

**SURVIVAL:** Allan Robison on doing what has to be done, PG. 29



April 2009  
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# Today's Trucking

The Business Magazine of Canada's Trucking Industry

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Wake up to apnea **PAGE 44**

## Fleets that stay Afloat

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to the big: page 30

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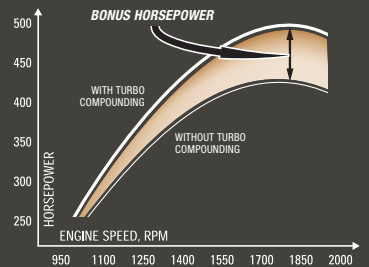


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The Business Magazine of Canada's Trucking Industry

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**Owe, no!**

Re: *Cannon Balls*, by David Menzies, Feb.09.

I'd like to add a couple of things from my own experience regarding the subject of debt collection. Given the current economic situation, it's bound to be on a lot of people's minds.

While there's merit in Mr. Cannon's unorthodox collection methods, in many cases a creditor's only recourse will be legal means. The article states "You can chase after a debtor via the courts. But this is typically a lengthy and costly process. What's more, winning a court case merely awards the victorious plaintiff a judgment—not the money. While essentially true, all's not as hopeless as it seems.

A few years ago I had a client who decided he no longer required our services. Perhaps because he was in a different province and felt insulated or maybe he thought many companies would prefer to not get buried in legal proceedings so would resign themselves to the loss, he decided to ignore our last few invoices, totaling approximately \$5,000. For my business partner and myself it became a matter of principal, and we decided we'd do whatever it took to seek justice. We were lucky enough to find a small, one-man collection agency who within a matter of three months managed to collect the outstanding amount in full, and as a bonus, caused the deadbeat customer considerable embarrassment.

The agency's fee was 40 percent but that included all legal and court fees and was only payable if he won. Compared to the zero percent we were looking at if we did nothing, it was a bargain. I don't know how the agency went about it, but I'm assuming they took our case to small-claims court. However, as mentioned in your article, receiving a favorable judgment is not the same as receiving the money. Fortunately for us this collection agency was able to get the courts to garnishee our customer's largest customers' payables. Legal instructions were sent to his customers, directing them to send any money owed to him, up to the amount he owed us plus court costs, to us. Suddenly, Mr. Deadbeat became anxious to clear things up the moment his customers got involved and started questioning him about the garnishee.

Also, I've learned when a customer starts falling behind, you should act on it sooner than later. In two instances, I was reluctant to cut off a customer because I felt we had a long-term business relationship that seemed like a personal friendship. Both times, I wound up shafted for considerable sums.

In both cases I "worked with them" when they asked for patience while dealing with "temporary" financial troubles, only to find out that they were simply stalling while orchestrating an organized and relatively easy-to-accomplish bankruptcy, which allowed them to walk away from creditors and resume business under another name, the very next day. I was thinking I was a compassionate friend. It turned out I was little more than a naïve sucker. As difficult as it might be, at the first sign of trouble, don't hesitate to cut off delinquent accounts and begin collection proceedings.

Mike Briant,  
Dodd Driver Personnel,  
Toronto

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By Rolf Lockwood



# Emissions Reconsidered

In the name of the levity we all need, I give you once again the riveting issue of bovine flatulence—with a new international spin.

**T**ruly, these days I don't know whether to laugh or cry. I exaggerate a bit, but you'll know what I mean. The world has gone quite nuts.

All the more reason to laugh when the opportunity arises. As it did the other day when my trusted colleague Marco Beghetto passed me the URL for a story about cows that appeared recently in the London Times online ([www.timesonline.co.uk](http://www.timesonline.co.uk)). He wondered aloud what aliens in the clouds could possibly think as they look down on humankind. It's a good question.

If you remember my crack about cows maybe needing 'farticulate' filters in my editorial a couple of issues ago (*January 2009, 'A New World'*), you'll also remember the U.S. controversy about an Environmental Protection Agency report dealing with greenhouse gases from motor vehicles. It was vague enough that the American Farm Bureau Federation thought the EPA had left open the possibility of taxing livestock because they produce a heck of a lot of methane when they... well, when they break wind, which apparently they do rather a lot. The AFBF figured farms with more than 25 dairy cows would have to pay an annual fee of about \$175 per beast. Ruinous, the farmers declared.

Well, the idea has spread across the Atlantic like a bad smell. The European Union has demanded emissions cuts, if you'll pardon the expression, and has proposed an elaborate greenhouse gases trading scheme amongst member countries. But agricultural emissions aren't included in the plan, so individual EU nations must deal with them on their own. In the Irish Republic and Denmark, legislators have proposed penalizing cows for their vile flatulence.

Needless to say, farming groups have been raising a stink of their own.

In Ireland there could be a levy of about 20 bucks per animal and Denmark is talking about a toot tax of more than 125 beans for each leaky quadruped. The idea is that the resultant tax revenue would offset penalties imposed by the EU for other emissions transgressions.

So that's a minimum of three times as much enviro-hurt from cows as from trucks, maybe as much as nine times.

In fact, I've long asserted that compared to the natural emissions of cows and other creatures, all of them otherwise very respectable, trucks are paragons of environmental virtue. Yet those of you who buy trucks pay through the nose for the right to proclaim that your engines are as clean as the law demands. Not \$20 per iron steed, not even a \$100 penalty, but thousands. Volvo, for example, says the upcharge for a 2010 engine will be just shy of \$10,000.

Yet livestock, says the United Nations, contribute 18 percent of all the greenhouse gases believed to cause global warming. A quick Google search failed to turn up a compellingly credible equivalent for trucks, so I'll use the six percent figure for American trucks touted by the Union of Concerned Scientists, a U.S. environmental interest group. Those nerdy tree-huggers can't be far off, but look at the relative truck density of the U.S. compared to the rest of the world. Globally, that six percent figure must be more like two.

So that's a minimum of three times as much enviro-hurt from cows as from trucks, maybe as much as nine times. We're paying through the nose, folks, as if you didn't understand that one already.

And it gets worse, as I pointed out back in January. Methane, the nasty stuff that wafts out of bovine backsides, is about 20 times more toxic than the gases coming out your exhaust stacks.

Now consider this too. Since the 1970s we've reduced our trucks' emissions by well over 80 percent, chopped their fuel guzzling by 50 percent or so, and increased their payload efficiency, as measured in litres/tonnes per kilometre, by 300 percent.

To put it in another perspective, I read somewhere recently that one truck built in 1988 coughed out as much pollution as 60 trucks built to our 2007 spec.

Can cows lay claim to the same record? No ma'am. Not even close. Truth is, in emissions terms, they haven't improved since they first arrived on the planet. Given the poisons that probably permeate the grass they chew on all day, they've no doubt gotten worse.

So tax the crap out of them, I say. ▲

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

# Dispatch

BY MARCO BEGHETTO

## Pay It Forward

The Supreme Court has an opinion on whether local 'freight forwarders' can handle interprovincial freight. The implications are surprising.

A pending Supreme Court of Canada decision could define once and for all the legal status of freight forwarders whose physical operations are regional in scope, but interprovincially work with third parties with nation-wide reach.

All eyes are on Woodbridge, Ont.-based Consolidated Fastfrate (CFF). At press time the carrier was awaiting the Supreme Court's decision on whether the cross-dock, intermodal carrier can be federally unionized, but anxious Canadian freight forwarders are left wondering what other implications a possible landmark ruling holds. In late February the court heard all the arguments, but reserved its decision on whether the company is a national entity and thereby governed by federal labor laws, including collective bargaining standards. Consolidated Fastfrate,

which is owned by American private equity firm Fenway Partners, considers itself a freight-forwarding business since it collects customers' local shipments, consolidates them at its cross-dock terminals in major cities, then arranges for interprovincial transportation with third-party carriers, mainly CP Rail. When the shipments arrive at a Fastfrate facility at the other end, the company de-consolidates them into LTL loads and hauls them to customers with its own trucks or contracted drivers. At issue is whether the carrier's physical handling of the freight on a local basis qualifies it strictly as a provincially regulated carrier, despite marketing itself for interprovincial transport via a network of partners.

Several messages left by *Today's Trucking* for CEO and president Ron Tepper were not returned.



**DOCKS IN A ROW:** Does an 'undertaking' actually mean taking freight? The Supreme Court decides.

Most national transport companies — particularly marine, air, rail and a majority of linehaul carriers — fall under Ottawa's jurisdiction for labor relations. The definition of a forwarder,

though, is murkier. As a result, certain firms could be considered provincial if their active role is limited merely to the local organization and distribution of interprovincial freight.

# ...thes

In 2004, CFF employees in Calgary were unionized by the Calgary Employees Association (CEA). Enter, then, the Teamsters, which convinced the Alberta Labour Relations Board (ALRB) to certify the union so it could collectively bargain under the Federal Labour Code for all non-clerical workers in Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba. Arguing the Teamsters lacked employee support, the company and CEA opposed the move, requesting it be quashed, though to no avail.

But a year later, the CEA was reinstated when Alberta Court of Queen's Bench judge Dennis Hart reviewed the case and found that the Labour Board erred in finding Fastfrate is sufficiently involved in interprovincial transport to be governed by federal labor laws.

The Teamsters responded by taking the case to the Alberta Court of Appeal, which in 2007 sided with the original ALRB ruling and declared CFF to be a federally regulated company once again. Here, the Court emphasized that the physical transport of cargo was not the main issue, but "whether the functional nature of the operation is to connect the provinces."

With one bullet left to fire back, CFF, appealed to the Supreme Court.

Lawyer Gavin Magrath, a partner at Magrath O'Connor LLP in Toronto whose been following the situation closely, agrees the case has implications.

"The case has nothing to do with the fact that CFF thinks of itself as a local operation, and everything to do with the fact they already had a local union, so if that makes them a local operation, then the Teamsters cannot be certified," he says. "I expect even (CFF) are not even looking at the bigger issue, which is the labor issue of the Teamsters coming in and unionizing local shops.

"It would be precedent setting in terms of how the labor code is applied, but the applicability of the decision will almost certainly go beyond that because the issues they'll be looking at are the same that they would look at in a similar analysis brought on by an entirely different (case) such as one dealing with provincial or federal regulatory enforcement."

In similar cases involving other companies, lower courts have traditionally looked at the issue in one of

## WHAT TIME IS IT?

Time to pay more, perhaps.



## Right ON TIME

**B**uy American or Buyer Beware? That's what Canadian cross-border shippers, importers, and carriers might be asking themselves these days.

Still digesting the implications of the 'Buy American' provisions included in the colossal U.S. stimulus package in February, foreign traders might soon have to deal with another seemingly quasi-protectionist rule, which slaps a fee on every shipment that enters or leaves the U.S.

Proposed by California Republican Ken Calvert and Illinois Democrat Jesse Jackson Jr., the Our Nation's Trade Infrastructure, Mobility and Efficiency Act (ON TIME)—and yes, that's its real name—would impose a "trade gateway corridor" fee on all goods.

The fees—to be paid by the shipper moving the cargo internationally—would be set at 0.075 percent of the declared market value per shipment, up to a maximum of \$500. "One hundred percent" of the expected \$5 billion a year in proceeds would go towards upgrading U.S. roads, bridges and port infrastructure along 300 frequently accessed trade corridors and ports of entry. Despite certain characterizations from industry, the authors insist the rule isn't a protectionist

measure. Instead, it would benefit domestic companies and their foreign trade partners by reducing transport costs associated with traffic congestion and shipping delays.

Projects eligible to receive funding from the fee revenue include, freeway expansion, grade separations, dedicated truck lanes, and publicly owned intermodal freight transfer facilities.

"This bill serves a dual purpose by expediting the movement of goods to increase the efficiency of trade corridors and by providing transportation funding to those local communities most impacted by trade," states Rep. Calvert in a press release. Like the idea of recouping all your accessorial charges, that all sounds great in theory.

Canadian Trucking Alliance President David Bradley routinely notes how redundant security and indifference to the thickening border is actually masked or a backdoor mode of protectionism. Still, he's holding out hope that the new regime is open to a "more practical approach" to managing the border.

The bill has been sent to committee in the U.S. House of Representatives for further analysis.



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two ways—either the rights of unions to organize local businesses or whether companies are trying to sidestep federal regulatory obligations. In Ontario, for example, “the Court did not want (companies) to think they could be an interprovincial or international undertaking and be shielded from the regulatory regime by casting itself as an exclusively local agent.

“It would be nice in this case if those combinations were resolved because it doesn’t make sense, at least to me, that they would be resolved separately every time.”

Though at the heart of it all, Magrath believes the SC will choose to define what an ‘undertaking’ actually is—and whether it has to do with when and where a company handles freight, if at all.

“Most of my (freight forwarding) clients will never have any cartage operations; they’ll never touch the cargo,” he explains. “So

the question is first ‘what is an undertaking’ and further, what if you’re a pure forwarder and don’t do a thing other than act locally as contractor or agent and yet still offer to the customer a service that ultimately includes delivery of their cargo to a destination outside the province? Can that be enough to make a local forwarder or broker an interprovincial undertaking?”

We’ll see soon enough.

## Truckmakers

### Hebe Uncut: O-Os Dying Breed

Is Jim Hebe the most compelling guy in trucking? Strictly from the point of view of truck writers—we think yes.

Among his more provocative declarations during a recent stop in Toronto: The North American owner-operator as we know him is nearing extinction.

Keep reading because

that’s just one of many candid industry insights offered up by the outspoken former Freightliner honcho-turned-Navistar International senior VP, at a private dinner for about 60 loyal Canadian customers.



Unless he’s linked to a strong, dedicated carrier to help him structure payments, get cheaper insurance and have steady access to profitable freight, “the day of the owner-operator as an independent stand-alone is

coming to an end,” the always outspoken Hebe said confidently.

He explains how a combination of demographics, bad economics and stringent regulations has taken a severe toll on the pool of owner-ops in Canada and the U.S., adding that new hours-of-service rules alone have chased many independent haulers out of the industry already. “Running legal doesn’t work for a lot of (owner ops’) business models,” he said.

As for fleets, some of the largest truckload carriers are realizing that “big is big enough.” Many are downsizing and drastically cutting capacity with no intention of ramping up just for marketshare’s sake in the foreseeable future.

“Fuel is down now, but the days of \$4.50-a-gallon diesel have not been forgotten and have changed operations for good.”

