly autonomous, electric, and connected, Wabco continues to be at the forefront of breakthrough technology innovation," said Jacques Esculier, Wabco chairman and chief executive officer. "We are excited to invest in Nikola Motor Company to help the industry realize our joint vision of electrified and autonomous trucks, buses, trailers and off-highway vehicles. Wabco's technologies, notably industry-leading braking, traction and stability control systems, continue to advance the transportation industry."

Nikola is building a zero-emissions truck, which it says will be tested with commercial fleets in late 2018, with production to begin in 2021. **TN**

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Versatility a key feature for upcoming Sprinter van release

By Derek Clouthier

STUTTGART, GERMANY

With the unveiling of its new Sprinter van on the horizon early this year, Mercedes-Benz recently provided insight into how it developed what it called “the perfect solution to a new era of digital solutions.”

Aiming to provide a “perfectly made vehicle for a variety of uses,” Volker Mornhinweg, head of Mercedes-Benz Vans, said the new Sprinter is more than just a van, but rather a service solution for its customers.

“The Sprinter is the flagship of our commercial fleet and embodies our approach towards an integrated system solution,” said Mornhinweg. “Comprehensive industry-specific know-how, a vehicle that is adaptable to different transport requirements and innovative networking services add up to an all-embracing fully integral product offering. The Sprinter is the first example of this new class of vehicle from Mercedes-Benz Vans and represents our understanding of the concept of smart hardware in every respect.”

Through the use of six educational labs, the company highlighted key factors into what it took into con-

sideration when conceiving the new Sprinter van, including the contention that with the release of the eSprinter in 2019, as well as the recent unveiling of the eVito, it will begin the process of electrifying all its vans and subsequently other commercial vehicles.

Despite the company’s push toward electric power, the upcoming Sprinter van was the belle of the ball during the Sprinter Innovation Campus tour Dec. 4.

Versatility was a focal point when it came to the new Sprinter van, with its ability to adapt to a variety of applications being a strong selling point. Whether traveling 6,000 kms or 350,000 kms a year, making two or 200 stops each day, needing a payload of 200kgs or 3,000 kgs, or transporting one or 20 people at a time, Mercedes-Benz said the upcoming Sprinter will be up to the task.

More than 1,000 individual design variants will be available for the upcoming Sprinter.

The new Sprinter’s digital networking ability helps the vehicle provide improved efficiency, as well as optimize a variety of processes.

“We have expanded the already wide-ranging Sprinter portfolio at



relevant points and added a multitude of new product features,” said Dr. Ulf Zillig, Mercedes-Benz project manager for the Sprinter. “This will allow us to meet even better the requirements of our commercial customers in the various business sectors, all over the world. The Sprinter is part of the Internet of Things and slots seamlessly into the digital world.”

The vehicle’s Internet connection – with the use of the Mercedes Pro hardware – helps fleets control and optimize communications between fleet managers and drivers, whether it be on the construction site or transporting VIPs via a shuttle service.

Mercedes Pro hardware was introduced as an adaptor in September 2017 and will now be offered on the new Sprinter. Services include vehicle

status, logistics, fleet communications, maintenance management, accident recovery, and digital vehicle logs.

Adding to the vehicle’s adaptability, the future Sprinter will be available in four interior designs, ranging from a basic offering for applications such as construction to a higher-end version for more detail-oriented driver tasks.

The same interior designs will be available in the upcoming eSprinter.

Mercedes-Benz also touted the new Sprinter as being the perfect solution for a growing eCommerce and online food retailing market.

Global parcel deliveries totaled approximately 44 billion in 2014, and increased by 48% by 2016 to 68 billion parcels. The popularity of eGrocery deliveries has seen a more gradual growth curve, but is expected over the next year to increase by 6% in the U.K., 10.5% in France, and 14.7% in Germany.

The new Sprinter’s ability in a further development stage to transport frozen, cooled, and ambient items in a single vehicle, coupled with technology that maps out the most efficient route and smart lighting to ensure the driver selects the correct item in a timely fashion upon delivery, were selling points for the new vehicle.

Matthias Winkenbach, director for MIT’s megacity logistics lab and research scientist at MIT’s Center for Transportation and Logistics, said cities will continue to be hotspots for economic growth, and the top 600 growing cities worldwide will make up 60% of global GDP and 25% of the global population.

With a predicted 40 megacities (cities with a population of 10 million or more) worldwide by 2030, there will be added uncertainty when it comes to last-mile delivery due to increased traffic and other unpredictable scenarios that come with large population centers. He added that last-mile deliveries remain to be the most complex and difficult to optimize as part of the supply chain, and with an increase in home deliveries, service providers must be able to be responsive and proactive, flexible, analytics- and data-driven, connected and integrated, autonomous, and intelligent.

Next month, *Truck News* will have a full report on the new Sprinter’s reveal, happening in Germany in early February. **TN**



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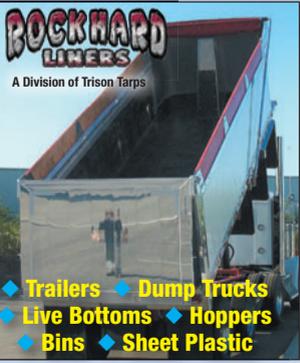




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Insights

Voice of the owner-operator

The perilous path to autonomy

My biggest automotive concern over the holidays was the crummy fuel economy my new gasoline-powered car was getting. With my scandalous Volkswagen TDI, I could go 1,000 kilometers on a 50-liter tank of fuel, and was shocked to find myself almost empty at just over 600 kilometers. A friend or two suggested I should have considered a hybrid or electric vehicle, while another speculated that if I'd been able to hold off for a bit, I could have invested in an autonomous vehicle.

If I can't even get over the loss of my diesel engine, how can I get my head around autonomous vehicles? Yet, if the province of Ontario is successful in changing the rules of its 10-year automated vehicle pilot project to allow for driverless testing, I might soon find myself motoring along the 401 next to a car with no one in the driver's seat.

Ontario's proposed changes would allow members of the public to drive vehicles that are less than fully automated, that is, capable of driving automatically in limited scenarios, once they are available for purchase. According to the province's transport ministry, that could be as early as this year, or as late as 2040.

In any discussion of automated vehicles, the "when" is just as hotly debated as the "how." Paul Godsmark of the Canadian Automated Vehicles Centre of Excellence, a non-profit consultancy that provides analysis and recommendations on automated vehicle deployment to governments, allows that the entire automated vehicle segment is moving much more quickly than most people realize.

Godsmark closely monitors the lead developers and their progress, and his expectation is that we will have some form of autonomous vehicle operating on public roads in the next two years in North America.

Dr. Ben Sawyer, a researcher with MIT who specializes in studying human/machine interactions and integration, gives us food for thought: those who are convinced autonomy is not really coming are wrong; it'll be here very soon. And those who think problems will be solved by full autonomy and everyone will be hands-off-the-wheel are also wrong. And, according to Sawyer, between these two states lies the messiest interaction possible.

One thing messing up the path from here to there is how the aver-



Joanne Ritchie is executive director of OBAC. Ready to take your hands off the wheel? E-mail her at jritchie@obac.ca or call toll-free at 888-794-9990.

age person interprets, or understands, the many different terms for vehicles that can drive themselves. Automated, self-driving, autonomous, or driverless vehicles are more often than not referred to simply as AVs. And while it may not be important for everyone to understand the intricacies of SAE's six levels of automation, starting at Level 0 for no automation, and leading up to Level 5 for full automation, it is important to remember that as of today, all those nifty bells and whistles are simply driver-assist technologies.

Creating a false sense of security, and lulling a driver into complacency, can be deadly. There's lots of room for misunderstanding and false expectations behind the wheel of an AV, and in any case, an easily-bored human is likely not the best monitor of technology systems.

In fact, there are those who believe that the sooner we remove the pesky human beings from the equation, the better. As risky as it sounds, a hands-off approach to driverless vehicle safety may save lives, according to Godsmark.

Commenting on the new guidelines for autonomous vehicles released south of the border last fall, he says it's clear the U.S. government is letting companies that make the vehicles take the wheel, in fact giving licence to developers to try an untested technology on an unsuspecting public. As frightening as that may sound, Godsmark says it may be the best decision. Proving the technology is safe could take hundreds of years, and many say it will save lives now.

The question is, would unleashing an imperfect automated technology kill or injure fewer people than the current human-controlled driving system? Some studies have shown driverless cars could reduce the number of traffic fatalities by up to 90% by removing driver error, speeding, and other unsafe human practices.

Godsmark believes that developers are determined to make the cars safe because their business survival depends on it. The economic pressure to get a piece of what experts say will be a multitrillion-dollar industry – five times bigger than the smartphone business – will motivate them to get it right.

Well maybe. But as a Volkswagen dieselgate victim, I'm still a bit leery about blind faith in an automaker. I'm just saying. **TN**

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Tax Talk

Movin' on? Do it right

As an owner-operator, you can't just park the truck and walk away



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

One advantage of being an owner-operator is that when you see a better job you can pretty easily take your truck and move on.

But it's more complicated if you decide to switch careers entirely. Or you have to stop working due to age, health, finances, or regulations – the latest being ELDs – that are too much for you to bear.

No matter what the circumstances, you can't just walk away. There are steps you need to take in order to close your trucking business.

Close your CRA accounts

You need to tell Canada Revenue Agency to close your Business Number and all related accounts for payroll, GST/HST, and corporate income tax. You can do this by completing Form RC145, *Request to close business number accounts*. Send it to your local CRA office or call the CRA Business Window at 800-959-5525.

Wrap up payroll

If your company has employees (including yourself) there are many obligations to wrap up.

