

WHEEL MONEY: New CTA head says drivers need more dough, PG. 12



Bruno Muller

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Today's Trucking

The Business Magazine of Canada's Trucking Industry

RULE

your

FUEL



PG. 28

Building shop staff



PG. 44

Cutting shop stock

Plus:

Realistic hybrid options, PG. 32

Fuel tips for small fleets, PG.38

How to hedge diesel, PG.40



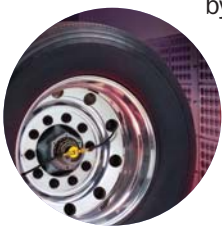
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**Kenneth R. Wilson
Award Winner**



Member



Canadian Business Press

BPA WORLDWIDE

Letters

Don't castrate my truck

All the rhetoric racing up and down the information highway has overlooked one fact: What about the several million cars that are already "terrorizing" the public-at-large and "threatening" the safety of defenseless mothers with their faithful canine companions in their SUV's on their way to dance lessons, hockey practice or the spa?



Are we going to have another gun-registry-like fiasco where all owner-operators and small companies will "willingly" surrender their vehicles for computer surgery in order to accommodate the Ontario Trucking Association's (OTA) whims?

Who, in their right mind is going to rush out to the nearest operating theater in order to emasculate their diesel-gulping behemoth so that they won't be able to go as fast as all "them lettuce haulers" across the states and on the Macdonald-Cartier Speedway in Ontario?

And, who, pray tell, is going to pay for said mechanical castration? Well, of course, let me guess—and we've heard nary a word from the new truck sales folk.

If you own a 1998 Pete with a 575 hp., 18-double over, 3:55 rears and it's due for trade to a new wagon, you are going to think twice about trading it up to a wussy facsimile of your former toy. You will consider rebuilding it just one more time, won't you?

And will it now become mandatory that every time a truck enters a repair facility its speed monitor will be checked by a certified—repeat—certified technician? And, again, at the risk of repeating myself, who is going to pay for all this? Yes, you're right, once again. Now, stop me if you think I'm wrong, but would it not make a lot more sense to put all that extra coin and person/hours toward beefing up enforcement of the existing speed laws?

Excuse me for pointing out the obvious: It is not fast trucks or cars that cause problems, it's fast drivers. Personally, I

prefer fast trucks and slow drivers.

Then it is possible to coax some real fuel conservation out of your conveyance without "pinning" it all the time. And split speed limits suck, big time. They are just excuses for road rage, drawn guns, Trudeau salutes—the whole bit.

Perhaps it is also time for the industry itself to apply some of its own enforcement in the right place at the right time. Hats off to the Maritime company that cans a driver after the second speeding offence.

The only viable speed limiter in a truck ought to be the one in the driver's seat!

Ed Murdoch,
Proprietor,
C&E Driver Services,
Enderby, B.C.

TODAY'S TRUCKING APPOINTMENT



Newcom Business Media announces the appointment of **Richard Kazmirchuk** to the position of Director, Internet Operations.

Richard will be overseeing all the websites for Newcom

Business Media's wide variety of products, publications and truck shows.

Newcom magazine titles include *Today's Trucking*, *highwaySTAR*, *Truck and Trailer*, *Transport Routier*, *Canadian Technician*, and *Plumbing & HVAC Product News*.

The Newcom Show Division produces *Truck World*, *CamExpo*, *ExpoCam*, and *Winnipeg Truck Show*.

In his previous position at Rogers Media, Richard was responsible for converting FRASERS Directories from a traditional print-driven product to a successful and highly profitable web-only property. Prior to that Richard worked in IT publishing for 18 years and helped launch 7 new magazines.

You can reach Richard at richard@newcom.ca or by calling 416 614-5823.

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By Rolf Lockwood



Driver Drought

A global shortage persists, but in some cases we seem to be our own worst enemy

Drivers. The very backbone of this industry, yet they're still in short supply despite plummeting freight volumes that have put trucks against many fences. As it happens, they're hard to find just about everywhere else in the world too.

The reasons are different from ours, but former Comecon countries like the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland are also suffering from severe driver drought. The Czechs have been hiring in Vietnam lately, the Hungarians in India, a practice we know well. Their loss of traditional domestic recruits is largely due to the better pay offered in the United Kingdom and other western European countries. And here, for that matter.

The U.K. doesn't have a problem right now, thanks to the imports, but carriers are bracing for it within the next few years and they acknowledge that recruiting abroad is a short-term measure. As the existing domestic driving force pushes into retirement age, they'll see the same problem we have—fewer young people want a trucking career. Like us, the U.K. industry's hiring efforts are hamstrung by the industry's increasingly poor reputation. The 'lorry driver' doesn't get the same respect he once did.

Shortages exist in Australia too, I learned over a recent dinner with Melissa Strong, HR manager at Roadmaster, a prominent refrigerated carrier near Sydney. She was in Canada as part of a seven-week world trip, courtesy of Cummins South Pacific, that was the key prize for being named the Australian Transport Woman of the Year for 2007. In any event, her driver recruiting efforts have also taken her to Asia because Aussie demographics are much like ours and because the job doesn't have the same appeal it once did.

Owner-operators are a different kettle of fish, but also in short supply here in Canada, a situation that's bound to get worse as fuel prices continue to rise. But I also keep hearing horror stories about the passing on—or not—of fuel surcharges to owner-ops. Add the coming speed-limiter mandate in Ontario and Quebec, and it looks to me like the industry has itself partly to blame if the supply of these folks continues to dry up. The paucity of miles to run is obviously another factor.

I think it's a given that as freight comes back, the many owner-operators who have seen their tractors repossessed lately will simply stay away. And they may not have trucks to buy again anyhow because thousands upon thousands of those repod machines have been sold offshore.

And those horror stories? Well, it seems at least some fleets have just plain stopped paying their owner-operators a fuel surcharge. This one boggles my mind. I hear this often enough that

there has to be some truth in it, though I must admit that I haven't spent hours researching it. Just slow down, one fleet owner reportedly told his guys when they asked how they could possibly manage taking the hit alone for crazy fuel-price hikes. As if slowing down—from any speed—could possibly counteract the price paid at the pumps these days.

One very successful, responsible owner-operator working for such a carrier says that on his first trip from Halifax to Toronto under a new regime that brought the end of subsidized fuel, he ran out of revenue many miles east of home. I guess we have to say, through no fault of his own, he used to be successful. He's the dependable sort of fellow that everybody wants, but he'll be moving on.



I keep hearing horror stories about the passing on—or not—of fuel surcharges to owner-operators.

The carriers in these cases, and hundreds more, are obviously under awful cost pressure. But surely it doesn't take a lot of gray matter to understand that the guys at the bottom of the ladder are the least able to make up the difference.