Having spent nearly 40



## LOG BOOK

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### April 16-18

**ExpoCam 2009**, Place Bonaventure, Montréal. ExpoCam, owned and operated by the publisher of this magazine, Newcom Business Media, is where the decision makers in the Canadian trucking industry come to see and buy. The show is Quebec’s leading trade event for all those involved in the industry. Contact: 877/682-7469 or click on [www.expocam.ca](http://www.expocam.ca).



### April 28-29

**Supply Chain & Logistics Canada Annual Conference**, Paramount Conference and Event Venue, Toronto. Titled “Supply Chain Leadership: Raising the Bar,” this two-day event put on by SCL and CITA also features the popular Transpo exhibition. Contact: Marle-Rae Dupee 905/513-7300 or go to [www.sclcanada.org](http://www.sclcanada.org).

### May 24-27

**Canadian Transportation Research Forum 44th Annual Conference**, Inn at Laurel Point, Victoria. This year’s conference—

titled “The Impact of Volatility on Canada’s Supply Chains and Transportation,” will be a great benefit for anyone operating in the transport-logistics sector. Contact: 306/242-6199 or click on [www.ctrf.ca](http://www.ctrf.ca).

### May 30-31

**Road Today Truck Show**, Powerade Centre, Brampton, Ont. Newcom Business Media has teamed up with Road Today Media Group for this event, which includes an indoor and outdoor trade show, show & shine, job fair, entertainment, and loads of ethnic food. Contact: 905/487-1320 or email [truckshow@roadtoday.com](mailto:truckshow@roadtoday.com).

### 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 click on [www.masterpromotions.ca/atlantic-truck-show.asp](http://www.masterpromotions.ca/atlantic-truck-show.asp).

PROStar

# 2010

## TIME TO SWITCH



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MILES AHEAD

years around trucks, Hebe says the current environment “is the most interesting in (his) lifetime.” Trucking is certainly accustomed to sharp turns in the business cycle, but now “the cycles are coming quicker and the impacts are more severe than ever before.”

Historically, he says, cycles are driven mainly by three things: the economy, fuel prices, and legislation. “But this is a perfect storm where we’re dealing with all three things nearly at once,” observes Hebe, who notes that for perhaps the first time, truckers will have to manage a major environmental standard directly following one of the deepest recessions in history. “There are no rules, no history, and

## OVER THE EAGLE LIMIT:

**W**e can’t wait to see how they log this one. Florida-based driver Matthew Roberto Gonzalez was on I-80 in Northeast Nevada when his cab had an unexpected visitor. According to the Associated Press, a 15-lb golden eagle with a seven-foot wingspan came crashing through the windshield. And lived to squawk about it (sorry, we couldn’t help ourselves).

Co-driver Daryl Young was sleeping when the eagle landed. On him, AP reports Young as saying: “I heard a loud thump like a brick or something coming through the glass. I woke up, and the windshield was all over me. Next thing I know there was a big bird lying on the floor.”

The good news—for the bird—is it wasn’t seriously hurt.

“The guys in the truck immediately bailed out because it was one ticked off bird. She was pretty feisty,” police said.



no looking back to lessons of the past because there aren’t any for what’s happening.”

Unlike the Sterling plant in St. Thomas, Navistar’s Chatham heavy-duty plant hasn’t shut down—although it’s now down to 200 full-time workers and Hebe hinted that new negotiations

with the CAW are required to keep the facility competitively viable for the long-term.

### ENGINE, ENGINE No. ‘10’:

The marketing war between Navistar and its competitors over 2010 emissions technology is in full swing, and Hebe certainly wasn’t shy

about rolling up his sleeves too. He didn’t pull punches when discussing his rivals’ decision to go with selective catalytic reduction (SCR) to meet EPA emission rules.

It’s of little surprise Navistar is aggressive in its campaign to convince customers, considering the

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company is somewhat on an island as the only major truckmaker to continue using cooled exhaust gas recirculation (EGR) alone, rather than scaled-back EGR plus SCR.

“(SCR) could be the biggest false-start in trucking history,” since, as he predicts, there could be non-urea based solutions coming online in the next few years.

Naturally, Navistar’s competitors disagree, explaining the requirement for drivers is no more burdensome than “filling up with windshield washer fluid.”

Representatives of Volvo and Daimler Trucks North America, in particular, have described Navistar’s campaign as “fear mongering.”

Interestingly, despite the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency having rejected the idea some time ago, Hebe said Navistar is still pressing for a delay in the implementation of the 2010 emissions regulations. “We do not need a deferral for technical reasons,” Hebe said. Rather, he wants the EPA to give truck buyers a choice of emissions solutions for an extra two years—either 2007-spec or 2010 engines—to settle things down and give customers a chance to decide how to proceed with their truck-buying decisions. At the same time, he said he’d like to see incentives to encourage the purchase of 2010-spec diesels during that period.

It doesn’t look like EPA is interested in the idea, but the Navistar VP makes a good point, namely that the affected customer

## on the Docket

### WITH NO TANKS TO CBP:

A proposed change to the U.S. Tariff Act could drastically change the way carriers report cross-border movements of tanker containers to U.S. Customs and Border Protection, todaystrucking.com learned in March.

CBP is reconsidering how it monitors “chemical residues”—even in trace amounts—left at the bottom or attached to the sidewalls of tanks and containers. As a result, there could be a lot more paperwork (and, of course, costs) for liquid bulk carriers when they cross the border.



Since 1994, CBP has held that a steel container filled with a chemical could be entered as empty when imported back into the U.S., notwithstanding the residue of chemicals remaining in the containers. The reasoning behind the rule was that it is extremely difficult for a carrier to completely clean a tanker of certain residues, and the amount left over is usually minuscule anyway.

Now, the post-9-11 border agency says that allowance is inconsistent with its treatment of other commodities (such as ‘petroleum slops’

base isn’t just big fleets with big resources, but a lot of “little guys” in trucking and other businesses that use trucks. And they deserve a break.

Finally, Hebe wouldn’t confirm what we already reported exclusively online

and in this space last month—that the upcoming Maxxforce 15 is actually going to be a Caterpillar C15 without ACERT, made under licence at Navistar’s engine plant. He was uncharacteristically coy on that front. Don’t get used to it.

from vessels) and that in order to ensure the “safety and security” of CBP officers who examine them, re-imported containers with chemical residues should no longer be manifested as ‘empty.’

Since the gross weight of most residues cannot be determined until generated, carriers would then have to estimate the quantity of residue left in the tank and have their broker prepare a formal Customs entry under the Harmonized Tariff Schedule for it.

That, of course, could be tricky considering electronic manifests have to be submitted between half an hour and an hour in advance of the unit reaching the port of entry.

### SASK ROLLING WITH REGS:

The Ministry of Transport in Saskatchewan has agreed to move on a number of significant changes to trucking rules, including the elimination of the 14-cent/km TPP fee for Energy Efficient Motor Vehicles (EEMV) companies. The fees are eliminated effective April 1, 2008.

The government has also harmonized LCV (long combination vehicle) operations within the three western provinces. The overall length of Turnpike Doubles and Triple Trailer Combination units jumps to 41 meters from 38 meters and Rocky Mountain Doubles go to 34 meters from 31 meters. Officials are also considering raising the speed limit for those vehicles to 100 km/h from 90 km/h.

Furthermore, there has been an examination of routes that can handle 63,500 kg and other weights. Several bridges and highway stretches could support this increase in weight in respect to EEMV trucks, the government concluded. And finally, the ministry is warming up to the idea of allowing increased weights for wide-based tires that currently operate at 3,850 kg/tire, bringing it more in line with Manitoba and B.C. which allow 7,700 kg per axle; and Ontario and Quebec, which allow fleets to spec wide-base tires at the same weight limit as duals, at 9,000 kg.

### Rules & Regs

#### Novabrunswick Anyone?

Has a nice ring to it, eh? Taking a page from the West, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick have inked an agreement that makes it

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easier to haul goods between each province through relaxed truck regulation barriers.

Similar to the Trade, Investment and Labor Mobility Agreement (TILMA) between B.C. and Alberta in 2007, the deal is intended to eliminate trade barriers for freer-flowing movement of goods and encourage more flexible labor practices.

Under the plan, truckers would enjoy uniform size and weight regulations on certain combination units, including LCVs and oversize loads, which are currently being tested in both provinces. The deal also calls for a single weigh scale enforcement facility at the N.B.-N.S. border, eliminating the requirement for trucks hauling between the two jurisdictions to be weighed at Salisbury, N.B. and then again at Amherst, N.S. just an hour later.

New Brunswick and Nova Scotia have invited the other two Atlantic provinces to join in, but Newfoundland and P.E.I. are still weighing their options.

The Atlantic Province's Trucking Association wasted little time in giving the plan a thumbs-up.

"We certainly like to hear

## heard on the Street

■ **Bert Clay**, VP of Sales and Marketing for **TRAILMOBILE CANADA** has left the company. Clay informed customers and industry people in an email recently. "I wish to express my gratitude and thanks to all my customers, co-workers and industry friends for the many years of working together," he said.

The future of Trailmobile Canada is far from certain. Last issue, *Today's Trucking* reported that the company filed for creditor protection so it could formulate a restructuring plan.

It was still unknown at press time whether creditors accepted the restructuring proposal. Manufacturing operations have been on hold since last December and the trailer maker reportedly put its Mississauga headquarters up for sale. In an email, Clay said he preferred not to comment on the company's current status.

■ Traditionally, Canadian carriers fare well at the **TRUCKLOAD CARRIERS ASSOCIATION (TCA)** annual safety awards and this year was no different. Both **BISON TRANSPORT** and **MACKINNON TRANSPORT** were divisional winners of the TCA 33rd Annual National Fleet Safety Awards. Bison won first place in the 100-plus million miles category, while MacKinnon took home top prize in the 25-49 million mile slot.

that the two governments are going to standardize permit regulations for the LCVs as well as oversize loads. This will make it much easier to flow through both provinces when operating these vehicles," says APTA Executive Director Peter Nelson. "The LCV configuration when added into the mix of various van and flatdeck applications will add to the versatility of the region's road transport industry to meet the needs of shippers, producers and manufacturers."

However, some free-market observers who have long championed a fully nationalized transportation system worry that such

agreements among a select group of provinces limit the ability to achieve a cross-country consensus.

### Hours-of-Service

#### Shoo 'Gadflies': ATA to Critics

Just when you thought it was safe to order that crate of logbooks, it appears the final chapter in the exhausting HOS saga may not yet have been written after all. Hoping to have better luck with an administration that's possibly friendlier to their interests, a familiar coalition is taking yet another swipe at the American hours-of-service rules. The Teamsters,

Public Citizen, Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety, and the Truck Safety Coalition are once again attacking the five-year-old HOS rules in court.

The groups asked an appeals court to review what they call "a dangerous Bush-era regulation that increased the amount of time truck drivers can spend behind the wheel." The rules, passed by the Bush Administration in 2003, have been in the works by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration since the latter half of the 1990s when President Bill Clinton was in the White House.

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## GET ON WITH IT

### THE SPEED LIMITER DEBATE IS PRETTY MUCH OVER

It's fair to say it was a valiant fight for the few who fought it, but like it or not (and it matters not either way) mandatory speed limiter enforcement will be a reality in Ontario and Quebec starting this summer. For those of you who were opposed to this plan, it's now time to move on.

Twelve—as in one dozen—truckers mustered the will to tell Ontarians what they thought was wrong with the speed limiter rule at an organized protest at Queen's Park. (The planning of the event received a fair amount of publicity from media and was backed by OBAC, the Teamsters and OOIDA).

The low number in itself isn't so much of an issue if it weren't for the fact that hundreds of owner-ops, drivers, and (more secretly) small fleets took the time to call or write to express their dismay with the



rule since it was first proposed four years ago. Sure, such correspondence isn't exactly the pulse of the entire industry, but the sheer amount, we figured, was a decent barometer. Plus, there's other letters to other magazines and the 700 truckers who signed up to OOIDA driver Scott Mooney's anti-speed limiter Facebook site.

And out of all those just 12 working truckers (if that) showed up for the TV cameras, which, ironically, almost outnumbered the protestors.

To be clear, I don't lament the poor turnout. Obviously, I don't make my living in a truck. Other than providing us scribes with interesting copy on an issue we believed was important to a lot of our readers, speed limiters would have little day-to-day impact on my life. So, if it's cool with all of you, then who am I to say different?

As a journalist, my main concern has always been the suspect legislative process at work here. Don't take it from me. At least two MPPs claim they weren't given all the available data on speed limiters before voting on the bill, including a preliminary copy of a critical Transport Canada study that found a few holes in the safety benefit argument advanced by the government.

With hard enforcement just a few months away, other issues—such as privacy and protection of downloadable information beyond truck speed; the absence of fully tamper-free speed limiter

technology; as well as determining if OEMs have any responsibility—have still not been fully addressed by legislators.

Here, I fully anticipate the “hey, we're-too-busy-trying-to-squeeze-a-buck-out-of-our-trucks” argument. While very true, it doesn't stop convoys of truckers from foolishly protesting high fuel prices (which, conversely, is something they have absolutely no control over).

Cab drivers aren't exactly known for their tremendous profit margins either, yet “hundreds” clogged the streets of Ottawa a few weeks ago to protest a bylaw requiring them to install security cameras in their vehicles. Yes, I know, cab drivers are local and that was a local demonstration. But 12 truckers in comparison, people? Seriously?

Maybe it can be said that unlike the days of those fuel protests, the pilot light is starting to burn out of the average owner-op, who as Jim Hebe says (on pg 13) is slowly approaching extinction in this trucking environment. Maybe hours-of-service and congestion, and border delays, crappy pay and whatever else, has incrementally taken its toll to the point where protesting speed limiters just seems silly in light of other challenges truckers face.

Regardless, I think it's time that the folks so ardently opposed to this rule quit trying to speak for those who claim to be against it too. It's time to accept that truckers have spoken by not opening their mouths.

Holding a protest at Queen's Park strictly for a media audience was a huge gamble because when you're asking the TV media to play along, you're conceding that the image you're projecting—not the argument you're expressing—will become the story.

What people saw was a smattering of truckers protesting a rule that on the surface at least sounds pretty good to them: Slower trucks. The message they interpreted was, essentially, “if most truckers aren't against it, then why should I be?”