You have to remit all CPP contributions, EI premiums, and income tax withheld within seven days of the day your business ends. Within 30 days of the day your business ends, you'll need to complete and file T4 slips and distribute copies to your former employees.

Also, you may want to confirm with your provincial labor standards agency that you have met their requirements for wrapping up your duties as an employer.

File outstanding GST/HST returns

You'll need to file GST/HST returns and pay any amounts owing up to and including the day your business ends.

Be careful about the handling of capital property (including land, buildings, vehicles, and computers) on these final returns. CRA deems you to have sold it and expects you to pay the GST/HST on your final return because you're changing the use from commercial to non-commercial. So, if you're keeping the service vehicle your company owned, you'll owe GST/HST just as if you personally bought the vehicle from the company.

There is a way to manage at least part of this mess: CRA Form GST44, *Election concerning the acquisition of a business or part of a business*. You can use this form when you are selling your business assets to another person. To qualify, the buyer must purchase all or substantially all (at least 90% or more) ownership, possession, or use of the seller's property necessary to carry on the

business. In a one-truck operation, selling the truck represents 100% of the property so this election is applicable.

File this election form with the GST/HST return for the reporting period in which the sale was made and also keep a copy for your records.

Corporate income tax

Send an application for dissolution to the provincial or federal government body that your corporation is chartered in. You should also file a final tax return and send CRA a copy of the articles of dissolution. Otherwise, CRA won't know the company no longer exists and will expect tax filings each year.

Remember that your corporation can live forever whether it's actively in business or not.

Of course, if your corporation has some money in its bank accounts you may not want to do this last step right away. If over the years you have managed to save money in the corporation, or if selling your equipment has put money in there, it may be best to wait.

Remember that your corporation can live forever whether it's actively in business or not. Rather than pulling money out of the business now and having to add that income to your personal tax return, you can withdraw it over time and then dissolve the company when the money

is gone. You may end up paying a lot less tax this way.

Every business comes to an end. When that day arrives, a carefully planned closure will help you move on quickly and without worry. **TN**

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Insights

You say tomato, I say tomahto

Electric trucks will attract new breed of driver

But I'll stick with my glider, thanks

The evolution of trucks, has until recently, been a gradual process. Take a truck from the late 1960s and compare it to a truck from the turn of the century – in 40 years there wasn't much on the surface to distinguish between the two.

Sure, under the skin there have been many changes, but it was a gradual process and there were only a few major changes, the introduction of turbocharging and inter-cooling being the big ones. Until the electronic control of fuel systems, nothing much happened to engines until the emissions control regulations came into force, demanding significant changes.

Chassis-wise, we got air suspensions and radial tires, and then tubeless radials; other than that, the fundamentals remained the same.

Today it's a different story altogether. I'm not going to talk about the emissions stuff, as it depresses



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.

me. I know it's for the greater good of the planet. While in our case it means replacing trucks at much lower mileage than we used to, the fact remains, the newer trucks do pollute our environment less.

I've seen it with my own eyes. My pre-emissions glider will make my eyes stream if I leave it idling inside my shop for five minutes, whereas my post-emissions truck doesn't have any effect whatsoever. Even leaving it running at 1,200 rpm for almost an hour as I tried to find a coolant leak had no effect, and my nose couldn't detect any fumes, so they do make the world a better place.

Now that is a massive step forward in engineering, but it pales into insignificance against some of the stuff that's become available in the last few years. There is extremely clever stuff out there, auto-shift

Continued on page 30

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Insights

Electric trucks aren't for me

Continued from page 29

transmissions being one. Love them or hate them, there are a couple on the market that can shift as well as the best drivers, no matter how good you are.

Now there are engines and transmissions that have a GPS function and know when to apply more or less power or shift gears in preparation for a grade. You have to be impressed by their capability. Lane departure and automatic emergency braking are also pretty clever. Again, you may feel that it's too much control, and that you're more than capable of doing that. But if that were always the case, there would be no truck-involved crashes.

These are just a few of the things that make a truck of today radically different from a truck of 10 years ago, and yet there are still more changes to come, the biggest of all being the electric truck. Now I don't know about you, but I think they're awful looking things. But they're not meant to appeal to me. No matter what the performance and fuel economy benefits are, I don't care, they're ugly and I don't want one – and many of you will agree.

We are tactile – as small children we played with physical things, building blocks, toy cars

and trucks, bicycles, etc. But kids nowadays are into computers. They stack blocks on a tablet, they play video games and rather than going to the local hang-out to hook up with their buddies, they send instant messages, videos, and who knows what other new things that came out yesterday?

These kids are the target audience, both as drivers and more importantly buyers. Where we're impressed by horsepower and torque, they're impressed by bytes and code. Tomorrow's drivers are a different breed, and the only way to attract kids into the industry will be by providing them with as much technology as you can cram into a truck.

A long time ago, transport was carried out by horse and cart, then a few crackpots started making carts powered by internal combustion engines and people laughed at them. More than 100 years later, we're still using those ideas, albeit much improved on the original designs but still using the same principals. I truly believe that electric power is the new internal combustion engine, and diesel engines will become obsolete. I just hope I've finished paying for this glider before it happens. **TN**

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Mike Millian is president of the Private Motor Truck Council of Canada, the only national association that represents the views and interests of the private fleet industry. He can be reached at trucks@pmtc.ca.

Marijuana legalization will create new challenges for fleets

As the anticipated date for legalization of marijuana gets draws closer – Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has recently flinched on the July 1 date, instead saying sometime in the summer of 2018 – more provinces and territories are announcing their proposed legislations for not only its use, but for new drug impaired driving laws.

Since September, Ontario, Saskatchewan, and Quebec have all announced plans for zero-tolerance laws for the presence of marijuana in your system while operating a motor vehicle. At the same time, they have announced tougher penalties for current impaired driving laws, whether impaired by drugs or alcohol.

All jurisdictions have indicated that drivers will be tested at the roadside, with a saliva testing device, which is waiting approval from the federal government. The device will test for the presence of marijuana in a driver's system, not for impairment.

The stated reason for this is one that is well known, the science is not yet there to determine impairment, nor is the science there to test for the tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) level in a person's system that will provide immediate results at roadside.

Which begs the question, why the rush from the feds to legalize marijuana when we have yet to develop the science needed to address the road safety issues this legislation will no doubt create? But I digress. The penalties for the presence of THC vary by jurisdiction; in Ontario for example, the zero-tolerance approach is for commercial vehicle operators and novice drivers only, while indications are Quebec and Saskatchewan will cover all drivers. They will also involve an immediate roadside suspension, of varying lengths, if the proposed legislations pass.

The feds have also weighed in with Bill C-46, which has passed through the second reading of the Senate and has been referred to the Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs. It is expected to become law in early 2018, and has added three Criminal Code convictions for drug impaired driving, ranging from an immediate roadside suspension until court has disposed of the charge, to possible 30-day vehicle seizures and up to 60.

The remaining Canadian jurisdictions are still reviewing data and considering their plans, however you can expect most, if not all, to announce stiffer penalties in advance of the federal legislation on cannabis use being finalized. I expect many to also add zero-tolerance for the presence of marijuana into their legislation.

While the PMTC is in favor of a zero-tolerance approach for the operation of a commercial vehicle, more needs to be done. One of the main reasons for this legislation is to try and remove drivers under the influence of drugs from the road.

Our question is, why not give

employers the tools to remove more of these drivers from the road before they ever get to them? In recent years, the PMTC has been lobbying the federal government, as well as the Ontario government, to address workplace safety in their legislation, especially when it comes to safety-sensitive positions.

In a recent meeting with officials from Transport Canada, the PMTC once again requested that it mandate a drug and alcohol testing policy for safety-sensitive positions, similar to the U.S. drug and alcohol testing program.

Canadian drivers entering the U.S. have been subjected to pre-employment, post-accident, random, and reasonable cause testing since the '90s. This has created an unlevel playing

field where drivers who are using drugs will most likely apply for Canada-only driving positions in hopes of slipping under the radar.

This is likely to be exasperated once cannabis use becomes legal here. While it can be argued that companies have the right to develop their own workplace testing policies, and many have, without legislation, these polices come at a significant cost to employers, and are subject to repeated legal challenges, which in some cases dismiss the employer's right to test.

The government has increased the potential use of drugs on the job, and it is their responsibility to help employers address the public safety

issues that result. As an employer, you need to prepare and ensure your polices and procedures address drugs and alcohol in the workplace. While many companies already have zero-tolerance policies, do they lay out the consequences and how it will be addressed? If you haven't already, review your polices, seek legal advice, and be prepared. In the meantime, we will continue the fight. **TN**

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Avoid heart pump failure

As a trucker, you know it's vital to keep all your rig's pumps functioning well. February, Valentine's Day month, is a great time to consider the maintenance of your body's major pump – your heart.

Your heart, about the size of your fist, sits slightly left of center in your chest. The dividing wall between its left and right sides separates oxygen-rich blood from oxygen-poor blood.

After blood circulates through your body, the right side (right atrium and ventricle) collects this oxygen-poor blood and then pumps it through the pulmonary arteries to your lungs for an oxygen top-up. This newly-oxygenated

blood then enters the left side of your heart (left atrium and ventricle) to be pumped through the aorta to your body.

Like most pumps, your heart has valves to keep blood flowing in the proper direction. For optimum function, these valves must be properly formed to open and close tightly without leakage. When your heart beats, it contracts and relaxes in a continuous cycle. When contracting (systole), ventricles squeeze and force blood through blood vessels to your lungs and body. When relaxing (diastole), ventricles fill with blood from the upper chambers (left and right atria).