So who can? Shippers have to pay, period. And if they won't, the freight's not worth having. Yeah, I know, that's easy for me to say sitting at one clear remove from the ugliness out there, but isn't it really that simple? Always has been, always will be. Every business operator tries to avoid passing costs on for as long as he can, but sooner or later something has to give. And our entire society understands that, accepts it. It's not as if the price of fuel is some hidden cost like the price of steel. Make the shipper pay. ▲

Rolf Lockwood is editorial director and publisher of *Today's Trucking*. You can reach him at 416-614-5825 or rolf@todaystrucking.com.

Dispatch

BY MARCO BEGHETTO

Fool Speed Ahead?

Blowback From Federal Report On Speed Limiters: Safety questioned; tampering discussed; and owner-ops sue

Like it or not, the speed limiter saga isn't quite over yet. As far as revelations go, the long-awaited collection of studies on speed limiters by Transport Canada (TC) offered few. It's the reactions (or lack thereof) that followed, though, that have reheated the controversial issue.

Rather than take a firm stand on mandatory speed limiters, the studies appear to confirm some of the main arguments expressed for years by both proponents and critics.

But in its main press release to the media, Transport Canada chose to hype some of the pro-environmental talking points for speed limiter legislation, while all but ignoring more prominent safety concerns.

The environmental benefits report—one of several on the impacts of mandatory speed limiters—reveals that the devices set at 105 km/h

on large trucks could result in 228.6 million liters of diesel fuel saved and eliminate 0.64 megatonnes of greenhouse gases. Ontario and Quebec—both provinces have already committed to speed limiter legislation in advance of the federal studies—would account for 64 percent of the estimated national savings.

On the safety side, TC is considerate of advocates' theory that more trucks with activated speed limiters means less severe truck-car accidents on the highway. However, the results also echo some of the warnings by groups like the Owner-Operator Business Association of Canada (OBAC), which, citing available literature on the issue, says that a greater differential in speed between cars and large trucks will result in more rear-end collisions and similar crashes.

Essentially, Transport

Canada concludes that the introduction of speed limiters set at 105 km/h increases safety only in "uncongested region(s)." The maximum safety gains, though, were obtained when speed was

set 15 km/h less—at 90 km/h for uncongested volumes. But as the volume of traffic and percentage of trucks increased, the safety gains associated with limiters become less pronounced.



Contrary to popular opinion, heavy truck and engine makers don't favor mandatory speed limiters.

ches

“As the volume is set close to capacity (2000 vehicles per hour per lane) more vehicle interactions take place and this leads to a reduction in safety especially for those segments with increased merging and lane-change activity, such as, on and off ramp segments. In these instances the introduction of truck speed limiters can actually reduce the level of safety when compared to the non-limiter case.”

The study also makes special mention of two-lane, undivided rural highways.

While many restrict speed to between 70 and 80 km/h (rendering a 105 km/h setting nearly irrelevant), some jurisdictions across Canada allow speeds of up to 100 km/h. Here, suggests the study, “implementation of mandatory speed limiters could lead to an “increase of passing maneuvers onto the opposing traffic lane. The possibility for increased unsafe passing maneuvers poses special safety challenges where trucks are subject to a maximum speed.”

These safety considerations apparently didn't convince Ontario's Ministry of Transport to rethink or revise Bill 41 before it passed in the Legislature in June. *Today's Trucking* learned that Minister Jim Bradley's office had preliminary copies of the study as far back as April.

Bradley, though, wasn't taking questions on TC's analysis. When contacted by this magazine, MTO spokesman Bob Nichols said the minister had “no comment.”

NDP MPP Peter Kormos and Tory Frank Klees—two of Queen's Park's most vocal critics of mandatory speed limiters—are upset the MTO didn't distribute the TC documents to MPPs during parliamentary debates. “Nobody told me they [the studies] were

MIAMI POUND MACHINE: Both the gridiron and the gridlock in South Florida are not things locals should be proud of.



SO THAT'S WHAT LEAD-FOOTED MEANS

Is there a connection between bad driving and bad football? Do the math.

The Miami Dolphins finished 1-15 in 2007, and drivers in that city were voted the least courteous drivers in America—for the third year in a row—by an organization called **AutoVantage**, which conducted a survey of commuter habits across North America.

Not that we're advocating road rage or anything, but how grumpy would you be (and the senior editor of this mag has been a 'Fins fan for 27 years) if your team came within a missed FG from a perfect—winless, that is—season last year?

But perhaps the gridiron and gridlock connection in Miami is just a coincidence. That's because the football

analogy quickly falls apart when you consider that the second-least-courteous drivers in the USA, according to the survey, are in Boston—home of the Patriots, who went 16-0 and have won three Super Bowls this decade. (Under suspect circumstances? —*editor's note*).

New York City has the third most aggressive drivers on the Continent. The Big Apple has one team that just won the Super Bowl, and the other that, well ... they're the Jets.

Then there's the Canadian angle. The last time the **Canadian Automobile Association** published statistics on Canadian road rage, the highest reported incidences were in Alberta.

The Stampeders and Eskimos shared the basement last year.



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available back in April. That was way in advance of the debate we had in the house,” says Kormos. “The committee process was the worst possible display of parliamentary democracy possible.”

Gilles Bisson (NDP Timmins-James Bay) thinks that if more members had a chance to see all the available information, “the outcome may have been different.”

The Ontario Trucking

Dispatches

Association (OTA), which first came up with the idea for compulsory speed limiters in 2005, didn't issue a public statement on the federal studies. When contacted by *Today's Trucking*, though, OTA's manager of Government Relations, Doug Switzer, disputed that TC's conclusion was that speed limiters are unsafe. "Safety is always relative, never absolute, and that's what I hear this study saying—that while in some circumstances there may be issues, on balance mandating speed limiters increases safety," he says.

"Even if we were to concede that the safety is a wash—the study doesn't say

that—the environmental benefits [and] fuel savings are sufficient reason on their own to justify the policy. Safety has never been the only issue."



MPP **Peter Kormos** wonders if the speed limiter vote would have gone differently if MPPs had all the available information.

But that begs the question; if the green argument alone justifies the policy, then why not push just as hard to extend limiters onto cars and other types of transport vehicles?

That's what OBAC Director Joanne Ritchie wants to

know, among other things. While the TC safety report doesn't specifically say limiters are safe or unsafe, she says it's clear it throws out more red flags than it confirms validation.

"You'd be hard-pressed to find a compelling argument for any jurisdiction to go down the road of mandating speed-limiters," she says. "The studies bear out what

we've been saying all along—that there is no evidence to show that safety is well served ... and indeed, safety can be compromised in a number of situations.

"Environmental benefits, which seems to be the only bright spot the minister could find, are already recognized by the industry as smart business practices."

The Canadian Automobile Association is part of the collation OTA assembled in 2005 to advance its speed limiter campaign. CAA Ontario Affairs Specialist Kris Barnier says that he believes that Bill 41 will ultimately be safety-neutral. But if limiters result in an increase of collisions around or on off-ramps, "we'd move to have the law changed."