And they wouldn't be wrong.

**Marco Beghetto is Senior Editor of Today's Trucking. He can be reached at 416/614-5821, or marco@todaystrucking.com.**

previously permitted, but require them to take more time off in a day, including eight consecutive hours off.

The coalition also sent a letter to Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood asking him to begin work on a new regulation. “We have taken this action with the conviction, based on research and scientific data, that longer driving and working hours are unsafe and promote driver fatigue,” the letter said. However, most of the available scientific research indicates the opposite is more likely true—that the current rules better match circadian rhythms and, as the American Trucking Associations' says, “the real world work environment truckers face every day.” Calling the coalition “gadflies” the ATA points to how the groups conveniently ignore mounting statistics showing how highway crash and fatality rates involving trucks have been steadily falling (in relation to increased traffic numbers) since the rules took effect.

However unlikely that the rules get overturned this far in the game, particularly concerning to those looking forward to HOS stability is House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's (one of the top three most powerful ruling Democrats) inclusion of the HOS rules in a recent list of “ghoulish midnight regulations” she blasted the former Bush administration for passing before leaving office.

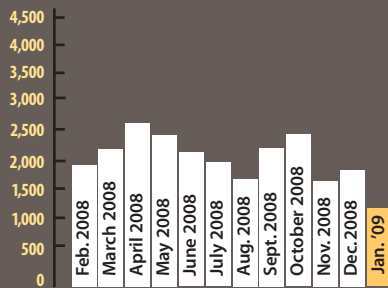
Some might say that Pelosi attacking anything as ‘ghoulish’ is kind of ironic, but we digress.

Ultimately, FMCSA's plan to solidify the rules with a mandatory EOBR requirement (likely for all carriers) should keep the political junkyard dogs at bay. ▲

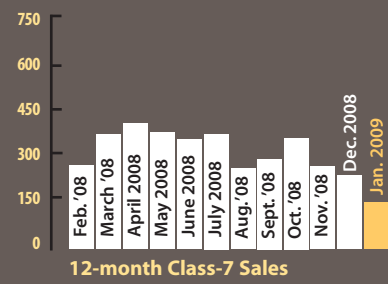
Canada: Truck Sales Index

January 2009

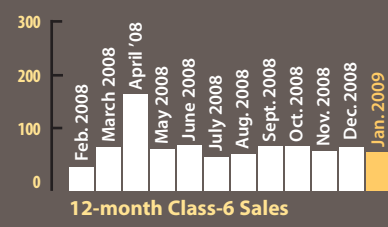
CLASS 8	This Month	YTD '09	YTD '08	Share
International	425	425	437	35.9%
Freightliner	234	234	310	19.8%
Kenworth	111	111	303	9.4%
Western Star	102	102	59	8.6%
Volvo	98	98	128	8.3%
Sterling	87	87	127	7.4%
Mack	80	80	104	6.8%
Peterbilt	46	46	219	3.9%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1183</b>	<b>1183</b>	<b>1687</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



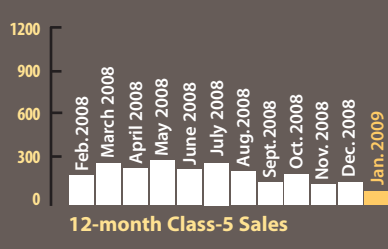
CLASS 7	This Month	YTD '09	YTD '08	Share
International	46	46	94	31.5%
Freightliner	35	35	37	24.0%
Kenworth	24	24	65	16.5%
Peterbilt	17	17	52	11.6%
Hino Canada	13	13	35	8.9%
Sterling	11	11	23	7.5%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>306</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



CLASS 6	This Month	YTD '09	YTD '08	Share
International	38	38	18	65.5%
Hino Canada	13	13	21	22.4%
Freightliner	4	4	6	6.9%
Sterling	3	3	4	5.2%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



CLASS 5	This Month	YTD '09	YTD '08	Share
Hino Canada	27	27	37	36%
Sterling	24	24	30	32%
International	17	17	37	22.7%
Kenworth	4	4	0	5.3%
Freightliner	2	2	7	2.4%
Peterbilt	1	1	0	1.3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

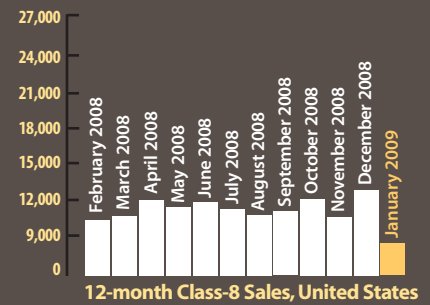


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U.S.: Retail Truck Sales

CLASSE 8	This Month	YTD '09
Freightliner	2527	2527
International	2111	2111
Peterbilt	741	741
Kenworth	654	654
Volvo	540	540
Mack	360	360
Sterling	354	354
Western Star	86	86
Other	1	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7374</b>	<b>7374</b>



Canada: Provincial Sales (Class 8)

CLASS 8	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	NB	NS	PE	NL	CDA
International	16	60	7	7	189	123	15	5	0	3	425
Freightliner	24	25	12	8	79	50	30	6	0	0	234
Kenworth	21	49	5	5	12	16	2	1	0	0	111
Volvo	5	14	2	9	52	7	4	5	0	0	98
Peterbilt	2	9	5	1	18	7	1	3	0	0	46
Sterling	24	15	0	0	30	10	5	2	0	1	87
Mack	2	15	9	9	31	11	2	1	0	0	80
Western Star	16	49	6	7	7	3	11	2	0	1	102
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>418</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1183</b>
<b>YTD 2009</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>418</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1183</b>

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

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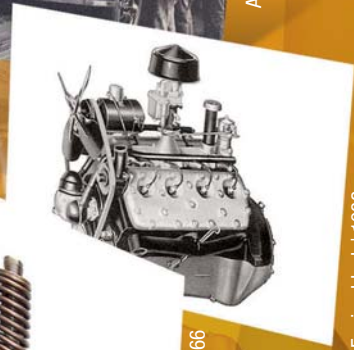
Automobile | 1889



Assembly line | 1913



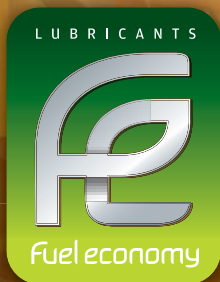
Engine block | 1932



Electronic fuel injection system | 1966



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# Credit Where She's Due

**financing** *Even with a tightened credit market it's possible to get funds for new equipment, as long as it's deserved. By Steve MacLeod*

**T**he credit crunch has made it more difficult for businesses of all kinds and sizes to get the funds they need to complete even the simplest tasks, like paying bills on time.

Luckily, in Canada the financial situation didn't fall as flat as in some other countries and credit is available to buy a new truck or trailer; assuming, that is, you're in the position to add new equipment.

Still, lenders are more cautious with their money than they were a year or two ago. If you want money, making sure you're a quality applicant is key. It all comes down to your credit rating.

"Good rates are basically there for people who have good credit," John Nelligan, dealer principal with Harper Truck Centres, a Freightliner/Western Star/Sterling dealer based in Toronto, tells me.

Failing an excellent reputation, you're going to have to consider finding a co-signor with good credit. A few assets, like a house or cash in the bank, could also help.

Like many businesses, sales projections at Harper's outlets were modest at the start of 2009, but Nelligan says business has actually been fairly good. Overall numbers are down, but not as much as expected—partly due to an inventory-clearing sale.

"A lot of our business has been with existing customers. There's not a lot of new people coming in," he notes. "A lot of

owner-operators aren't looking for financing because they're just looking to get freight."

Operators looking for financing got a bit of reassurance in the latest federal budget that credit would remain available.



Part of the budget included the Canadian Secured Credit Facility, designed specifically to make sure funds will be available to help consumers purchase new vehicles and equipment—including big rigs and trailers.

The feds will provide up to \$12 billion to purchase term asset-backed securities (ABS) backed by loans and leases on vehicles and equipment.

The government is providing the money on commercial terms and will expect to make a modest return on their security portfolio. However, the feds will not dictate the terms of loans made to the consumer.

Right now, the Canadian Secured Credit Facility is in the preparation stages and a

public comment period will be opened once the terms of participation are decided.

The Finance Department expects it to be up and running this spring.

There's no formal termination date to the funding

with the idea that if the deal makes sense, then we do it. Some lenders have a formula and if you don't fit in, then you don't get funding. We look at the situation, and then try and find a solution that will work," says Jonathan McCready, account manager with ADD Capital Corp.

Still, looking at used instead of new equipment won't make a difference if you have a poor credit rating.

"It all depends on credit. If the applicant is questionable we're still not going to be happy losing thousands of dollars on a used tractor," notes McCready. "We're not going to lease a new truck to

**Lenders are more cautious with their money than they were a year or two ago. If you want money, making sure you're a quality applicant is key.**

availability, but the plan will be revisited in about a year.

The Canadian Secured Credit Facility is being made available to traditional banks, in-house financial firms and to private lending firms.

When buying new equipment, the in-house financing option will probably offer the best rate. The finance arm of most truck makers relies strictly on those funds, so they have a vested interest in the truck. If you're looking to keep costs down a bit and buy a used truck or trailer, it may be worthwhile to do some comparison shopping.

"We're pretty unique here

someone who can't afford it. With owner-operators we'd expect to see some net numbers for the past year."

Whether you're looking for new or old, or where you get the financing from, the most important part will be reading over the fine print.

It's true of any contract you sign, or any warranty for that matter: read the darned thing right away. Avoid nasty surprises in the future. ▲

Steve MacLeod is *Today's Trucking's* Western Editor. He's based in Edmonton and can be reached at [smacleod@newcom.ca](mailto:smacleod@newcom.ca)

# Street Smarts

## INSIDE:

27 Drivers' braking points

29 Allan Robison's survival tips

MANAGING PEOPLE, TECHNOLOGY, BUSINESS, AND SAFETY



**ONEROUS OPERATING:** Keith McMurdo knows a thing or two about the pressures of keeping a small fleet on the road.

## Keep It Simple

**profile** *How Calgary's Keith McMurdo proves that an owner-operator can run multiple trucks successfully and live to tell about it. By Steve Macleod*

If you ask Keith McMurdo what the difference between an owner-operator who runs a few trucks and a fleet owner is, he'll tell you it's a full-time mechanic.

McMurdo never made the jump to fleet owner. At a peak of seven trucks, the Calgary-based owner-operator was always the main mechanic in his shop. And, like many other owner-ops, he's behind the

wheel most days of the week and also in charge of the office paperwork—with the help of his wife of course.

Back in 2001-2002, K-Mac Trucking numbered seven trucks. If there was a good time for McMurdo to push forward and grow into a fleet; that was the time.

"I sat back one day and looked at the numbers," says McMurdo. "And I realized Co-op [Federated Co-op Ltd.] was pay-

ing the bills. They even pay the licensing and registration, which makes it that much simpler."

So, four of the trucks painted in the red and white colors of FCL stayed. Another FCL truck, as well as two other trucks being contracted out to other carriers and hauling everything from vans to flat decks and dump boxes, were trimmed from the fleet.

"You just have to react to the business. It's all about customer need," explains McMurdo. "Keep it simple, rather than bigger because that's when the problems show up."

This was also a time when McMurdo was taking pills for his blood pressure and his relationship with Federated Co-op Ltd. had spanned three decades. Those rea-



sons may have also factored into McMurdo's decision to downsize and he knew it was the right choice, despite not being able to hire a full-time mechanic.

McMurdo and FCL have been through a couple of "firsts" together. The first time he drove a tractor-trailer was as a 19-year-old with FCL back in 1977, and two years later he became an owner-operator, leased to FCL.

FCL's roots date back to the 1920s, when a co-operative of retailers in western Canada worked together to expand their buying power. Today, approximately 270 independent retail co-operatives own FCL and their service network stretches from Thunder Bay, Ont. to the Queen Charlotte Islands in B.C. Many of the retail locations operate as a grocery store/department store combination, with a gas station and hardware store attached or nearby.

McMurdo has put in 25 years of safe driving with the company and has the jack-

didn't work out that way.

"Everybody kept saying if you take your truck to the oil patch you'll make so much money," remembers McMurdo, with a skeptical grin. "I ended up working one day out of 10, so the money was good if you could find solid work. It was one of those times when the oil patch wasn't doing so good."

With a lack of income, and a truck spec'd specifically for the oil patch, McMurdo had to purchase another truck—two actually—to generate income. On his extended periods away from the oil patch, McMurdo used his other two trucks primarily to deliver Quonsets across the prairies.

In the end, though, the extra work just wasn't

in 1994, followed by a fourth in 1995.

The big difference for McMurdo in running multiple trucks this time around is they were taken on to handle increased work, rather than to chase after new work.

"I was pretty confident they [FCL] would keep us busy," adds McMurdo. "It's not recession proof, but it's certainly better than some other industries—like the oil patch we talked about."

Ever since McMurdo became an owner-operator in the late-'70s, he's rented shop space in southeast Calgary. Today, K-Mac Trucking makes its home in an 1,800-sq-ft shop in the same warehouse district where it all started, not far from Deerfoot Trail.

"I kept thinking if I got big enough I could hire a full-time mechanic," says McMurdo. "But then you start to get bigger and you start

getting some drivers who you might not work well with. One of the toughest things is hiring."

Although he was never able to hire that mechanic, McMurdo now has pretty much the next best thing.

"It's nice to have a driver with a mechanical background. I have one driver now who used to work in a trailer repair shop," notes McMurdo. "So we have one guy who knows what he's doing—him—and one guy who sort of knows what he's doing—me."

Although they do as much maintenance as they can at the shop, for major work, the trucks get taken into a dealership. But McMurdo has come to terms with the fact he'll never have a full-time mechanic and one day, won't even have to worry about the hiring process at all.

He doesn't intend on adding more trucks in the future. He'd actually prefer to whittle the enterprise back down to one machine.

"I keep meaning to downsize to one truck, but if they came to me and said we want you to do this route, I'd probably add another truck," he says.

Whatever the customer needs. ▲



**UNCONVENTIONAL APPROACHES:** McMurdo keeps intending to shave his fleet back to fewer trucks.

et to prove it. He estimates that's about two or three million miles without an incident.

His first attempt at running multiple trucks however, didn't happen with FCL and it didn't exactly go according to plan.