Your heart pump receives

impulses from your body's electrical system, which trigger contractions and maintain a regular beat. These electrical impulses begin high in the right atrium and travel through specialized pathways to the ventricles, causing the heart to pump. By maintaining a coordinated rhythm, this conduction system keeps your blood circulating well. However, heart or cardiovascular disease reduces your heart's efficiency.

A broad range of conditions fall under the umbrella of cardiovascular disease, including heart defects that are present at birth (congenital); blood vessel diseases (coronary artery disease); heart rhythm diseases (arrhythmias); conditions



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creating narrowed or blocked blood vessels; and/or conditions impacting the heart muscle, valves or rhythm.

What are typical signs and symptoms of heart disease? They differ, depending on the root cause and whether you are a man or woman.

For coronary artery disease, men are more likely to feel chest pain, while women typically have chest discomfort and also shortness of breath, extreme fatigue and nausea. General symptoms include chest discomfort, pain, tightness, and/or pressure; shortness of breath; ongoing pain, numbness, weakness and/or coldness in extremities; and pain in the jaw, neck, throat, back or upper abdomen.

Heart arrhythmias can cause shortness of breath; lightheadedness; dizziness; fainting; fluttering in your chest; racing heartbeat (tachycardia) and/or slow heart beat (bradycardia). A weakened heart muscle (cardiomyopathy) may cause fatigue; swollen feet, ankles and legs; irregular heartbeat (fluttering, pounding or rapid); breathlessness, whether active or resting; and/or lightheadedness, dizziness and fainting.

Infection that settles in the inner membrane separating the chambers and valves of your heart (endocarditis) can cause fever; shortness of breath; weakness/fatigue; swollen legs/abdomen; irregular heartbeat; dry, persistent cough; skin rashes or unusual spots.

Valvular heart disease, damaged valves impacting the blood flow through your heart, may result from conditions leading to leaking; a narrowing; or improper closing. These can cause swollen ankles or feet; fainting; fatigue; shortness of breath; irregular heartbeat; and/or chest pain.

If you have any cardiovascular disease symptoms, get checked out by your doctor. Fortunately, early-identified, non-congenital conditions can usually be avoided or treated by adopting a healthier lifestyle. You can reduce your risk factors. Quit smoking – nicotine constricts blood vessels and carbon monoxide damages their inner lining. Improve your diet – lower your intake of fat, salt, sugar and cholesterol. Control your blood pressure. Lower your cholesterol – avoid the formation of plaque leading to atherosclerosis. Preserve appropriate blood sugar levels – avoid diabetes. Maintain a healthy weight. Be active. Avoid and manage stress. Wash your hands and brush your teeth regularly – avoid bacterial/viral infections.

Don't wait for an emergency situation to take care of your heart. Conscientious maintenance will help avoid failures, breakdowns, and repairs. **TN**

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Back behind the wheel

Are you feeling SAD?

How to deal with seasonal affective disorder

Have you ever noticed that your mood is affected by the weather? Often, our spirits are lifted on a bright sunny day while a dull, cold, and rainy day may make us feel a little gloomy.

Although these are normal reactions to the changing seasons, some people experience a much more serious or intense reaction during the transition from fall to winter. This condition is called seasonal affective disorder (SAD). This is a type of depression that is correlated to the changes in seasons.

For many professional truck drivers, the long dark days of winter can have a significant effect on their moods. It is common for drivers to spend many hours behind the wheel of their truck during a workday. During the winter months, when the hours of daylight are reduced, truck drivers will spend more time driving in the dark. To add to this, much of their workday is spent alone.

As a result, truck drivers are at risk of developing SAD.

As with many conditions, the exact cause of SAD is still unknown. However, recent studies have shown that age, genetics, and the chemical make-up of your body play an important role in developing this condition. Research in Ontario suggests that 2-3% of the general population has SAD. Although it may affect some children and teenagers, SAD most commonly affects people over the age of 20. This condition is more common in women than in men.

SAD is thought to be related to the seasonal variations in the amount of daylight we are exposed to. The reduced level of sunlight in the fall and winter may disrupt our body's internal clock, which tells us when we should be sleeping or awake. To add to this, changes in sunlight exposure may affect biological chemicals such as serotonin and melatonin. Both of these chemicals play a role in sleep and mood regulation. As a result, shift workers are at greater risk, as their schedules may cause them to be exposed to very little natural daylight.

The symptoms of SAD are similar to several other psychological conditions such as depression or bipolar disorder. However, SAD is a cyclical condition, which means the signs and symptoms usually come and go at the same time each year.

In most cases, the symptoms of SAD appear during the late fall or early winter and go away during the warmer, brighter days of spring. Symptoms may include: depression; anxiety; weight gain; loss of energy; oversleeping; difficulty concentrating; and irritability.

Normally, the symptoms of SAD will disappear in the early spring or summer.

It is important to take SAD seriously, as it can lead to serious complications

if left untreated. It is advised to seek medical help if you are experiencing the above-mentioned symptoms. The good news is, there are effective treatments for SAD.

The first line of treatment consists of spending more time outside during the day and arranging your home (or cab) to maximize the amount of light that enters. Things such as trimming tree limbs and opening the curtains work very well. In addition, physical activity is recommended as it will boost energy levels as well as relieve stress.

In more severe cases of SAD, light therapy may be the treatment of choice. This therapeutic approach

consists of sitting beside a specialized light therapy box for several minutes per day. This specialized light will mimic natural daylight, relieving the symptoms of SAD. I recently had a patient, who is a truck driver, diagnosed with SAD by his medical doctor. After using the specialized light in his truck for two weeks, he felt a significant improvement in his symptoms. After one month of use, his SAD symptoms were completely gone.

Another form of treatment that is becoming more and more popular is counseling or psychotherapy. The goal of these therapies is to help identify and eliminate negative thoughts as well as

Dr. Christopher H. Singh runs Trans Canada Chiropractic at the 230 Truck Stop in Woodstock, Ont.

He can be reached at 519-421-2024.

provide coping strategies. Finally, if all other treatments fail, your doctor may recommend antidepressants or other psychiatric medications.

As you can see, SAD can become a serious and debilitating problem for some people. Due to their job demands, professional truck drivers are particularly at risk. Although there is no way to completely prevent this condition, it is possible to minimize its effects by following these simple hints.

Until next time, drive safely. **TN**



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Human Factors

Millennials will bring value to trucking: Panel

By Sonia Straface

MISSISSAUGA, ONTARIO

It's no secret the trucking industry is in dire need of millennials. Truck drivers are getting older, and a great number of them are due to retire soon. Ideally, fleets would love for them to be replaced with young blood, even though millennials have received a bad rap in the media.

They've been labeled the lazy generation, and the trophy generation, who cry if they go without recognition. But these portrayals are far-fetched, concluded a panel at the 2017 Surface Transportation Summit.

The panel included two millennials, Isabelle Hetu of Trucking HR Canada and Victoria Armour of Armour Transportation Systems. The panel also included Wesley Armour of Armour Transportation Systems, a veteran trucking executive.

Hetu said there are a number of misperceptions about millennials that are simply not true.

"There is a misconception that millennials are really different from previous generations before them," she said. "Yet Trucking HR Canada released a report (called *Millennials Have Drive*) and it found that millen-

nials actually want very similar things to other generations before them, which is respect career opportunities, and work-life balance."

Another big misconception is that millennials want to change the workplace altogether, Hetu said.

"And while this may be the case for one millennial in particular, I don't think it's fair to generalize the whole generation this way," she said. "So, I think every effort should be made to fill vacancies (in trucking) with millennials."

"Millennials measure their performance on output, whereas older generations measure that on time in the office."

— Victoria Armour, Armour Transportation

Victoria Armour agreed, saying that millennials aren't lazy because they don't want to stay in the office for eight hours, rather they quantify their work by output, not by hours put in.

"Millennials measure their performance on output, whereas older generations measure that on time in

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the office," she said. "If your shift is nine to five, older generations would stay and work that shift. But if you're a millennial and you're done all your work at three, you don't want to stay there for two hours. However, in the same breath if you have a lot of work, millennials will work until seven or eight at night to get it done."

Wesley Armour, who took over the business from his father at a young age, agreed with his fellow panelists, saying that he used to believe the hype about 18- to 35-year-olds being lazy, however, since employing them, he has changed his mind.

"At one time I thought yes, they were lazy, but now I don't," he said. "They're people who want challenges and want to work hard. At Armour, 25% of our employees are millennials."

The panelists agreed that employing millennials into your fleet actually benefits your business in many ways.

Victoria Armour said that millennials shine when it comes to technology, a skill the trucking industry could desperately benefit from.

"I think every generation is different than the one before them," she said. "One thing that comes to mind for me that really strikes me as being different is technology. We are the generation that grew up with technology and we are the first to enter the workforce that has been exposed to technology at such a young age. And with that comes different views of the world and different views of the workplace."

Hetu said millennials will also bring innovation and fresh ideas to the workplace.

"And that provides a learning opportunity and teaching opportunities for a more mature workforce," she said. "So yes, they can bring technological skills and they can also learn from the older generation about soft skills, and together you can create a cohesive work space."

And if you shut down these ideas, warned Victoria, it's a possible recipe to lose the generation for good.

"One thing about millennials, is that we're thinking of new ways to do things," she said. "And all millennials' ideas aren't going to be great – but if you just shut those ideas down, they're going to be frustrated and you won't be able to retain them." **TN**

Human Factors

Further coverage in the latest edition of

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Movin' on up

Trucking industry provides room for advancement

By **Sonia Straface**

TORONTO, ONTARIO

At 21 years old, Tara Whiteman had just graduated nursing school and was ready to embark on a career of tending to sick patients. However, after just two years of working as a nurse, she gave up her scrubs for a safety vest after a friend's advice, and began driving team for Kriska Holdings.