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Richard Harris
Medium-Duty Sales Manager
South Central Region

TAMPER TANTRUM

Despite the perception that OEMs are generally supporters of mandatory limiter rules for heavy trucks, comments to TC by the Truck Manufacturers Association (TMA) and Engine Manufacturers Association (EMA) reveal that equipment suppliers are pretty much against such a policy, as it stands, for Canada or the U.S.

“At this time, we believe a great deal more information is needed before a reasoned decision can be made on this issue. [We] support proposals that are demonstrated to provide safety benefits and are practicable. We believe this proposal has flaws, especially in terms of its practicality,” states TMA in a questionnaire response titled ‘Technical Considerations.’

The engine makers are even more direct: “We are strongly opposed to any proposal that would require manufacturers to “hardwire” a limit specific to a particular jurisdiction [even if that limit is consistent within all of Canada]. Such a proposal is unworkable ...”

“In general, EMA prefers voluntary incentives measures rather than regulatory mandates, particularly when the costs and associated burdens of the regulation may not be justified by the potential benefits and when the objectives can be achieved through voluntary measures.”

The comments also reveal some of the enforcement roadblocks that lie ahead for authorities like the MTO. One such issue is the problem of determining that a

non-compliant speed setting was programmed “in error” or “maliciously.”

Asked by Transport Canada if a 100-percent tamper-proof speed limiter could be a reality, the TMA, answers: “We don’t foresee any possible way to make such a system completely tamper-proof ... A fully tamper-proof system is highly unlikely.”

COMPETITIVE FRONT

Overall, says Transport Canada, there could be some impact on trucking industry competitiveness within speed-limited jurisdictions. Any blowback would be most felt by small fleets and independent owner-operators since many large fleets

already voluntarily govern their fleet speed.

Regionally, according to TC, Atlantic Canada would be most affected by an Ontario-Quebec policy, while in the west only 10 percent of the commercial truck population would be impacted by a Central

We believe this proposal has flaws, especially in terms of its practicality.

Canadian rule. However, a national mandate would shake up far more truckers in those parts, especially as it relates to two-lane highway networks—which are quite extensive in Saskatchewan and Alberta. Both provinces, incidentally, have already dismissed the possibility of a speed limiter rule.

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There's a certain value to the service trucking provides and the outspoken new chairman of the CTA thinks it's about time we got it.

BRUNO MULLER doesn't see any significance in having the leader of a western carrier as chair of the Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA) but it doesn't mean he's not going to try and shake things up a bit.

The president of tanker carrier Caron Transportation Systems recently began a two-year term as chairman the CTA, whose board describes Muller as "a visionary leader who built his specialty bulk commodities hauler into one of the most successful carriers in western Canada."

A fixture on the CTA board since its inception 10 years ago and a member of its executive committee for the past six years, Muller's chairmanship comes at a pivotal point for the umbrella group.

Muller took some time to sit down with *Today's Trucking* recently at his Sherwood Park, Alta., office to discuss the trucking industry and what the next couple of years might hold.

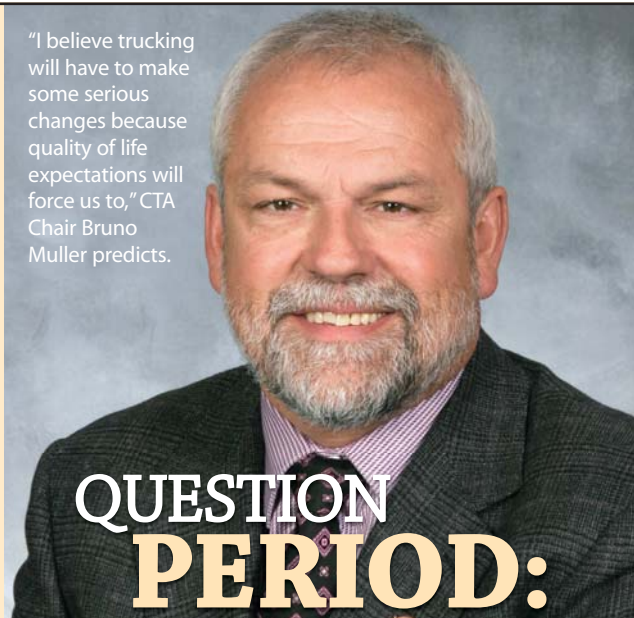
TT: *Is there significance to having the leader of a western carrier as chair of the board of directors for the CTA?*

BM: In some people's eyes there may be significance, especially for some carriers out west who may think there is an imbalance, but (CTA CEO David) Bradley and his people have done a good job of mitigating any imbalances. In today's CTA, I don't see any significance in where in Canada the chair comes from.

TT: *How different is trucking in various parts of the country?*

BM: The basic operational issues are the same. One big difference

"I believe trucking will have to make some serious changes because quality of life expectations will force us to," CTA Chair Bruno Muller predicts.



Yes We Caron

in central Canada is there is a lot more north/south traffic than in eastern and western Canada, so consequently issues like the Canadian dollar and border crossings are a lot more significant.

As far as issues go for the driver shortage, we may be a little worse off throughout western Canada, but it does exist throughout the country. The differences really are more sector-based than regional-based.

TT: *At times, different regions have not always agreed on what is best for the industry, is that something that can change?*

BM: I don't think that will ever change, but I think the CTA does a much better job of working through it.

There might be regional differences, but they don't linger on the board or in the executive. We do a good job of looking at the big picture and not just our own jurisdictions, and getting a consensus before we move forward. We respect the differences of opinion and carry on.

TT: *Is national consistency in trucking still a main lobbying goal?*

BM: Trucks travel across Canada to move goods and if you have to worry about a different set of rules for every province you cross, it becomes a big problem. You should be able to drive a truck from PEI to Vancouver Island without any issues.

Some of the main issues are harmonization of hours of service and equipment (weights and dimensions, and configurations). Certain pieces of equipment can't run in certain jurisdictions and that becomes a roadblock for carriers. It would be nice if you could take any piece of equipment and go anywhere without worrying about being in violation. And border issues are still out there, as well as environmental issues and speed limiters.

TT: *It's been 20 years and the lack of manpower is still an issue. What do we do about it?*

BM: The first thing we have to do is continue to get into the junior and senior high schools and promote the job of driving a truck as a good standard of living and a good lifestyle. We have to ensure people look at our industry, and look at driving a truck or being a

mechanic, as a preferred job in the workforce; and not always just hire people who have trouble getting other jobs.

The quality of life needs to be addressed and compensation should be better. That will have nothing to do with regulations; it's just industry and pricing. We have to value our service so we can pay people enough and the compensation is there for them.

For a long time, truck drivers in general have been under compensated if they're doing a good job and the minute there's another opportunity, we're not there with the compensation. We need to get it together and understand you can't just work people harder to get them money.

