

SURVIVAL STRATEGIES: A-hunting you shall go, PG. 30



Trucker Ludwig:
"Shippers always look
to transportation costs."

June 2009

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Today's Trucking

The Business Magazine of Canada's Trucking Industry

RIDE & STYLE

We put a snazzy
LONESTAR through
its paces, PG. 40

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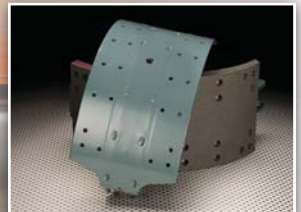
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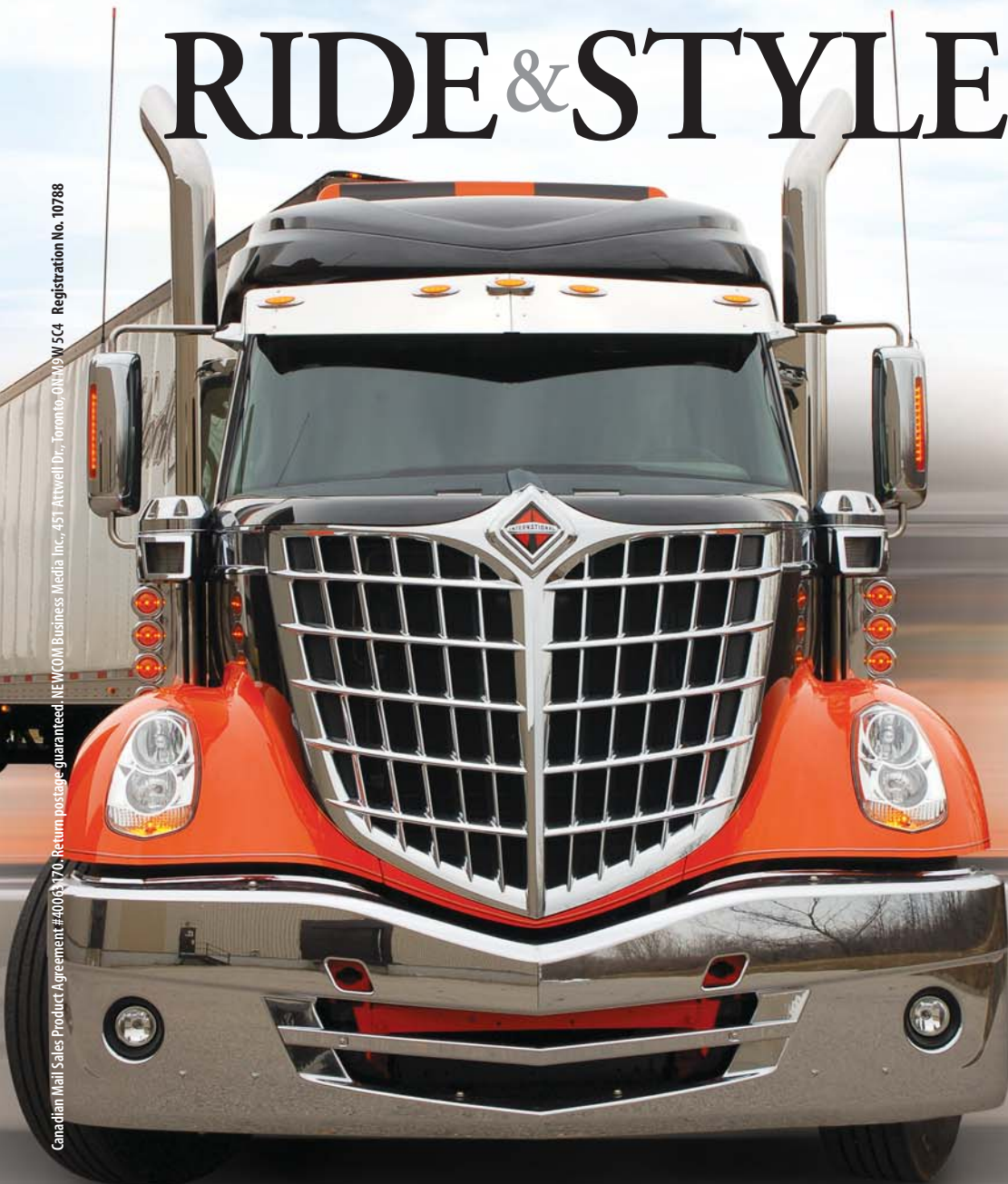
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A good place to start? Senior Editor **Marco Beghetto's** blog. It's called "Right Turn."

Here's a taste of a recent Marco special, followed by a few readers' reactions. And there's still space for you to wade in. Just go to www.todaystrucking.com and click on Beghetto's mug or bookmark www.todaystrucking.com/blog.

"Bordering on clueless"

Remember when we Canadians went all loopy when the unilateralist cowboy 'snubbed' us by making Mexico, not Canada, his first official state visit or when his speech writers forgot to make mention of Canada's efforts and assistance on Sept. 11?

Well, in the same vein I hope we (as well as our media) can get roused up enough to send Mr. Obama a message that his handpicked DHS secretary Janet Napolitano, is, well, out of her tree when it comes to international border issues, particularly anything involving Canada.

After mentioning weeks ago that Canadian trade deserves no more flexibility at the border than corrupt, drug-cartel-ravaged Mexico, she follows up by implying that we (Canada) let in some of the 19 terrorists who went on to the U.S. to launch the Sept. 11 attacks. She later apologized for the suggestion (by saying she misunderstood a CBC reporter's question on the matter).

[Incidentally, the word 'terrorism' is out at DHS, as Napolitano prefers "man-caused disaster." Seriously.]

Regardless of which terrorists she was referring to, she did say pointedly: "The fact of the matter is that Canada allows people into its country that we do not allow into ours."

Really? I'll admit that Canada has always been lax about who gets into this country. But last I checked it wasn't us who gave most of the Saudi highjackers student visas; and in Mohamed Atta's case, issued approval notices of his visa six months after he died flying a plane into the World Trade Center.

Folks, is this really the best the all-embracing Obama could do for us after eight years of dealing with the Bush admin's color-coded border anxiety?

As Canadian MP John McKay said today:

"If you are, in fact, negotiating a managed border, and your negotiating partner believes a set of mythology, then you have problems."

It's going to be another long eight years for you shippers and cross-border truckers. You can be sure of that.

UPDATE (April 26th):

What the heck do they put in the imported water in Arizona? Just days after Democrat and DHS secretary Napolitano made a fool of herself by saying that some of the 9-11 terrorists (err, sorry, to Napolitano, they would be man-made disaster makers) got into the U.S. through Canada, fellow Arizona representative and recent Republican presidential nominee, John McCain does the same. This weekend, he came out defending her and repeated the claims.

It would be easy to say that there's an anti northern border agenda from southern border politicians at work, but from what we saw of his election campaign, pure incompetence is just as likely to be true in McCain's case.

It's a strange feeling lamenting Obama's victory while being utterly relieved that McCain didn't win. Sigh.

And two reader responses?

You just have to love the people who get into these jobs where they have to dictate what is going to happen and in most cases could not point out their own state on a map let alone put a finger on the places they are screwing over with small thinking. Just once I would like the people getting these jobs to go on camera and take a short quiz on the facts of their related job for next few years. If they are going into transportation then have them walk around a truck and trailer pointing out the various things when asked to do so. If they have any idea of the operation of the things involved in the set job then just maybe they would have a better understanding of the facts when it comes to setting up rules to govern the industry or country. But kissabutts always win in that job dept, so you can be sure of one thing, the wrong person will be in control.

— JIMW

Like you said, there's no doubt this is about southern politicians protecting the companies in their state who do more business with Mexico. Ironically, the way they defend Mexico at the expense of our country, is really like putting lipstick on a pig.

— TDOG



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By Rolf Lockwood



Talk About Chutzpah

Mostly invisible but larger than life, Ambassador Bridge owner Matty Moroun might as well own Detroit too.

Windsor, Ontario and Detroit, Michigan are not exactly like peas in a pod, but they both have a huge stake in a crucial border crossing, one that engenders more bizarre shenanigans than a rock band zonked out on acid in 1969. The most important single link between Canada and the U.S. is presently mired in a wildly confusing conflict that pits the owner of the Ambassador Bridge against just about everybody else except a few right-wing Detroit and Michigan politicians. The Ambassador joins the two cities and, indeed, the two countries.

The last part of that sentence should be reason enough to force politicians and other key players into clear thinking and decisive action, but that seems to be way too much—WAY too much—to ask. Whether we're talking about the bridge in particular or the border crossing in general, all I see is partisan politics and self interest and deep, sticky mud that prevents anything from getting done.

For all intents and purposes the Ambassador Bridge has been the only way for commercial vehicles to cross the Detroit River since 1929. There's also a tunnel for car traffic, and a small ferry operation that hauls hazmat trucks across the river, but the bridge is king.

Yet now it's under siege, and its owner—reclusive Michigan zillionaire Manuel 'Matty' Moroun—is fighting very hard to maintain his near monopoly on cross-border truck traffic.

For the uninitiated, a second bridge has been proposed and its location approved by a bi-national body of state, provincial and federal authorities. Together, they launched the Detroit River International Crossing (DRIC) study project a few years ago, looking to create a second span between Windsor and Detroit, and a publicly owned span at that.

To be honest, I'm not entirely sure where the project sits right now. In theory it's a go, but not everyone wants it and I believe that not all approvals are in. Nor is the money in place, especially not in cash-strapped Michigan where there's no agreement on the need.

Incredibly, Windsor and Detroit were not consulted in the process of deciding on the new bridge, and the location of its proposed footings on both sides of the river has enraged many locals.

Naturally, Matty Moroun doesn't like it because the DRIC bridge would inevitably reduce traffic using the Ambassador. He's claimed all along that there isn't enough traffic to support two bridges, and given the recession and the decimation of the automotive industry in both Ontario and Michigan, he's got a point. Bridge truck traffic is down some 18 percent year over year, but DRIC supporters say it will come back.

Throwing another log on the fire, and this is where the story

gets really interesting. Moroun and company decided a few years back that a replacement for the ageing Ambassador was also required. Plans were drawn up, property in both Windsor and Detroit having already been acquired next to the existing bridge, and construction was started. Without public money.

But wait, what about the countless approvals required for such a huge project?

Yeah, well, details, details. Astonishingly, the bridge folks don't have all the approvals required—none at all from the Canadian side, a few from American authorities—but they've been building the entrance ways in both Windsor and Detroit for two years already! You or me, we'd be thrown behind bars for erecting a garden shed in our backyards without a permit. But Matty prefers to ask for forgiveness rather than permission.

You or me, we'd be thrown behind bars for erecting a garden shed without a permit.

And it almost always works. It gets better. The bridge company has even taken over Riverside Park in Detroit as part of its construction plan, clearing out basketball courts

and such in the process, and erecting a fence to keep the public out. Out of their own park still owned by the city! Not only that, but the fence now holds fake Homeland Security signs saying 'Keep Out'. A gun-toting guard, claiming to have Homeland Security authority, actually kicked a reporter out of the park last year.

Moroun doesn't own this park, asked nobody for permission to seize it, and the city is now suing to get it back. Suing? Are they nuts? Ownership can't possibly be in doubt, but here you see a measure of Moroun's power, and I wouldn't be at all surprised if he cows weak-kneed Detroit politicians and wins the day.

He's now suing DRIC, not incidentally. More particularly, along with some Detroit community groups opposed to the DRIC bridge, he's launched a suit against the Federal Highway Administration for relying on inaccurate traffic data, failure to fully examine alternative locations, and neglecting the new bridge's impact on the Delray neighborhood of southwest Detroit.

And I have to ask, as at least one reporter has done, is a U.S. district court the place to decide the future of North America's busiest border crossing?

I pity that poor judge. ▲

Rolf Lockwood is vice president, editorial, at Newcom Business Media. You can reach him at 416-614-5825 or rolf@todaystrucking.com.

Dispatc

BY MARCO BEGHETTO

An Ill Wind

So you think you dodged the swine-flu bullet? Think again. It might still hit you in ways you'd least expect.

If you're vacationing in Mexico and happen to catch swine flu, relax, there is a bright side. After the cold sweats and shakes subside, call your travel agency because in a bid to lure tourists back to the country's Caribbean coast, a few firms are offering free trips for up to three years to travelers who come down with H1N1 influenza. As for everybody else? Well, good luck and make sure the Vitamin C is stocked up.

Like the so-called bird flu scare of a few years ago, it's quite true that the potential for North American-wide pandemic chaos has been sensationally overstated by the media.

Still, with over 9,000 swine flu cases confirmed worldwide at press time and about 77 deaths associated (one in Canada), the health and business implications of a potential full-blown pandemic can't be reflexively

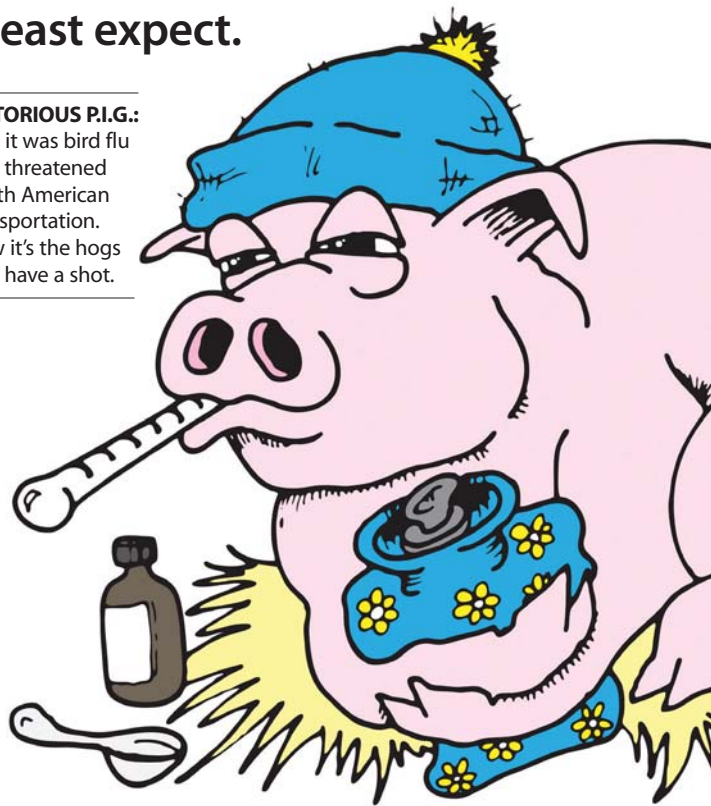
ignored. After all, these disaster scenarios are always duds, only until, of course, they're not.

Even though the current strain affecting most people isn't as virulent as first expected, there's concerns among NAFTA traders and truckers that escalating fears could lead to restrictions on the flow of goods between the Canada-U.S.-Mexico borders.