Twenty years later, and she hasn't looked back.

Today, Whiteman is still working for Kriska, only now she has moved up the ranks and is the company's safety and compliance supervisor.

Trucking is filled with stories like these – people who started out in an industry they didn't know much about and ended up sticking around for years, proving trucking has an abundance of career paths for just about anyone. For Whiteman, her pull to become a truck driver in 1997 was that it was a career with adventure.

"At first, I thought (driving trucks professionally) was a bit off the wall," she said. "But then I thought about it some more and thought, I'm young. I could at least try it. I hadn't traveled much and I wasn't tied down so I thought it was a great opportunity for me at the time."

After two years she handed her keys in and worked on the

inside where she eventually made her way into the safety department. Whiteman's been in her current role since 2014, and in 2017 celebrated 20 years with Kriska in total.

"It's such a rewarding career," she said. "It's challenging, and totally unpredictable. If you're the type of person who doesn't like to do the same thing day in and day out, then this industry is for you. I love this industry and I love working so close with the drivers because I know what a hard job that is to do."

Like Whiteman, Bob McKiernan started in trucking in the '90s.

McKiernan began at Challenger Motor Freight in Cambridge in 1992 as a truck mechanic. He worked there for a few years but after his wife got pregnant with their son, McKiernan moved back home to London to be with his family.

Eventually, in 2003 McKiernan got a job at the London Challenger facility, where he was the team lead for the midnight shift in the shop.

"I worked that shift for five or six years," he said, "and then the day shift team lead quit and I applied for his job and got it."

Today, McKiernan is the maintenance manager at Challenger's London facility. And it's a role he relishes.

"Whether you're a mechanic on the floor or a manager like me, you are always learning and training every day," he said. "Because trucking is changing every day and we have to make sure we can keep up. Challenger is a great place to work because they push us to have that training and encourage it. I make sure my mechanics set aside one to two hours every week so they can go on the computer and do training."

Brooke St. Jacques started at Bison 10 years ago when she was just 23 years old as an outbound assistant.

In a short period of time, she moved to become a dispatcher, then a fleet manager, then was a team lead for the night operations. After maternity leave, St. Jacques returned as the turnpike fleet manager. Then she was the team lead for turnpike, west highway operations supervisor, and the U.S./Pacific northwest planner. Today she is the supervisor of the west highway fleet operations.

St. Jacques said her moves throughout the company are the result of her wanting to better herself as a Bison employee and trucking professional.

"If you recognize yourself as someone who wants to keep learning, Bison allows you create that path for yourself," she said. "Bison has always been accommodating for me and will never hinder someone's desire to grow."

Eventually, St. Jacques, now just 33 years old, says her end game is to become operations manager.

"More than growing in my career at Bison, I've grown as a person," she said. "Everyone I work with, we've all become super close, like one big family."

St. Jacques went to college and studied hotel and restaurant management but after getting into trucking, she found it difficult to leave after her changed perspective on the industry.

"When I first got into trucking I thought it was a man's world. I thought it was dirty and grimy and unprofessional. I never thought about how it worked, how things got from one place to another," she said. "But now that I'm in it, it's so much different than what I thought it would be. It's professional. It's fun. It's exciting. There's a new challenge every single day and it's rewarding. I get a lot of satisfaction knowing that I'm helping bringing goods to store shelves every day. I would definitely recommend any jobs in trucking to the younger generation. It's a job where you can go home and understand your wins for the day. And I think that's something that everyone wants." **TN**





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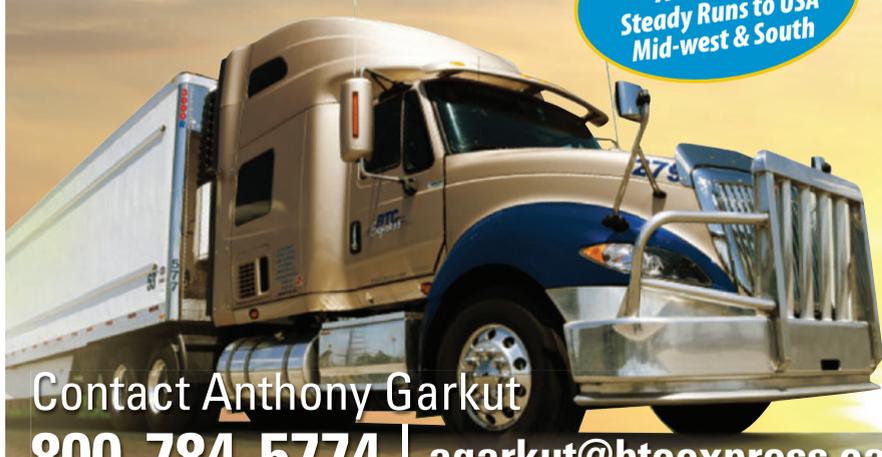
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Driver pay is trending up

Continued from page 1

“That is definitely becoming more of a trend,” she said, noting that among the Best Fleets finalists, about twice as many are now offering “full” guaranteed pay as in previous years.

“What I mean by full, is they have some amount (of pay) per week the driver can get if they don’t get their miles,” she explained. “There may be some stipulations around that – some kind of rule where you have

“Everybody is upping their pay. Everybody.”

– Jane Jazrawy, Carriers Edge

to be available. If you decide to take three days off you’re not going to get your guaranteed pay, obviously.”

Fleets in the U.S. have been more aggressive with driver signing bonuses. Covenant Transport launched a US\$40,000 teaming bonus, effective Feb. 1. Teams earn \$2,000 in bonus money every time they eclipse 60,000 paid miles, up to a combined \$40,000. The company said the move was done in order to increase its team truck count as demand is increasing for team capacity.

Another U.S. fleet, Royal Trucking, installed EpicVue satellite TV in all 250 of its trucks, in an effort to better attract and retain drivers. And such creative incentives and pay increases are coming to Canada as well.

Titanium Transportation Group announced it increased company driver pay by up to six cents per mile, and owner-operator rates by an additional 5% of revenue, effective Jan. 1. Drivers at Titanium are now earning more than ever before in the company’s history, Marilyn Daniel, chief operating officer, told *Truck News*.

“We believe over the next year, the driver shortage in Canada will be more pronounced,” she said. “I’ve always said we haven’t had a driver shortage yet. I’ve never had to advertise for drivers until now. We believe the fleets with the drivers will win in the end, and we’re starting to feel a capacity crunch. In the last few months of 2017 there was more freight than drivers, so we’re taking a leap of faith as we believe the marketplace is ripe for increases from shippers to begin, and we are raising rates now for drivers.”

Daniel said for the first time in several years, shippers are accepting contract rate increases.

“When reviewing contracts, we’re able to talk about increases, whereas it wasn’t even an option in the past,” said Daniel. “We are giving

it to our drivers so they can be safer and make more money, and customers are understanding of it.”

Windsor, Ont.-based Morrice Transportation also announced a pay increase of five cents per mile, effective Jan. 1.

“I have had multiple drivers call to ask me about the raise, and are ecstatic to hear that most drivers will be seeing a five cent a mile increase to their base wage alone, on top of which our current accessorial pay and bonuses are factored in,” said Amanda Matalik, human resources manager. “As I have told our drivers, Morrice appreciates the hard work that our drivers commit to every day in order to make operations run smoothly, and hope that their dedication will continue as we grow and expand in the new year.”

Financial compensation, naturally, is an attractive incentive for drivers, but fleets are increasingly looking at other ways to lure and keep drivers. Publicly-traded Titanium offers a share-purchase plan, where it matches employee stock purchases.

“They’re buying stock 50% off market prices, really,” Daniel said. “It’s a big incentive for them to continue to work with us long-term, because there’s a vesting period for them.”

She also said drivers are looking to operate new, well-spec’d equipment.

“The average age of our trucks is two years,” she said. “A big part of driver retention is good equipment.” And giving drivers the technology they need to make their lives easier also factors into a retention program, she added, “making drivers’ lives on the road as easy as possible. A lot of drivers are now looking to come home as often as possible, so we’re doing shorter runs, switches. I have drivers coming in now looking for work-life balance.”

When analyzing driver surveys as part of the Best Fleets to Drive For program, Jazrawy noted more drivers feel they’re paid “fairly” for the work they do. Equally important to them is how they feel about the people they work with, she noted.

“I think trucking companies are starting to realize the relationships they have with their drivers are just as important as the pay,” Jazrawy said. “Having a guaranteed pay model really helps...they know they’re going to be taken care of, and it makes them feel supported.”

To retain drivers, leading fleets are increasingly using social media, the latest tool being Facebook Live, which managers can use to communicate to their scattered drivers.

“A lot of drivers are on Facebook. It’s one of their main ways of communicating,” Jazrawy observed. **TN**

Most fleets expecting driver pay to increase in 2018

TULSA, OKLAHOMA

More than 90% of fleets surveyed by background screening firm Driver iQ reported having unseated trucks in the last quarter of 2017, and 59% of recruiters expect driver compensation to increase in the first quarter of 2018.

The survey included Driver iQ customers, which include 23 of the top 25 U.S. truckload carriers. Lana Batts, co-president of Driver iQ, published the findings Dec. 21 in a report called *Trends in Truckload Recruiting and Retention*.

Over the last three quarters of 2017, driver turnover among large truckload fleets climbed from 71% to 90%. Forty one per cent of responding fleets expect driver turnover to remain the same over the first quarter of 2018, while 24% think it will increase.

While 59% of fleets surveyed said they expect driver compensation will increase in Q1 2018, the remaining respondents said it will stay the same – none anticipate a decrease in pay rates.