TT: *What do you envision for us in the next 10 years?*

BM: At the end of the day, I believe trucking will have to make some serious changes because quality of life expectations of today will force us to—I mean hours per week and time away from home. People today and the workforce today will not do the same things as the past generation.

We need to stop being a secondary job market; the only time we get people is when the economy is down. Whatever the cost is, we have to pay. We need to start valuing the service we provide because we need a better rate of return to do that.

I have a large concern that the industry is not going to be able to supply proper service if (these) issues are not addressed. There is going to be a time where if we don't get new people in the system, then the goods will not get moved on time. Probably 95 percent of everything we use in our daily lives comes by truck and that could be a serious issue for our industry. ▲

and smaller fleets that routinely head north are very much concerned with being capped at 105 km/h, as it would place them at a disadvantage when traveling at home.

Considering the weakness of southbound lanes and shrinking volumes out of central Canada, though, it would be hard to find a major cross-border carrier that would miss them poking around for backhauls.

And that, believes, the Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association (OOIDA), is the end game for industry advocates. The Missouri-

based group argues that speed limiters are an affront to NAFTA. It has retained legal counsel in Canada and plans to make its case in court as soon as the Ontario law takes affect.

"We believe the new law discriminates against U.S.-based companies as well as Canadian trucking companies based outside of Ontario by restricting their ability to operate freely throughout Canada," said Rick Craig, director of Regulatory Affairs. "The reasons given by proponents for passing the bill were nothing more than a red herring and

will infringe upon the rights of all extraprovincial truckers [who operate] throughout Canada."

Strategies

Go Back to Go Forward

A number of negative economic pressures backed Winnipeg Motor Express into a corner this past spring, but the carrier is confident it will come out on top after a bit of restructuring.

The fleet recently filed for creditor protection after the high price of diesel, over-capacity, and a slumping U.S.

dollar began to squeeze it dry. By filing under the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act, WME was able to begin a restructuring and refinancing plan to allow it to carry on as usual.

"The environment trucking companies have been forced to operate in during the last two years has been severe," said President Brian Page in an interview. "The company is continuing as is, just on a smaller scale."

In fact, the Winnipeg-based fleet is about half the size it was when it filed the court order a couple of months ago.



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August 21-23

Great American Trucking Show, Dallas Convention Center, Dallas. One of the largest annual truck and product shows in the U.S. Contact: 888/349-4287 or go to www.gatsonline.com.

August 23-24

Alberta Big Rig Weekend, Race City Motorsport Park, Calgary. The name and the venue says it all. Contact: 604/580-2092.

September 7-14

National Trucking Week 2008, Nation-wide. An annual Canada-wide event held to spotlight the contributions made by the 400,000 Canadian truckers who keep the freight moving. Sponsored by the Canadian Trucking Alliance. Contact your provincial trucking association.

September 21-24

Transportation Association of Canada Annual Conference, Toronto. Canada's largest annual gathering of transportation professionals. Contact: 613/736-1350 or go to www.tac-atc.ca.

September 21-27

Brake Safety Awareness Week 2005, North America-wide. Sponsored by the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance

and your local ministry of transport. Contact: 202/775-1623 or click on www.cvsa.org.

October 3-4

TRUXPO 2008, Northlands Tradex Centre (Abbotsford Airport), Abbotsford, B.C. The biggest truck show for Western Canada returns to Alberta this year. Hosted by the British Columbia Trucking Association. Contact: 604/888-5319 or click on www.bctrucking.com.

November 7-9

2008 SAE Commercial Vehicle Engineering Congress & Exhibition, Donald E. Stephens Convention Center, Rosemont, Ill. Presented by the Society of Automotive Engineers. Contact: 724/772-8516 or go to www.sae.org.

November 7-9

CamExpo, Centre de Foires de Quebec, Quebec City. Owned and operated by *Today's Trucking* publisher Newcom Business Media, our biggest show in La Belle Province heads back to the provincial capital. Call 418/691-7110 or click on www.cam-expo.com.



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The carrier was formed in 1989 and primarily provided east-west domestic service moving full loads of consolidated shipments for distribution in western Canada. Opportunity arose for routes into and out of the U.S., and like so many other cross-border players, the fleet grew on the strength of the U.S. economy.

By 2004, about 70 percent of the miles were run south of the border, which also made up about 70 percent of the annual revenue. Two years later, a management-led buy-out provided new ownership for the 243-truck, 420-trailer fleet. The debt taken on by the new owners, compounded by negative market activity eventually led to the filing for creditor protection.

“By filing for creditor protection, your seeking a stay from actions sought from creditors against the company in order to reorganize the finances,” explained Page. “The other thing it does, which is a benefit, is it brings in a court-appointed monitor to referee the situation and it really allows you to focus on restructuring.”

Through the restructuring—monitored by Ernst & Young Winnipeg—the carrier has reduced its fleet size and slashed its service offerings. It’s now down to 26 owner-ops and 30 company drivers. But “the folks doing business with us are still getting paid, our owner-operators continue to get paid and our drivers continue to get paid,” noted Page.

Moving forward, part of the restructuring process could involve a sale of the company and there are five serious buyers. But for a deal to be done, Page said it would have to maximize stakeholder value for the investors, creditors, employees and customers.

One thing is for sure, says Page, “We’re not filing for bankruptcy and we’re not even contemplating it.”

— Steve MacLeod

Lawrence Cannon declared in late June as his government finally disclosed the official location of the much-hyped structure.

The announcement by the Detroit River International Crossing (DRIC) study team was in line with recent published reports that indicated the new bridge would be built in the Brighton Beach area, just off Ojibway Parkway on the west end of Windsor, between the power plant and Canada Salt company.

A private partner is still being sought to invest—even possibly, operate—the new structure, and, interestingly, there could be a familiar local player in the running. (More on this later).

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Dispatches

of 29 total lanes (19 for trucks); and 103 secondary inspection parking spaces. The span itself will be about 850 meters long and is expected to cost \$800 million, plus another \$200 million for the plaza. DRIC confirmed that construction would likely begin in late 2009, with a target completion date of 2013.

It's believed that on the U.S. side, the bridge will land in the Detroit suburb known as Delray. But an official announcement is pending the completion of a draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in the fall.

The head politician of Windsor, for one, is glad the selection process is finally complete, although he seemingly has a love-hate relation-



Ambassador Bridge Pres Dan Stamper says his company would rather cooperate than fight with the Canadian government. But fight, they might.

ship with DRIC these days. While he applauded this announcement, Eddie Francis and much of city council have been embroiled in a bitter disagreement with the binational selection team

over plans for a new feeder highway from Highway 401 to the new crossing.

DRIC presented its preferred Windsor-Essex Parkway plan, while council instead want the city's GreenLink plan approved. That alternative nearly doubles the below-grade tunneling and adds more green space.

Francis admits that the federal wing of DRIC has been friendlier to council. "The provincial government, through DRIC, have admitted they have not analyzed, not evaluated, GreenLink. And that's the issue," he says.