Despite pleas from officials that our pork is safe, a handful of countries shut down their borders to Canadian pork shipments in May. China, which was Ground Zero for the bird flu virus in 2006, is one country that thinks swine flu is nothing to snort at. Upon news that an Alberta pig farm was placed under quarantine and our lone H1N1-related death occurred there too, China moved to ban pork exports originating from, or even passing through, Alberta. Claude Vielfaure, of

NOTORIOUS P.I.G.:

First it was bird flu that threatened North American transportation. Now it's the hogs that have a shot.



Manitoba's hog producer Hytek, ships pork weekly to Asia from Vancouver. He told local media that he's been forced to consider bypassing Alberta by sending truckloads through the U.S. and back up over the border to B.C.'s coast.

Even without restrictions on certain goods at the Canada-U.S. border, increased health and shipment checks could thicken crossings if more severe cases surface in either country.

ches

"[We] are aware that, depending on how aggressively the swine flu continues to spread, certain government actions might be taken which could impact trucking operations, especially cross-border operations with Mexico and Canada, and potentially at a domestic level," the American Trucking Associations (ATA) stated.



It's been speculated that the issue is also delaying a resolution between the U.S. and Mexico in the ongoing cross-border trucking program dispute and Mexico's retaliatory tariffs on several American goods.

Closer to home, the Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA) is advising carriers to be diligent. In the worst case scenarios, warns CTA, a significant percentage of Canadians could become ill. In that event, "trucking companies could be looking at a serious shortage of workers, with employees not showing up for work either because they are sick, or they are caring for a family member who is ill, or because they are simply afraid to go out of their own homes during the pandemic."

And in certain cases that worker or driver may be entitled to stay home. According to the Canada Labour Code an employee may refuse to... work in a place or to perform an activity, if the employee while at work has reasonable cause to believe that ... a condition exists in the place that constitutes a danger to the employee." Expect unionized workers, especially, to do just that—meaning there could well be significant disruptions to some of your customers and suppliers too.

Furthermore, many trucking companies and reefer fleets could be summoned to assist in delivering essential goods and medicine. In fact, a recent study by researchers at



HAULING HOME: This ain't you everyday truck cab.

PIMP MY PETE

Marv Mountstephen has quite the imagination. He also has quite a bit of experience building trailers and when he had a chance to combine the two, one customer drove away with a trucker's dream motor home.

Mountstephen operates Outlaw Welding and Mechanical in the rural town of Taber, Alta. The shop's typical work is on truck bodies and trailers working in the oilpatch, although Mountstephen has also built horse and racecar trailers.

"I've had something like this drawn up on the computer for about 10 years and even laid in bed at night thinking about it," says Mountstephen. His idea spread by word of mouth and eventually found a guy in Regina who was eager to turn his tractor-trailer into a rolling luxury condo.

The customer brought in a 2008 Pete 389 long-nose, equipped with a 538-hp Cummins and a 13-speed Roadranger UltraShift transmission. An UltraCab was spec'd on the chassis, but behind the curtain there was just empty space instead of a bunk. That became Mountstephen's workshop.

"The nice thing about building it right on a truck is you don't have to worry about weight," explains Mountstephen. "It's built like a tank and if it doesn't last for 40 years I'd be surprised."

Since the big rig had the ability to carry more weight than a typical motor home, the sinks, granite counter tops, shower, and washer and dryer installed were of residential quality, instead of lighter weight RV models. As well, the customer decided to add a few more custom features.

"There's a hot-water heating system in there, there's tool boxes, a pullout barbeque, a 330-gallon fresh water tank, a diesel generator... short of a pool table and a hot tub I'm not sure what else could go in there," notes Mountstephen, who guesses his crew spent over 2,500 man hours on the unit. "But if we did another one it would probably take about half that time. We'd never done anything like this before and it was a good learning experience."

Including the tractor—which was also fully loaded—Mountstephen guesses the whole get-up cost about 400 Gs.

"No," he says, "it's not for the typical retired husband and wife."



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Dispatches

Johns Hopkins Berman Institute of Bioethics stated that truckers—along with utility workers, nurses, paramedics and police—are “priorities” during a pandemic and these “first responders” should be among the first professionals to get treatment.

New Hamburg, Ont.-based refrigerated carrier Erb Transport has arguably one of the most extensive pandemic contingency plans of any carrier in Canada.

When we called up in May, director of corporate communications Patricia Attwell told us that the company was in the middle of tweaking the plan for the particulars of H1N1.

“We need to make sure that our infrastructure can be as resilient as possible if

we are faced with large-scale employee absences,” says Attwell, explaining that the plan could entail cross-training of staff, calling back retirees and seasonal workers, or updating databases of customer contacts. “We can and must be pre-planned in advance.”

Stage one of Erb’s plan, which is in effect now, calls for mandatory hygiene procedures through its terminal network. For proprietary reasons she couldn’t share specifics of the next two stages, but did say they involve measures dealing with re-organization plans, alternate reporting areas, employee welfare on the road, and, if needed, quarantine policies and security. She says if there is a surge in government-driven food and

pharmaceutical delivery services, the company will have to balance those requirements with current customer demands. “The challenge will not be in vehicle and trailer capacity but in employee capacity,” she says. “I believe it is safe to assume that we would see a decline in transportation needs from many regular customers because of less productivity in manufacturing, less people venturing to grocery stores, etcetera.”

As for the notion that swine flu is just a bunch of media-driven hogwash and pandemic planning is a painstaking distraction in these tough economic times, Attwell says any “reputable transportation company [doesn’t] have the option to disregard contingency plan-

ning” no matter how overblown the threat might be in reality.

“Customers have a valid expectation that we are doing all we can to safeguard our business, in order to honor our service commitments,” she says.

And those that don’t probably shouldn’t squeal about it if they get hoofed where it hurts.

Labor

Anti-Scab Bill Nixed Again

Don’t tell Dan Marino, but number 13 isn’t a charm—at least not for unions and their political supporters. More than a dozen times since 2000—and for the third time in just the last couple of years—legislation



LOG BOOK

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June 12-13

Atlantic Truck Show, Moncton Coliseum Complex, Moncton, N.B. Back for 2009, the Atlantic Truck Show descends on the “Hub of the Maritimes” to showcase new trucks, on-board systems, engines, power train components and other technological advances. Contact: Master Promotions: 888/454-7469 or go to www.masterpromotions.ca/atlantic-truck-show.asp.

June 17-18

First Annual McMaster Institute for Transportation & Logistics: Translog 2009, McMaster University, Hamilton, Ont. A must event for those who seek the latest information on the best ways to move goods, transportation ideas for future business planning and opportunities to learn best practices from peers in the industry and academia. Contact: 905/525-9140 ext. 22542 or email scottdm@mcmaster.ca.

June 18-19

Private Motor Truck Council of Canada 2009 conference, Queen’s Landing, Niagara-on-the-Lake. Topics on the schedule this year include, Hybrid Technology Explained, Empowering For Productivity, Strategies For Recessionary Times, and the usual legal updates. Contact: 905/827-0587 or click on www.pmtc.ca.

June 25-27

The Great West Truck Show, Las Vegas Convention Center,

Las Vegas. The show features all the latest industry equipment and products as well as updates on trucking regs and safety seminars. Presented by Independent Trade Show Management. Contact: 800-227-5992 or go to www.truckshow.com.

June 27 - July 1

Canadian Association of Equipment Distributors Annual Convention, Kananaskis Hotel, Kananaskis, Alta. Presented by the Canadian Association of Equipment Distributors, which represents over 1,500 providers of equipment in construction, forestry, mining, marine, and oil industries in Canada. Contact: 613/822-8861 or click on www.caed.org.

July 10-11

2009 Ontario Truck Driving Championships, Sarnia, Ont. Professional truck drivers demonstrate their excellent skills in a rigorous driving competition. Organized by the Transportation Health & Safety Association of Ontario at the Ontario Trucking Association. Contact: 416/242-4771 or go to www.thsao.on.ca.

July 23-26

Fergus Truck Show, Fergus and District Community Centre, Fergus, Ont. The show is back and in full force and promises to be better than ever. Named one of the top 50 events in Ontario, the event offers a show ‘n shine, truck pull, and star studded live music. Contact: Call 519/843-3412 or go www.fergustruckshow.com.

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to ban federally regulated companies from hiring replacement workers during labor strikes has been defeated.

The vote for the Bloc-led motion, Bill M-294, was quietly moved up from June to the eve of the Liberal Party convention, when many Liberal MPs were not expected to be in the House of Commons.

Luckily for employers, including federally regulated trucking companies, enough business-minded Liberals (14, in fact) showed up to join the minority Conservative government in striking down the Bloc and NDP-supported bill.

This is reportedly the 13th time in the last nine years union-friendly NDP, Bloc and even Liberal MPs have tried to slip so-called

anti-scab legislation through Parliament.

And it probably won't be the last time, which is why business groups including the Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA) are reminding companies to stay vigilant.

In 2007, two back-to-back private members' bills (one Bloc, the other Liberal) were defeated by a majority of legislators who agreed that such rules would prolong work stoppages around the country.

Just like M-294, those bills would have prevented the use of any replacement worker except for management, supervisory or labor relations personnel. It would also have prohibited the services of independent

PROOF POSITIVE:

While an inborn love of hockey and double-doubles might be considered distinctively Canadian, wearing the home team's jersey and having a Tim Horton's coffee in the cup holder of your cab is no longer enough proof for U.S. border guards.

On June 1, the final stage of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI) took effect and proof of citizenship is required at all land and sea crossings to gain entry into the U.S.

Commercial drivers can use a few different documents to satisfy the new rule, including a passport or FAST card.

A passport is a great document for traveling, not only to the U.S., but all over the world. It can be had for about \$100, including the cost of a photo.

Thanks to trucking lobby groups, FAST cards—designed to provide expedited travel to pre-approved, low-risk truckers at the border—are also being accepted. As are so-called Enhanced Driver's Licence/Enhanced Identification Cards (EDL/EIC), which are being launched in only a handful of provinces. These enhanced drivers' licences are secured with biometric and RFID chip technology that will store identity and citizenship information.



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contractors such as owner-operators.

While only 20 percent of the for-hire trucking industry is unionized—mostly in the LTL sector—such measures could cripple operations at a time when many carriers and their customers can't bear further damage to the economy.

Not surprisingly, proponents of the legislation see it differently. They instead argue that companies use replacement workers to weaken union resolve during a labor standoff. "Workers' rights have been chipped away at in Canadian legislation over the past 25 years," said NDP Labour Critic Chris Charlton in a statement. "Now, more than ever, we

need to ensure that the collective bargaining process is protected under the law."

However, FETCO—an organization representing federally regulated employers—points out that hiring replacement workers is rare among Canadian companies. Most of the time they're brought on to keep companies operational during collective bargaining negotiations.

The association insists that union workers are already protected under the Canada Labour Code, which ensures their jobs upon returning back to work. But longer strikes that limit businesses' ability to continue operations will eventually threaten workers' job security.

Hours of Service

West Holds Firm on Regional HOS

The west still wants out of national out of service rules—at least for now.

Last year Alberta Transport Minister Luke Ouellette pledged that implementation of federal hours-of-service rules were on the horizon, but it seems the sun has set on his optimism. And the province isn't alone.

Speaking at the Alberta Motor Transport Association's annual conference in April, Ouellette left no confusion of whether his department is ready to sign off on Ottawa's HOS regulations, which went into effect in most other

provinces in January 2007.

"I want to state very clearly that I have no immediate plans to mandate federal hours of service regulations," he said. "Given the state of the economy, I don't think it's the time to put restrictions on small companies."

Part of Ouellette's concern is that the federal rules use a lower weight threshold, and include some one-tonne trucks.

Ouellette adds that B.C. Transport Minister Kevin Falcon told him that B.C. would make changes to the rule if Falcon could do it over again.

"Alberta's not the lone wolf on this," Ouellette adds.

Saskatchewan sees it the same way and officials there are not ready to go ahead

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NOT SO FAST

We're constantly told that Quebec is a "distinct society." But really, is there any region that does it its own way better than the Princess Province?

Not only did he dismiss the possibility that Alberta would follow suit with federal HOS rules anytime soon, but when speaking to carrier members of the Alberta Motor Transport Association recently, transport minister Luke Ouellette reiterated, unequivocally, that he has no intention of adopting mandatory speed limiter rules as Ontario and Quebec have done.

"Forcing trucks to stay below 105 km/h on provincial highways could potentially cause more collisions on roads, while other vehicles travel at higher speeds," said Ouellette. "As long as we have highways with speeds at 110 km/h, I don't think it would be safe to force trucks to travel below that."

Taking a page from the owner-op groups that actively oppose such rules in central Canada, Ouellette noted that speeding trucks could be combated with more vigilant roadside enforcement. He said only a North America-wide initiative would likely get his ministry on board. It's a similar stance he's taking with the issue of mandatory use of electronic on-board recorders (EOBRs). The department might consider using them as a measure for poor performing carriers, but a industry-wide, blanket rule is not supported.

So there's no continental consensus on mandatory speed limiters just yet, but it appears



GOVERNING THEMSELVES: Alberta still has no interest in speed limiter rules adopted in Ontario and Quebec.

one more Canadian jurisdiction is at least considering the idea. New Brunswick Public Safety Registrar Charles O'Donnell is reportedly working on a recommendation for speed limiters in that province.

Although no decision has been made, O'Donnell told the Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association—which is the U.S. driver group fighting such proposals in Canada and the U.S.—that he expects the Legislative Assembly to consider a bill "within the near future."

O'Donnell, who is also vice president of the national Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators (CCMTA), was traveling when we called, but Peter Nelson of the Atlantic Provinces

Trucking Association confirms that the process is underway.

Mandatory speed limiters have no doubt been controversial where they've been introduced, but Nelson doesn't expect the same level of anxiety to affect his province.

"Looking at most of our carriers, their trade takes place mostly with Ontario and Quebec where there's already speed limiter rules and certainly with last year's fuel prices, most people who didn't have speed

limiters in place pretty much have them by now," Nelson tells us. "Also, many of our major fleets have had them for a number of years and some even well below 105 km/h."

And despite recent comments from a Nova Scotia transport department spokesman that there are no plans to implement speed limiters in that province, Nelson expects that'll change if its neighbor follows through.

"My guess is down the road, you'll see Nova Scotia put them in place as well."

with the federal rules as they're written either. Wayne Elhard, Saskatchewan Minister of Highways and Infrastructure, doesn't think that a half-tonne or one-tonne that provides mechanical service, "with a welding kit or tool box in the back" should "all of a sudden fall under these regulations."

"The existing federal regulations don't provide flexibility for these people to

do their jobs effectively."

According to the minister there are a handful of various industries that routinely work under timeframes outside of what the federal HOS rules allow, such as oil and gas, heavy construction, and agriculture sectors. "The federal regulations don't address the unique and specific needs of Saskatchewan," he tells us. "We need to balance safety with a healthy and opera-

tional trucking industry."