Fifty two per cent of responding fleets say they offer sign-on bonuses. Of the vast majority of fleets that experienced unseated trucks, 62% reported between 1% and 5% of their capacity was without a driver. Even though most fleets had trouble keeping drivers in trucks, 90% of responding fleets said they plan to add capacity in the first quarter of this year. **TN**

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Over The Road

Finding the right carrier

Drivers need to recruit the right carrier to work for

The trucking industry as a whole doesn't display much empathy for its drivers. Drivers are about the passion for what they do day in and day out. Corporate trucking is about profit. The ground between these two poles is a no man's land at present, when it should be seen as fertile ground on which to grow common interest.

It is a challenge that isn't unique to the trucking sector. We are facing divisive issues between large corporate interests and their employees and independent contractors across our society. In fact, I would say that

entrepreneurs, small and medium businesses, along with employees, share many of the same concerns when it comes to dealing with and competing with the global titans of the business world.

On one hand we (individuals and small companies) have no choice but to adopt new technologies. This, at first blush, may seem detrimental to our well-being both financially and logistically. On the other hand, we can find the silver lining and flourish in markets transnational companies are simply too large to be responsive to. In fact, many

large companies can be a lucrative source of partnerships for this reason alone.

If you're a driver that holds a passion in your heart for driving; if you value your independence and freedom but still desire to work in an atmosphere that will provide you with a sense of security in return for your commitment and loyalty, then allow me to recap yet again a few things I've learned working for a family-owned trucking business.

First, let's set the stage. You need to do your homework as a driver. In my experience, companies with



Al Goodhall has been a professional longhaul driver since 1998. He shares his experiences via his blog at www.truckingacrosscanada.blogspot.com. You can follow him on Twitter at [@Al_Goodhall](https://twitter.com/Al_Goodhall).

a fleet that is operated by employees and not owner-operators are far more likely to be empathetic to your needs as a driver.

These companies may be easier to find in the private fleet sector, but are certainly not limited to it. I work for a common carrier. As a driver, you need to recruit a carrier to work with, as much as they need to recruit you to work with them.

Honesty and integrity are at the heart of everything that transpires between the owners and drivers where I work. With the founding family's same passion for trucking that I share, there is always fertile ground for both parties to grow and prosper.

As an employee, not a contractor (owner-operator), my employer has made a large commitment to me from day one. Our relationship is symbiotic, not parasitic.

My employer is in tune with my needs as an employee. Things such as family time, job security, steady income, and so on, are a priority to them. In turn, I am in tune with their needs. Meeting customer service, operating, and safety standards are important to me. I know I will be rewarded further for my ability to deliver above the expected standard. My employer is in touch with how I feel about what I do. This is incredibly important.

The result of this relationship is a team approach as we compete against those titans of global business I mentioned above. Working together we are able to respond far more nimbly to the needs of our customers. Just as my employer is empathetic to my needs, I, as a driver, am far more in tune with the needs of the company as they respond to a rapidly changing business environment.

The rollout of electronic logging devices (ELDs) is a great example of our relationship. It was a non-issue for either party. I was able to depend on them to plan years ahead for these changes and they were able to depend on me to adopt new technology and provide critical feedback well in advance, which enhanced their competitiveness.

In this industry, we spend far too much time working against one another, rather than with one another. Drivers and employers are partners, not competing interests. **TN**

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Focusing on the soft skills



Angela Splinter leads Trucking HR Canada, a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to addressing the human resources challenges and opportunities in the trucking and logistics sector. Learn more at www.TruckingHR.com or follow them @TruckingHR.

The nature of work is always changing. Today, as technology and demographics evolve, our skills have to keep up or else we risk being automated out of a job.

But some talents simply cannot be replaced by technology. I am referring to the “soft skills.” The skills that make us who we are as humans: our ability to interact with others.

These social, emotional, and critical thinking skills are often observed in successful business people, politicians, and leaders.

These are people who have the ability to truly connect with others. People who challenge the status quo. People who can build and maintain genuine relationships.

As the trucking industry braces for what many think will be disruptive changes, success will come from a combination of hard work, business savvy, and a focus on people. Here are some examples of how the soft skills can factor in.

New technologies

Decisions need to be made about which technologies will enhance operations and keep you competitive. These new technologies will require people who can think critically, analyze data and trends, identify and solve problems, and have outstanding communication skills.

Elon Musk of Tesla is a good example. The Tesla electric semi-truck introduction illustrates how to effectively build buzz. And, there are people in the industry who will be early adopters; eager to experiment with the technology. Many others will take the time to digest information, critically assess how the truck performs, and patiently wait to see how Tesla’s competition responds.

Employees who are charged with this analysis will then need to articulate their rationale to senior managers. As is often the case in marketing, it is much easier to drink the Kool-Aid than to explain what’s in it. But clear communication is a skill we need during times of profound change.

The changing workforce

Our workforce is increasingly diverse with different cultures, genders, generations, ideas, and approaches. Managers will need to draw on their social and emotional skills in order to foster a workplace culture that values this diversity and builds effective teams. Managers will need to hone their communication skills, too, to make sure staff are aware of their roles in the organization, and how new technologies will impact their workplace specifically.

XTL Transport is a good example here. Last October, they received Trucking HR Canada’s 2017 Top Fleet Employer Achievement of Excellence Award for workplace diversity.

They train their managers to conduct bias-free interviews; their workplace inclusion program helps new immigrants integrate fully into the XTL culture; and their driver mentorship program focuses specifically on the soft skills and informal norms of the job. As a result, XTL has a great workplace culture with happy employees stemming from a variety of backgrounds, cultures, and more.

Government relations

Public policy regarding safety, environmental impacts, marijuana legalization, proposed labor legislation changes, and NAFTA will all

impact trucking and logistics. And here the soft skills of industry leaders will be put to the test.

Our government relations work needs a strong team of people who can manage relationships; clearly formulate, articulate, and communicate ideas; and successfully negotiate and persuade. More than ever we need leaders with the ability to build consensus and have the fortitude to stay the course.

My example here? The Canadian Trucking Alliance has excelled at this for years, and will continue to leverage its experience, connections, and in-house expertise. It is the soft skills that has helped make

them one of the most effective lobby groups in the country.

Whether we are competing for business, employees, or for the industry as a whole, the team with those soft skills – and the willingness to do everything humanly possible to connect with others – will come out ahead. **TN**

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Nothing's automatic

Used truck market slowly embracing automated transmissions

By Derek Clouthier

"Try it and you'll like it" has been a common theme in the trucking industry of late with new advancements being made in the world of technology.

Automated transmissions are no different, and with approximately 70% of new trucks coming with the newer, easier to operate clutch, what kind of impact does this demand have on the used truck market?

A lot depends on what year the truck was manufactured. As Jason Wheeler, vice-president of Canadian operations for Inland Kenworth in Burnaby, B.C., explained, automated transmissions in the used truck market are gaining in popularity.

"I would say it is almost the same depending on the model year," Wheeler said comparing the demand for automated transmissions in the new and used markets. "Older trucks with automated transmissions are less desirable than manuals, however, the later model trucks are performing well."

One of the concerns Wheeler has heard from used truck buyers is the cost to repair an automated transmission, something he said is higher than with manuals.

"When it comes to the Eaton, for example, it is the same transmission with an ECU controlling the shifts, so the base box and gears are the same and have the same repair costs," said Wheeler. "But then you add in the extra shifting components."

Wheeler added that some proprietary transmissions can be difficult and expensive to rebuild and are only offered as exchange units.

Bert Downton, regional used truck sales manager for Custom Truck Sales out of Regina, Sask., said the main costs his company sees with automated transmissions is with the electronic control units, wiring harnesses, and shifter failures.

He added, however, that reliability is improving on newer models, so repair costs are coming down.

Brian Sarna, corporate remarketing manager for Peterbilt Manitoba in Winnipeg, Man., agreed that the cost to repair today's automated transmissions is much higher than manuals, but he added they also work much better and for longer.

"They are becoming very bullet-proof," said Sarna. "Call it smart, but it doesn't have to sit there and go through 10 or 13 individual gears. It's smart enough to know, it senses the load and might start off in third gear instead of first, then might jump to sixth. It's smart enough to know what gears



The cost to repair today's automated transmissions can be steep, but the new technology is also becoming more reliable.



"Once guys try them they tend not to go back to manuals."

— Jason Wheeler, Inland Kenworth

it has to take. The shifting is very smooth these days, you can hardly feel them moving at all."

Sarna said around 45% of used truck customers are looking for automated transmissions. The difference Sarna sees in the secondary market is that these buyers aren't always as up to date on new technologies as those buying new trucks.

"A lot of the new truck buyers are fleets and have multiple units, so they are really in tune with the new developments in terms of new technology," said Sarna, adding that the second owner of a truck may not be looking for the same level of technology. "He still comes from a little bit further back where you can't beat the old stickshift. Primarily the second truck buyer is a vocational guy, maybe a regional carrier. He

reads about (new technologies) but he's still a little bit scared to jump in the water."

Downton added there is a demand for Allison's fully automatic transmission with RDS/PTO provision in the medium-duty market. With Class 8, he is seeing a demand from the farm community for 13- and 18-speed Eaton UltraShifts for grain and day cab trucks.

Some of the demand, Downton points out, is due to "a lack of driving skill for 18-speed manuals. We have had occasions when we have had customer waiting lists for automated manual transmissions," Downton said.

Doug Brandon, sales manager for Timmins and New Liskeard Kenworth, said older auto-shift transmissions are not as popular as

those found in today's trucks, but he has seen a small demand for the Allison automatic transmission in some applications.