CAN'T WE JUST BE FRIENDS?

It's no secret that the Ambassador Bridge Co. has

been publicly trashing the DRIC concept since the bureaucratic team dismissed the private bridge's own proposal to twin the current span instead. The Ambassador folks have forged ahead with that project anyway and construction on both sides of the border has been underway for months.

"The decisions were made long ago and they have been since working on making the study support those decisions," Ambassador President Dan Stamper says.

Interestingly, though, Stamper seemed to lament not being able to partner with the Canadian government on a joint border solution.

"Could you imagine if the government of Canada and the Ambassador Bridge



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cooperated? How much better would the border be?" Stamper says. "I don't know how much they've spent on this [DRIC process], but I think that money could have been used for better things if there was better cooperation. Together we could have done a lot of good."

Those comments come just after Minister Cannon indicated the bridge company could be among those considered for a P3 deal on the new bridge.

When asked directly, Stamper didn't clarify if, by cooperation, he meant partnering with Ottawa on the bridge's own twinning project or whether his company would have considered an opportunity to deal with the feds on a new structure. "I

heard on the Street

■ The brightest and best in vehicle graphics were recognized by the **PRIVATE MOTOR TRUCK COUNCIL OF CANADA (PMTC)** during the 2008 Vehicle Graphics Design competition, co-sponsored by 3M Canada. Here's some of the winners: Tractor Trailer Combination—**Meyers Transportation Services and Dairy Farmers of Ontario**; Special Events/Promotion—**T.O.B. Enterprises and HBC Logistics**; Night-Time Safety—**Molson**

Canada and 4Refuel Canada, which along with **Bruce R. Smith** also won in the Identity Fleet Graphics category.

As well as recognizing the best in eye-stopping graphics, PMTC takes time to recognize the safest fleets and best drivers. Sponsored by Zurich



Insurance, **Pro Trucking Systems** of Burlington, Ont. took home the Small Fleet category

award, while **Home Hardware** of St. Jacob's, Ont., was given top honors in the Large Fleet category.

mean cooperate on the development of how to improve the border," he said.

It could be that the government wants to avoid a drawn-out legal battle with Matty Moroun, the billionaire and Detroit-based trucking mogul who owns

the bridge. There are reports that Moroun could sue if another private sector player — subsidized by the government—threatens the Ambassador's near monopoly on truck traffic.

Asked about the possibility of a potential lawsuit,

Stamper said: "We would rather cooperate than fight, but we have to protect our business and our shareholders. What we'll do, I don't know. I just look at today and say things would be a lot better if there was cooperation." ▲

MPH

80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0

0.000 0.025 0.050 0.075 0.100 0.125 0.150 0.175 0.200

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Truly Gaseous Emission Policy

right turn Carbon taxes are economically foolish. But they're a symptom of a much bigger problem in the enviro industry. By Marco Beghetto

In many corners of this country, a Liberal politician has to be a real dud in order not to get elected. Still, Stephane Dion seems to be one of the most unelectable figures in decades.

For a Liberal, he lacks the aggressive idealism of Trudeau; the political toughness of Chrétien, and the confidence (some called it arrogance) of either of them.

I think Dion's advisers came to the conclusion not too long ago that if there's any chance for inheriting Trudeaupia, he would need to make a splash with some grandiose policy on an issue that's pressing on every Canadian's mind and where the Tories' policies are perceived to fall short. Enter the carbon tax—a sort of last ditch effort to showcase Dion as an innovative leader on what's supposed to be, we keep hearing, the most critical issue facing the nation, if not the world.

If elected, Dion would add a new tax on energy products, including diesel fuel, in an effort to cut down on greenhouse gas (GHGs) emissions.

Carbon dioxide is a minor agent in total GHGs, but we're told it's bringing an end to the world. Or something like that.

Anyway, the plan, according to Dion, will result in about \$16 billion in new tax revenue. Like a similar carbon tax regime that took effect in B.C. last month, the federal version is supposed to be revenue

neutral. The logic is that the tax burden shifts to so-called "polluters" while tax increases on energy would be offset with income and business tax cuts for all.

We're asked to believe that Ottawa will refrain from filling its coffers with some of that surplus revenue, of course. And are we to suppose as well



that a Liberal government will go four straight years without re-raising income taxes or slapping down some other backdoor levy, sales tax, or health surcharge? It's a shell game, folks.

Of course, "revenue neutral" doesn't really count for truckers who have no choice but to consume fuel as part of their livelihoods. Paul Landry of the BC Trucking Association explains it best: "In a revenue-neutral situation, either everyone comes out even or some people receive more than they pay. The government has chosen an impossible third definition—everyone gets more than they pay." That is, except truckers who will be paying an excessive portion of the

tax. On a personal scale, he explains, an average long-haul owner-op in B.C. will pay \$3,000 in 2010 and \$6,000 in 2012. The same operator can expect to get back between \$20 and \$51 in personal income tax cuts. That sure sounds like a wash, doesn't it?

Even the premise that an extra tax would encourage less use is inherently faulty. This is evidenced by the fact that consumption hasn't receded one bit even as fuel prices doubled over the last couple years.

The truth is, since Mulrone's reign, truckers have been paying a de-facto carbon tax on fuel in the form of a "repugnant, regressive" (CTA boss David Bradley's words) four-cent-per-liter excise tax on diesel. The result has led, in part, to year-over-year fiscal surpluses for successive governments. So, instead of using those billions of dollars to subsidize truly environmentally effective policies like incentives for smog-free, clean-burning trucks, Dion wants you to pay even more at the pump.

Thankfully, Prime Minister Harper agrees that Dion's proposal would "screw" Canadians. But, really, I wonder how long before he considers similar penalties as he continues to feel pressure by the growing environmental lobby. Even if it doesn't fully understand the global

warming debate—and no, the debate isn't actually over—the public has been convinced that *something* needs to be done. That sentiment will only strengthen as politicians, the educational system and the media continues to frame the complex issue through a single lens. Even Hollywood—which has run out of original bad guys since the Berlin Wall fell—has been relentlessly advancing the politically green agenda: We're the new bad guy.

In this space seven years ago, I wrote about my skepticism of the global warming campaign (Oops. Now that the earth has actually cooled the last five years—and expected to so continue for at least the next 10—it's called "climate change"). The more I research the issue, the less I believe humanity is at risk of extinction and that policies like carbon taxes would do much to change things even if the earth was melting.