Like many other born-and-raised Albertans, McMurdo felt the pull of the oil patch and it was too hard to resist. In 1987 he spec'd a hotshot truck and headed out to make his fortune. Unfortunately, it

enough. McMurdo was working too many hours with not enough return, so he packed it in and headed back to FCL. He purchased a brand new truck and began a second life as an owner-op with one truck in 1990.

Within a few years, FCL decided to consolidate their hardware warehouses to Calgary and asked McMurdo to take on a second truck to handle more runs. He obliged and ended up adding a third unit

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# Welcome to the Brake Chamber

**safety** *A few devices to help prove to drivers that a slack-adjuster check doesn't have to be torture. By Brian Botham*

It might be spring where you are, but as I write these words, it's cold, icy and, generally nasty out. (I have to produce this column about one month in advance.)

This weather reminds me of having to crawl under my truck during a pre-trip, with snow, ice, salt, sand, and Lord knows what dripping on my face and down my back.

I don't miss that part of driving one little bit.

But brake checks—as nasty as they can be—have always been a fact of driving life. Like tons of other facts we'd like to be in denial about, it appears drivers insist on pretending they don't have to do brake checks. I just checked the most recent statistics and guess what? Even though trainers, bosses, ministry personnel, spouses, other drivers, and trade-magazine safety columnists revisit this topic with alarming regularity, drivers still think the brake check is best left for somebody else to do.

Back in my days of driving, a 9/16th wrench and a hammer were always within reach. A quick crawl under the truck and trailer to tighten the brakes and then backing them off half a turn and making sure the lock nut was released and we were good to go.

However gone are the days of manual slack adjusters. We are all running auto slacks now.

No more having to crawl around adjusting brakes with the 9/16th. Everything is automatic right?

Wrong! And the statistics show it.

Operation Air Brake was originated by the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA) more than 10 years ago to encourage commercial drivers to run with safely adjusted brakes.

Since Operation Air Brake was founded, inspectors have been keeping statistics and here's what the 2008 inspection turned up: 2339

- 2,191,366 brakes inspected;
- 11.08 percent of vehicles placed out-of-service for brake adjustment defects;
- 7.94 percent of vehicles placed out-of-service for brake component defects;
- 17.1 percent of vehicles placed out-of-service for brake related defects;
- 8.87 percent of brakes equipped with manual brake adjusters placed out-of-service;



## UNDERWHELMING EXPERIENCE:

Who wouldn't be reluctant to crawl under their vehicles?

trucks (11.2 percent of the vehicles checked) were placed out-of-service for brake adjustment defects; 1,873 vehicles placed out-of-service (9.0 percent) for brake component defects, and a total of 3,835 vehicles placed out-of-service (18.4 percent) for brake defects.

Since Operation Air Brake was launched in 1988, roadside inspections have resulted in:

- 271,016 vehicle inspections;

- 3.91 percent of brakes equipped with self-adjusting brake adjusters placed out-of-service;
- 5.07 percent of all brakes inspected placed out-of-service for brake adjustment defects.

We continue to have issues with defective brakes across North America. So what can we do to combat this and win the battle on brakes out of adjustment?

Training is, of course, the first step. We have to show our drivers and techs how to check brakes for their adjustment limits, and we have to make it easier to do.

There are a number of products on the market that make it simple for drivers to check their brake adjustments. I was recently introduced to the Spectra Brake Inspector. For about the same cost as an Out of Service order at roadside for brake adjustment, your drivers can know from the comfort of the cab whether or not all of their brakes are functioning properly and in adjustment. (Visit [www.spectra-ssa.com](http://www.spectra-ssa.com))

MGM Brake manufactures the e-Stroke system, designed for a quick reading of airbrake status ([www.mgmbrakes.com](http://www.mgmbrakes.com)). I haven't tested the e-Stroke system myself yet but it's made by the same people who manufacture brake chambers.

I say anything that makes the chore easier is great.

Meantime, if you can come up with a way to persuade a driver to do a roadside inspection somewhere in the coastal mountains on a snowy day, laying out under his trailer on the self-same spot where an earlier driver stopped to, um, do whatever, send your suggestion my way. I'll be glad to spread the news. ▲

Brian Botham, CDS, is a certified director of safety through NATMI. He can be reached at 519-533-3656 or [bbotham@cmvsafety.ca](mailto:bbotham@cmvsafety.ca).

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# D-Day for Trucking

**economy** *That's d as in decisions—the economy's calling on you to make some of the hardest choices ever. Here's how. By Allan Robison*

**I**t was the best of times, it was the worst of times”—those words from *“The Tale of Two Cities”* by Charles Dickens seem to be very appropriate right about now. “Yes,” you might say, “it’s easy to see the worst of times—but where on earth do we get this best idea?”

I have been in this industry since age 11. I started driving at 13. I have seen it all, and experience is a great help when these cycles hit.

The worst of times is certainly apt. The whole globe is in trouble. We are in a deep recession, and it’s not going to be over in a couple of months.

The problem is somewhat self-inflicted. Consumers are told and convinced that they had better quit spending and batten down the household budget for the coming storm. When they do that, sure enough the storm comes.

But being sloppy in times of abundance causes most of it. The last several years before 2008, many companies were just that.

The trucking industry is guilty of the same problems; enjoying times of plenty and not paying attention to the costs and their relationship to revenues. Organizations get sloppy when profits are easily obtained. So when the cycle turns (and it always does) there is a huge price to pay if the truck is to stay on the road. This experience reminds me of going from regulation to deregulation

and the shock of knowing we had not been efficient at all.

Which brings me to the best of times. Trucking companies must realize that poor cost control means disaster. The good news is that those companies that are careful and think outside the box during this downturn will weather the storm and then be fit for the next upturn when the best of times arrive, in abundance.

Some leaders have a terrible disease called pride. It involves thinking they have all the answers and not being humble enough to listen to others or to seek good advice.

**The worst of times is certainly apt. The whole globe is in trouble. We are in a deep recession, and it is not going to be over in a couple of months.**

This can be deadly. Sometimes the best solutions come from the most unusual places. Leaders should be willing to listen, swallow their pride and then do something about it.

Eighteen years ago we were dropping into one of these recessions, and one of the largest trucking companies in Canada had engaged an outside firm to help them figure out what they could do.

I vividly remember the meeting where the CEO of the trucking company explained to us that the consultant had pointed out that most of his costs were “fixed” so he couldn’t do anything about them, and that’s how the CEO proceeded.



revenue. At the same time put the revenue stream where it belongs by eliminating business that just wears out trucks and your employees without any return.

We’re not in this business for practice—it is a serious game that involves wonderful employees who count on our making good decisions. So after some pain, which will include each of us, we then get to enjoy the fruits of our labor when the economy begins to turn positive.

That is the best of times and that is where we all want to go. ▲

I was shocked. The premise he was operating on was absolutely false and meant death if he pursued that course of action. Even though we (myself and other trucking executives) tried to convince him otherwise, he went forward with the plan. It wasn’t too many months before the losses at this company were monstrous and the end eventually came.

The hard part is doing what you have to do in these serious downturns. Otherwise the journey is not going to end the way you had hoped. This is the time to make changes that should have been made in the first place and to put the costs in line with the

Allan N. Robison recently retired as President & CEO of Reimer Express Lines after 13 years. He has extensive experience leading medium and large trucking firms in the U.S. and Canada. He started in the industry at age 11 with his father’s trucking firm in Nevada.



**OUTSTANDING IN HIS FIELD:**  
Founder Vernon Erb drove his first truck—a dump—in 1956.

# Erb

**I**n January, 2008, The Erb Group of Companies instituted a fuel-saving program called Pro-Drive. Administered by a hand-picked committee that included brass and a handful of drivers, Pro-Drive was designed to minimize idling, hard braking and overspeeding.

Currently, Pro-Drive involves only company drivers. Erb, which specializes in OTR and LTL reefers dispatched out of 10 terminals across North America, runs about 700 trucks and 1,000 trailers, making it one of the largest carriers in the country. It was also the second Canadian trucker to receive its HACCP designation.

With Pro-Drive, Erb accesses engine information through a system called Turnpike Global EOBRs and every quarter, issues bonuses to drivers who meet or exceed the program's goalposts. With idle time, for instance, the benchmark for trip idling during any quarter is set at 15 percent. Quarters are January to March, April to June, July to September, and October to December. Erb recognizes that certain times of the year; i.e, when it's freezing out, more idling is required.

Hard braking is taboo. The goal post for hard brakes is none. But for a hard

brake to be registered at all, the truck must be moving at more than 25 mph; and a hard brake is considered when the deceleration is anything more than seven mph per second.

Finally, Erb is a stickler for speed. Points will be deducted any time the truck exceeds 65 mph.

Participating drivers get their scores posted in their terminals at the end of each quarter and although for privacy reasons the driver's actual bonus isn't publicized, it'll certainly show up on his pay stub. The bonus is based on a percentage of a driver's salary.

This is how Tom Boehler, Erb's director of Health And Safety, illustrates the bonus payouts to drivers: "For example, with 1.5 percent being the maximum payout for a perfect score, someone who earned \$20,000 in salary for that quarter and had a perfect score would earn a bonus of \$300 or with the same salary but an 80-percent score, they would earn a bonus of \$240."

In 2008, about 350 drivers participated in the voluntary program. The payout divided among those participating: \$157,206.19.

The best part, from head office's point of view, is that the program is self-financing. The money paid out in bonuses comes directly out of the savings achieved through the Pro-Drive program. It's hard to see the downside.

In November, the company's General Manager Wendell Erb himself bobtailed to Omaha from head office near Kitchener, Ont., to retrieve a trailer. For research purposes, he calculated what his Pro-Drive score would be. He scored 98 percent. (A few hard-brakings stopped him from getting perfect, he admitted later.)

"With 98 percent, I would have earned an extra \$21 or \$22," he told a recent meeting of Erb's Pro-Drive management committee. "There's a steak dinner in there for just doing what you would be doing normally."

There are, everyone admits, glitches from time to time, as the committee heard at its annual meeting.

For one thing, stuff breaks. Sometimes a driver's APU malfunctions; or else, as one driver reported, the speedo on his tractor leaped up every time he shifted gears, even though the road speed didn't. Also, engine idle's not always controllable, especially if a service technician is working on the truck and leaves it running.

Erb's Boehler acknowledges the obstacles but is quick to add, "they should just bring that stuff to our attention. We want this program to work because it benefits everybody."

Erb, as well, says he not only wants this program to work, but, as he told the meeting, driving like this is the way of the future.

Erb is going into the second quarter of 2009 with an eye on expanding its facilities in Western Canada at the same time as it's celebrating its 50th anniversary. Also, late last year, the founder Vernon Erb was presented with the prestigious "Trailmobile Service to Industry" award. Among drivers, Erb has an excellent reputation. Its turnover rate is remarkably low and, as one driver told *Today's Trucking*, "everyone knows those Mennonites are great to work for."

Says seven-year Erb-vet Alf Meyers, "When I came to Erb, I was just treading water financially. My truck [a 1998 Volvo 610] was too old for the company but Bruce Yantzi, Erb's VP, was willing to give me a chance to prove myself.

"I did so well there that within two years I was able to purchase my Freightliner Coronado."

unique relationship running smoothly."

And time for change—or a least adaptation—has arrived. Like everybody else on the continent, Erb is living in the new economy. Wendell Erb says efficiencies must be found. He knows a thing or two about that, too.

As business morphed over the past year, Erb reports that they learned that by organizing loads differently, they could maintain the same weight and volume but be six-percent more efficient.

"When there's lots of freight to move, it's easy to overlook some of the savings that are available to you," he says. The fact is, people aren't buying as many groceries as they were two years ago, the food companies are cutting shipping costs even to the point of trying to do their own manufacturer-to-store shipping, and newcomers are entering the reefer market and

American fleet and his father, who had built the Canadian company by purchasing lanes across Ontario, saw that big change was coming.

"Everybody and his brother started buying old reefers," Wendell recalls. "Rates which had been semi-protected were falling and we were faced with 25 percent less revenue. The rates dropped so quickly we needed a real increase in our central business; and we needed cost control.

"There was a time when we needed money for a new terminal and the bank helped and we got into more debt than we should have. We had to cope with a new reality in the marketplace."

"There were a lot of long nights," he says.

It didn't hurt Erb that the company had thrived in the U.S. market, which had already survived deregulation, and Wendell had been overseeing that end of

# Remedies

How living through one trucking meltdown can prepare you for the next | **BY PETER CARTER**

"Over seven-plus years," says Meyer, "I still have to develop something really critical to complain about."

Also, some of Erb's longtime customers are among the most demanding yet loyal in the business. "My dad," says Wendell, "could never bring himself to say 'we can't do that.'"

The dairy giant Parmalat has been a long-time customer. Bob Richardson is its director of transportation and warehousing. "Any time we have needed to make changes in our business," he says, "Erb was more than willing to come to the table and work out solutions, regardless of the challenges.

"Their expertise in technology, commitment to high standards in the food-handling process, and commitment to employee engagement helps keep our

forcing prices down. Ultimately, there's not as much freight available this year as there was last. Erb will no longer overlook any savings to be had.

Good thing they've been through all this before. Otherwise they might not know how to do it.

Is there one single trucker honest enough to admit that he didn't think the late-'80s deregulation of the national industry would be its undoing? Rates were being cut, new players were showing up on the highways, and drivers were let go. The time has been referred to as, among other ways, "a bloodletting."

At the time, Erb Transport, which had been started by Wendell's father in 1959, had operations in Ontario and the U.S. Young Wendell was overseeing the

the operation, which got started in the early '80s.

"We were beneficiaries of the free-trade agreement, the U.S. market was beginning to pick up and ultimately we were getting new revenue.

"But there were some similarities to what's going on now. There were things going on with rates that just didn't make sense to anybody."

Wendell's dad Vernon is semi-retired now. He handed over the corner office (and it is a corner office, too, with a beautiful view of the Erb fleet, which includes some top-of-the-line new iron, including the prettiest red International Lonestar ever) to eldest son Wendell in 1999.

His other son, Darryl, prefers to drive and works out of the Thunder Bay terminal. Daughter Karen established the hats-and-belts promotions division and sits on the board of directors. Assorted grandkids have joined the team; and founder Vern tries his best to stay out of

the shop and tend to his nearby farm.

Still, The Erb Group is a Vern invention, to the core. And it's that hardworking yet compassionate spirit of Vern's that got them through deregulation and that will get them through the coming fiscal quarters.