In agriculture, specifically, producers have a very short window to plant crops, often working from sunup to sundown. As the saying goes, you need to make hay when the sun shines.

So, in some cases, argues Elhard, Ottawa's "one-size-fits-all rules" impedes other regions' growth. "So, then, we can't get them fertilizer delivered because of hours of

service?" Elhard asks rhetorically. "We need flexibility in there to override some of the rules. They are tight rules."

Elhard and Ouellette don't expect the feds to solve their problems. Instead the two provinces are working on provincial regulations that "respects the intent of the federal regulations," but have "a common sense approach" in dealing with regional industries.

"If we find a workable solution between Alberta and Saskatchewan we might be able to sell it to the feds," notes the Saskatchewan minister.

Ouellette is also optimistic changes are possible. While previous federal transport ministers didn't want to discuss changes to the weight threshold, Ouellette is holding out hope the current man in charge, John Baird, will be more receptive.

— Steve Macleod

Trailers

Ontario Trailers Get a Longer Look

Place your bets. How long before the Toronto Beaches, letter-to-the-editor-writing cyclist crowd goes all squirrelly over Ontario's plan to pilot long combination vehicles (LCVs) in the province this summer? The truth is that some hyperventilating has already begun. Take this letter posted on the Toronto Star's online message forum from a concerned driver (spelling fixed):

"Save Lives! Cancel the pilot program. The extra money in government coffers is not worth the toll these monsters extract. I also agree, tractor trailers should not be

allowed on the 400 series highways during rush hour.”

There’s many others like that, including this one from a guy who thinks the LCV program is the “dumbest transportation idea... since the federal liberals cut back on the railway system. For the sake of safety, the environment and costs, spend some infrastructure money on improving the railways.”

Eyelids... rolling... back.

Aside from explaining to such folks that LCVs take power units off the road, save fuel (and thereby environmentally friendly) and are more cost effective than rail, the PR wings of the ministry of transport and the Ontario Trucking Association will have their work cut out for them in the coming months.

More on that later. First, though, here’s a few details of the program: The Ontario government has approved for use a select number of Rocky Mount Double-style LCVs (two 53 ft trailers), which, to varying degrees, brings the province in line with Alberta, B.C., Nova Scotia and Quebec. At first, only “active” OTA or Private Motor Truck Council carrier members will be invited to take part in the pilot. A

heard on the Street

■ Service technicians from Volvo Trucks North America dealership **PARÉ CENTRE DU CAMION VOLVO** in Levis, Que. emerged victorious at Volvo VISTA 2009—a hands-on competition to select the top Volvo dealer service and parts personnel and to highlight technician excellence. It was the second such win for **Daniel Blais, Benoit Raby** and **Mario Labrecque** of Paré Centre du Camion. Their first title was in 2003.

■ When a door closes in Canada, another opens for **ARVINMERITOR**. After announcing the closure of two Ontario plants in recent months, ArvinMeritor cut the ribbon on a new 100,000-sq-ft facility in Mississauga, Ont., for its aftermarket Mascot Truck Parts business. The operation—which remanufactures transmissions, drive axle carriers, drivelines,

and steering gears—previously consisted of three smaller, separate facilities in the area.

■ **Co-Van International Trucks** is changing its name to **HARBOUR INTERNATIONAL TRUCKS** and will unite three companies, **Co-Van, Cascadia**, and **Westlang** into one cohesive group. General Manager **Rob Owen** says the combined locations in Coquitlam, Nanaimo and Langley, combined with its strong group of associate dealers, gives the company “extensive customer support facilities throughout southwestern B.C.” The company is also relocating and expanding its Surrey facility in September to 19880-96th Avenue, Langley, B.C.

■ **HARPER POWER PRODUCTS** has named **Brian Husk** territory manager for Northern Ontario. In this role, Husk will assume full commercial, operational and strategic growth responsibilities for the Northern Ontario market, including the Harper Power Products branch locations in Sudbury, Timmins, and North Bay.

maximum of 50 carriers will be selected via lottery. Each carrier is eligible for two permits and will be allowed to operate by special permit under very strict conditions and using only drivers with the best safety records.

On the safety front, which seems to be the big bugaboo among skeptics, there is no evidence to suggest LCVs will be any more dangerous than standard 53-ft units, or passenger cars, for that matter.

In fact, jurisdictions in

Canada and the U.S. that allow them report that LCVs have some of the lowest crash rates of any vehicle on the road. One of the most comprehensive studies on LCV safety (conducted by engineering consultants Montufar & Associates in Alberta over six years between 1999 and 2005) concludes, among other findings:

There were 106 LCVs involved in collisions on the Alberta LCV network,

accounting for 0.02 percent of all collisions. The authors estimated that LCVs account for a reduction of 67 collisions a year, when compared to what would be realized by using single-trailer configurations for the same operations.

And while it’s true that adverse road surface conditions (wet, slush, snow, or ice) accounted for about 40 percent of LCV collisions, “this proportion was similar for other truck types.”

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From a collision-rate perspective, “LCVs as a group had the best safety performance of all vehicle types with 25 collisions per 100 million vehicle-kilometers traveled (VKT) on the LCV network.” (For another look at LCVs, see “Make it a double-double,” on page 32.)

Compliance

NS Scales in Need of Fix

Roadside inspectors are the people who make sure your trucks are in healthy working order, but the guy in charge of keeping an eye on truck cops in Nova Scotia says their department could use a tune up too.

In a recently published report, the province’s inspector general (AG) Jacques Lapointe revealed that there are major inconsistencies between provincial truck weigh scales and Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal (TIR) enforcement staff lack oversight and inspection guidelines. Because of that, among other issues, it’s become too easy for truckers to avoid inspection in Nova Scotia, he says.

“We found TIR management did not sufficiently control safety, inspection and enforcement program activities to ensure key factors contributing to truck accidents were adequately addressed,” states the report. “Important information such as accident data and truck travel patterns were not routinely analyzed.”

Lapointe suggests that 24/7 coverage of scale houses with unpredictable hours is an effective deterrent to

on the Docket

ONTARIO DIALS 118:

Talking while trucking—on a cell phone, anyway—will be a punishable offence in Ontario probably as early as this fall. It seems as if truckers will catch some breaks, though.

The Ontario legislature rubberstamped Bill 118 to ban hand-held phones or entertainment devices while operating a vehicle. If caught, drivers won’t lose any demerit points, but can face a fine of up to \$500.

Hands-free devices that use Bluetooth and properly mounted GPS devices will be allowed, confirmed the Ministry of Transportation. So are mp3 players or ipods, provided they are plugged into the stereo system.

“Additional exemptions for certain communications devices used to dispatch, track and monitor commercial drivers” are also being considered. But that’s still somewhat vague when it comes to excusing the use of push-to-talk (PTT) devices in the commercial sector. As we were the first to report last year, Ontario’s and Quebec’s ban technically restricts the use of PTT devices, which are

extremely popular with drivers in the short-haul and construction sectors.

Weeks ago, the Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) revealed that officials gave verbal confirmation that they would likely be allowed. Even though no decision has been made, OTA’s Doug Switzer says he’s “fairly confident” that PTT devices will be exempt—at least for commercial operators.

Switzer explains that the bill still has room for exceptions, and filling in those gaps after a bill has been passed is “normally what happens.” In fact,



Law enforcement could have a difficult time differentiating between PTT devices and regular cell phones.

he adds, “the ministry can’t really start drafting regulations until the bill passes.”

Although Switzer’s sure that the OTA’s message was well received, he knows that when it comes to government, there’s always the chance for a dropped call.

“I’m pretty confident that they’re going to follow through... [but] I’ve been at this long enough to know that these things never happen the way you think it will and promises from politicians are just promises from politicians.” — Jason Rhyno

truck weight and safety violations. But in Nova Scotia, the AG found that predictable patterns of operation allow some unsafe trucks to roam free. “Truck operators with poor safety records could be encouraged to manipulate their schedules so they can drive past scale houses at times when they are generally closed.”

Staffing procedure at inspection stations also came under fire. “If only one officer is on duty, the extent of checks and inspections that an officer can perform are limited.” And the AG found that most of the time, only one officer is in fact on the job.

Like a highly critical audit of Ontario’s Ministry of

Transportation released last fall, Lapointe reports several procedural and performance inconsistencies between various weigh scales. For example, one inspector hadn’t written a single ticket between April 2006 and December 2008, while another had issued 1,082 in the same two years.

“We acknowledge that the volume of truck traffic at each scale house and hours of operation would impact the number of written infractions issued but we believe the size of the discrepancies suggest a problem of inconsistent enforcement,” states Lapointe,

Also troubling, according to the AG, is the frequency of the types of checks per-

formed across the board. When a truck is stopped, officers most often checked for a driver’s licence, registration and insurance (67 percent), and vehicle weight (59 percent). However, only 20 percent were targeted “toward safety issues of the vehicle” such as tires and brake condition and just 15 percent of inspections targeted logbooks.

Premier Rodney MacDonald told local media that his government would review the AG’s report, but he wouldn’t commit to any specific changes. He said that despite holes in the system, Nova Scotia maintains one of the best transportation safety records in the country. ▲

Canada: Truck Sales Index

March 2009

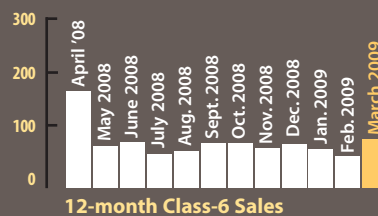
CLASS 8	This Month	YTD '09	YTD '08	Share
International	325	1070	1270	29.1%
Freightliner	387	860	1218	23.4%
Volvo	170	369	515	10.0%
Kenworth	142	328	993	8.9%
Sterling	126	303	440	8.2%
Mack	127	298	369	8.1%
Western Star	115	273	224	7.4%
Peterbilt	64	177	657	4.8%
TOTAL	1456	3678	5686	100.0%



CLASS 7	This Month	YTD '09	YTD '08	Share
International	43	116	233	27.8%
Freightliner	26	79	144	18.9%
Kenworth	31	72	191	17.3%
Hino Canada	19	61	113	14.6%
Peterbilt	21	45	174	10.8%
Sterling	17	44	71	10.6%
TOTAL	157	417	926	100.0%



CLASS 6	This Month	YTD '09	YTD '08	Share
Hino Canada	45	82	53	44.8%
International	22	71	57	38.8%
Freightliner	6	18	20	9.8%
Sterling	3	8	8	4.4%
Peterbilt	1	4	0	2.2%
TOTAL	77	183	138	100.0%



CLASS 5	This Month	YTD '09	YTD '08	Share
Hino Canada	72	135	186	48.7%
Sterling	36	84	201	30.3%
International	11	40	129	14.4%
Kenworth	6	11	0	4.0%
Peterbilt	3	4	0	1.4%
Freightliner	0	3	10	1.1%
TOTAL	128	277	526	100.0%

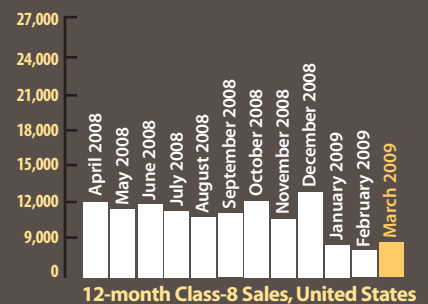


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U.S.: Retail Truck Sales

CLASSE 8	This Month	YTD '09
Freightliner	2517	6379
International	2252	6092
Peterbilt	857	2435
Kenworth	920	2349
Volvo	639	1924
Sterling	521	1187
Mack	436	1156
Western Star	78	210
Other	2	7
TOTAL	8222	21,739



Canada: Provincial Sales (Class 8)

CLASS 8	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	NB	NS	PE	NL	CDA
International	11	52	6	5	137	73	11	20	10	0	325
Freightliner	14	29	18	24	161	106	20	15	0	0	387
Volvo	5	11	9	38	75	23	4	5	0	0	170
Kenworth	9	46	16	7	31	27	1	5	0	0	142
Sterling	10	12	0	2	33	63	6	0	0	0	126
Mack	9	10	14	3	66	19	5	1	0	0	127
Western Star	10	30	4	7	17	36	5	6	0	0	115
Peterbilt	6	23	7	6	13	5	4	0	0	0	64
TOTAL	74	213	74	92	533	352	56	52	10	0	1456
YTD 2009	248	623	173	179	1369	800	163	103	10	10	3678

Sources: Canadian Vehicle Manufacturers Association and Ward's Communication.

Thursday, June 18

9:00 am • Registration and Coffee

9:30 am • Seminar I: Hybrid Technology Explained - Is It For My Fleet?

We've all heard something about hybrid technology, but few of us know enough to determine whether it would have an application in our particular business. This seminar will explain the technology and we'll hear from a large user of hybrid vehicles on the actual results (pros and cons) from using hybrid vehicles.

11:45 am • Conference Lunch

1:15 pm • Seminar II: Empowering For Productivity

Roy Craigen is an expert communicator and trainer. He is a sought after speaker and consultant for fleets that are seeking ways to improve productivity and team building by making better use of your human resources. Roy will be describing how you can get your drivers to contribute more to improving productivity, and how to turn them into valuable resources for your fleet.

3:00 pm • Seminar III: Strategies For Recessionary Times, Part 1: Fuel Economy Counts

Think you know all the ways to improve fuel economy? Our select panel will be discussing some innovative ways to make it even better. Fleet operators and suppliers join this panel to offer ideas and actual results from steps they've taken.

6:30 pm • Chairman's Reception & Dinner

Of course we'll mix in a little social time at the Chairman's Reception and Dinner Evening where we will experience an evening of great food and entertainment featuring standup comedy at its best.

Friday, June 19

8:00 am • Registration and Buffet Breakfast

9:15 am • Seminar IV: The Legal Update

During our Friday morning breakfast we will hear from two respected lawyers whose work involves the trucking sector. They will provide updates and commentary on Labour and Transportation Law.

10:30 am • Seminar V: Strategies For Recessionary Times, Part 2: What Successful Fleet Managers Are Doing

In Recessionary Strategies Part II, our assembled panel of fleet managers will describe cost control initiatives that have worked for them. This is one of your best opportunities to learn from other fleet managers about what actually works for them.

12:15 pm • PMTC Awards Luncheon Reception

12:45 pm • Annual PMTC Awards Luncheon

Join us as we celebrate some of the very best in trucking with our annual awards ceremonies:

- Canada's safest private fleets will receive the PMTC - Zurich Private Fleet Safety Award in recognition of superior safety performance.
- The PMTC - Huron Services Group Hall of Fame for Professional Drivers will welcome new inductees with many years of safe driving - truly the cream of the crop.
- The PMTC - 3M Canada Company Vehicle Graphics Design Awards, always a highlight of the conference, will salute creativity and imagination in vehicle graphics design.