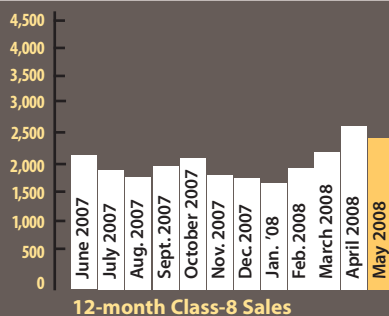
Anyway, I'm running out of racetrack, so if this sounds like the kind of conversation that interests you, check out the invaluable Planet Gore blog at National Review Online (www.planetgore.com) for more info. Plus, I'll have more to add from time to time on my own blog at www.todaystrucking.com. ▲

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

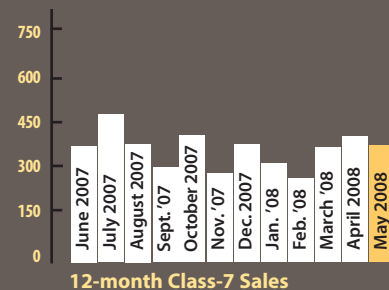
Canada: Truck Sales Index

May 2008

CLASS 8	This Month	YTD '08	YTD '07	Share
International	534	2574	2422	24.1%
Freightliner	381	2032	2465	19.0%
Kenworth	412	1852	1806	17.3%
Peterbilt	272	1220	1370	11.4%
Volvo	246	922	866	8.6%
Sterling	235	874	1259	8.2%
Mack	212	748	754	7.0%
Western Star	138	480	968	4.5%
TOTAL	2430	10,702	11,910	100.0%



CLASS 7	This Month	YTD '08	YTD '07	Share
International	118	535	550	31.6%
Peterbilt	83	324	278	19.1%
Kenworth	64	278	258	16.4%
Freightliner	37	219	293	12.9%
Hino Canada	24	194	227	11.5%
Sterling	45	139	151	8.2%
Ford*	0	3	57	0.2%
General Motors*	0	0	267	0.0%
TOTAL	371	1692	2081	100.0%



CLASS 6	This Month	YTD '08	YTD '07	Share
International	32	208	84	55.5%
Hino Canada	18	95	190	25.3%
Freightliner	8	44	37	11.7%
Sterling	2	18	15	4.8%
Ford*	0	10	51	2.7%
General Motors*	0	0	46	0.0%
TOTAL	60	375	423	100.0%



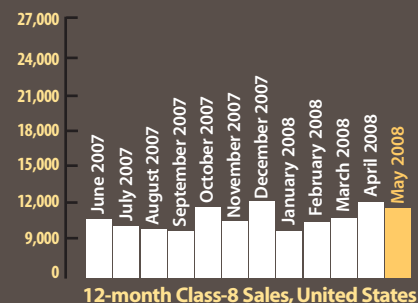
CLASS 5	This Month	YTD '08	YTD '07	Share
Sterling	94	393	57	34.4%
Hino Canada	78	333	376	29.1%
International	77	265	240	23.2%
Ford*	0	121	1099	10.6%
Kenworth	19	54	0	4.5%
Freightliner	2	13	23	1.1%
General Motors*	0	0	629	0.0%
TOTAL	270	1179	2424	100.0%



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U.S.: Retail Truck Sales

CLASSE 8	This Month	YTD '08
Freightliner	2708	13,313
International	2633	12,542
Peterbilt	1474	6774
Kenworth	1396	6685
Volvo	1286	5975
Mack	1127	4702
Sterling	646	3049
Western Star	123	516
Other	7	75
TOTAL	11,400	53,631



Canada: Provincial Sales (Class 8)

CLASS 8	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	NB	NS	PE	NL	CDA
Freightliner	33	90	13	6	123	81	23	12	0	0	381
International	12	62	3	35	227	152	22	13	1	7	534
Kenworth	62	110	24	17	117	69	4	9	0	0	412
Mack	17	35	13	19	96	19	2	11	0	0	212
Peterbilt	22	99	26	8	69	34	14	0	0	0	272
Sterling	24	43	12	20	77	54	2	3	0	0	235
Volvo Trucks	15	19	15	35	96	46	6	9	0	5	246
Western Star	15	22	5	4	53	28	8	3	0	0	138
TOTAL	200	480	111	144	858	483	81	60	1	12	2430

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

* The Canadian Vehicle Manufacturers' Association, which supplies these numbers, reports that it is in the process of making changes to its monthly GVW sales stats report. Until that project is completed, the sales stats report no longer contains Ford or General Motors sales numbers. CVMA indicates that reported sales numbers for both OEMs will resume for the June 2008 monthly report. Thank you.



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The Next Perfect Storm

driver's side *It's little more than a breeze now, but there are signs the winds are about to start blowing very much in truckers' favor. By Jim Park*

Where were you when the bottom fell out of the market back in 2008? Your grandkids might be asking that question 25 years from now. Certainly, the magnitude of the crisis we're experiencing today will be remembered for a long time to come—even if the lessons are soon forgotten.

With carrier profitability at an all-time low in the general freight sector (other sectors are doing extraordinarily well, mind you), the signs of a turnaround are in the air. There's evidence that rates are stabilizing, and fleets are no longer running for nothing just to keep utilization up. Fears that idle trucks would prompt an exodus of drivers have subsided somewhat, with fleets now seemingly more willing to shed capacity—even aggressively.

Enough capacity has already disappeared from the market that shippers are taking notice, though it would be premature to say they're getting nervous. A very reliable source tells me that we could lose up to 30 percent of our previous capacity over the next year. That should make shippers nervous.

The best news I've heard on this front in some time comes from transportation analyst Joe White, writing in the May 5, 2008 online edition of *Traffic World*, a logistics journal some of you will be familiar with. White is CEO of a firm based in Atlanta, called CostDown Consulting.

"There is a perfect storm headed for the trucking industry and the impact of that storm might forever shift the focus of U.S. shippers and logistics providers from 'Transportation Spend' to



LONG TIME GONE: Many drivers lost today won't be coming back.

"Transportation Assurance," he writes. "Converging forces of fuel prices, driver shortages, and highway congestion will gradually squeeze capacity out of the industry, dramatically drive up freight rates, and send manufacturers and retailers begging for resources to get their products to market."

Too bad not all of us will be here to enjoy the fruits of White's predictions.

It's been suggested to me that when the turnaround comes, we'll be a distinctly different industry on the other side. Many of the drivers we turned loose won't be back, many of them having gone off to other ventures, and perhaps more importantly, many of the trucks that once flooded the market will be gone too.

There would be a ton of surplus equipment on the market coming out of past recessions. Anyone with a little credit left could buy a handful of used trucks and be

up and running again in short order. But many of today's used trucks have already been shipped overseas to Russia or Vietnam or Brazil or Saudi Arabia (ironically, perhaps the only place on earth they can

be run affordably). They're gone, and they won't come back to haunt us.

But even with many indicators pointing to rosier times ahead for trucking, fuel costs, labor shortages, and the decimation of central Canada's manufacturing sector could dampen the recovery. The closing of GM's pick-up truck line in Oshawa, for example, will cut the supply of available freight in the region by some 700 loads a week. That's going to hurt.

Four- to five-dollar-a-gallon fuel is going to force shippers to reconsider their options in some cases. Intermodal could become a more attractive option, particularly on less-than-urgent cross-country moves.