"We had to cope with new realities of the marketplace. We only lost money one year; even though it took us three or four

years until we really got back on our feet. In the end, we only closed down one terminal." Indeed, it was during the latter years of coping with deregulation—2000 and 2001, in fact—that Erb expanded into Western Canada.

Coincidentally, they'll be opening their new HACCP-approved Winnipeg terminal on eight acres later this summer. "We're poised for growth," Wendell says. ▲

## HARTFELT ADVICE



Like most people raised in trucking families, Wendell

Erb has been driving since he could see over the steering column.

But, he says there was one trip from St. Catharines Ont., to Port Moody, B.C., with a tanker full of wine. He had no experience driving tankers before and, he'll never forget the feeling of having that load of wine behind him, fairly pushing him through the intersections long after he wanted to be stopped, and thrusting him straight ahead when what he wanted to do was go around the corner.

"That trip," he recalls, "is when I became the safest driver in North America."

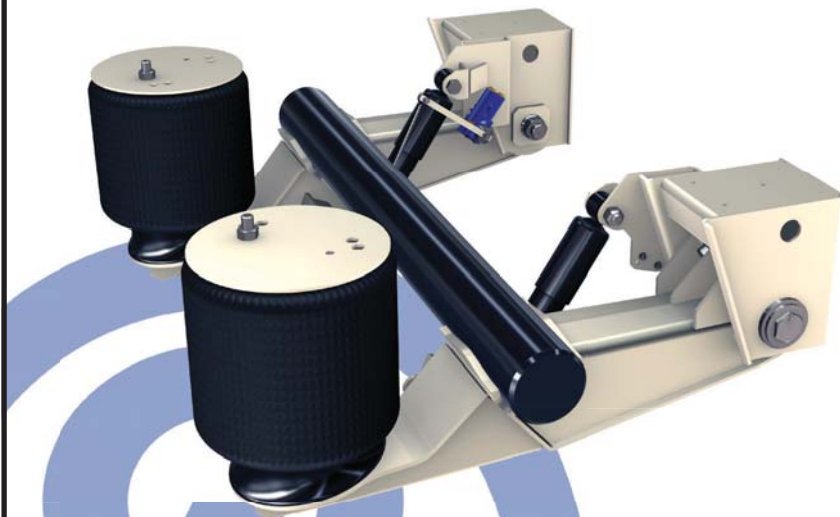
At Erb, he breathes safety and was one of the advocates of the speed limiter campaign. Like he says, driving safely is not only cost-effective and environmentally friendly, it is, "the way of the future."

In a recent issue of Erb's extraordinary company newsletter *The Erban Report* (edited by Erb's Director of Corporate Communications Patty Atwell); longtime Erb driver Bob Hart shares some of his secrets with readers. Among his practices:

- "I back off fuel before I get into a reduced speed zone and coast to the posted speed limit with no brake applications."
- "Stopping for a five-minute coffee? Shut it down. You might meet a long-lost buddy and your five minutes will turn into a 45-minute visit."
- "I have few favorite exit ramps because I can leave the expressway at 100 km with an 80,000-lb vehicle, foot off the fuel, jake activated and decelerate to the stop sign slipping the transmission into low gear, never touching the brake pedal."
- "In an urban area, no two green lights are the same so I when I'm approaching a green, I watch for the pedestrian walk sign, paying attention to my distance from the intersection, and slowing down by taking my foot off the fuel and putting it over the brake pedal because those ambers can surprise you."

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# BIO HAZARD?

**NOT A NOZZLE IDEA:** Trucking groups want Ottawa to put a cork into mandatory biodiesel plans until there's more testing on older and new-gen engines.



The government wants you to fill up with biodiesel. Here's the inconvenient truth of why that plan could spell trouble for thousands of truckers.

**BY MARCO BEGHETTO**

**C**onsidering what they're putting into some biodiesel blends these days—French fry grease, chicken fat, sunflower—it might make more sense to buy the fuel for your kitchen rather than your Kenworth.

Just don't tell that to the Feds or the B.C. government, though. They believe that biodiesel is a no-brainer for heavy truck fuel tanks—so much so, that they're going to ensure as many truckers as possible are filling up with the stuff in the next three years, regardless of significant outstanding operational and market-based concerns.

Urged on by farmers and the subsidized renewable-fuels industry, Ottawa is prescribing a national on-road biodiesel mandate of B2 (two-percent biofuel) at some point between 2010 and 2012.

In case you don't read this magazine often enough, or you've been living in a far off country whose agriculture lobbyists have no idea what a diesel engine and a coconut could have in common, biodiesel is a renewable fuel made mostly from rapeseed, soybean, and other natural vegetable oils or animal fats. It can be blended at any grade (from B2 to pure B100) and combusts in any diesel vehicle.

In Canada's most leftward province, the government plans to take things further, within an even narrower timeframe. The B.C. government is going full speed ahead with a province-wide B5 renewable fuel standard (RFS) for on- and off-road diesel, including home heating oil.

One common misconception regarding the national and B.C. proposals is that fuel retailers will be required to sell B2 and B5 directly at the pump. Not exactly. While it's possible that is indeed what you'll get, the inconvenient truth is that, practically speaking, truckers could be pumping zero biodiesel content (if they're lucky), or worse, blends as high as B10, B15 or higher, which could affect engine efficiency and strict warranty rules (*see sidebar pg 36*). Here's why:

As written, the proposal requires petroleum producers to comply with a renewable fuel "pool average," meaning they must send to market an annual average of B2 (or B5 in B.C.). The problem, as one fuel policy insider explains, is the actual blend at the pump is left free to vary between the stated value based on customer demand. This, of course, is of particular concern in B.C. where the mandated average blend is even higher.

"What you're going to have is some commercial customers that have market power and are in a position to say 'I only want B3' or, more likely, 'I don't want any B at all,'" explains the B.C. Trucking Association's (BCTA) Paul Landry, who's been fighting against this plan as hard as anyone in Canada.

"When they do that, they affect the average in the pool that has to be delivered across the entire province. So, a bunch of big customers—say, for example, B.C. Ferries or the railway—will demand a lower B level and other customers will get a higher

proportion, by definition, depending on where they are and what time of the year it is.”

Theoretically—and that’s all anyone can go on at this point—things get thornier, not to mention more expensive, in the winter time. Because of the notorious cold flow and gelling troubles with higher biodiesel blends in sub-zero climates (it’s worse in certain feedstocks than others), it’s highly unlikely fuel suppliers will be shipping B5 or higher to Prince George in February. So, as Landry says, “they’ll obey the law as best they can by providing a B blend somewhere else in the system that’s higher.” It’s a good bet that “somewhere else,” then, will likely be populated southern regions of the province with milder temperatures—although not necessarily mild enough for high biodiesel usage.

Arguing for carriers at the national level for the Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA) is senior VP, Stephen Laskowski. He points out that truckers are the largest consumers of diesel fuel in the country, but individually they have very little market leverage. Therefore, they’re the ones who will bear much of the costs since the most obvious solution for fuel suppliers to closing the B-gap is to dump the higher blends onto the retail on-road market. And, as the reg is currently written, it’s perfectly legal.

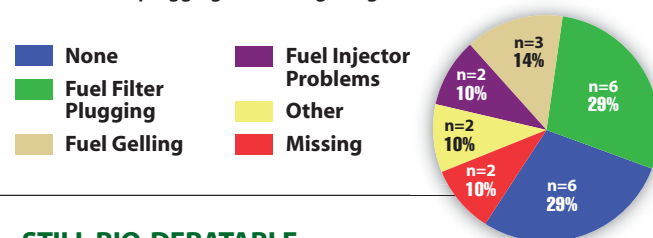
Furthermore, while the majority of biodiesel suppliers abide by industry-based ASTM International D6751 specifications, there’s no real government enforcement. As a recent U.S. Department of Energy study found, small and medium producers have “significant failure rates,” when it comes to following proper blending practices. “The issue,” says Laskowski, “is that the [biodiesel] industry is self governed.”

Although it’s been proposed to them, the Canadian Renewable Fuels Association (CRFA) isn’t likely to go for a revision to the RFS, which could possibly establish a universal B2 rate rather than a national pool average. After all, its members are in the business of making as much biodiesel as they can, not less.

In response to trucking carriers’ concerns, the CRFA insists that it’s up to the petroleum industry to create the infrastructure for integrating biodiesel into diesel, regardless of the fact petroleum companies echo many of trucking’s concerns.

Meanwhile, neither B.C. nor Ottawa appear willing to budge from the current RFS proposal, at least not now.

The BCTA conducted a biodiesel operability survey last year with a few dozen carrier companies. Of the 21 companies that reported using biodiesel, 13 (62 percent) experienced some type of operability problem. The most commonly reported problem was fuel filter plugging, with fuel gelling second.



STILL BIO-DEBATABLE

Both Landry and Laskowski stress their groups aren’t against biodiesel per se. They point out that they supported the recently concluded Alberta Renewable Diesel Demonstration (ARDD), which was established to test the cold-weather operability of biodiesel. Overall, the project yielded positive results, concluding that B2 can be used in five-year-old heavy-duty trucks during the winter and B5 is fine for the rest of the year.

But CTA and the Canadian Petroleum Products Institute make clear that the program was conducted in a very controlled environment and transitioning from this small-scale demonstration to full, real-world commercial implementation on a national basis still presents significant challenges. “Everything went as it was supposed to, with heated tanks, guaranteed fuel supply and all the rest of it,” says Laskowski. “Well, in reality, we know that the infrastructure just isn’t out there.”

Also, the demonstration was conducted with newer engines (2002-2007), which are approved by engine makers to handle B5 or less. What remains unknown, though, is how biodiesel affects new 2010 engines, particularly SCR technology requiring urea-based diesel exhaust fluid.

Not all engine makers responded to requests for information on how biodiesel is being tested in the upcoming engines. Mack’s David McKenna did say, however, that his company is doing preliminary testing with B20 and SCR. Although no major issues have been observed (other than elevated cylinder combustion temperatures and small NOx increases, depending on the feedstock) it’s still

B for Boondoggle?

Biodiesel advocates would like skeptics to move on to greener pastures, but even some environmentalists don’t seem entirely convinced anymore that biofuel is an economically viable, environmentally friendly solution.

There’s been much ink spilled on a succession of damning studies suggesting that worldwide biofuel production drives up food by directly diverting food and tracts of cropland formerly allocated for food growing to fuel production. Other studies have shown that the land-clearing and processing

of rapeseed and corn (for ethanol) actually produces as much or more carbon emissions than biofuel saves at the tailpipe.

Algae-based biodiesel—not a food plant—is the newest biofuel spin-off that’s hyped to tilt the benefit balance back the industry’s way. While it has potential, the problem is algae itself, which requires natural open ponds in order to be harvested cheaply as well as an energy source to dry out the biomass.

And while it’s true that biodiesel reduces harmful particulate matter (PM) emissions,

some would argue the benefit is redundant in newer 2007 engines, which virtually eliminate PM.



Biodiesel is also known to increase NOx, the specific pollutant targeted in the 2010 EPA engine rules. Will even more NOx-reducing diesel exhaust fluid (DEF) be needed when filling up with biodiesel,

then? That one’s still unanswered.

Regardless, when one considers the costs—taxpayer subsidies as well as at the pump—along with ever-more dubious environmental claims, is it all really worth it?

## Fuel

too early to say which B blend will be approved for 2010 engines, if at all.

A far more significant concern, however, is how the RFS impacts pre-2002 engines, which still make up close to 70 percent of the national truck fleet. If blends exceed B2 or B5 as expected, these are the engines far more likely to experience the typical operability problems in chilly climates—gelling and frosting (or biodiesicles, if one

prefers); fuel foaming, water separation which leads to microbial growth; and the most common challenge, fuel filter plugging and related injector issues. (See chart on pg 35).

Additive cocktails is the common remedy advanced by the B industry, but loads of anecdotal evidence suggests that these problems still persist in older trucks running in colder regions. Besides, one of the few

## THE FINE PRINT

If Canada passes this proposed biodiesel mandate, the first thing carriers in remote northern regions should do is make nice with their neighborhood truck dealer.

Truckers forced to fill up with above-grade biodiesel blends might want to check the fine print on their engine warranties.

While most engine makers generally “allow” ASTM-approved biodiesel usage of B5 or less (in certain models only), things could get interesting if you’re the unlucky guy who unknowingly filled up with B15 in Grande Prairie and something with the fuel system goes wrong. Remember, “allowing” a specific B5 spec and “extending” warranty coverage are two different things.

While non-compliance with fuel-use guidelines may not necessarily void warranties, it’s possible it can lead to non-coverage of components like injectors, the fuel pump or certain gaskets.

truly comprehensive studies on biodiesel, conducted by the California Air Resources Board (not exactly card-carrying members of the global-warming-denying crowd) points out, among other concerns, that more testing is necessary on how additives themselves can potentially alter the characteristics of biodiesel, “increasing its environmental and health risks.”

So, just what is the big hurry, then?

Before any legislation is passed, CTA wants more tests that “simulate real-world market sourcing” and “fleets from every corner of Canada must be allowed to select their own suppliers and equipment and manage the process as they normally would.”

Basically, “what we want is assurances,” says Laskowski. “We want the same consumer protection as everyone else in the supply chain. If the [government] is hell-bent on putting forward a renewable fuel mandate, then these issues must be dealt with first.”

If the decisions remain in the hands of the politicians and bureaucrats, they’re going to learn the hard way that when it comes to biodiesel, you can’t fuel all the people all the time. And it’s truckers who are going to pay. ▲

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# COMING of AGE



Honda runs this Peterbilt Model 386 diesel/electric hybrid truck in the fleet at its parts center in Alpharetta, Ga. The fleet is operated by UPS Freight Truckload. The Pete will be alternated with a standard diesel truck so as to accurately compare the two trucks on the same routes.

The process of commercializing hybrid trucks has slowed a bit, but the long-term prospects are good. Think 30 percent of the work-truck market.

**BY ROLF LOCKWOOD**

**H**ybrid trucks were coming on strong, very strong, this time last year, as the 2008 rendition of the Work Truck Show demonstrated. There were vendors aplenty and an upbeat mood in the air. Everyone knew that commercialization of this once exotic technology was just around the corner.