2:30 pm • Conference Adjourns



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Street Smarts

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25 Ray Haight on re-jigging rigs

MANAGING PEOPLE, TECHNOLOGY, BUSINESS, AND SAFETY



PROS AND CONS: Scam artists target busy staff.

Scam Breaks

business *This kind of economy brings out the worst in people. Here're some red flags to watch for. By Steve Macleod*

You're on the phone looking for freight and wondering how to close-shave costs. Your spouse is doing more admin than ever and it's everything you can do to avoid borrowing against your credit card. The last thing you need is something else to fret about.

Too bad one of the only kind of businesses booming these days is the monkey kind.

That's right. The economy is bringing out the worst in people. Scam artists who target individuals and small businesses are ramping up; and ill-tempered staff are resorting to activities they'd never consider when times are good.

Karl Schober, a legal research officer with the Competition Bureau of Canada, told a Calgary seminar on security in the

shipping industry recently that con artists buy and sell lists of "easy marks" the way other people buy oil futures. If somebody has conned you or one of your staff once, odds are they'll hit again. About 30 percent of people who've been scammed once will be targeted again.

If you've downsized, chances are that some of your staff are busier than ever. According to Schober, scam artists often rely on people not having enough time to pay attention to details. They also know that when a company's going through tough times, the morale meter might be registering abject indifference.

One scammer mailed out phony invoices that looked nearly identical to legit bills. A phone call, asking for payment, followed. Because the phone calls

were persistent and the bills only in the \$20 range, lots of people paid just to stop the harassment. (Schober said the con artists took in more than \$1 million before they were caught.)

Another common scam involves the fake delivery of office supplies—generic items like paper or toner—that take advantage of a company's high turnover rates. The scammers hope the invoices will be processed automatically by a new staff person who hadn't placed the original order. And of course, if the payment isn't forthcoming, they could resort to harassing phone calls just to try and get some money.

Sadly, in-house theft is on the rise, too, as employees face debt or emotional problems.

In the words of Brian Tario, a partner with the Calgary-based consultant firm Meyers Norris Penny, "with the downturn in the economy, the sins of the good times will be uncovered."

Tario is responsible for investigations in the area of due diligence and has an extensive background in fraud, employee theft and assorted other corporate minefields, and he estimates that about 85 percent of his work involves employee theft. Much of that, he says, is a result of addictions. It pays to know as much as possible about the people who work for you.

"You have to understand your people," he says, "Not just what they do at work but what they do outside of work."

Tell your staff (and c.c. yourself) that it's more crucial than ever that every invoice gets triple-checked. Never agree to purchases over the phone and don't get rushed into any purchasing decisions.

And if you do suspect somebody at the trucking company is stealing, don't take matters into your own hands. Get legal help.

Says Tario: "An external investigation limits the number of employees who know. Get legal counsel involved right away because it provides privileged communications." ▲

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
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safety *How to make termination as painless as possible. By Brian Botham*

I remember having to fire a driver a number of years ago. He had a history of poor performance, with a couple of speeding tickets and two preventable incidents (minor collisions). His last infraction occurred at a truckstop. He claimed someone had backed into him while he was inside having lunch. But after I looked at the damage and saw the telltale transfer of yellow paint, I confronted him. He admitted he had hit a yellow post and was not really the victim of a hit and run.

When I brought him into my office for the termination, I was more than a little worried. He was about twice my size and known for a very short temper. Yet when I told him he was terminated, the reaction took me by complete surprise. He started to cry. Believe it or not, even though you're in a tough-guy business, you should keep a box of tissues handy. You never know.

He of course pleaded with me, but my decision was firm. And I was confident I was right. With each of the incidents that had led up to his firing, I had documented everything.

The exit interview lasted for about an hour. We went through his history, including everything I had done to help him improve. And there was no disputing any of it.

When it was over, he stood, shook my hand, and thanked me and walked away.

As I look back, I realized

that the main reason it went so well was that I had documented every incident that this driver had been involved in. There were copies of each citation and evidence of all the subsequent discipline and remedial training.

I had documented the warnings—verbal and written—and made notes around

that spelled out the steps we would take when exercising discipline.

The policy stated we would treat all drivers in a firm and friendly manner but when necessary we would use progressive discipline for any incident, including citations, out-of-service inspections, preventable collisions,

whiskey between his legs and went screaming down the road and crashed into a bus load of Sunday School kids, he would be terminated without warning.

Also, each driver had to sign a copy of the progressive-discipline policy to prove that they read and understood it.

I used a standard easy-to-complete single-page form, stating the violation, whether it was a breach of company policy, a highway-traffic citation, a preventable collision, or other incident.

Then I wrote a brief synopsis and gave the driver the opportunity to write a version and to agree or disagree with the company's statement. Then I had to let the driver know how this particular incident affected his status. Was it a first warning? Was it suspension time? Had he or she learned from previous incidents?

Firing will never be an easy part of your job, but having the right policies in place and documenting everything will make it go a lot more smoothly.

You might never get a driver to shake your hand after you've just fired him, but at least if you are sued for wrongful dismissal you will have all the documentation necessary to help your case. ▲

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“When he was terminated, his reaction took me by complete surprise.”

his suspension. (If you don't write it down it didn't happen.) The driver had been allowed to comment on each at the time and we had both signed off on them. So when presented with all of this, it was painful and obvious to both of us that termination was the only option.

Another reason it went smoothly was that my company had developed a progressive-discipline policy, a simple one-page document

breach of company policies and procedures, or any other behavior that we deemed unacceptable.

The policy involved four steps: a verbal warning, a written warning, suspension and termination. Our policy also stated that the company could determine if a situation was severe enough to skip steps one and two.

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SWOT Was That All About?

planning *Strategic planning hints for the smaller but exceptionally busy operators. By Ray Haight*

There are so many moving parts to the business of trucking it is easy to get lost in what you're doing on a day-to-day basis.

That's dangerous, especially with margins being—in a lot of cases—thin to nil.

Further, staying focused is even more critical when the entire executive level of your company—president, vice president, health-and-safety guy, the whole team—consists of you.

How does a small-business operator know that everything possible is being done to ensure survival? Here's a way that might work.

Remember that your business depends on the rules of profitability that have existed since the first Neanderthal businessman climbed from the slime 10,000 years ago and traded a clam for a pointy stick. Quite simply, bring more money (revenue) into your business than you are spending (expenses), and you will have some left.

The following technique has been popular among larger businesses for years, but it's applicable to any size of operation. It is called the "SWOT test." The first letter, s, stands for strengths, w is for weaknesses, o for opportunities and t stands for threats.

The purpose of the exercise is to identify where there might be room to make changes within your business to improve your profitability.

First thing to do? Assemble a SWOT team. This could include your business advisor and a few key industry people as well as a friend or two who you respect and have confidence in. Then, set a half day aside at a place where you won't be disturbed.

"Think down the road. Try writing a press release about your company, dated three to five years out. What would it say?"

The process of listing the strengths of your business can be quite revealing—very often you will find unappreciated talents and services that you hadn't realized were so critical to your operation. Once revealed, you might find that core strengths aren't being exploited to the maximum. If not, why not? They are part of the reason you are where you are today.

Weaknesses are sometimes difficult to accept but when revealed in a group and discussed openly, they can be far less ugly.

They are also quite often the place you'll find money leaking from your operation. A loose handle on costs can easily sink the boat. So make a list of all your expenses

from largest to smallest and scrutinize every one for potential cost savings.

Revealing opportunities that might be available for a business takes imagination and creativity. Think about this when you form your SWOT team. Does it have creative types on board?

Opportunities for additional revenue streams can be discussed, perhaps by expanding into a different segment of the industry with very little asset changes needed. Think down the road. Try writing a press release about your

How serious or imminent are they? Use your SWOT meeting to do some what-if planning so that you will be prepared should the worst happen.

When you're done this process, you should be left with a list of action items and ideas. It's your job to turn them into reality. Quite often it is easy for small-business people to lose sight of the bigger picture when they're being blinded by the small stuff.

If your company has under 50 trucks, you are probably not only the owner, mechanic,



company, dated three to five years out. What would it say? Threats in this industry surface on a regular basis, in the form of new legislation, border processes, fluctuating capacity, etc. These are outside threats and should be listed, but also list your internal threats. Then ask if they can be mitigated with some planning?

sales manager and ops person, you're likely the v-p in charge of planning, too.

You owe it to yourself to try this type of exercise to help you and your company move ahead strategically. ▲

Ray Haight is immediate past chair of the Truckload Carriers Association (TCA) and executive director of MacKinnon Transport.

THE TRANS ● CANADA: From Sea to C-minus



Why the longest truck route in the country needs a serious upgrade.

BY JASON RHYNO

If Canada is to emerge as a strong G8 contestant—and make no mistake, it is a contest—we not only have to cultivate innovation, leadership, and ideas, we must also come together. And to come together, we have to go back to one of the basic building blocks of any nation: a national highway.

With strong ports in Vancouver, Prince Rupert and Halifax, and a viable inland freight portal in development in Manitoba, what is needed is a Trans-Canada Highway (TCH) that is safe, efficient, and consistent in design and vision.

We need a twinned or at least a double-divided highway that doesn't leave parts of the country in economic purgatory, one that reflects where Canadians are today and where we want to go.

If the current state of the Trans-Canada is any reflection of



where we are as a country, it's safe to say that we are a broken, scattered mess with each province only concerned with its own needs.

We can't even number the Trans-Canada highway consistently, let alone pave it. Appropriately numbered 1 from Victoria to Manitoba, it changes as soon as the TCH hits Ontario. What's more annoying is that if you follow the TCH on Google maps, paying attention to the little green-and-white rectangular markers that designate the Trans-Canada, they stop at Ontario only to pick up again in Quebec. Apparently, Google doesn't think that the Trans-Canada runs through Ontario.

And you can't blame them. Highways 17 and 11 of the Trans-Canada Highway are no shining beacons of a proud country's national highway system. Predominately two-laned, the northern sections of 11 and 17 are examples of antiquated road construction from the 50's, when the initial construction of the TCH was nearing completion. It took roughly 20 years if you don't include 30 years of local communities and business lobbying, and \$1 billion, simply to have the TCH paved.

"May it serve to bring Canadians closer together," Prime Minister John Diefenbaker said at the Trans-Canada's opening ceremony at Rogers Pass in 1962. "May it bring to all Canadians a renewed determination."

After doing a bit of research into the state of our main artery, I'd say it's high time we listened again to Dief. The highway needs extensive work at various points, but the longest, saddest section can be found in northern and northwestern Ontario.

"The level of support for the Trans-Canada has deteriorated," says David Oraziotti, the MPP for Sault Ste. Marie, "and Ontario has the longest section of un-four-laned Trans-Canada link in the country." Back in 2006, Oraziotti brought forth a bill that would see sections of highway 17 twinned, arguing that it would improve safety and northern Ontario's economy.

(It would also lubricate the trucking business immensely. As it is, along many sections of the TCH, a single small accident can tie up traffic for miles.)

Oraziotti garnered support for Bill 149 from the Ontario Trucking Association (OTA), the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP), the CAA, and a multitude of other lobbyists, but the bill didn't get much further than its third reading in the legislature before being pushed aside—which isn't surprising. It's always been a long quest to have the Trans-Canada twinned where needed. Just ask New Brunswick or Saskatchewan, provinces that lobbied for years before having their shares of the TCH twinned.

Oraziotti points out that in 1949, when they signed the Trans-Canada Highway Act between the federal government and the provinces, the provinces, in participation with the federal government, laid out a route that would be branded as the Trans-Canada route and those links through each province were going to be funded 50 percent by the federal government.

To twin or not to twin? It's not even a question anymore.

Twinned or divided highways provide, first and foremost, immense improvements in road safety. "If there's no opportunity for the oncoming car to move to the side without going onto the gravel and into the ditch," Oraziotti says "the risk of an accident, the likelihood of it going up, are greater."

Bob Dolyniuk of the Manitoba Trucking Association (MTA) agrees. "When I was in the industry," he says, "particularly in the wintertime in northern Ontario—double dividing would have made it a hell of a lot better."

As it is, there are stretches of 17 and 11 with "miles and miles with no place to pull off if you want to check your load or have a problem," says David Berry, a retired owner-operator out of Iron Bridge, Ont. "If the shoulder is there," he continues, "you can't really trust them because they're soft."

Plus the lack of rest stops makes it difficult for drivers to fulfill service requirements. *Today'sTrucking.com* reported in May that a husband/wife driving team for Manitoulin Transport who run a lane from Calgary to Toronto were distributing petitions in order to get a few more rest areas. It's a lot of country to travel and the wife side of the team, Susan Barlow, says the number of washroom facilities along the way—particularly in Ontario—is inadequate and only getting worse.

The other obvious benefit to twinned highways is the substantial increase in efficiency. "You wouldn't have some of the traffic jams you have now," Dolyniuk says of the Kenora/Dryden area, "And one only has to travel through northern Ontario and northwestern Ontario during vacation season when there's a significant mix of personal and commercial vehicles."

Tim Heney, CEO of the Thunder Bay Port Authority, emphasizes dimensional cargo. "When you have a two-lane road, you have a lot more restrictions on the amount of movements you can make, basically dictated by the road itself. Four-lanes are much more adaptable to slow-moving pieces."

And then, of course, there are the environmental benefits. "There would be less

stopping and going, slowing down, speeding up," Dolyniuk says. "Obviously it would create some fuel efficiency for the industry and also reduce our greenhouse-gas emissions." Modern-day design plans take into account wildlife by specifically building either tunnels under the highway or overpasses covered in earth at popular creature crossings. The highway through Banff National Park is a prime example of this.

HIGHWAY 17 vs HIGHWAY 11

While highway 11 is predominantly flatter than 17, making it cheaper to twin or double-divide, it is populated with much smaller communities than 17, which may be the better choice given its proximity to large urban centers, Lakes Superior and Huron, and eventually down to prime economic corridors in the U.S.

But let's face it: twinning the entire length of both highways isn't going to happen—even with the federal government's recently renewed love for infrastructure spending.

The cost to four-lane Highway 69 in Ontario, according to TSH, the company that is assessing the next stage of that particular twinning project, was roughly \$10 million per kilometer, not including design and property buying. If that price tag is any indication of how much it would cost to four-lane both 17 and 11, we're talking billions and a not-in-our-lifetime project. Probably not even in our great-grandchildren's lifetime. So choices have to be made as to which sections take precedence.

As it stands, Heney, Dolyniuk and Oraziotti agree that Winnipeg to Thunder Bay is the critical corridor. "You look at the growth in western Canada," Heney argues. "That's where the growth in the Canadian economy is going to come from. It's coming east."

Retired OPP officer William Manktelow spent years working up along that stretch of dilapidated highway. "When you drive out of Manitoba and into Ontario," he says, "the roads deteriorate probably a 100 percent. Uneven patches, potholes. I found it very disgusting to know that Ontario would maintain a highway to that condition knowing that it is the Trans-Canada."