And then there's those darned American trucks. With their domestic economy in the tank, many have turned north, finding lucrative lanes that we once dominated. We

can't get south to pick up that freight, so the Yanks have moved in. The question is will they give up those lanes as the U.S. economy emerges from the doldrums?

I've even heard it said that the trend to taking privately held trucking companies public, and accountable to their shareholders, will have a positive effect on rates and sustainability.

"I can think of few other industries that have so many dummies with so much latitude to do harm to the basic economic underpinnings of their sector. One of the biggest and best factors of the current consolidation into the income trust structures is the very heavy level of accountability to financial returns that comes with a public company," says Jim Mickey of B.C.-based Coastal Pacific Xpress. "No longer can a group of poor managers hide behind closed doors and ignore poor financial performance. The heightened preoccupation with black ink is good and long overdue."

Those left standing this time next year could be looking at a distinctly different landscape, and hopefully one where costs and other constraints keep the casual and inexperienced player out of the market. Think of it as a new form of economic regulation. ▲

A former owner-operator, Jim Park is the editor of *highwaySTAR* magazine. Reach him at 416/614-5811 or jim@todaystrucking.com.

Street Smarts

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25 Accidental facts

27 Satellite warning

MANAGING PEOPLE, TECHNOLOGY, BUSINESS, AND SAFETY

GEARS ARE NOT ENOUGH:

Are your drivers trained to keep it in the sweet spot?



Shift Work

fuel economy *Want to save money on fuel? Photocopy this article and get all your drivers to read it. By Jim Park*

Nobody's laughing all the way to the bank anymore. It costs about 65 cents a mile in fuel alone to get there.

Considering all the factors that affect fuel economy—aerodynamics, tire inflation, terrain, idle reduction strategies, etc.—driver performance remains the most significant.

A difference of up to 30 percent can exist between the best drivers out there and the worst.

To get the best performance from your engine at the lowest cost, it's essential to understand the relationship between

torque and horsepower. It's key to good performance and good fuel economy.

A full technical explanation of the difference between torque and horsepower isn't necessary, but in practical terms, horsepower is what keeps you running at high speed, while torque is what does the pulling at low speed.

All modern heavy-duty diesels achieve their rated horsepower at the mid range of the rpm band (typically somewhere above 1,600-1,900 rpm).

They produce high torque at relatively low rpm (typically between 1,100 and 1,400 rpm).

Fuel consumption is lowest at lower rpm. That alone should tell you the engine is most economical in the lower end of its rpm range. But there's more to it than that.

Today's heavy diesels—all makes and models—have a very narrow optimum cruise range. Mating transmissions, drive axles, and tire size to meet the engine's "sweet spot" is an engineering exercise in itself, but it's critical to good performance and fuel economy.

An ideal highway gearing set up will have the truck cruising at the selected road speed, with the engine running 100-200 rpm above peak torque (depending on the GVW), and a couple of hundred rpm below peak horsepower.

The higher horsepower above cruise speed gives you power to pass, the high torque below cruise speed gives you power to pull up a hill.

In the real world, as you begin climbing

a hill, rpm will begin to drop out of the sweet spot into the higher torque range. From the driver's seat, it feels like there's additional power under foot as the engine drifts down the rpm band and into the higher torque range in a pull.

So, why do we figure all this stuff is worth knowing? It's useful to know where your "power" is while cruising and when deciding to shift gears.

Here's a completely hypothetical example. Although the numbers may vary across the brands and models, it's relative to all today's engines.

Your optimum engine cruise speed is 1,400 rpm, and your truck is geared to run at 65 mph at that speed. You decide to pass another truck so you put your foot into it and run it up to 70 mph. Your engine speed is now 1,600 rpm. You're on the high side of the fuel consumption curve, and your mpg might have just dropped from 7.0 at cruise speed to 6.0 at passing speed.

Here's another situation. You're approaching a hill at cruise speed. The proper procedure is to let the torque work for you. You'll burn more fuel speeding up to take a run at the hill, and that will deliver no real advantage in terms of getting to the top faster or with fewer gear changes.

As your revs drop from 1,400 at cruise, you get into the peak torque range of the engine where the pulling power is best. You've now got a 300-rpm band where the engine is running at peak torque, but not burning any more fuel.

You'll lose a bit of road speed, but the torque will keep pulling. If the hill is steep and you need to drop a gear, shift well before your torque bottoms out at 1,100 rpm. Aim to downshift back into the high side of the peak torque range—between 1,300 and 1,400 rpm.

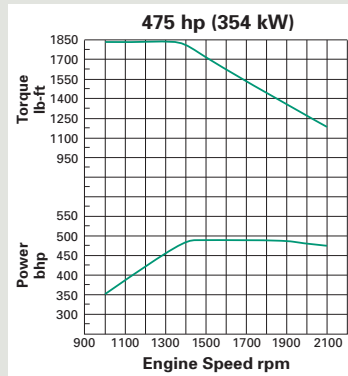
If you shift too early, you'll get back into gear at maybe 1,600 or 1,700 rpm—on the horsepower side of the power curve. There's not much pull there, so you'll waste fuel and accomplish little until the engine drifts back to 1,400 and below.

As you approach the crest of the hill, you're at 1,200 rpm but the revs are still dropping. Do you drop another gear or just let the engine pull?

It's safe to drop a little below peak torque for brief periods. There's still torque

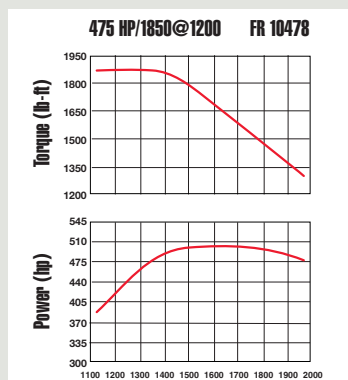
LET'S SEE GOOGLE MAP THIS!

These power maps show how different engines produce torque and horsepower and, therefore, how each should be driven. Power maps for each engine are available from the engine makers.



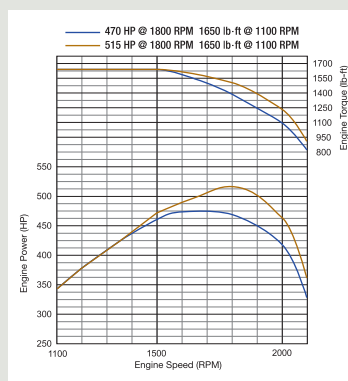
Cat C15 ACERT (475/1850)

- Peak torque is flat between 1,000 and 1,375 rpm.
- Peak horsepower is between 1,425 and 1,850 rpm.
- Best cruise speed (sweet spot) is between 1,350 and 1,450 rpm.
- It has a relatively narrow "sweet spot," but a broad peak torque range, meaning you could cruise at 1,325-1,400, and have lots of pulling power down to 1,000 rpm. Fuel economy would suffer above 1,450 rpm.