"New automated transmissions are becoming more popular," said Brandon, "but are just starting to hit the used market. Some customers want them, others don't."

Andrew Koziak, used truck manager for Nortrux in Edmonton, Alta., said demand for automated transmissions in used trucks is still quite low, adding that he believes manuals still work best in the Alberta market.

There is one application Koziak is seeing demand for automated transmissions on the rise.

"So far, the vast majority of customers looking for automatics are farmers," he said.

Koziak said with costs to repair automated transmissions coming down and performance continuing to get better, the market needs to catch up to the technology and "get smart in the next three to five years."

Wheeler said demand depends greatly on the application – highway being very unlike dump and dump a different animal than logging – with vocational customers not yet embracing automated transmissions due to "the less-than-perfect performance in those applications."

Highway is another story, however.

"I don't think the availability of automated transmissions is hurting the highway used truck market or the local city tractor market," Wheeler said. "I know if I was grinding around town hauling trailers I would much rather have an automated transmission. And once guys try them they tend not to go back to manuals."

As for performance, Wheeler said with today's automated offerings, there is no comparison.

"The modern transmissions just do everything so much better," he said, "but drivers still need to be trained on and embrace the new style of driving for them to perform at their best."

Sarna added that though there was skepticism with automated transmissions at first, there is not much that goes wrong with the more recent models.

But for the used truck buyer, having an automated transmission is not always at the top of their priority list.

"When they're coming to buy, they look at the overall truck," said Sarna. "They're not saying they will pay a certain amount more or 3% more because it's automated. They buy it or they won't." **TN**



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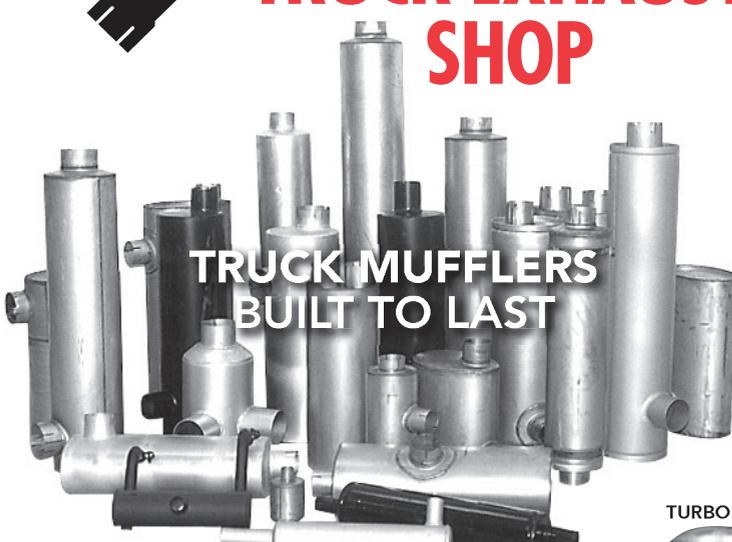
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2003 PETERBILT, 315 HP CUMMINS, 10 SP, 18,500L 3 COMPT HUTCH TANK, PUMP, METER AND LC ELECTRONICS, BOTT LOAD READY, AIR MANIFOLD, CLEAN, 212 MILES. -112237



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2000 STERLING FUEL TRUCK, CATERPILLAR ENG: 3126, 330 HP, 10 SPD TRANS, BLUE IN COLOR, SINGLE AXLE, GVW: 39,000 LBS. WELL EQUIPPED WITH A 13,000L (3,434 USG) ALUMINUM 4-COMPARTMENT FUEL TANK. DUAL PUMP AND METER EQUIPMENT (GAS REEL IN SIDE BOX). 335,965 MILES. -126098



2002 STERLING L8500, CUMMINS ISL L6 8.9L 340HP, 6015615KM, EATON FULLER 10 SPD TRANSMISSION, 18 & 40 AXLES, DUAL PUMPING EQUIPMENT, MIDCOM 8000 IN CAB, 2001 DEPENDABLE 20,000L 4 COMPARTMENT TANK, TC306 SPEC, AIR MANIFOLD, ROUGHED IN FOR BOTTOM LOADING, TRUCK RUNS AND OPERATES VERY WELL. -434984



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MINT CONDITION
 2012 WESTERN STAR 4900 FUEL TRUCK, 475 HP 13 SPD TRANS; 20,000 L, 4-C HD "BUSH" TANKER, AIR MANIFOLD, DUAL PUMP & METER EQUIPMENT, BOTTOM LOAD. MINT CONDITION. 262,000 KMS -1261784



2006 STERLING FUEL TRUCK, CATERPILLAR ENGINE; C10, 10 SPD TRANSMISSION; 20,000 L, DUAL PUMPS & GRAVITY METER. -123448



2012 WESTERN STAR 4700 FUEL TRUCK, CUMMINS ENG: ISL, 330 HP, 10 SPD TRANS; AIR SUSP; SILVER IN COLOR, GVWR: 60,000 LBS. WELL EQUIPPED WITH: A HEAVY-DUTY ROBICA 20,000 L (5,300 USG) ALUMINUM 4-COMPARTMENT TANK, SINGLE PUMP, METER AND REEL (150' X 1 3/8" HOSE), AIR MANIFOLD WITH BOTTOM LOAD, MASTER BOX CONTROLS. MINT CONDITION. 68,400 MILES. -1260694

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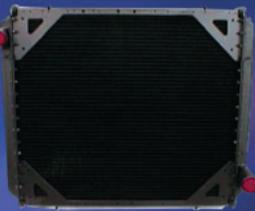
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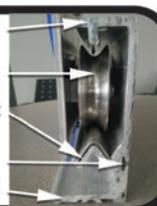
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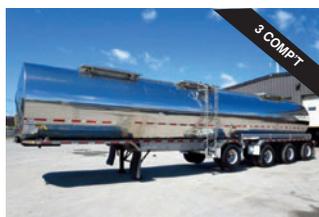
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Announcements

Bradley back in the business with **Titanium**; **Mack Trucks** names new president; and **OOIDA** mourns the loss of its leader.

Titanium Transportation Group has announced **David Bradley** has joined its board, as an independent director. Bradley recently retired as the longtime head of the Canadian Trucking Alliance and Ontario Trucking Association. He assumed his position on the Titanium board Jan. 1.

Bradley was responsible for leading several key industry policy initiatives including the introduction of mandatory speed limiter activation, a universal electronic logging device (ELD) mandate, and mandatory entry-level training (MELT) for truck drivers.

Titanium also announced the resignation of **Ari Levy** as director, effective immediately.

John Oss has been named the new director of yield management for Consolidated Fastfrate.

The new position is national, and he will be responsible for all pricing and assessment of margin requirements for the company.

Oss has spent his entire career in the pricing area of the transportation sector. Originally from Quebec, his early work with Cottrell Transport brought him to Toronto. He had held a previous pricing position with Consolidated Fastfrate in 1995. His career has given him experience in most modes of transportation with LTL being his strong suit, the company announced.



Martin Weissburg will take over the role of president of Mack Trucks, effective June 1.



Weissburg is currently president of Volvo Construction Equipment, and after June 1, he will continue to be a member of the Executive Board for the Volvo Group. He joined the

Volvo Group in 2005 as president of Volvo Financial Services Americas, and in 2010 became global president of Volvo Financial Services. He will be headquartered in Greensboro, N.C.

Weissburg will succeed **Dennis Slagle**, who has led the company since 2008. Effective June 1, Slagle will take on a new role with Volvo Group as a special projects leader, reporting to Martin Lundstedt, president and CEO.

Jim Johnston, president and CEO of the Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association (OOIDA), has passed away after a battle with lung cancer. Johnston led the U.S.-based OOIDA since 1974.

“The trucking industry has lost a visionary and crusader for the rights of all truckers,” said Todd Spencer, who will now serve as acting president of OOIDA. “He leaves behind a legacy of passion and persistence that we will undoubtedly look to as our inspiration going forward as we continue the mission of the association.”

Johnston was influential in building OOIDA into the force it is today, as the largest national organization of professional truckers.

“We are prepared to continue the fight as only Jim would want us all to do,” said Spencer. “He loved every minute he spent as a trucker, but when circumstances required it in the ’70s he stepped down from behind the wheel to give a badly needed voice to truckers, the real truckers that move America. Every driver today is better off because of that decision he made years ago.”

The Young Leaders Group (YLG) of the Private Motor Truck Council of Canada (PMTCC) has added three members to its board.

Kimberly Black, a consultant, **Byron Eveley**, sales with Eveley International, and **Meredith Vincent**, regional sales manager of Truck-Lite, have joined the board. **TN**

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Mark Dalton: Owner-Operator

By Edo van Belkom

THE STORY SO FAR

Mark is traveling to Winnipeg on Hwy. 17. He checks the forecast and it looks bad, so he chains up long before the snow. After driving a while Mark is wondering if the snow will ever come, but it does eventually hit, and when it does, it's a monster...

After driving a few kilometers through the storm, things calmed down slightly and Mark was able to see the road ahead better. The snow continued to fall, but it was falling down now as opposed to blowing every which way imaginable. There was also a fair accumulation of snow on the highway, at least four or five centimeters with more adding up by the hour. As he drove, Mark could feel the chains he'd installed just outside Thunder Bay biting into the ice and asphalt beneath the snow. It was a good feeling, made even better by knowing he'd done the right thing putting them on when there was no obvious sign of the impending storm.

Mark had looked up the history of snow chains the last time he bought a pair for Mother Load and learned that they'd been invented by an American named Harry D. Weed of Canastota, New York. Apparently, Weed got the idea for his "Grip Tread for Pneumatic Tires" after watching drivers of the day wrap vines or rope around their tires to increase traction in mud and snow.