While passing lanes have been put in, it's still a bad stretch of the TCH, so much so that "before the tightening up of the border," Dolyniuk says, "a significant portion of Canadian domestic east-west traffic moved in-transit through the States to avoid northern Ontario. All that did for us as a country is it gave us less in fuel tax and excise tax revenue to the provincial and federal governments and it gave more to the U.S. governments for their infrastructure. I would hate to see that happen again once we resolve the issue with



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WASHOUT

It's a significant section of the Trans-Canada highway (TCH) that has its problems, but not the kind that can be solved by twinning.

Last October, The Fraser Institute released a study that reported that the Marine Atlantic ferry system that links Nova Scotia to The Rock is extremely expensive, costing federal and provincial governments \$60 per person, per trip.

Still, somebody's trying to remedy the situation.

"The *Atlantic Vision* came on stream on April first," said Marine Atlantic's Tara Laing. "With the addition of that [new] vessel, we'll actually increase the capacity of our overall fleet. What that does for the commercial-trucking industry is ensure that there is more capacity to transport."

Laing said that they've made a few changes to the schedule in an effort to have more "customer-friendly sailing times and as well building some additional port times."

On the same note, they've also built in "some additional maintenance time in our schedule so that we're better able overall to meet our published schedule."

The inaugural voyage of the new ship was delayed five hours when the support legs of a tractor-trailer jammed on the ramp and equipment had to be brought in to dislodge it. Let's hope that didn't set the tone for the service. — *Jason Rhyno*

in-transit moves with the States."

Realistically, it comes down to where the money is best spent. "Any transportation link in our country is going to have a positive economic impact in the long run," Heney says. "To justify it in immediate payback is more difficult, of course."

Dolyniuk adds that highway 16 through Manitoba and Saskatchewan would be ideal for twinning, and Ozarietti maintains that there is no reason Sault Ste. Marie to Ottawa cannot be twinned.

"It would obviously create greater support for the trucking industry and more economic opportunities," Ozarietti says of the possibility of an improved infrastructure along 17.

While we may not be on the heels of a

World War pushing us to improve our national infrastructure as we were during the initial construction of the Trans-Canada, we certainly could use some of that Diefenbaker "renewed determination" in the race to stay relevant on the global playing field. If there ever was a time again when we had to drop our petty regional differences—Western Canada vs. Central Canada; Eastern Canada vs.

Western Canada (and everyone against Toronto)—it's now.

"I think that's something we're starting to lose sight of with all this north-south talk," Heney says when I ask him about the symbolic possibilities of a truly connected Trans-Canada. "It really just fragments the country more. I think it would help unify the country like back in the old days when they first built it." ▲



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Stop us if you heard this one. A big fleet owner, a truck dealer, and an OEM sales rep are all sitting around the table... Okay, there's actually no joke here, but that's really how the story begins. In fact, there wasn't much to smile about listening to parts of that conversation at a customer appreciation dinner held by an OEM in Toronto in early spring.

Discussing the current Canadian freight environment with his tablemates, the owner

noticed any particular-sized carriers—big or small—taking a disproportionate brunt. In southern Ontario, it can be said, we're all auto workers [and makers] now.

"The first place shippers look to when they have to come up with some dollars—whether it's because of the economy or they have a change in personnel—is they always look at transportation," he says. "They have identified that they are a pack of wolves chasing a herd of caribou and there's quite a few weak ones in that herd."

Is it true, though, that hunting season could be slowly coming to an end? While a

the largest proportion (43 percent) said they were pessimistic about overall industry prospects over the next couple of months. That's not such good news, of course. But what's changed is that this is down from 52 percent who said the same thing in the first quarter of 2009. Plus, the percentage of carriers that are optimistic about industry prospects rose significantly to 27 percent from 17 percent.

Similarly, Nashville, Ind.-based FTR Associates also reported that the economic storm clouds are slowly parting. While imploring caution, the firm said that the

Squeeze Play



of a reasonably large—and all things considered, financially stable southern Ontario trucking fleet—had brought up the plight of a separate carrier he knew of comparable size, but clearly, of lesser fortune.

This other guy, our storyteller explained, was recently told by a familiar customer that the rate would now be "renegotiated" on a weekly basis. "That's not the fuel surcharge," he clarified. "That's the rate."

"That's not a customer," the dealer quipped. "At that point, you're just working off a (load bid) board."

And so it's gone in trucking over the last 18 months.

Asked if that anecdote is typical of the always-reactionary trucker-shipper relationship these days, Michael Ludwig retorts that "in this economy, more than a few [shippers] have realized there are enough savings that it pays for their transportation person to negotiate every load they move."

The owner of his own 18-truck name-sake fleet in Simcoe, Ont., says he hasn't

At the same time as experts detect hints of recovery, customers have learned there's quite a big herd of carriers chasing the same freight. The lean and fit will survive. | **BY MARCO BEGHETTO**

turnaround isn't imminent, there are some signs that the freight market has hit rock bottom and although we'll likely be dragged along the ocean floor a few more months still, it seems better times (at least, less worse times) are ahead. Or, as Churchill proclaimed when the Second World War finally turned in the Allies' favor, "This is not the end... this is the end of the beginning."

In its most recent Business Pulse e-Survey (see sidebar for more details), the Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) found that the industry in Ontario and Canada-wide is showing the first indications of stability. Out of 74 trucking companies of all sizes and sectors interviewed,

enormous declines witnessed in the first quarter are unlikely to be repeated and after a flattish latter half to 2009, there should be some modest growth in early 2010.

Clayton Gording of Winnipeg's YRC Reimer (formerly named Reimer Express) agrees that the freight market has had some breathing room since late spring, but it's generally difficult to pinpoint what the triggers are. "Certainly there's some growth and not the week-after-week downturn we had in January. It's kind of a good feeling," he says. "But whether it's about an improving economy or whether it's seasonal is hard to say."

It's true that certain carriers—LTLers mostly—have enjoyed a decent-sized

bump in demand in late spring over the last decade or so thanks in large part to a surge of big box, do-it-yourself home improvement and gardening retailers, among other seasonal products. In fact, some have argued that April to June has given to the rise of a new mini-peak shipping season.

Calyx is the parent company of a stable of carriers that haul in these niche lanes, including Muir's Cartage—a dedicated Home Depot provider. Company CEO Rob Donaghey says they've "been blessed to serve some of those people, so we always experience that peak season," although

now find any way they can to avoid doing that if they can," says Gording. With more shippers willing to sacrifice immediacy for cost, the "sector is suffering more than standard service, for sure."

As he often does when rates dip, OTA President David Bradley is warning shippers not to get too carried away squeezing all they can out of truckers.

"One thing is sure. When we come out of this mess, there will be less capacity in the trucking industry and those shippers that have tried to take advantage of the current situation may find themselves



the depth of this recession has tempered expectations this year.

Other carriers, depending on their regional markets, have just as much reason to be thankful. Gording admits that keeping an active role in the robust provinces of Manitoba and Saskatchewan has softened the blow felt on cross-border LTL lanes. "If you're involved in intra-Prairie business you're generally okay. You almost feel like you're outside of the problem."

Not so lucky, though, are truckers heavily dependant on expedited freight, which has arguably had more chewed off of it than any sector over the last year. Rates have taken a severe beating from LTL and even truckload carriers with capacity to spare.

"Where customers a year or two ago thought nothing of paying a premium because they had to get something to a certain customer on a certain day, they

having a hard time finding anyone interested in hauling their freight," says Bradley.

How much tighter capacity gets remains to be seen. Surely, the rising cost of oil this summer and the surging Canuck buck vis-à-vis the U.S. greenback will take a toll once more.

Lower diesel costs this past year has given some struggling carriers a second wind, although, as Ludwig points out, not as much as some think since the ability to recoup fuel surcharges is pretty standard these days.

It's his belief, then, that a freight recovery will be a lot slower than what some optimists have guessed. Why? It's all about the trucks in the end.

"The finance companies can't do anything with these trucks," says Ludwig. "You take a two-year old, \$130,000 truck. It should be worth \$80,000, but today on the

LIGHT AT THE END OF TRUCK TUNNEL?

No doubt the Canadian freight market continues to be knocked around by recessionary pressures—hold on, hold on, we have some good news this time—but it also may be some primitive indications of stability, according to the Ontario Trucking Association's 2Q09 Business Pulse e-Survey. Although 43 percent said they were pessimistic about industry prospects, that's down from 52 percent from a 1Q survey. OTA says 30 percent are unsure of where things are heading, which, for those who subscribe to the theory that no news is good news, is something to celebrate. "While we have a long way to go and more carriers remain pessimistic than optimistic, the narrowing of the gap between the two is perhaps an early signal that things may be stabilizing," says OTA's David Bradley.

Just don't start partying like it's 2004 just yet. About 75 percent of respondents still think that the Canadian economy has yet to hit bottom and even more (81 percent) believe Ontario in particular will slip further as well.

Carriers are trying to manage cash wisely and reduce capacity. But, according to Bradley "it's a game of catch-up right now since the rate of decline in freight volumes has outpaced the rate of decline in capacity in recent months."

Yes, things remain uglyish. But, as Bradley points out, "more carriers are expecting freight volumes to either stay the same or improve over the next six months than those who expect it to deteriorate, which is a hopeful sign."

street it's only worth \$40,000. So, why would you take that kind of a bath when the [finance company] is offering you relief of payment for x number of months to carry on as you are? There's a lot of that kind of 'restructuring' going on that's keeping trucks out there."

The wildcard, as it's always been in southern Ontario at least, is what happens in the automotive sector. As Bradley routinely sticks to the end of any optimistic forecast, "all bets are off" if the automotive industry fails or things get worse in the U.S.

And that's no joke. ▲

MAKE IT A DOUBLE- DONBTE

Why LCVs will be part of your fleet, down the road. | **BY PETER CARTER**



One sunny Friday afternoon in May the president of AB Volvo Leif Johansson threw his company's support behind the idea of longer combinations of tractors and trailers. The irony was almost a shock.

If a truck manufacturer like Volvo suggests doubling up, does that not mean they'll sell fewer VN's?

Well, yes, in the short term. But Johansson says he's a long-term guy and his best projections say that there will be a 26-percent increase in the truck population of North America between 2006 and

2020. (He also said he's personally betting on the "recovery" starting the last quarter of this year.)

Long term, Johansson believes, there'll be plenty of demand for trucks. And the driver shortage will be rearing its familiar face again. But more importantly, the erudite Swede told a group of journalists after an environmental seminar hosted by the company, trucks are merely "production tools" and if they should be used as efficiently as possible. That means each truck should be pulling as much freight as possible.

As Volvo's senior vice president of sales and marketing Scott Kress told the seminar, more productive trucks would consume less fuel, contributing to less demand for foreign oil while also reducing emissions, especially greenhouse gases such as CO2.

In fact, according to Kress, trucks pulling double 53-ft. trailers have a better safety record than the corresponding tractor/single trailer combination predominant in today's freight hauling.

Another study—this one released by University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute (UMTRI) shows that

CARE AND FEEDING OF YOUR WAGONS

Want to make your long units last longer? Here are some corrosion-fighting tips from across the trailer-making industry.

"I think there are times when washing may be looked at as a luxury," says Charlie Wells, director of dump trailer products and dealer development at East Manufacturing. But in reality, it's an important part of preventive maintenance.

Ron Gordy, director of quality assurance at Great Dane, recommends using low-pressure

warm water wash and rinse. High pressure can remove protective coatings by mistake. To keep corrosion from spreading, Wabash's Rod Erlich says, remove the visible corrosion crust and treat with one of various sealants available on the market.

Also, inspect the whole trailer top to bottom, more often than you do now. "I think a good maintenance program is every time the trailer is in, that it gets looked over," says Utility's Craig Bennett, senior vice president of sales and marketing.

"If there are cuts on the wall, they need to get repaired right away, particularly on a reefer. Don't go out on a second or third trip and allow moisture to penetrate the foam of the sidewall," which will only result in a more expensive repair down the road.

East's Wells notes that his company's operating manual lists periodic inspections; e.g., six-month, monthly, weekly, and daily trip inspections. Wells compares it to a pilot's pre-trip checklist.

Proper inspections, he says, are "probably the single biggest thing from a maintenance standpoint. You may see some little telltale sign, like a little drop of oil, and



increased use of larger vehicles would be a boon to the North American economy and, of course, the environment.

It's already happening. LCVs are permitted in more than half the States in the Union. And a month before the Volvo announcement, the Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) announced that it was approving a pilot project that could see up to 100 longer combination vehicles (LCVs) on Ontario highways over the next year. (In this case, the LCV means a single tractor pulling twin 53-ft trailers).

LCVs have also been approved to some

degree in all the other provinces except Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island. (It stands to reason because the big rigs do need big roads.)

When Ontario made the announcement, Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) President David Bradley described the move as "a new era in freight transportation productivity" in the province.

As this magazine goes to press, a group of engineers hired by the OTA is preparing a readiness report for the MTO, according to Doug Switzer, the OTA's vice president of Public Affairs. The MTO wants to be

you've got to ask yourself, 'What caused that?' Sometimes catching things at the earliest stages is the biggest savings one could find."

Don't neglect hidden areas that will require a mirror to check, says Great Dane's Gordy. "A lot of weldments in the trailer understructure are basically hidden from immediate view, like the upper slide rails of the suspension to the bottom flanges of the crossmembers. It's very important those be checked during regular PM schedules."

Another hidden area prone to corrosion is the interior of the kingpin section, says Chuck Cole, manager of technical sales

and product training for Utility.

Because of its position above the tractor's rear tires, he says, it attracts sand, salt, and corrosive de-icing chemicals. And many corrosion coating processes, he says, may miss some of that area.

"We have heard that there is a problem in the industry with people having failures of the kingpin section due to corrosion," Cole says. "If you were to take a camera and go inside and look, you'd be surprised at what you see as far as the loss of material thickness" due to corrosive chemicals that are nearly impossible to wash out.

— *Today's Trucking Staff*



A LITTLE TAB'LL DO YA

Researchers in the Ottawa Valley town of Carp, Ont., have been working hard to make your big rectangular trailers more fuel efficient, and recently, they were honored by none other than NASA for their invention, which is gaining popularity throughout the trucking business.

The company is Aeroseve Technologies Ltd., and the product is the Airtab.

Airtabs are small, lightweight, very low-drag vortex generators that help airflow bridge the gap between tractor and trailer and smooth turbulent airflow at the rear of any squared backed vehicle.

The generators were tested by NASA for flow-control, and the award is part of the induction of the NASA Dryden Flight Research Center Aerodynamic Vehicle Design Program team into the Space Technology Hall of Fame.

But back to the Airtab. Fuel savings average three-percent in test track and real world applications. Easily installed using double-sided tape, Airtabs benefit any appropriate vehicle at speeds at or above 40 mph.