And even last October, the annual national meeting of the Hybrid Truck Users Forum in South Bend, Indiana, was a wildly

successful affair that some 550 people attended. The hybrid truck looked like a real player, with momentum behind it.

“We’re so close to the tipping point, to commercial success, but we’re not there yet,” said John Boesel, president and CEO of CALSTART, in his opening address to that meeting last fall.

The HTUF event is organized by CALSTART, which is a California-based non-profit organization that works to develop and implement clean, efficient transportation options, working with manufacturers and end users alike. HTUF is an offshoot, a user-focused coalition, North American in scope, that aims to speed the commercialization of hybrid trucks.

Boesel said the hybrid industry would be well established when 2000 to 3000 trucks a year are built. He envisioned a 30 percent hybrid share of the work-truck market and 5 percent of the heavy-duty market by 2020. Things have slowed down a bit in the intervening months—chopped budgets have slowed the pace of sales, and low diesel prices have extended payback periods, making the switch to hybrid less appealing—but one research outfit sees good things coming soon.

In a report on the commercial vehicle hybrid industry, NextGen Research of Oyster Bay, N.Y. says the global commercial

## Hybrid Trucks

hybrid vehicle market will triple from 8,653 units in 2008 to more than 27,000 in 2013. The study says the market will begin to grow more quickly in 2010, as the global economic downturn ends and the testing of hybrid vehicles in commercial fleets is completed.

### BIG FLEETS BUSY

Not long ago it was FedEx and UPS that led the hybrid way, but nowadays there's equally serious activity at outfits like Wal-Mart, Coca Cola, and the U.S. military. The latter has been much involved with CALSTART and appears to be Mack's main hybrid customer. The truck-maker recently delivered its first diesel-electric hybrid refuse truck to the US Air Force (USAF). The TerraPro low-entry truck is the fifth hybrid that Mack has built for them, the rest already in operation around the country.

This one has a rear-loading refuse packer body and a 325-hp MP7 engine. Its Mack hybrid electric powertrain features an integrated starter, alternator and motor that assists the MP7 in providing torque to the wheels. Using regenerative braking, the conceptual cornerstone of the hybrid idea at large, braking energy is captured and stored in lithium-ion batteries. The system is expected to improve fuel economy by 20-30 percent while reducing maintenance costs.



In a different world, late last year UPS announced the order of seven hydraulic hybrid vehicles, in the form of the traditional brown UPS curbside van. Using an Environmental Protection Agency patent for the hydraulics, the trucks are the result of a partnership between UPS, EPA, Navistar, which supplies the chassis, and Eaton, which supplies the powertrain. The first two are in service in Minneapolis now.



▲ In Victoria, B.C. R&B Trucking's Freightliner M2e diesel/electric hybrid also has an Aura Systems electric reefer unit that runs off the powertrain's electric supply. It's a first.

◀ Wal-Mart's fleet now has this International tractor in the fleet, sporting ArvinMeritor's first hybrid electric powertrain. Under 77 km/h the truck is powered entirely by an electric motor and a bank of lithium-ion batteries, which are recharged through regenerative braking and/or an engine-driven generator. As the tractor hits highway speed, the drivetrain phases to diesel power, using the electric motor only as required.

It's a 'series' hydraulic hybrid in which a small but efficient diesel engine is combined with a hydraulic propulsion system, replacing the conventional drivetrain and transmission. Hydraulic pumps and storage tanks capture and store braking energy, as with a diesel/electric hybrid. But in this case, the diesel is used to periodically recharge hydraulic pressure and can thus be run at a very efficient steady rpm. It can also be shut off when stopped or decelerating.

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▲ Mack recently delivered its fifth hybrid, and first diesel-electric refuse truck, to the US Air Force. The TerraPro low-entry truck has a rear-loading refuse packer body and a 325-hp MP7 engine plus the Mack/Volvo-developed hybrid electric powertrain. It should improve fuel economy by 20-30 percent.



▲ Kenworth's largest-ever hybrid truck order will put 150 T370 diesel/electric tractors and 35 Kenworth T370 hybrid trucks in the Coca-Cola Enterprises fleet this year. Added to the 142 hybrids running there now, the result will be the largest hybrid delivery fleet in North America.

The guess is an upcharge of about \$7,000, but tests of a prototype in Detroit for the last 18 months show spectacular fuel savings of 40-50 percent, fully 60 percent in the lab. Emissions show a reduction of 30-50 percent. The advantage of the hydraulic answer compared to electric is a matter of simpler technology in general, with no complex electronics to develop and then manage.

"There's no question that hydraulic hybrids, although little known to the public, are ready for prime time use on the streets of America," says David Abney, UPS's chief operating officer. "We're not declaring hydraulic hybrids a panacea for our energy woes, but this technology certainly is as promising as anything we've seen to date."

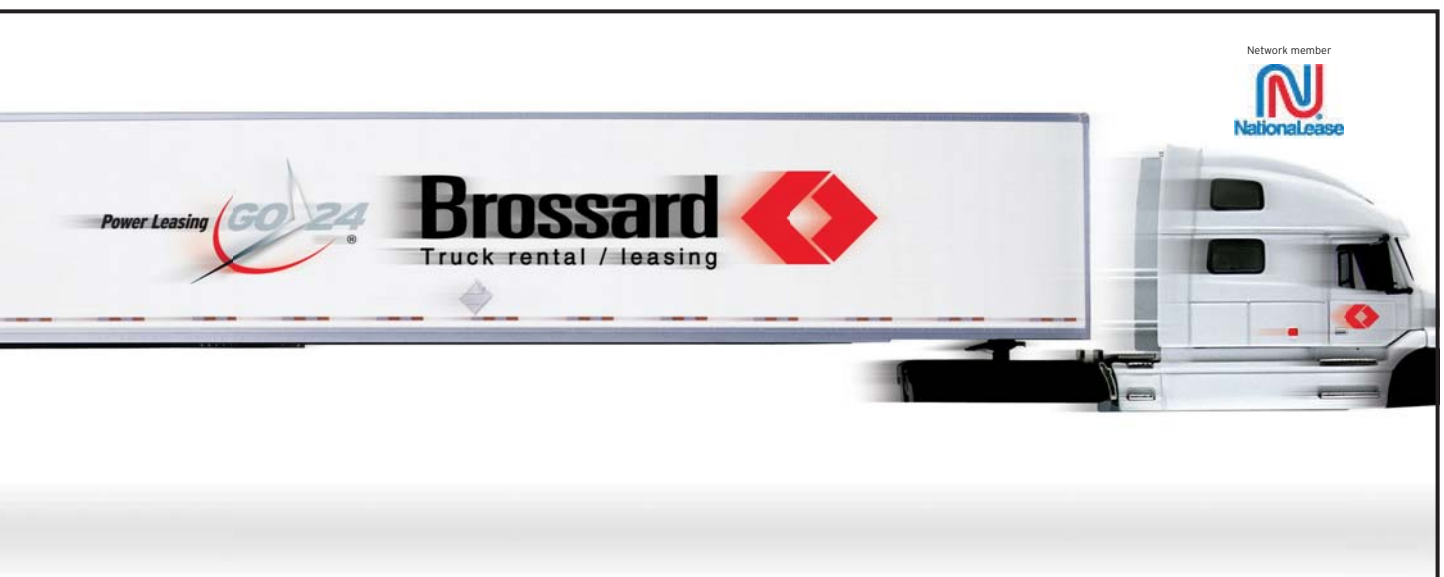
And Coca Cola Enterprises (CCE) plans to deploy another 185 hybrid electric trucks across the United States and Canada this year. When they're all on the road, the fleet will have 327 diesel/electric delivery trucks, the largest such fleet in North America. It has 142 hybrids running now. This new order is for 150 Kenworth T370 diesel-electric tractors, CCE's standard bulk delivery unit, and 35 T370 hybrid straight trucks. The hybrid tractor is said to use about 30 percent less fuel and produce some 30 percent fewer emissions than standard tractors. It uses electric power at speeds below 30 km/h.

Perhaps the most aggressive fleet in terms of testing better-than-diesel power options is Wal-Mart's transportation arm, which runs nearly 7200 heavy-duty

trucks in North America. It managed a whopping 25 percent increase in efficiency between 2005 and 2008, surpassing one of its stated sustainability goals. The company aims to double fleet efficiency by 2015, from a 2005 baseline. Hybrids are part of this effort, along with biofuel and natural gas, but also more intelligently designed delivery routes and more efficient trailer loading.

Its most recent test acquisition is an interesting one, namely a full-propulsion ArvinMeritor hybrid system in an International ProStar tractor that will initially operate in Detroit. This dual-mode diesel-electric hybrid is said to be the first vehicle of its type, and its the first Meritor diesel-electric drivetrain.

"While most hybrid systems today are



## Hybrid Trucks

best suited for start-stop applications, our hybrid drivetrain is specifically designed for linehaul, over-the-road trucks, the largest segment of the commercial vehicle population," says Carsten J. Reinhardt, president of ArvinMeritor's Commercial Vehicle Systems business.

The dual-mode hybrid drivetrain combines both mechanical and electrical power. Under 48 mph, or 77 km/h, the

truck is powered entirely by an electric motor and a bank of lithium-ion batteries, which are recharged through regenerative braking and/or an engine-driven generator. As the tractor hits highway speed, the drivetrain phases to diesel power, using the electric motor only as required.

The key differentiation of this system, says ArvinMeritor, is its ability to run in zero-emissions mode in a wide range of

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situations, allowing the truck to operate in places where emissions are restricted, like a port or urban area. The batteries also provide continuous power for hotel loads during an overnight rest period, eliminating the need for engine idling or other anti-idling systems. Electrification of accessories such as the air and AC compressors offers further efficiency benefits.

The Meritor hybrid drivetrain was developed in collaboration with Navistar and Cummins and consists of a proprietary motor/generator unit with high-capacity lithium-ion batteries, as well as the overall power-management system.

Peterbilt is also very active with Wal-Mart, and it's in the process of delivering five Model 386 tractors with diesel-electric hybrid power systems developed by Eaton and PACCAR.

### AND SMALLER FLEETS?

Given the cost of entry, serious explorations in hybrid technology have been mostly a big-fleet playground. And American at that. But there's one interesting exception in Victoria, B.C., where R&B Trucking has what's being called the cleanest refrigerated delivery truck on the continent. The company, run by Paul Cunnington, is a delivery agent for Clark Freightways. It has 28 trucks on the road, this one being the only diesel/electric hybrid.

Cunnington's class 7 Freightliner M2e 106 straight truck uses a small Cummins engine and the Eaton hybrid system. It also has an interesting electric refrigeration unit powered by the hybrid system, eliminating the need for a second diesel engine. It should save as much as 35 percent in fuel costs and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by more than 20 tonnes a year.

That all-electric reefer unit is made by Aura Systems of California, which is predominantly a maker of mobile-power electric generators for military use. More recently involved in truck refrigeration after the acquisition of Global Refrigeration, it makes the 'Oasis' midrange truck unit as seen on the R&B vehicle. Intended to run electrically off a PTO-driven generator, it was modified in this case to get power from the hybrid system. And it probably has a big future in either form.

Introduced last September, with capacities of 15,000-20,000 BTU/hr, it's on the road in more than 100 trucks so far. Aura says Penske, Ryder, Idealease, and smaller regional leasing companies have agreed to provide a leasing option for this system for select customers. Coming noise and emission regulations will very likely make this sort of product very popular. Aura conservatively estimates shipping over 700 sys-

tems in 2009 and 2000-plus in 2010. It will also introduce a trailer system in the first half of this year.

R&B Trucking notwithstanding, it's likely that we'll have to depend on large companies such as Coca-Cola and Wal-Mart to advance the hybrid truck commercialization process for now. They're hurting too, of course, but they have deep pockets. Envious, eh? ▲

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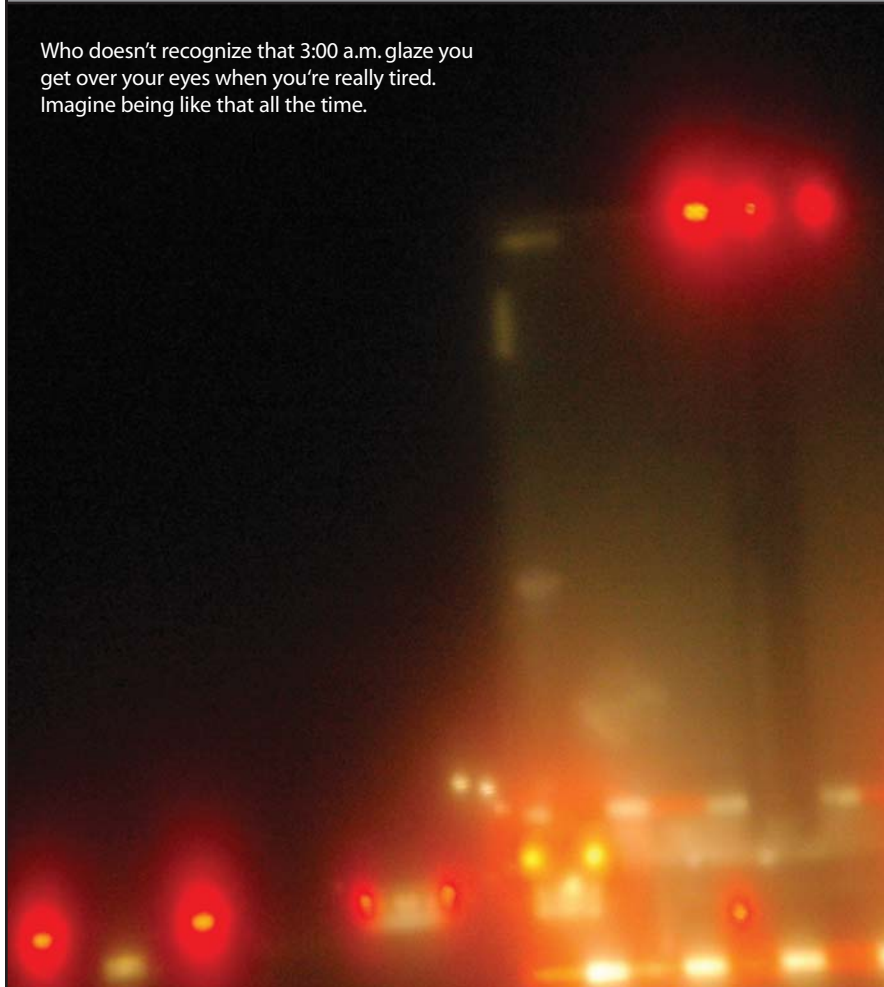
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## Awake at the Wheel

**sleep apnea** *Trucking now recognizes obstructive sleep apnea as a significant safety concern. FMCSA could soon require drivers be screened for the disorder. By Jim Park*

One of the first things you learn in driver education class is that a vehicle will cover a distance of 88 ft in a single second while traveling at 100 km/h. That's just a bit longer than your typical Super B-train. A lot can happen in one second at highway speed, and if your eyes are closed because you're experiencing a fatigue-induced micro-sleep, you won't be in a position to respond.