But for all the good they did, snow chains weren't a wonder cure for icy road conditions. Mark had seen plenty of highways so covered with ice that no amount of chains would ever get a truck through. And then there was the human element. Plenty of drivers installed chains for use on an icy road, but then failed to modify their driving accordingly. Driving too fast – over 50 km/h – put too much stress on the chains and caused damage to both the tires and the road. And then there's laziness, when a driver is through the ice and snow but continues driving on dry roads for way too long, wearing away the life of the chains and risk-

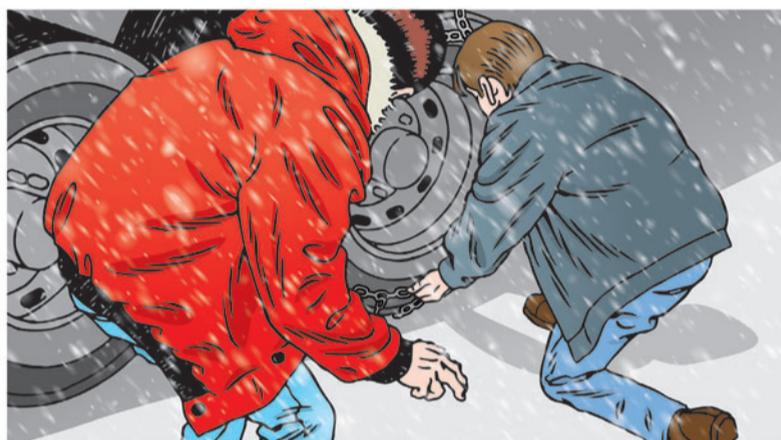


Illustration by Glenn McEvoy

The Chain's in Command – Part 2

ing damage to everything the chains come into contact with.

And then there's good old-fashioned human error. Mark was ashamed to admit it, but he'd seen drivers apply chains to non-drive wheels. Or, applying chains in a blizzard or in bitter cold often resulted in chains being installed improperly – usually too loose – which heightened the risk of a chain breaking at the least opportune time. Mark had seen trucks parked in truck stops during snowstorms with chains wrapped around their drivetrains or gashes slashed into trailers by broken chains that had been whipping around freely for kilometers.

But in every instance, it's not the fault of the chains, but rather the fault of the operator who never bothered to practice installing chains.

Like this driver up ahead.

In the distance, Mark could see a semi-trailer pulled partway onto the shoulder with a string of cars lined up behind it trying to skid or slide

around him and continue down the highway. The big rig wasn't going anywhere anytime soon without a set of tire chains to bite into the ice. Even from a distance Mark could see the semi's drive wheels spinning and bucking against the ice.

"Ah," he said aloud. "What are you doing?"

Mark didn't want to stop, especially since he was making such good time, but he was too much of an old-school driver not to see if the driver needed help.

And so, Mark slowed down and rolled down his passenger window.

"Weren't you stopped by the cop back there?" Mark said, throwing a thumb over his shoulder. "He was checking everybody for chains."

The driver smiled and sheepishly turned away from Mark. After a moment, he looked back in Mark's direction and said, "I have them, but I don't know how to put them on."

"Of course you don't," Mark said under his breath. Then after a long

sigh, he said out loud, "You want some help?"

The face on the driver truck lit up. "Would you, sir?"

Mark shook his head slightly wondering why he was doing this when he'd taken so much care to install his own chains in dry comfortable conditions. But, he couldn't back out of his offer now. "Get them out," he said. "I'm going to pull over up ahead."

Mark pulled in front of the stuck truck and put his hazard lights on. Then he took his time getting dressed to ensure he'd be as least affected by the weather as possible. But when Mark approached the stalled driver, he was amazed that the man had just a light jacket, a ball cap on his head, sneakers on his feet and knitted gloves on his hands. "Nice to see you're ready for this," he said, the sarcasm lost on his cold, wet colleague.

He picked up one set of chains and set them over a pair of drive tires. Then he did the same on the passenger side. "Get inside!" he told the driver. "Let the clutch out slowly. I'll tell you when to stop."

Here was one of the problems with installing chains in bad weather. If the tires spun it was possible the chains could be sent flying down the road. But luck was on their side as the driver turned the wheel less than a full rotation and the chains were in the perfect position to complete the installation.

"Watch me," Mark said, "So you can do it yourself next time."

Mark then went about attaching the chains. To his credit, the driver helped quite a bit, getting the idea quickly and hurrying around to the other side of the truck to affix the passenger side chains. Minutes later, the driver was in the truck and his chained-up tires were miraculously biting into the roadway.

"Thank you, sir," the driver said. "Thank you."

"Don't thank me," Mark replied, looking at the long row of headlights behind them. "Just get the hell out of the way!" **TN**

Mark Dalton returns next month in Part 3 of The Chain's in Command.

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Not painting truckers with the same brush

Dear Editor:

Re: "Painted with the Same Brush," December *Truck News*

The Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) has never painted all commercial motor vehicle (CMV) operators with the same brush. In fact, we make a concerted effort to publicly acknowledge that the majority of CMV drivers are safe drivers, and are one of our most valued road safety partners.

While it is true that Ontario has among the safest highways in North America, we can always do better.

Working with our partners, the goal of the OPP CMV Collision Mitigation Strategy is to reduce the number of CMV-involved collisions on OPP-patrolled roads and, ultimately, to save lives. Informing this strategy is OPP data that speaks to trends in CMV collision and fatality causal factors. The data helps us understand why, when and where CMV collisions occur.

By early December, the OPP had responded to more than 6,200 transport truck-related collisions, with 84 people dying in 69 of those crashes. The OPP is concerned by these statistics.

Safe driving is a responsibility that belongs to all road users. I reiterate and have said many times publicly, the majority of CMV operators exemplify the profes-

sional behaviors and practices we all strive to maintain. But I firmly believe that professional drivers – like those who operate the majority of commercial motor vehicles – must be held to a higher standard.

J.V.N. (Vince) Hawkes
OPP Commissioner

ELDs may help end deflation

Dear Editor:

I have been in the business for almost three decades and unfortunately for trucking, unlike ocean and air modes, it has suffered from deflation. We all know the negative impact of deflation. Clients have been spoiled by low prices for many years due to oversupply, both in brokering and equipment. Truckers moving full truckloads for under \$1.50 per mile – ridiculous with fuel and other related costs on a dramatic rise.

My take with the electronic logging device (ELD) is that drivers, especially the ones who have not followed the proper guidelines, will now lose income and demand a higher per mile rate leading to an increase in prices for everyone. Owners have to tread water to keep drivers happy with the high demand in that vocation.

The carriers that are already part of the ELD system have solid clients with guaranteed returns creating a scenario where they already know the

revenue from each trip. These companies will have to up driver salaries so as not to lose their drivers, and due to accepted rates during RFQs, may have to be locked in for 12 months hence reducing their bottom line.

Lucky Singh
North Bay, Ont.

Simple solutions to add truck parking

Dear Editor:

For years, our industry has been looking for solutions and subvention, to address the shortage of truck parking.

There are millions of square feet partially available – that could be rented with conditions, naturally – and assumed by the Ministry of Transportation; a great opportunity for quick action and savings.

A 15-acre piece of land good for 200 trucks every night, with few exceptions, let's say 225 days a year is good for 10,000 trucks a year.

Such a facility is worth an average of \$10 million. The cost of the mortgage at 5%, is \$500,000 per year of revenue for the retailers, absorbed by the MTO. Nice pocket money, nice opportunity.

Twenty-five locations along the 401 at 200 trucks a location, is bed for 5,000 trucks a night between 8 p.m. and 8 a.m.

It would be fun to start talking better utilization and better effi-

ciency for everybody. People must think outside the box. This applies to your friend shippers and receivers who are refusing trucks in their yards before appointment time. They want on-time services and refuse trucks in their yard, but charge penalties if late.

Claude Robert
Boucherville, Que.

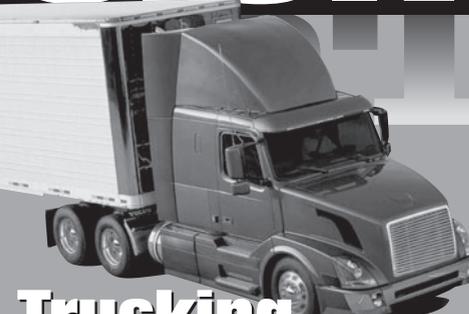
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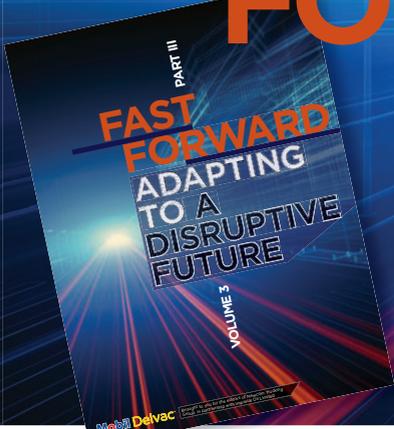
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PART III VOLUME 3

ADAPTING TO A DISRUPTIVE FUTURE

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The Adventures of NEWLAND TRANSPORT

By Edo Van Belkom

Vic had never seen snow until he came to Canada. At first he loved it because it was new and different, and was fun for he and his family to play in. But once he had to drive in it he realized snow on a hill was fun, but snow on the road was not only NO fun, but dangerous too.



Winter is in full force and it has been snowing for what seems like days. Vic is driving every day through the storm and this morning, after it had snowed through the night, the snow had piled up everywhere.



Which is why Vic didn't understand why some Canadians had an easy-going attitude about winter driving, especially in heavy snow. Some were cautious, but others, were in a hurry, taking chances with their own lives and the lives of others.