Airtabs have other benefits, too, Aeroseve says. Trucks handle better in gusty wind conditions and the drivers experience improvements in visibility through rain and snow.

Comments Aeroseve's Director of Business Development Kent Smerdon, "An old Aero saying goes, 'It's not the size of the hole you punch that matters...it's how fast you can close it behind you.' We can't seem to convince the industry that the back of the trailer always was and still is the biggest source of drag in operation at highway speeds."

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reassured that the trucks will have all the space they need to operate safely around ramps, rest stops and terminals. Rest stops big enough to accommodate the double 53-ft. trailers have to be within 500 meters of the highway, and of course the trucks will only be permitted on multi-lane, controlled-access divided highways. (For more, see "Ontario Trailers Get a Longer Look," page 16.)

Dave Reid is a Fredericton-based LCV driver trainer with Sunbury Transport, which has been running the long doubles between Moncton and St. John, mostly carrying paper products.

"It's all very well controlled," he says. "When we apply for the permits, we have to apply for the specific highways that we're going to be on; we have to apply for permission to use specific exit ramps. We don't operate in bad weather or if there's a heavy fog or heavy wind."

The amount of extra training drivers need varies according to jurisdiction, and Reid says New Brunswick drivers have to start with five-years experience and more than 150,000 km under their belts, and Reid as well as Switzer agree that having the LCV certification will improve a driver's employability after these units become more popular.

Reid says, other than maneuvering around yards and truckstops, they perform like their smaller brethren. And the current crop of diesel engines is more than man enough to power them. (The rules state that LCVs have minimum hp standards. Ontario's minimum is 425.)

Another questions also arises: What's it like to back them up?

Says Reid: "It doesn't happen." The trailers are separated and then loaded and unloaded one at a time.

Sunbury is looking to expand its LCV map. They're currently planning for a route from Grand Falls, N.B., to Halifax. And along the road, if they meet naysayers who have a problem with these big trucks, they could simply point to Volvo's support.

As much as the 65 year-old Swede was the very image of physical fitness to baby boomer Canadians, Volvo motor vehicles have worked hard to carve out the "safety" niche. They wouldn't be pushing (or, rather, pulling) these big trailers if they didn't think they were a good idea. ▲



TRAILERS PARKED, BOYS

It's safe to say that few people have been around trailers as long as Rod Ehrlich, the vice president and chief technology officer at Wabash National, in Lafayette, Indiana. He's been working on trailers since '63.

At the moment, Wabash and some other trailer manufacturers are bathing in vivid red ink. Wabash took a \$110-million loss. Salaries were cut; layoffs announced. A few years ago, Wabash were moving about 70,000 units. In 2008, that number sank to approximately 43,000.

They're far from alone. As Erik Stark, the president of the transportation consultant firm FTR Associates told a trailer conference recently, "at the moment, transport demand is so weak that in fact the trucking industry as a whole actually does not need any new trailers at all."

Part of the problem is the freight market. But also, as Ehrlich says with remarkable candor, "trailers are lasting too long."

Bob Gauthier operates Seaway Express in Cornwall, Ont., and says trailers are usually great purchases for that very reason.

"We have gone away from leasing," he says, "and instead have been purchasing outright."

"Trailers are a good buy; there's little to maintain and after their useful lives of say 15 years, I can get \$250 per month to park it as a rental."

Time was, a trailer-trade in cycle was around six years. Thanks to new composite materials, improved engineering, and enhanced materials-management tools as well as enhanced efficiency because trailer tracking lets truckers take better care of the units that actually belong to them, there are some 20-year-old vans out there, still going strong.

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WEIGHTING GAMES: It makes sense to spec things just a little heavier than you need. You don't want to design weakness into the mix before you pull a load.

101 DRIVETRAINS

Spec'ing an efficient combination of engine, transmission and rear axles is different these days, and more important than ever.

E BY ROLF LOCKWOOD

Everyone knows that designing a drivetrain is a different task than it was in the glory days before low-emissions engines arrived on the scene. But there are some basic essentials that haven't changed. We'll have a look at them here, and then we'll examine some more specific issues.

First, what will the truck do? Local or long haul, it has specific duties in a definable operating environment, demanding a particular spec. Has anything changed since the last time you spec'd a truck? Is it likely to change in the near future? Bear both in mind and be prepared to accommodate possible future work.

And second, do your homework. You can rely on your dealer's salesman to use his computer spec'ing program effectively, and the factory engineers approving the spec will catch any gross errors. But you'd do well to ensure that you're absolutely up to date with the latest technologies—engines, transmissions, tires, you name it—because they're changing all the time. Ideally, you'll meet the sales guy knowing at least as much or more than he does about the components available to you—or soon to be. More than ever, you must stay on top of the potential efficiencies available to you because you need to be at your competitive best, and the latest technologies can help you get there.

That said, don't forget the basics of serviceability, durability, safety, and of course cost.

ENGINES: Do you want more engine than you really need? Can you define adequate power? Start by deciding on road speed. You may well decide that 100 km/h is the optimum speed for safety and fuel economy, in which case you might want to add 5 km/h and design the drivetrain to cruise at that speed in high gear.

Remember that the sweet spot has moved in modern engines, and it's usually a narrow place that leaves little room for spec'ing error. They're harder to find than in days gone by, but you'd do well to ask your salesman for engine 'maps' detailing torque and horsepower curves for the engines you're looking at. Look at where torque peaks on the tach and where horsepower falls off, and keep them in mind when you're thinking about transmission and rear-end ratios.

See the sidebar entitled 'Speed Limiters & Drivetrain Peril' for a discussion specific to trucks operating in Ontario and Quebec.

Consider the possibility that you don't need a 14- or 15-liter diesel, even though they bring better resale value. The fact is, today's 11-, 12- and 13-liter motors develop healthy power and torque, in ratings of 425 hp or more, and torque as high as 1,650 lb ft. They accelerate and climb hills well and the lower displacement can deliver about a half-a-mile per gallon better fuel economy, maybe more. As well, the smaller engines weigh 400 to 600 lb less than the big bores engine, and they'll cost several thousand dollars less.

You might want to think about variable-power, multi-torque engines. They'll deliver serious power when it's called for—usually at highway speeds in higher gears—and cut back when it's

Drivetrains

not. This preserves performance but saves fuel, and in some cases it could allow you to spec lighter drivetrain components to match the engine's lowest torque output in lower gears where damage is most likely to be done. But make sure your drivers know about the feature so they can let it work.

CAPACITY: Weight capacity isn't the only consideration here, because axles are rated both by their load-carrying capacity and by GCW (drawbar load). Capacity also applies to the torque and horsepower rating of the components, so the minimum torque requirement for the job becomes your baseline. You can safely add 10 or 15 percent to that figure but don't go light, whatever you do.

You should figure out the maximum and average weight of the loads you'll be carrying, and don't ignore the potential for inadvertent overload. Which suggests that you ought to estimate maximum payloads on the high side. That might mean a more expensive axle, but the cost to replace a single carrier destroyed by overload abuse might be higher still.

GRADEABILITY: This is the measure of how steep a hill the truck can climb without losing speed in a given gear. If you're to optimize driver satisfaction, safety, and productivity, you can't afford a truck that dies on a three-percent grade. Calculate gradeability for the top three gears to assess highway performance, or get your

salesman to do it, and make sure to include the steepest grade the truck will comfortably climb at highway speed. The standard recommendation calls for a fully loaded vehicle to show 0.3 percent gradeability at full engine speed or one-percent at peak torque in cruise gear. It should maintain that standard at cruising rpm, which is commonly 50 rpm either side of 1,400 these days.

Not surprisingly, drivers hate piloting slow trucks with lousy hill-climbing power, which add minutes or even hours to a long trip, and that can easily push a driver out of logbook hours. There's a safety issue too when the truck is significantly slower on a grade than everyone else. It

SPEED LIMITERS & DRIVETRAIN PERIL

If you're based in Ontario or Quebec, or even if you just operate there occasionally, you have to deal with the mandated road-speed limit of 105 km/h. In drivetrain terms—and fuel economy—it could be a nightmare. There's no disputing the general wisdom of slowing down, but your drivers and your accountant might not thank you if you're hobbling an existing truck with this electronic tweak.

Why? Because you run the risk of lowering engine speed to a point where driveability suffers, or raising it until fuel economy falls off in a big way. Today's emissions-restricted engines are far more sensitive to rpm than ever before, and they just won't deliver optimum performance or fuel economy if you stray a couple of hundred rpm above or below the so-called 'sweet spot'. And that spot is lower than it used to be. In fact, there are fleets that spec'd what turned out to be the wrong rear-axle ratio—3.25 instead of 3.55, for example—with '07 engines and have actually had to raise road speed to keep the engine at that place on the tach where it's most efficient.

Consider the following fairly typical example:

A truck spec'd to run at 70 mph or 112 km/h has a 10-speed transmission with an overdrive ratio of 0.74, 11R22.5 tires, and a 3.36 rear end. Running at 70 means an engine speed of 1,425 rpm. Performance is good, and power, gradeability, and fuel economy are optimal.

Now, reduce road speed to 65 mph (105 km/h) and you lower the engine speed to 1,323 rpm—well below the engine's sweet spot. Performance and gradeability are marginal because engine speed is too low. Drivers will want to compensate for that by running one gear down, which means fuel economy will suffer. In 9th gear at 1,813 rpm, you're way above the point of optimal fuel economy.

Drop road speed back to 60 mph, about 97 km/h, and you get an awful engine speed of just 1,221 rpm in top gear—dramatically too

low, such that highway performance will be extremely poor. You'll definitely have to run one gear lower in this case, but then your engine speed is 1,673 rpm, still well above optimal fuel economy.

"Multi-speed transmissions such as 13- and 18-speeds tend not to be impacted as severely as a 9- or a 10-speed," says Mack's powertrain marketing manager, Dave McKenna. "The top-gear step in a 10-speed is 26 to 27 percent. It's closer to 16 percent with the multispeed transmissions."



Even without the speed limiter issue, we're hearing more and more stories of some drivers routinely cruising one gear down from top, likely because they don't like the feel of 1,400 or fewer rpm or perhaps because they simply don't realize that current engines need such low revs to be anything like efficient.

Caterpillar's '07 motors want just 1,325 rpm for top-gear highway cruising, for example. Given gross weights above 80,000 lb, that verges on the impossible if driveability is to be maintained, so spec'ing for a cruise of 1,600 rpm has become the norm for heavier vehicles. Fuel economy is thus compromised, but there's really no choice.

The 105 km/h speed limiter law demands a similar compromise in many existing trucks, likely the majority of them. Again, your only choice is to grin and bear it until you buy new trucks and can spec for 105. Or you bear the considerable expense of changing your drive-axle ratio now, which just ain't going to happen.

should be able to keep up with traffic on all but the worst hills.

One of the factors in gearing is wheel and tire diameter, so once the truck's in service, don't change tire sizes without considering any effect on road and engine speed.

STARTABILITY: This is the steepest percentage grade on which a vehicle can be started from rest in first or low gear and accelerated. It's based on clutch-engagement torque at 800 rpm. The standard recommendation is a minimum startability factor of 15 percent for moderate on-highway trucks and 20 to 30 percent for severe off-highway trucks.

GEAR STEPS: These are important in terms of minimizing the number of shifts a driver has to make routinely and of keeping the engine in its most fuel-efficient range. As well, gears that are too tall will strain the entire drivetrain.

Multi-speed transmissions—those with 13 to 18 speeds—are often spec'd without much question when heavy gross weights are in the mix, but they're not always necessary. Your operating conditions—especially the terrain your trucks roll across—may well allow something different.

The fact is there's no single ideal drivetrain spec for any particular truck or job, so we suggest you and your dealer salesman go over this carefully. If there's anything unique about your work—or if you simply want to explore spec'ing possibilities—it would make sense to have him consult with the transmission maker and ask for their computer models to spit out workable combinations. You might be surprised.

MISCELLANY: Among the remaining factors, durability is pretty important, so it makes a ton of sense to spec things just a little heavier than you need. You don't want to design weakness into the mix before you pull pound one. You can get a bit clever here and check the durability of various components by inquiring with local remanufacturers. What wears out first? What breaks most often?

Another item: your differential choice, which is crucial to your driveshaft spec. If the rear end ratio is tall, you'll find that the driveshaft is under extreme torque stress, meaning you'll likely need a heavy and expensive one. For the sake of better balance, you might want to spec a deeper-reduction diff and move up to a

taller overdrive transmission.

Engine rpm and tire size are the main determinants of differential ratios. Smaller tires demand a taller diff or a tall overdrive transmission.

And then there's the desired weak link in the driveshaft assembly, which should be an easily accessible component deliberately spec'd for exactly the load you'll be pulling. The idea is to prevent the catastrophic

failure of expensive components like the engine or differentials by sacrificing a lesser, cheaper one like the clutch or U-joints.

Aside from gearing calculations, and your dealership can handle those, drivetrain spec'ing is not overly complex. Not as simple as it once was, but far more important if you're to get the most out of your equipment. And there's no room for anything but precision. ▲

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STYLE AND SUBSTANCE: Behind LoneStar's deliciously retro deep-V grille lurks some serious engineering. It turns heads anywhere it goes.

A Ride In Style

quick spin *International's flashy LoneStar will catch everyone's eye, but not the wind. By Jim Park*

Drivers and fleets hoping to maintain tight delivery schedules might want to refrain from ordering a LoneStar—at least until the novelty wears off. Personal experience suggests this buggy has the wow factor to generate crowds like no truck we've ever driven. While unloading in Montreal a

few weeks back, even the warehouse staff and the roach coach driver were out snapping pictures of the thing with their cell phones. Same thing at the truckstops. Be warned: hours of service could be compromised if you don't want to appear rude and aloof.

LoneStar isn't style over substance. It's

a solid, well-designed working truck with a host of technical advancements in addition to groundbreaking aerodynamic styling and performance. There are of course a few little things the designers missed—like every truck out there.

The bottom surface of the cubbyholes could use a soft rubber lining so the stuff inside them doesn't rattle around on the hard plastic, for instance. There are other minor irritants, but not really much to whine about, and no deal breakers. And hey, it has vent windows! That's worth more than a few points in my book.

SPEC SHEET

INTERNATIONAL LONESTAR ADVANCED CLASSIC

*with 73-in. high-rise sleeper,
244-in. wheelbase,
19,720-lb weight at the factory*

POWERTRAIN

Engine: Cummins ISX 455 ST 455 hp / 1550 & 1750 lb ft

Transmission: Eaton Fuller RTLO(F) 18918B 18-double-over

FRONT AXLE

Hendrickson Steertek Wide Track 12,350 lb

Suspension: Hendrickson Softek mono-leaf 12,350 lb

Brakes: S-cam 15 x 4-in. / 20 sq in. MGM Long-stroke chambers

Steering: TRW (Ross) PCF 60

Tires: 12R24.5 Michelin XZA3

REAR AXLES

Dana Spicer DS405 / RS405 40,000-lb, 3.55:1 ratio

Suspension: International IROS 40,000-lb, 52-in. spread

Drive shafts: Dana Spicer SPL250XL / SPL170XL

Brakes: S-cam 16.5 x 7 in. MGM TR3030 long-stroke chambers

Tires: 12R24.5 Michelin XDA3



BERTH COMFORT: The sleeper pictured here features the Rosewood trim, but it has all the same amenities as the one I drove.