Humans respond to acute fatigue by, well, sleeping. Lapsing into sleep is an automatic response triggered by a physiological need, the same way you'll pull your finger back if you touch something hot. Remaining awake while your brain is trying to sleep requires considerable conscious effort and sometimes despite our best efforts, the onset of sleep can occur at the most inopportune moments—like

while seated at the dinner table with your in-laws, or driving along a highway.

The most common cause of such fatigue is chronic short sleep, where you just don't get enough rest to meet your body's needs. Whether you choose to remain awake for more time than is good for you, or some external factor prevents you from resting properly matters not. The point is, if you're not getting adequate rest, you're going to be dangerously tired sooner or later. Obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) is one of those external factors.

OSA is essentially a cessation of breathing during sleep, caused by an obstruction—in this case, it's often the soft tissues at the back of the throat relaxing during sleep and easing downward, closing off the airway. This condition is said to be very common among males with a collar size of 17 in. or larger.

Dr. Allan Pack, MD, PhD, director of the sleep center at the University of Pennsylvania, says the inability to draw a breath is what wakes you up.

"When the airway closes, the oxygen level in the blood declines. The brain senses this and wakes you to a lighter stage of sleep. As you wake, the brain sends a signal to these muscles to open up so you can breathe," says Pack. "When you go back to a deep sleep, the whole thing repeats. An OSA sufferer will have multiple episodes where breathing actually stops or markedly declines during sleep."

And the sleeper is often not aware this is occurring. The classic response when sleep researchers ask subjects if they wake up during the night is to say they wake to go to the bathroom. Sometimes they will wake up snoring or gasping for air, but usually they just wake to a lighter stage of sleep where they're not aware of waking. The result, Pack says, is non-consolidated, very fragmented sleep.

"We can test for this in the lab by disturbing a person's sleep throughout the night. You can make that perfectly normal person excessively sleepy during the day.

And because of the fragmented nature of this kind of sleep, you don't get into the deeper stages of sleep that we believe are the most restorative," he notes. "Patients with severe sleep apnea are very, very sleepy people. They will fall asleep in all sorts of circumstances: talking to people, even eating, and of course while driving."

That's why the U.S. Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) is now very interested in OSA.

One of the consequences of excessive sleepiness is a higher propensity of falling asleep while driving. No studies have been done with commercial drivers who suffer from sleep apnea at this point, Pack says, but multiple studies done on passenger car drivers show motorists with significant sleep apnea have roughly twice the normal risk of a crash.

The second reason to be concerned is that the commercial driver population has shown a high degree of prevalence of this disorder. The commercial driver community is believed to have a higher percentage of sleep apnea sufferers than the general population because as a group they tend to be more obese than normal—particularly at a young age. (See sidebar: *Too Fat for the D-O-T?*)

### THE CARROT OR THE STICK

Results from a Fatigue Management Program study at a January 2008 Transportation Research Board meeting showed very positive rates of therapy compliance with drivers taking part in the study. As a result, FMCSA is expected to issue a proposed rule that would mandate sleep apnea screening for drivers fitting the profile of a sleep apnea sufferer as part of the required DOT medical exam.

"We expect, on the DOT physical, that all drivers who display OSA symptoms would be required to have an in-home or in-lab sleep study done," says Dr. Kirsty Kerin, director of strategic development for Sleep Health Centers in Brighton, Mass. "If drivers test positive, they would be steered toward CPAP therapy." (See sidebar: *Nasal CPAP*)

## NASAL CPAP: A MIRACLE CURE?

**T**he treatment for sleep apnea is simple, and the condition can be abolished on the first night's use of a Nasal Continued Positive Airway Pressure device. The treatment is referred to as "Nasal CPAP." A mask is worn over the nose, or often the nose and mouth, and it's connected to a machine that uses a blower to create positive air pressure inside the mask. This forces air into the lungs through the nose and mouth, keeping the airway open.

"The improvement is often very dramatic," claims Dr. Allan Pack. "Patients who report not having had a good night sleep in years put the mask on and get the first good sleep

they can remember... It's almost like a religious experience. They feel terrific for the first time in memory. The improvement continues over days and weeks until they are back to complete function."

The issue with the mask and the pressure is not a trivial thing. The treatment is clumsy, and you need a good seal with the mask. Some take to it like a duck to water, others find it cumbersome and very difficult to use. And it's a lifetime commitment.

It can be used in the truck as well, but much of the existing

equipment requires drivers to idle the truck to power the machine—not constantly, but more than many state environmental agencies are comfortable with.

Don Osterberg, vice president of safety and driver training at Schneider National in Green Bay, Wis. says there are battery solutions out there, probably something in a lithium battery. "I've talked to the suppliers of these machines urging them to design them for this industry's needs," he says. "We need a battery that is sufficiently robust to keep the machine running for the required 10-hour [HOS] break. I know the solution is out there."

Schneider currently has drivers in its self-developed OSA screening and therapy program.

There are surgical techniques available as well, but they are very invasive, and not terribly successful most of the time. Dr. Pack says losing weight through diet and exercise can help, but he has seen only a few people who have lost enough weight to make a difference—and have kept the weight off.

Dr. Pack, who was a member of the expert panel reporting to FMCSA on the OSA issue, says the panel recommended to the agency a three-part process to screen, treat, and verify compliance.

"We understand drivers may see this as a threat, but the goal here is not to have this sword of Damocles hanging over anyone's head. Our plan is to keep [drivers] driving for one month following the screening in order to get diagnosed. If they are shown to have obstructive sleep apnea, they would have three more months to get effectively treated and onto a therapy program. They'd also need to show that they

are using the therapy," Pack explains. "The goal is not to drive people off the road and to lose their jobs, the goal is to give them time to get diagnosed and begin a treatment program and to document the efficacy of the treatment."

Dr. Kerin understands that drivers would be very nervous about this, but stresses that they really should prepare for this eventuality.

"If I was a driver at this point, and I really did expect these regulations to be coming in, I'd rather deal with the regulation now; get compliant on treatment, prove my compliance so that the regulation



## In Gear

would not be an issue," she says.

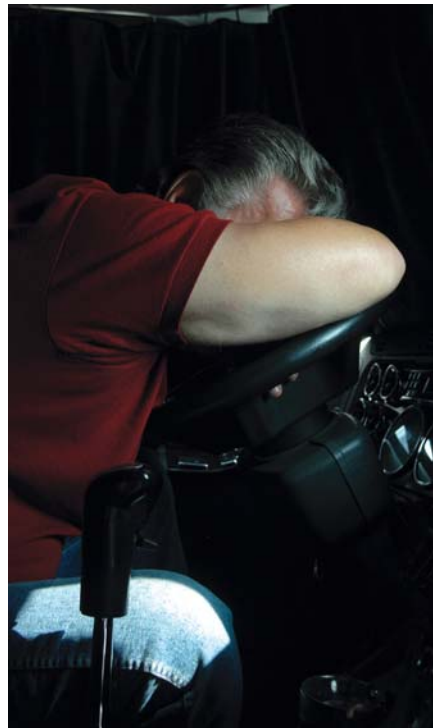
There's a Canadian component to this as well. While the NPRM has not even been written yet, it's expected that these new medical requirements would apply to Canadian drivers in much the same way current drug and alcohol testing rules do. We may even have a similar medical standard of our own on the books before too long.

The Fatigue Management Plan study that looked at sleep apnea among truck drivers has been underway for several years now. It was sponsored by several U.S. and Canadian government agencies, including Alberta Transportation (TRANS), Alberta Workers' Compensation Board (WCB), Commission de la sante el de la securite du travail du Quebec (CSST), Societe de l'assurance automobile du Quebec (SAAQ),

and Transport Canada (TC).

Canadian researchers on the project included doctors Diane Boivin of Alpha Logik in Montreal, John Remmes of SagaTech Electronics in Calgary, and Alison Smiley, of Toronto-based Human Factors North—who will be presenting findings of this research at the upcoming meeting of CCMTA's Standing Committee on Compliance & Regulatory Affairs in Regina in May.

Three fleets participated in the study: U.S.-based JB Hunt Transport, Transport Robert of Boucherville, Que., and Alberta-based ECL Group.



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The two pathways to sleepiness: chronic short sleep and sleep apnea. For truckers, short amounts of sleep on a chronic basis is considered an even more important problem than OSA, says Dr. Allan Pack.

"The fleets that I have been talking to are treating this as a wellness campaign, not a targeting exercise to instill fear in the drivers," stresses Kerin. "I think that speaks volumes to the management of those companies."

Still, there is fear among some drivers that OSA screening could cost them their jobs, and they have expressed concern about the confidentiality of medical records being shared across so many government agencies and with various carriers.

## TOO FAT FOR THE D-O-T

**W**e're told there's a strong correlation between obesity and elevated risk of obstructive sleep apnea (OSA). What constitutes obese in relation to sleep apnea risk? Obesity is a condition where excess body fat has accumulated to such an extent that health could be compromised. Obesity is determined using a statistical measurement that compares a person's weight and height, called a body mass index (BMI). Though it does not actually measure the percentage of body fat, it is a useful tool for estimating a healthy body weight based on how tall a person is.

Persons with a BMI of 30 are considered obese, and due to its ease of measurement and calculation, officials with the U.S. DOT plan to use BMI as a screening tool for mandated sleep apnea testing for commercial drivers.

In April 2008, an FMCSA medical review board submitted comments and advice on OSA and the driver population, and FMCSA is now considering a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) on how to deal with OSA. The NPRM could possibly mandate sleep apnea screening for drivers with a BMI of 33 or greater, but sleep experts and physicians on the review board believe that a BMI of 30 would be a better a predictor, so FMCSA's target of 33 could yet come down.

Roughly one-third of American truck drivers have a body mass index that puts them at elevated risk of having OSA.

Where are you on the BMI scale? A six-foot male weighing more than 225 lb would have a BMI of 30 or higher, and would be considered obese. At 5 ft-11 in. and 195 lb, I am considered 15 lb overweight with a BMI of 27.2. If I weighed 10 lb more, I'd be a candidate for OSA screening if FMCSA has its way.

Calculate your own BMI using this formula:  $BMI = \text{weight (kg)}/\text{height (m)}^2$

— Jim Park

Next time out, we'll tell you about an OSL screening program that Schneider National Carriers voluntarily implemented several years ago. It has since reduced the frequency of preventable crashes experienced by drivers under treatment by 30 percent, and they saw a 48-percent reduction in the median cost of crashes within the group. Schneider also saved \$534 per driver per year in health care

costs. We'll also have more on the Canadian side of this story. Stay Tuned.

To hear the complete Obstructive Sleep Apnea interview with Dr. Allan Pack, check out Truck Talk on [todaystrucking.com](http://todaystrucking.com). ▲

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](mailto:j.park@sympatico.ca).



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# PETERBILT AERODYNAMICS

PETERBILT AERODYNAMIC PACKAGE FOR MODELS 386  
AND 384 IMPROVES FUEL ECONOMY UP TO 12 PERCENT.  
SIMILAR KITS FOR 388/389 TRUCKS.



The new, proprietary Aerodynamic Package for **PETERBILT** Model 386 and 384 trucks was designed through computer analysis and testing to reduce vehicle drag by up to 24 percent, the company says. That's said to translate into a 12-percent fuel-economy gain over the same Peterbilt truck without the aerodynamic improvements. Benefits were validated by the company with computational fluid dynamics studies, wind-tunnel testing, and on-track drag

metering pulling 53-ft van trailers. Depending on the price of fuel and distance covered, the potential annual saving is easily several thousand dollars.

The package includes: a new roof fairing with trim tabs that help push air up and over the cab and trailer to reduce drag; a new sleeper roof transition that brings smoother air flow between the cab and sleeper roof lines; enhanced chassis fairings that have been re-contoured at the end to feature a 'flare' design element

which redirects air flow around the rear tires and wheels; optimized aero battery box/toolbox to provide better air flow under the cab; a composite sun visor that minimizes aerodynamic drag while enhancing glare protection; a new sleeper extender that features a 3-in. rubber extender flare to redirect air flow outward and around the trailer; and new lightweight-aerodynamic mirrors that include four-way adjustability both vertically and horizontally, with an

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integral convex mirror and fully heated primary and convex sections.

Peterbilt's new Aerodynamic Package will be available for order on new Models 386 and 384 and will also be available from PACCAR Parts for retrofit on these trucks.

The classic Models 388 and 389 also get a new Fuel Efficiency Package not unlike the 384/386 kit, and this too is said to offer a 24-percent aerodynamic gain and 12 percent better fuel economy. As well, it's available in retrofit form, including a kit for earlier Models 378 and 379.

See your dealer or [www.peterbilt.com](http://www.peterbilt.com)

## TRUCK-LITE CATALOG

TRUCK-LITE'S 2009 CATALOG FEATURES MOST EXTENSIVE HEAVY-DUTY LIGHTING PRODUCT OFFERING

With the addition of over 300 new items, **Truck-Lite's** 2009 Full Line Product Catalog now includes over 3,000 items to choose from for both trucks and



trailers—LEDs, sealed or replaceable lighting products, harnesses, mirrors, forward lighting, flashers, work lights, turn signal switches, and accessories.

The new catalog can be downloaded from Truck-Lite's website (see below) or call 1-800-562-5012 for a printed copy.

See [www.truck-lite.com](http://www.truck-lite.com)

## RETROFIT ROLL STABILITY

MERITOR WABCO'S RSSPLUS RETROFIT KIT BRINGS ROLL STABILITY TECHNOLOGY TO OLDER TRAILERS WITH MECHANICAL SUSPENSIONS

The joint venture between **ArvinMeritor** and **WABCO Vehicle Control Systems** of Brussels says its independent stability enhancement system, RSSplus, is now available as an affordable retrofit kit whether you have air or mechanical suspension on your trailers—even if they don't currently have ABS.