One of his worst pet peeves were people who didn't completely clean their cars of snow after a storm. Vic himself often cleared off the lights of cars covered in snow, not so much for the careless driver inside the car, but for the innocent drivers around them who couldn't tell if they were stopping, turning or moving.

But some people were even more careless... and dangerous.

As he parked in the lot outside a Tim Hortons, Vic sees a car in the lot with its back window completely covered in snow. Not only that but its lights were covered – front and rear – as were the side mirrors. Even the front windshield was covered save for a tiny spot on the driver's side that the driver had cleared so he could get to the coffee shop.



Vic wants to clear the car, but it was just too much. Besides that, he wanted to teach the driver a lesson and force whoever it was to clear away the snow before they got back out onto the road.



Maybe now the driver would take the time to be safe.

Illustration by Glenn McEvoy

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Quebec fleets form heavy-haul powerhouse

MONTREAL, QUEBEC

QSL, Groupe Robert, and Express Mondor announced Jan.10 that they are joining forces to create one of the largest heavy-hauling and oversize transportation providers in Eastern Canada.

QSL will be the majority shareholder of the new entity, Mondor-Watson, while Mondor's team will run daily operations. Groupe Robert will remain a shareholder in the new consortium where it will play a role in transportation and logistics.

"At QSL, our vision is clear: to become the North American industry benchmark by supporting the success of our clients, actively par-

ticipating in the growth of the Canadian and American import and export markets, and making a difference in our communities. Today's announcement is in line with our determination to surpass expectations and go the extra mile for our clients by joining forces with the very best. We are tremendously motivated by this exciting partnership and the new opportunities it offers," said QSL president and CEO, Robert Bellisle.

A final agreement should be inked by Apr. 1, the companies said. During this period, the companies will continue to operate independently. **TN**

CFI gives to charity



Pictured at the presentation holding the ceremonial check are Paul Stefaniuk, regional sales manager for CFI, and Lynn Conforti, director of philanthropy, Southlake Regional Health Centre Foundation.

NEWMARKET, ONTARIO

Twenty-three charities in eight cities across the U.S., Mexico, and Canada received donations from some 3,500 employees of CFI from its annual Truckloads of Treasures holiday giving campaign in December.

Truckload of Treasures was established in 1993. Now in its 24th consecutive year, the 2017 campaign raised a goal-breaking \$54,000 – with funds 100% contributed by employees and independent contractors.

"Every year I look forward to Truckloads of Treasures as one of my favorite annual events," said Tim Staroba, president, CFI. "It's

part of our culture to recognize the needs of our communities and support efforts to give back and help those less fortunate. I could not be prouder of our employees who once again have outdone themselves with their generosity. We are proud to support such meaningful charities in Joplin and those communities where members of the CFI family live and work."

One of the Canadian charities supported through the effort was the Southlake Regional Medical Centre Foundation in Newmarket, Ont. Since its inception, Truckloads of Treasures has raised nearly \$750,000 for local charities. **TN**

Seaway Express expands

CORNWALL, ONTARIO

Seaway Express has acquired a more than 156,000 sq.-ft. warehouse in Cornwall Business Park, complete with 25 truck-level doors and 30-ft. ceilings.

The purchase expands Seaway's footprint in the area, which now manages more than 300,000 sq.-ft. of warehouse space in Cornwall.

"This acquisition positions Seaway Express as a leader in short- and long-term warehousing in Eastern Ontario," said Melanie Hamel, general manager of Seaway Express. "With our well-established trucking business, we can offer our clients a one-stop solution."

In addition to the extra space, Seaway also expanded its transportation business with a rolling stock investment of more than \$1 million in new tractor-trailers.

"Cornwall continues to grow and is acknowledged as one of the key supply chain hubs in Canada," said



Melanie Hamel, Steven Lindsay, and Bob Gauthier

Hamel. "Our location on Hwy. 401 and proximity to major distribution centers makes Seaway a preferred carrier in the region."

Coming on board with more than 24 years of experience in the transportation sector, Steven Lindsay joined Seaway to pursue new business opportunities. **TN**

Manitoulin buys Direct Right Cartage

BRAMPTON, ONTARIO

Manitoulin Transport announced Jan. 10 that it has acquired Direct Right Cartage.

This is the seventh purchase for Manitoulin in the past 12 months.

According to Manitoulin, the acquisition builds on its existing intermodal offerings and signifies Manitoulin's intent to further expand its capabilities in this service.

"Customer demand is a key influencer in Manitoulin's business decisions and this latest transaction further demonstrates that we listen," said Jeff King, president, Manitoulin Transport. "This purchase enables Manitoulin to provide a higher level of service and frequency of intermodal service within Canada. We will continue to look for opportunities such as this to build out our services and coverage to ensure our offerings meet our customers' evolving needs."

Direct Right Cartage was founded by Paul Enright and John Farrugia in 1982, initially to serve the time-sensitive transportation needs of Canada's entertainment industry. Direct Right has expanded its expertise and geographic scope to cover all industries, including automotive, plastic, retail, packaged foods, and other general commodities. It is headquartered in Brampton, Ont. and has locations in Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, Winnipeg, and Montreal. Its founders will continue in their respective leadership roles.

"John and I are both delighted to join the Manitoulin Group of Companies," said co-founder of Direct Right Cartage. "Manitoulin is one of the more prominent companies in the transportation industry and we have long admired its history and brand. We are excited to introduce our customers to the Manitoulin Group, given the holistic and global supply chain services it can offer." **TN**

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Brian Kurtz Trucking looks ahead

Kurtz excited about the future of the trucking industry

BRESLAU, ONTARIO

Learning to change with the times is not easy for trucking companies that have been around a while. But without embracing the change that comes with the advancing trucking industry, success is hard to achieve.

Brian Kurtz Trucking was founded in 1980. Kurtz caught the trucking bug when he was just 16 years old working at his uncle's farm.

"That's where I first got to drive truck," Kurtz said. "And I loved it. I thought it was so educational between the people you meet and the places you see – I really enjoyed it."

From there, he bought his own truck at 22, and worked as a broker for Day & Ross. At 31, he started his own company Brian Kurtz Farms, where he was hauling steady freight for different customers, and a year later he changed the name to Brian Kurtz Trucking.

Today, the business is based in Breslau, Ont., a small community outside of Waterloo, Ont. The company has 48 highway tractors, 22 regional trucks, and 136 trailers, 60 of which are dry box – the rest are refrigerated units.

"We are very big into LTL," Kurtz said. "That's why are our warehouse is so important to us. It's 30,000 sq.-ft. with 22 doors on it. We haul all over North America, and we very seldom go to the Maritimes."

Brian Kurtz Trucking specializes in hauling hazardous materials or "placarded freight" as the president himself says.

"But then we also haul produce," he said. "On any truck we could have 20 skids of paint and four skids of clothing. We haul anything you can think of."

Today, as much as Brian Kurtz is known for his shiny blue trucks, it is also known to be one of the most decorated trucking companies in Canada. It has won the Truckload Carriers Association's National Fleet Safety Award multiple times, as well as being named one of Trucking HR Canada's Top Fleet Employers for two consecutive years.



"Our drivers like working here. And I think it's because we are one of the only trucking companies left that are family-oriented."

– Brian Kurtz, Brian Kurtz Trucking

And while for some, being in the industry for so long can make you pine for the good ol' days, Kurtz is actually looking forward and positions himself as a forward thinker. It's this thinking that has made the company such a success.

For example, he is a big proponent of getting more women into the industry and says it could solve the severe driver shortage in trucking.

"I think hiring women is one of the best ways we can help the driver shortage," he said. "We have seven female drivers working here for us, and three husband-wife teams. They're happy to be out there, making the same money as the guys, with no macho ego attached."

Kurtz also has a rather modern managerial approach. Instead of being the feared boss that many

baby boomers grew up knowing and being, Kurtz says he tries his best to be understanding and level-headed.

"We are the best company out there at keeping our employees, and keeping them happy," he said. "Where other people are quick to fire employees, I make sure not to do that. If somebody comes in that's made a mistake on the road that is costly, I make sure to go over it with them. Because we want them to understand and learn from it. We will give them a week off if need be."

It also helps that Kurtz knows trucking inside out, he says, and that his four sons, who also work at the business, know trucking as well.

"Today our driver turnover is only 12%," he said. "It used to be zero, but now my older drivers are starting to retire so that's where the 12% is com-

ing from. But our drivers like working here. And I think it's because we are one of the only trucking companies left that are family-oriented. When people come here to work for us, they say they are blown away because right off the bat, they are treated like family, and no other company is doing that."

The good equipment and pay is helping too, Kurtz said.

"We're also among the top in rate of pay in North America for our drivers and mechanics," he said.

Since hauling freight across the border, Brian Kurtz Trucking has had to roll out electronic logs throughout its fleet to stay in compliance.

"We had eight drivers who were like me, very old school, and didn't want to use them," he said. "But since they've been on them, they tell me it's not as bad as they thought. After a few months we audited seven of our drivers to see the results, and of those seven, no one was out of money. In fact, one driver even got paid \$7,000 more. And all my drivers say when they go home, they're not sleeping, they're actually spending time with their family."

Ultimately, Kurtz says this is just the start of trucking getting even better.

"I think in five to 10 years, once everyone is on the same playing field in Canada and the U.S. with e-logs, rates are going to go through the roof, and there's going to be so much change for the better," he said. "I'm hoping that's how it goes. It's going to be really tough for people who didn't embrace change and jump on ELDs in the future." **TN**



Sonia Straface is the associate editor of *Truck News*. She has been covering the Canadian trucking industry since 2014.



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