CAB & SLEEPER

LoneStar's cab is both elegant and functional. Gauges are all visible (depends how you adjust seat and wheel), and very easy to read. They're gorgeously lit at night but they don't follow the 12 o'clock normal protocol.

The 73-in. sleeper was in suite configuration, meaning it had a Murphy bed that folds down from the back wall over a very comfortable sofa. This puts the bed a little higher off the floor than usual, but using that space for seating rather than a bed makes sense. It takes no effort or time to pull the bed down, and sitting on the sofa is more comfortable than sitting on the bed during downtime.



TOOL SPACE GALORE:

While it sits on just a 244-in. wheelbase, there's still more than six feet of open frame space between the fuel tank and the front drive wheel.

It's very quiet in there, too. I had a reefer running behind me, albeit a pretty quiet ThermoKing SB-210, but I could barely hear it from inside with the engine shut off.

DRIVE TIME

Before I get into the pleasures of driving the LoneStar, thanks are due to Martin Fry of Carrier Truck Centres in Brantford, Ont., for setting up the ride, and to Jim Peters of North Shore Transport Inc.,—also of Brantford—for letting me take his LoneStar on its maiden voyage. Jim was my dispatcher when I was a driver at Air Products and Chemicals, so I guess he figured I could be trusted.

I set out from Brantford to Montreal on a Sunday night loaded with 20 tons of frozen cinnamon buns, and ran smack into a blinding rain with the temperature hovering at around 3°C. The rain soon subsided, only to be replaced by a 40-knot headwind. Wind noise was virtually absent.

The truck ran at 100 km/h at 1,275 rpm, right in the sweet spot of the ISX 455. At 150 rpm above the lower limit of the peak torque band, it was very driveable along Ontario's Highway 401. A couple of pulls took me slightly below that point, but I let the engine lug and could really feel the torque rolling on as it crossed into the higher torque range above 1,100. That's a sweet feeling.

Even with the relatively light load and with the engine running on the low side of



SHIFT CHANGE: The gear shifter has a heck of a dogleg to it, which often makes for sloppy shifting. I didn't find that was the case with this one. There's ample room between the shifter and the seat.

In Gear

the Intebrake's retarding capability, it cruised down the hill on Highway 403 west of Hamilton in position 2. There's limited retarding power at that rpm, but it was enough to maintain my road speed. I'm sure it would easily keep a heavier truck at bay on a larger hill at 2,000 rpm.

Full marks to LoneStar in the ride and visibility department. The curved and slightly sloped leading edge of the hood

provided an extra measure of visibility on either side of the truck, and the slightly setback axle with 50-degree wheel cut made wheeling the thing around a joy. Even on Quebec's crumbling Highway 40, LoneStar never lost its footing. The ride was great, with the suspension leveling out all but the worst of the potholes.

Generally, driving straight down the road was a pleasing experience, but it



ACCESS ABILITY: Grease fittings and daily inspection points are within easy reach. The engine compartment is pretty clean, considering all that's crammed in there.

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drifted a little from time to time—can't say if it was my limited wheel time in the past 10 years, the wind, or the road. I'd rate the steering as easy and sure-footed, but it sometimes needed a little correction. It cornered well at high speeds and on the city streets. Very nice handling.

The LoneStar exceeded my expectations for ride, noise levels, roominess, and the intangible stuff like an attractive dash layout—especially at night—good body position while driving, and overall comfort.

Much of what makes it such a terrific truck was brought forward from the ProStar's design work. Some have said, in a complimentary way, that it's a ProStar with attitude. Ease of maintenance, structural integrity, and advanced electrics are but a few of the advantages passed down from ProStar. Driveability is another.

If you're a fan of classic styling but fearful of the running costs, this is a terrific compromise. International claims LoneStar at its worst is still six-percent smoother than other classic-styled trucks, and could be up to 12-percent better when a few bits of aero trim are included. It's classic through and through, with aero attributes that will please any cost-conscious operator. ▲

Jim Park is the former editor of *highwaySTAR* magazine, now a freelance truck writer. He can be reached at 905-227-5755, or j.park@sympatico.ca.



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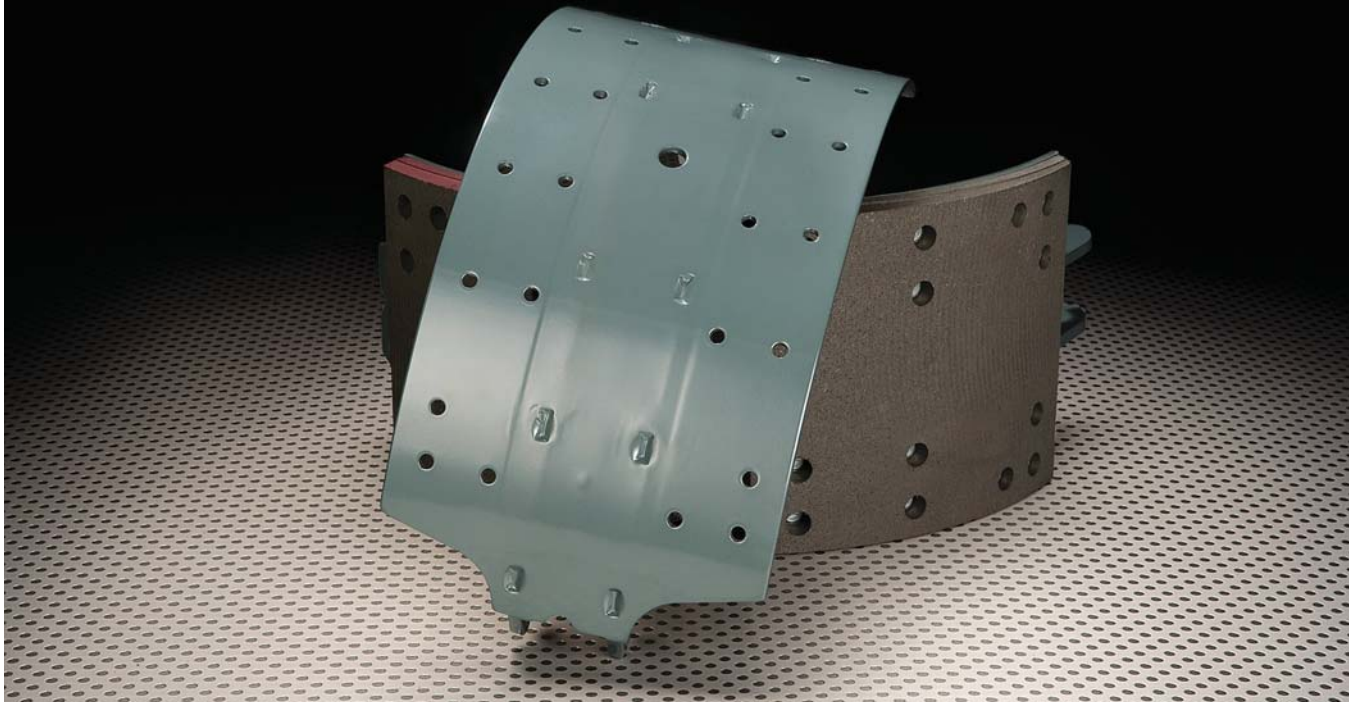
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GOODBYE RUST-JACKING?

ARVINMERITOR'S REMANUFACTURED BRAKE SHOES WITH 'PLATINUMSHIELD'
COATING OFFERS STRONGEST PROTECTION AGAINST CORROSION AND RUST-JACKING



Remanufactured brake shoes that resist the micro-abrasion leading to accelerated corrosion and rust-jacking are now available from **ARVINMERITOR**. The new PlatinumShield coating on these shoes brings with it a very strong three-year, 300,000-mile warranty against rust-jacking. And they promise to cut maintenance costs by eliminating premature brake jobs resulting from cracked liners.

The coating was developed by ArvinMeritor engineers specifically to resist micro-abrasion caused by the movement of the brake lining against

the shoe table during normal use. Rust-jacking occurs when rust forms on bare shoe metal under the lining, which can then lift and crack. It's been a recurring industry issue, exacerbated by the increased use of harsh liquid chemicals as winter road solvents.

The company says it conducted tests of these new reman shoes to evaluate surface rust after more than 400 hours of exposure to salt and road solvents. It says they achieved the highest possible ASTM1 scale rating of 10 (less than 0.01-percent surface rust). It's claimed that two competitive shoes had ratings of

one (50 percent surface rust) and two (33 percent surface rust).

Starting this month, these new remanufactured shoes will be standard on all Meritor remanufactured production shoes with 'MA' and 'R' prefixes—Meritor MG1, MG2L, MG2, CG, and MET OEM aftermarket shoes; and Fras-Le F550, F555, F577, F560, F587, F787T, and Combo shoes.

ArvinMeritor will make the PlatinumShield coating available to all OEM customers later in 2009 for new truck/trailer brake applications.

See www.arvinmeritor.com

SIDE-KIT TARP

THE MAVERICK FOR FLATBEDS, FROM QUICK DRAW TARPAULIN SYSTEMS **Quick Draw Tarpaulin Systems** calls its Maverick product "the next generation of side kits for flatbed vehicles." It features a smooth aerodynamic outer surface designed to increase fuel efficiency; side



panels located at maximum vehicle width to increase cargo space; a tarp-and-post hold-down technique that eliminates bungee cords; and a tarp tensioning mechanism that pulls the tarp tight.

The patented Maverick can be easily installed on any standard flatbed vehicle, says the manufacturer.

Ontario's Quick Draw is best known for its rolling tarp systems.

See www.quickdrawtarps.com

AUXILIARY LAMPS

NBB AUXILIARY LAMPS COME IN SEVERAL STYLES AND SIZES NBB auxiliary lamps from **NBB Canada**, representing ABL Lights Group, are made in Sweden. The lights come in



several styles and sizes, round and rectangular, with pencil and broad beams, halogen and xenon bulbs, on- and off-road specs. NBB has been making lights since 1946, incidentally.

In the picture above is the company's polished light bar on a Western star,

which comes with four lamp brackets and two solid mounts. The lamps are NBB Alpha 225s (225mm or 8.85 in. in diameter), which can be equipped with road-legal 55w halogen bulbs or, in two off-road versions, 100w halogen and 35w HID/Xenon bulbs. Broad-beam and pencil-beam patterns are available. With the Xenon bulb, the pencil beam lights the road a full kilometer ahead, but it's not

cheap—that full four-lamp setup costs about \$2,000 plus taxes with Xenon bulbs. It's just \$600 plus taxes in halogen form. Xenon will last 10 times longer than the 55w halogen bulb, however, and delivers three times the light with less power consumption. NBB says it's also better able to deal with vibration.

Smaller round 170mm (6.7 in.) lamps are also available in both halogen and

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Xenon types, as well as a rectangular lamp measuring 162 by 135 mm (6.4 x 5.3 in.).

All lamps have a strong fiberglass-reinforced plastic housing with polycarbonate or hardened-glass lenses, well sealed against weather, the company says.

NBB Canada, without a website, can be reached at 819-694-6000 or 888-622-2260, or by e-mail at nbbcanada@bellnet.ca. ABL's full catalog or spec sheets for each lamp can be downloaded at www.abllights.com.

REEFER COST SAVINGS

THERMO KING LAUNCHES ALL-NEW T-SERIES

From **Thermo King** comes the all-new T-Series of temperature-control units for straight trucks. They're available for order now.

The T-Series is said to provide improved performance and a lower life-cycle cost.

New and improved features include the new TSR-2 controller with durable LED technology that helps to ensure the correct parameters are set.



Customers can choose between the time-tested reciprocating compressor or the new scroll compressor, which boasts added technology for improved reliability, higher capacity, and greater fuel efficiency, says Thermo King.

Stationary or the optional over-the-road Hybrid SmartPower electric operation can mean substantial fuel savings and zero emissions.

Enhanced Whisper technology makes the T-Series the quietest Thermo King truck units ever, the company says.

See www.thermoking.com

HEAVY HAULING

ASPEN'S NEW 13-AXLE TRANSPORTER **Aspen Custom Trailers** says its new 13-axle transporter is its most versatile heavy-haul transporter ever. Starting with the basic configuration of a tri-axle jeep,



tri-axle lowbed and tri-axle booster, over-dimensional loads are readily accommodated. When the load requires a longer deck, lower deck height and more maneuverability, you simply add a rear goose-neck and replace the booster with Aspen's dual-purpose six-axle steering dolly.

Based in Alberta, Aspen manufactures custom-built trailers and components from 25- to 600-ton capacities.

See www.aspentrailer.com

ONLINE ORDER TRACKING

LINK LOGISTICS INTRODUCES ONLINE ORDER TRACKING FOR OPSCENTER CUSTOMERS

TransCore's Link Logistics unit has launched online order tracking for its Canadian Link OpsCenter customers, allowing them and their customers to monitor freight shipments through secure Web access. By logging into <http://myload.linkopscenter.com> with a user name and password, both carriers and their shippers will be able to see if an order has been picked up, delivered on time, or where it is in transit.

This online freight-tracking capability provides customers immediate, real-time information about the status of their order in transit, which should mean improved operational efficiency and productivity. As well, time-consuming status inquiries and miscommunication are eliminated and accountability is improved. Not least, it helps ensure a competitive service edge.

TransCore is a transportation services company with installations in 46 countries. It created the LoadLink freight-matching network in North America by merging both U.S.-based DAT Services and Canada's Link Logistics.

See www.loadlink.ca or www.transcore.com

DRIVER HIRING, RETENTION

NEW TENSTREET OFFERING ADDS DRIVER RETENTION TO SUITE OF ONLINE DRIVER MANAGEMENT SERVICES

The massive amount of paperwork—and recruiter time—involved in hiring, managing, and retaining drivers can be dramatically reduced by the use of software and online services from **Tenstreet, LLC**.

For instance, using Tenstreet IntelliApp, the collection of prospective driver history and employment data can be fully automated at the first point of contact. Applications include signed drug and alcohol releases without the need for a fax. The interactive online application ensures the completeness and accuracy of the driver's employment history, and can dynamically change to capture additional data depending on previous responses.

Tenstreet Xpress is another application that speeds up the recruiting process and quickly rejects applicants who don't meet pre-set criteria.

Tenstreet Xchange co-ordinates all the data sources connected to an application and does away with the jumble of faxes, sticky notes, and phone calls.

The Tenstreet Forms Engine can rid you of paper-based forms by creating forms online, and you can get a legal signature on them without leaving the screen.