It's part of the SmartTrac family of stability control products such as Electronic Stability Control (ESC), Roll Stability Control (RSC), and Automatic Traction Control (ATC) offering advanced functions to enhance vehicle stability. The retrofit kits are backed by a warranty of one year/100,000 miles, parts and labor.

The kits were designed for North America, not Europe, so there's no need for a power inverter to convert from 48 volts.

RSSplus is a two-modulator stability

system that integrates with the trailer's antilock braking system. It continuously calculates the trailer's roll stability threshold based on lateral acceleration (side-to-side movements) and individual wheel speeds. When a rollover is imminent, the system will apply the trailer axle brakes to slow the vehicle and assist the driver in maintaining control. The system can apply full brake force to the outside wheels while delivering lower pressure to the insides.

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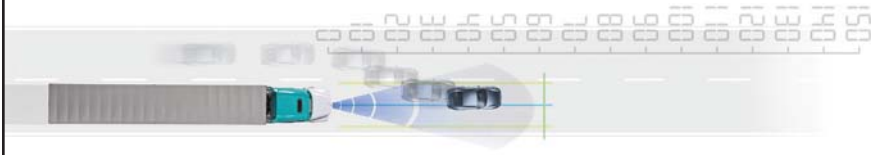


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# COLLISION AVOIDANCE

FIRST WITH ACTIVE BRAKING TO SAVE THE DAY



**M**ERITOR WABCO'S OnGuard collision safety system is said to be the first such system with active braking in North America. It can automatically maintain a safe following distance and helps avoid or reduce the impact of rear-end collisions by braking as needed. Up to a point. It won't do a full-bore panic stop, though we'll get closer to that in the next version.

OnGuard uses forward-looking radar sensors to monitor the distance to the moving vehicle ahead, supplementing the truck's cruise control system. When it sees a potential collision is developing, it sends audible and visual warnings so the driver can react and take corrective action. If he doesn't, the system will automatically decelerate the truck by throttle control, apply the engine brake, and if necessary, apply the foundation brakes until a safe following distance is re-achieved. Once a safe gap is re-established, it will accelerate again.

There are over 1,100 installations in operation now, with orders for another 2500.

In the fall we'll see a third variation on the theme called collision mitigation. It also works to maintain a safe following distance but it will brake more aggressively if the driver doesn't take the appropriate corrective action to save the day. It still doesn't reach a panic stop, but in a hands-on demonstration at an idle Orlando airport, I definitely needed to brace myself in the shotgun seat when the brakes were applied.

These systems actually 'see' around curves, I'm told. OnGuard's radar technology uses an internal gyro to detect a curve approaching and adjusts the radar beam as necessary to see objects around the bend. — RL

See [www.arvinmeritor.com](http://www.arvinmeritor.com) and [www.wabco-auto.com](http://www.wabco-auto.com)

Different retrofit kits accommodate a wide range of braking system configurations, including 2-sensor/1-modulator (2S/1M); 2-sensor/2-modulator; and 4-sensor/2-modulator (4S/2M). It can be installed on trailers equipped with Meritor WABCO ABS or a competitor's ABS product, or no ABS at all.

Installation involves replacing the ABS ECU/valve assembly with the RSSplus ECU valve assembly and mounting an electronic sensor to measure the deflection of the suspension springs. If the trailer is equipped with Meritor WABCO ABS, existing wheel-speed sensors and cables can be reused to reduce the installation expense.

A typical retrofit installation of RSSplus for mechanical suspensions takes approximately four to six hours. Meritor WABCO's field service team is available to train and qualify technicians who will perform the installations. RSSplus for mechanical suspensions

works exactly the same as the version for air suspensions, providing familiarity for drivers and technicians.

Pricing is in the US\$1,200 range, higher if the trailer doesn't already have ABS.

See [www.arvinmeritor.com](http://www.arvinmeritor.com) and [www.wabco-auto.com](http://www.wabco-auto.com)

## ALUMINUM FLATDECK

FONTAINE INTRODUCES A SLEEK ALUMINUM FLAT THAT WEIGHS JUST 8,000 LB IN 48-FT TRIM

Fontaine Trailer is launching what it calls a "revolutionary" aluminum flatdeck trailer that's said to weigh just 8,000 lb in 48-ft form while handling a 60,000-lb load concentrated in just four feet. It combines aluminum main beams with an extruded aluminum floor in a unitized design. Fittingly, the company says, the new trailer is called the Revolution.

There's also a sister model, the new Revolution Hybrid, a composite steel/aluminum 48-footer that weighs

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VICTORIA	87.7	-2.0	58.3
PRINCE GEORGE	83.7	-1.8	58.0
KAMLOOPS	86.7	-1.2	60.9
KELOWNA	87.6	-1.3	61.7
FORT ST. JOHN	94.9		68.7
YELLOWKNIFE	93.4	-23.5	75.9
CALGARY *	75.9	-3.3	59.3
RED DEER	82.4	-3.5	65.5
EDMONTON	73.7	-3.0	57.2
LETHBRIDGE	78.8	-3.3	62.0
LLOYDMINSTER	80.9	-3.0	64.0
REGINA *	79.9	-2.0	57.1
SASKATOON	78.4	-3.3	55.7
PRINCE ALBERT	79.9	-3.0	57.1
WINNIPEG *	77.5	-6.2	58.3
BRANDON	74.9	-7.0	55.8
TORONTO *	82.9		60.7
OTTAWA	83.2	-5.7	61.0
KINGSTON	82.1	-1.3	59.9
PETERBOROUGH	83.9		61.6
WINDSOR	79.5	-0.7	57.4
LONDON	79.6	2.2	57.5
SUDBURY	87.9	-1.0	65.4
SAULT STE MARIE	89.9	-3.0	67.3
THUNDER BAY	85.7	-4.3	63.3
NORTH BAY	88.5	-1.3	66.0
TIMMINS	89.7	0.3	67.1
HAMILTON	80.9	-0.4	58.7
ST. CATHARINES	81.9	-0.3	59.7
MONTRÉAL *	91.9	-0.5	61.2
QUÉBEC	91.9		61.2
SHERBROOKE	91.7	-0.3	61.0
GASPÉ	92.9	-0.5	62.1
CHICOUTIMI	91.9	-0.8	61.2
RIMOUSKI	92.6	-0.5	61.2
TROIS RIVIÈRES	92.9	0.7	61.2
DRUMMONDVILLE	88.9	-1.5	61.2
VAL D'OR	91.9	-5.0	61.2
SAINT JOHN *	87.8	-3.3	56.8
FREDERICTON	88.4	-3.1	57.3
MONCTON	87.8	-3.8	56.8
BATHURST	91.9	-2.8	60.4
EDMUNDSTON	89.6	-2.5	58.4
MIRAMICHI	89.6	-3.4	58.4
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only 9,000 lb but handles a 55,000-lb load concentrated in four feet. It features 23-in. steel main beams combined with the same extruded aluminum floor seen on the all-aluminum model.

Fontaine says it's working with its largest dealer north of the border, Ocean Trailer, to create Canadianized versions of these new models.

The trailer floor features an integrated load-securement system to improve safety and convenience. Modular chain tie-downs slide in grooves that are built into the floor. You can position them virtually anywhere on the deck to secure loads quickly and easily, says Fontaine.

The patent-pending design is made possible by 3D solid modeling and friction-stir welding technology. That welding process, proven in the aerospace industry, uses little heat but is said to produce superior structural integrity by bonding molecules. The join is no stronger than conventional welding at



**Fontaine Trailer**

any given point, but it's more consistent along the entire weld line, resulting in greater strength overall.

Another key patent-pending feature is the one-piece extruded aluminum siderail that's said to withstand impact damage better than steel equivalents.

The two trailers also sport an LED lighting package designed by Grote that reduces the number of electrical connections—thus increasing the likelihood of reliability—by more than 60 percent. The electrical system is backed by a comprehensive 10-year warranty.

See [www.fontainetrailer.com](http://www.fontainetrailer.com)

## FUEL ECONOMY GUIDE

BRIDGESTONE HAS PUBLISHED THE 4TH GUIDE IN ITS SERIES ON TIRE AND TRUCK FUEL ECONOMY

There's a lot of very useful information packed into the 40 pages of the new **Bridgestone** guide, *Real Answers: Tires & Truck Fuel Economy*. It's billed as a



the Bridgestone book covers the TMC guide as well. The book is very well

companion to The Fleet Manager's Guide to Fuel Economy published by the Technology and Maintenance Council. In fact, the index at the back of

illustrated and easy to understand, covering more than just the role played by tires in fuel economy. Bridgestone has other similar resources, including a downloadable DVD video called 'What Drivers Can Do to Save Fuel'.

See [www.bridgestonetrucktires.com](http://www.bridgestonetrucktires.com). See also TMC at [www.truckline.com/Federation/Councils/TMC/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.truckline.com/Federation/Councils/TMC/Pages/default.aspx)

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## BRAKE PADS, SHOES

MONROE STOPPING EQUIPMENT SAID TO REDUCE FADE

Monroe Dynamics brake friction covers the latest air-disc brake systems

**Tenneco Inc.** has introduced Monroe Dynamics disc brake pads and shoes covering the latest air-disc brake systems from Workhorse, Knorr Bremse, Meritor Wabco, and other manufacturers.

These brake pads and shoes are, for many applications, packaged complete with all hardware and related components needed for the job.

Each Monroe semi-metallic brake pad features an application-specific friction material secured to its backing plate with an OE constant-pressure manufacturing process called positive molding. This is said to provide a better bond and denser friction material, which in turn reduces pedal fade and helps ensure stopping performance.

See [www.monroebrakes.com](http://www.monroebrakes.com)

## APU IS CARB-COMPLIANT

CARRIER'S COMFORTPRO APU GETS NEW DIESEL PARTICULATE FILTER

The new ClearSky diesel particulate filter (DPF) has been conditionally verified by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) for use with **Carrier**

**Transicold's** ComfortPro auxiliary power unit (APU). This allows operators of class 8 tractors with 2007 or newer engines to use these APUs with the new DPF throughout the state.



Active-regeneration technology in the new DPF achieves CARB's emission standard, which calls for particulate emissions to be reduced by at least 85 percent. It also meets CARB's NOx (nitrogen oxide) emission regulations.

Active regeneration might be considered impossible because these units typically don't generate enough heat to burn off particulates from the exhaust. Carrier says the ComfortPro's Deltek hybrid diesel-electric technology is unique, and its generator creates the necessary temperatures.

With a silicon carbide filter element and an easy-to-maintain design, the

ClearSky DPF replaces the ComfortPro muffler on new equipment, and it can be field-installed on existing units (model PC6000). Requiring no driver intervention, the DPF automatically regenerates in less than 25 minutes, every 10 to 30 operating hours.

Without a DPF, some truckers are now prohibited from running their diesel-powered APUs in California. The California

law applies to trucks equipped with a 2007 or newer engine. Rigs with older engines may still use the ComfortPro APU without the DPF in California. And, even without the DPF, operators of newer rigs can take advantage of the APU's shore-power option when parked at any California location where an adequate 110-volt power supply is available.

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By Peter Carter

## Dr. Pete's Magic Sleeping Potion

A sure cure for the most common sleep problem of all

Once you're finished with this column, I'm sure you'll want to read "Apnea never sleeps," by Jim Park on page 44. In case you didn't know, apnea's a killer and a serious truck-industry health problem and Park offers some cutting-edge advice on how to deal with it.

But never mind that for now.

Here's a sleep issue that affects everybody.

I'm referring to waking up in the middle of the night to see your digital clock flashing 3:42 and realizing that your next day is shot.

You have a meeting at 8:30 a.m. and if you're less than alert you'll lose a shipper and your boss will be really peeved and who knows in this economy what that means and the more you fret about it, the less sleep you're going to get.

Plus you have to go to the bathroom. By the time you get back to bed, it's 3:48 and you tripped on the cat en route so now you're wider awake than ever.

And every little problem that your business could possibly encounter seems to demand an immediate middle-of-the-night resolution and your head feels like it's going to explode with worry.

"I'll never make it through the day, I'll be a dangerous driver and will probably make a damn fool of myself in that meeting," is what you tell yourself.

By 4:17 a.m., you'll know that life, as you know it, is over.

Except that since you're reading this, you've come to the right place. I am the go-to guy when it comes to helping people sleep. (I guess that means I am the go-to-sleep guy.)

I personally have developed a system for going back to sleep that's free, doesn't involve any activities that you can't mention in a respectable business magazine; and it's pretty much guaranteed.

I am very serious about this. My system works like a dream and it's scientific. My sister runs a business called Bassis&Carter

Counseling and she's studied sleep techniques galore and uses them in therapy.

There are three secret ingredients: Lists. Math. And sheep.

The first trick—lists—is most fun. Simply put, I come up with lengthy lists that need making—the longer the better—and as long as I keep at it, sleep comes handily.

Recently I lay there thinking about North American cars, starting with Z and working back to A. I started with Mercury's Zephyr. If you make your way through the alphabet, start back the other direction. This is very effective. The only downside here

was as I was working my way through the models, I thought "that's a lot of product overlap. No wonder those companies are thin on the ground these days." That made me fret about the economy again, so I had to work to keep my mind on my list.

Second trick: Get comfortable. Close your eyes (Not now! When you're in bed.) Imagine a completely random number in the thousands, for example 18,438. Then, subtract from it, in a repeating pattern; say, first subtract

seven and then 11. The hard part is keeping your mind on the job. Don't let your thoughts stray. Keep at the arithmetic. I guarantee you'll be at zzzzzz long before you get to zero.

Finally, count sheep. Seriously. But you have to move your eyes back and forth, as though you are really watching the woolly buggers hop a fence. And again, keep at it until you're in dreamland. Eyes go left to right. Right to left. It's like self-hypnosis. Says the expert my sister, Bertholde: "[by counting sheep] we provide a rhythm in our heads that synchronizes with our breathing and that prompts us to fall asleep."

Trust her (and me) on this.

Just two more things: Don't look at the clock. That'll backfire seriously. And if the person beside you snores, (not that I have any experience there) all bets are off. That I can't help you with.

Now go read Park's story. ▲



RAMMIING THE POINT HOME: Counting sheep really works if you do it right.



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