In some cases the company can even manage conflict resolution between, say, drivers and dispatchers. Its latest tool is a retention service, known as Tenstreet Xtend. It service provides the foundation to establish effective communication channels between employees and management to quickly identify and correct issues/concerns that need immediate attention.

Tenstreet says this can be particularly helpful during the first 90 days of a new driver's hiring—a period in which most accidents occur and turnover rates are especially high. Tenstreet staff support the program by providing custom-made metrics and call-out reports, as well as providing personal contact with drivers to track issues and provide solutions. This creates opportunities for fleets to identify and react to recurring issues even if those issues are specific to a given

terminal, driver type or any other variation.

Tenstreet was established in 2005, and currently works with a wide range of private and for-hire trucking fleets throughout North America. It's especially keen to add Canadian clients.

See www.tenstreet.com

PROTECT YOUR FUEL

TRUCKPROTECT OFFERS FUEL-THEFT PREVENTION DEVICE

TruckProtect North America has launched a fuel-theft prevention device for heavy trucks. Available to fit all makes of class 7/8 vehicles, the European designed and engineered Neck-It! anti-siphon device is already in use elsewhere, deterring fuel theft in over 100,000 vehicles around the world. For a limited time, it's available for just US\$75.

Theft is still an issue despite lower fuel prices, TruckProtect points out.



Neck-It! fits in minutes and requires no drilling or gluing. It contains no moving parts and deters siphoning by having holes much smaller than 1/2 inch, yet allows hands-free high-speed fuel filling without splash-back. Should Neck-It need to be removed at any point, this can be achieved in a workshop; in a parking lot, however, thieves will probably choose to look elsewhere.

Neck-It! is available directly from Texas-based TruckProtect North America (615-866-7984). The company is also looking for retail distributors via that same number or e-mail to chris.helm@truckprotect.com.

See www.truckprotect.com

Retail Diesel Price Watch

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CITY	Price	(+/-) Previous Week	Excl. Taxes
WHITEHORSE	94.4	-0.5	78.7
VANCOUVER *	91.1	-0.5	59.0
VICTORIA	91.5	-1.2	62.0
PRINCE GEORGE	79.3	-1.4	53.8
KAMLOOPS	83.7	-0.2	58.0
KELOWNA	82.6	-3.3	56.9
FORT ST. JOHN	87.4		61.5
YELLOWKNIFE	92.9		75.4
CALGARY *	76.7		60.1
RED DEER	76.4	-1.0	59.8
EDMONTON	73.0	-0.6	56.5
LETHBRIDGE	74.7	-0.3	58.2
LLOYDMINSTER	80.4	-1.5	63.6
REGINA *	77.6	-2.0	54.9
SASKATOON	79.2	-0.4	56.5
PRINCE ALBERT	76.9		54.2
WINNIPEG *	78.7	-1.0	59.5
BRANDON	79.9		60.6
TORONTO *	80.9	-0.7	58.7
OTTAWA	82.2	-2.7	60.0
KINGSTON	80.1	0.3	58.0
PETERBOROUGH	81.9	-1.0	59.7
WINDSOR	77.8	-0.8	55.8
LONDON	77.9	-1.5	55.9
SUDBURY	83.4	-1.0	61.1
SAULT STE MARIE	89.9		67.3
THUNDER BAY	84.7	-1.0	62.4
NORTH BAY	83.0	-2.1	60.8
TIMMINS	89.3	-1.4	66.7
HAMILTON	79.5	-1.3	57.4
ST. CATHARINES	80.7	-1.3	58.5
MONTRÉAL *	90.6	-0.3	60.0
QUÉBEC	88.9	-2.0	58.6
SHERBROOKE	88.9	-2.0	58.6
GASPÉ	88.9	-1.0	62.4
CHICOUTIMI	86.4	-1.2	60.2
RIMOUSKI	86.9	-4.5	56.8
TROIS RIVIÈRES	89.4	-1.2	59.0
DRUMMONDVILLE	87.9	-2.0	57.7
VAL D'OR	90.9	-1.0	64.2
SAINT JOHN *	86.5	-2.4	55.6
FREDERICTON	87.2	-2.5	56.2
MONCTON	87.8	-2.5	56.8
BATHURST	91.4	-2.5	60.0
EDMUNDSTON	88.2	-2.4	57.2
MIRAMICHI	88.3	-2.2	57.2
CAMPBELLTON	88.3	-2.4	57.2
SUSSEX	87.0	-2.3	56.1
WOODSTOCK	91.9		60.4
HALIFAX *	84.8	-3.5	55.6
SYDNEY	88.5	-3.5	58.9
YARMOUTH	86.9	-3.5	57.5
TRURO	85.6	-3.5	56.3
KENTVILLE	85.7	-3.5	56.5
NEW GLASGOW	87.7	-4.1	58.2
CHARLOTTETOWN *	84.7	-4.7	57.8
ST JOHNS *	97.3		65.6
GANDER	93.8		62.5
LABRADOR CITY	104.6		72.1
CORNER BROOK	96.0		64.5
CANADA AVERAGE (V)	82.8	-0.7	58.9

V-Volume Weighted
(+/-) indicates price variations from previous week.
Diesel includes both full-serve and self-serve prices.
The Canada average price is based on the relative weights of 10 cities (*)

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MAGAZINE WEBSITE

UNDER-BUNK FRIDGE

DOMETIC EXPANDS LINE WITH SPACE-SAVING CD-30 REFRIGERATOR

Dometic Automotive's new under-bunk refrigerator unit, model CD-30, has a convenient slide-out drawer. It's designed to fit beneath the bunk or in other locations like a closet or shelf, providing over 1 cubic foot of interior space.

The compact fridge is just 9.8 in. high, 17.5 in. wide, and 28.25 in. deep, and weighs 39.7 lb. It runs on standard 12- or 24-volt DC power. The unit has a steel exterior with protective coating, and the polystyrene interior is said to be easy to clean and maintain. The DC-powered



Danfoss compressor is designed for long life under the toughest over-the-road conditions, says Dometic. The refrigerator's oversized condenser protects against compressor overheating and there are built-in low-voltage and high-pressure cutout circuits for extra protection.

See www.dometicusa.com

CONSOLE WORKSTATION

KENWORTH ADDS WORKSTATION OPTION

Kenworth's optional workstation for daycab and extended-daycab T660, T800, W900 and C500 models is located between the driver and passenger seats, offering nearly 2 cu ft of space for storage



of files, books, small printers and laptops. When opened, paperwork can be completed on a 140-sq-in. writing surface. When closed, the 100-sq-in. top

hosts a cup holder, and a pencil tray. Two 12-volt accessory power outlets are built-in. This option has been offered in the company's T170, T270 and T370 medium-duty trucks for some time.

See www.kenworth.com

ON-BOARD SCALE

AIR-WEIGH'S SCALE FOR MACK CAMELBACK TRUCKS

Air-Weigh has announced a new sensor and software configuration designed for vocational vehicles equipped with the Mack Camelback drive suspension. This new configuration is available for Air-Weigh's LoadMaxx product line, adding to scales already available for the

Hendrickson Haulmaxx and HN series suspensions. Air-Weigh digital on-board scales feature an in-dash display that shows GVW, net payload, plus steer- and drive-axle weights.

The scale can be installed on dump trucks, mixers, and refuse vehicles that use the Mack Camelback drive suspension. The scale incorporates Air-Weigh's patented deflection sensor technology,

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To keep on top of these and other issues, you'll want to check out The Full Story next time you visit todaystrucking.com.



which is said to provide accurate weight measurement on steer and drive axles with mechanical suspensions.

Air-Weigh scales offer user-programmable alarms to indicate warning and overweight conditions, multiple digital data interfaces capable of transmitting weight information to on-board computers, and PIN-protected dual-point calibration.

See www.air-weighscales.com

MOBILE VIDEO CAMERA

CAPTURE THE ACCIDENT ON VIDEO AND MAYBE AVOID LIABILITY AND DEDUCTIBLE COSTS

Winnipeg's **CVCMobile** sells a variety of Canadian-made mobile video equipment and claims that increased traffic congestion makes the need for high-quality video recording "a must" on commercial vehicles. It says mobile video products often prove true liability and can save big dollars on deductibles, possibly preventing 50 percent of at-fault determinations when the culprit in an accident isn't otherwise clear. The cost of the equipment, says the company, might well be repaid in just one incident. It can rig up to four cameras in full color with an optional in-cab display, plus motion detection, even an optional GPS unit.

CVCMobile says that one camera facing forward through the windshield and one camera mounted rearward on each of the outside mirrors allows a system to 'see' most of a tractor and trailer. A seven- or 10-in.

ceiling-mounted monitor is available so the driver can 'see' too—not just in real time but, for example, when he returns to the truck after a truckstop break and finds damage to the vehicle. With the monitor he can quickly view the recording and determine what happened. Images can be converted quickly to a standard PC format to create court-quality video. Systems are designed, manufactured and tested in Canada for use in difficult Canadian environments. The small Sony-based camera shown



BENDIX OVERCOMES EFFECTS OF TURBO LAG

The Pneumatic Booster System (PBS) from Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems is a nifty approach to engine intake air that overcomes turbo lag. It's not quite ready for prime time, and the company won't give us a date.

This is cool stuff, the first air-management system of its kind to simultaneously improve fuel economy and acceleration while reducing engine emissions, the company says. Bendix calls it "groundbreaking," and that may well be the word to apply.

The booster is placed near the engine's air intake manifold where it monitors the Controller Area Network (CAN) for specific signals. Once the conditions for activation are met, the PBS injects compressed air from an auxiliary air tank into the manifold, delivering the air needed by the diesel combustion process.

Typically, explains Bendix, when a driver hits the throttle, there's a delay in engine response because the turbo can't

spin up fast enough. That lag is the time difference between acceleration demand and the maximum air delivery of the turbocharger. The PBS system overcomes that lag by instantaneously feeding air, allowing the turbocharger to spin up to

its full capacity and then to take over air delivery demands as usual.

Several years in development already, it's currently undergoing internal validation, as well as field and engine benchmarking. Initial testing shows that adding PBS to a 7.8-liter engine results in better overall performance than you'd get in a



Bendix Pneumatic Boost System

typical 10-liter motor. The implication is that PBS will allow smaller, more fuel-efficient engines to replace big ones, while doing the same work.

Currently, there are two models that reach 80 percent of all engine applications between them. The Bendix PBS 200 model is for 4- to 8-liter engines, while the PBS 400 aims at 8- to 13-liter engines.

See www.bendix.com

here is not much bigger than a loonie and can withstand temperatures from minus 40°C to plus 65°C.

See www.cvcmobile.com

NIGHT VISION SYSTEM

PANA-PACIFIC'S PATHFINDER LETS DRIVERS SEE MUCH FURTHER THAN HEADLIGHTS

Pana-Pacific says FLIR's PathFindIR Driver's Night Vision System, a compact thermal imager, allows drivers to see up to four times farther in total darkness than they can see with headlights. Typical headlights only let you see about 450 ft straight ahead, but this system sees heat not light, making road hazards like animals, pedestrians and disabled vehicles visible at night or day, in good weather and bad, without being blinded by the glare of oncoming headlights.

This complete kit includes: thermal Night Vision camera with universal mounting bracket and hardware for securing and aiming the camera, along with a high-resolution 7-in. LCD monitor with wide viewing angle. It has, three PAL/NTSC camera inputs and one front-panel A/V input for the PathFindIR camera. There's also an earphone output jack, built-in speaker, mirror and normal image switch, button-controlled brightness, and full-function remote. The set comes with a 20-ft cable and installation instructions.

The camera, when mounted in its bracket, is very small—about 3 by 3 by 4 in. The connection between the camera and cable is completely sealed against moisture. The camera must be mounted outside the cab of the vehicle, as it cannot 'see' through glass.

See www.panapacific.com ▲

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By Peter Carter

One person's carrot is another person's shtick

How to motivate the troops when times are lean

The following column is going to get somebody in trouble and I'm pretty sure that that somebody is going to be me. A few years ago when my son Michel was about 11, we were eating supper on the back deck. My wife, Helena, was annoyed with Michel's pokey dining technique. At one point, in one of those ultimatums that arrives disguised as a question, she said, "Would you pull-ease eat your French fries now, Michel?"

Michel was not cooperating. Helena was not amused.

Then she stood up to go into the kitchen for something.

As soon as she was inside, Michel scarfed down every last one of the fries he had and just before Helena got back he snatched a few from my plate, slammed them down onto his own and let on as if nothing happened.

Turns out he was dawdling simply to bug his mom.

I thought, "The bugger. He's just like those drivers I met at the CB store."

A few days earlier, I spent an afternoon at a store called Queensway CB. It's not far from our office and just around the corner from Pearson Airport.

If you need anything citizen's-band-radio-related, this is your joint. I was there to learn about state-of-the-art gear but what I picked up instead was a lesson about the workforce we spend most of our days among.

Over the course of my visit, five truck drivers came and went, all of them in the market for a CB or some other accessory.

Of the five, three tried out microphones with special effects. These mics could make the user's voice sound ghoulish. Or, if they so chose, the driver could emit a strange and irritating reverberation.

To my ears, that stuff's about as welcome as hip hop music, which is to say, not very.

I asked the guys. Two of them told me—completely independent of one another—that they thought the microphones were amusing and fun.

One—a polite young man who resembled the actor Johnny Depp and who told me I wasn't the first person to say so—put it this way: "After a long hard day behind the wheel, there's nothing quite as relaxing as annoying people."

I don't know about you but until that moment, I never realized that some guys reward themselves by bugging people. To each, my late mother would say, his own.

And that's exactly the kind of information that can come in handy, especially these days when you're doing your darndest to motivate your people with what might be the fewest resources you've ever had. How do you get the best out of people? The first thing you must figure out is, what makes them tick?

Here's the great news. I was at a seminar recently at which the CEO of one of Canada's top for-hire carriers said that even when he tries to incent drivers to, say, avoid hard braking or speeding, he finds a few extra bucks in their pockets don't get them charged up much as, say, a few extra days off would.

Instinct would tell you that money talks but evidently, it's not as loud as it used to be.

Other people are motivated by winning. You know those competitive types. They like winning contests and bragging rights.

After a long hard day behind the wheel, there's nothing quite as relaxing as annoying people.

Still others want to be liked. They're the kind that want to see their names in the company newsletter as do-gooders.

Company jackets are usually prized items. So are cards for free Timmies. For a driver like the one I met, you could reward him with, well, a toy. Such as a video game or special-effects mic. Use your imagination.

Sometimes, though, it does come down to money, but the delivery has to be right.

One of the gentlemen I was sitting with at that conference mentioned that if you want to get a driver to buy into a pay-fuel-conservation bonus program, don't waste time explaining the details to the driver.

Tell the spouse.

When she gets wind of how driving slowly will yield cash, she'll get him to ease up on the foot feed. ▲



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