Cummins ISX (475/1850)

- Peak torque is flat between 1,125 and 1,375 rpm.
- Peak horsepower is between 1,550 and 1,750 rpm.
- Best cruise speed is between 1,400 and 1,500 rpm.
- It has a relatively narrow "sweet spot," and a narrow peak torque range, meaning you could cruise between 1,400 and 1,500, but you wouldn't want to drop the revs much below 1,150 before upshifting. Fuel economy would suffer above 1,700 rpm.



Detroit Diesel Series 60 (470/1650)

- Peak torque is flat between 1,100 and 1,550 rpm (blue line).
- Peak horsepower is 1,550 and 1,750 rpm (blue line).
- Best cruise speed is between 1,500 and 1,600 rpm.
- It has a relatively narrow "sweet spot," but a broad peak torque range, meaning you could cruise between 1,400 and 1,500, and have lots of pulling power down to 1,100 rpm. Fuel economy would suffer above 1,600 rpm.

there, just not as much. As you approach the top of a hill, it flattens, so you may be able to keep pulling below peak torque on a shallower grade.

Most importantly, you're still on the low side of the fuel consumption curve. Let the revs drift down, and ease over the top by backing off the pedal as the engine speed begins to increase.

Upshift as soon as you can, and let

gravity help you back up to road speed as you start down the other side of the hill—no throttle applied.

"There's no good reason why anyone should ever pull a hill using anything but torque," says Dave McKenna, powertrain marketing manager with Mack Trucks.

"Pulling at anything above 1,200 or 1,300 rpm, all you're doing is turning very expensive diesel fuel into noise." ▲



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Collateral Damage

safety Write this down: Don't make an accident worse than it already is.

By Brian Botham

So what if I'm responsible for the destruction of an entire forest or two? The following has to be said.

Paperwork can protect you.

Especially in the event of an accident.

We all know that an accident's aftermath can endure for years, especially if it involves personal injury—or worse. So it's crucial to keep as much information about the incident handy as possible.

Start with a file checklist.

Make a new file to store incident-related documents in, make a list of all the documents and information that go into the file and staple the list to the front of the folder. If you add a document later, mark it on the list.

Assign the file a number and write it on both the folder and the checklist in case the two pieces of paper get separated. The number can be anything, such as the date and maybe a truck number; e.g. 0806083744, (mm/dd/yy/truck-number-number).

Note the driver's name, date of incident, truck-and-trailer unit and plate numbers.

Inside the folder, create an information bank and fill it with information such as the exact location, time and type of accident. Was there property damage? Injury? A fatality? Was hazmat involved? (If a fuel tank was ruptured, the answer to that last one is yes.

If the police got involved,

list the officers' names, badge numbers and precincts. As well ask for a copy of the police report.

List any charges and who they're laid against. Also, add court documents and legal papers.

Next, list insurance contact information; who you spoke

"I know the law says you can destroy them after six months, but if you show up at a civil or criminal trial without those logs the judge can consider it destroying evidence."

with, who is handling the claim, and the file number. Was an adjuster sent to the scene? If so, list his name and contact information and add a copy of his report.

If hazmat was released during the collision it must be reported to the appropriate agency. Make sure you keep a copy of the report you submit to the agency and of course copies of the clean-up bill.

I shouldn't have to mention this one, but the driver statement and collision report must be in the file along with any notes you took while interviewing the operator or his team driver. If you think about how the event could have been avoided or prevented, jot that down and keep it in the file too.

The same applies to any witnesses you talk to; and of course if you have photos, they belong in the file.

The driver's log and vehicle inspection report for that day should be included and it is a good idea to put a copy of the previous 14 days' logs in.

I know the law says you can destroy them after six months, but if you show up at a civil or criminal trial without those logs the judge can consider that destroying evidence. And those trials can be delayed for three or more years after the incident.

It is a great idea to keep a

with the collision, not only for your insurance company but—who knows?—depending on the circumstances you may want to file a lawsuit of your own later.

I know that compiling all this paper sounds like a huge headache, but remember that it is very difficult to obtain



copy of the maintenance files for the vehicles involved, I have seen many lawsuits that claimed that the vehicle was mechanically unfit for the road. Being able to prove you did preventative maintenance and your vehicles were in fact fit may save your bacon big time at trial in a court of law.

Finally, make sure you keep track of all the costs associated

this information a year or so down the road if it is needed. Collect it as events unfold. You never know when you will have to prove that you and your driver did the right things. ▲

Brian Botham, CDS, is a Certified Director of Safety through NATMI. He can be reached at 519-533-3656 or bbotham@cmvsafety.ca.

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Houston? We Have a Problem

tech tips Taxing questions to ask the folks peddling GPS gear.

By Sandy Johnson

I won't tell you the name of the company, but recently I heard about a pickup-and-delivery outfit that had one trip of only 50 km a few times a day but their fancy tracking system measured the trip as only five clicks.

The reason: Their satellite blipped vehicles on an hourly basis. Between signals the truck could do a lot of clicks without being tracked.

It's a good thing the proprietor discovered the problem before he got audited by the fuel-tax people. He would have been bombarded with extra levies and fines, perhaps from several jurisdictions.

Trucking companies are inundated with sales calls for satellite-based "tracking systems," and you can see where I'm going with this. Deciding what you're going to buy can be daunting, at best.

Using GPS is great but there are a few things you should be aware of so you don't wind up with the five-click trips.

One of the prime benefits of GPS data collection is fuel-and-mileage-tax reporting. IFTA (International Fuel Tax Agreement) and IRP (International Registration Plan) have made the reporting of the fuel and mileage data easier.

Just be sure the distance report provided will be accepted. This can be inconsistent so you have to do your homework. The reporting must meet minimum standards as determined by the plans and

the jurisdictions involved.

Distances measured using GPS data are not created equal. The accuracy is highly dependent on the frequency of the readings taken. Typically, the more frequent the readings, the more accurate the data. That was the problem with the trucker I mentioned earlier.



Using GPS is great but there are a few things you should be aware of so you don't wind up with the five-click trips.

If a truck is recorded as moving when it's standing still, you would get an inaccurate kilometers-per-liter ratio.

This not only creates a problem for government reporting, it may affect internal management reports. For example, if you think your truck is getting better mileage than it actually is, it may affect your decision to purchase more fuel-efficient iron. A good GPS reporting system will incorporate an algorithm to remove these distortions.

When buying a system, ask how the distance reports are created.

Typically, there are two ways. One is by importing GPS

coordinates into a "miler" program such as ProMiles or PCMiler. The program creates route and distance by jurisdiction reports, based a table of distances maintained by these programs.

There are a few things to watch out for with this method. First, you may be over or under reporting

much or too little distance. That means jurisdictions can get too much or too little of the tax distribution. When this happens, you pay penalty and interest. This can be substantial because the error factor is applied to the entire audit period, which can be up to four years. Further to that it will affect fuel tax (IFTA),

licensing (IRP) and mileage tax where applicable.

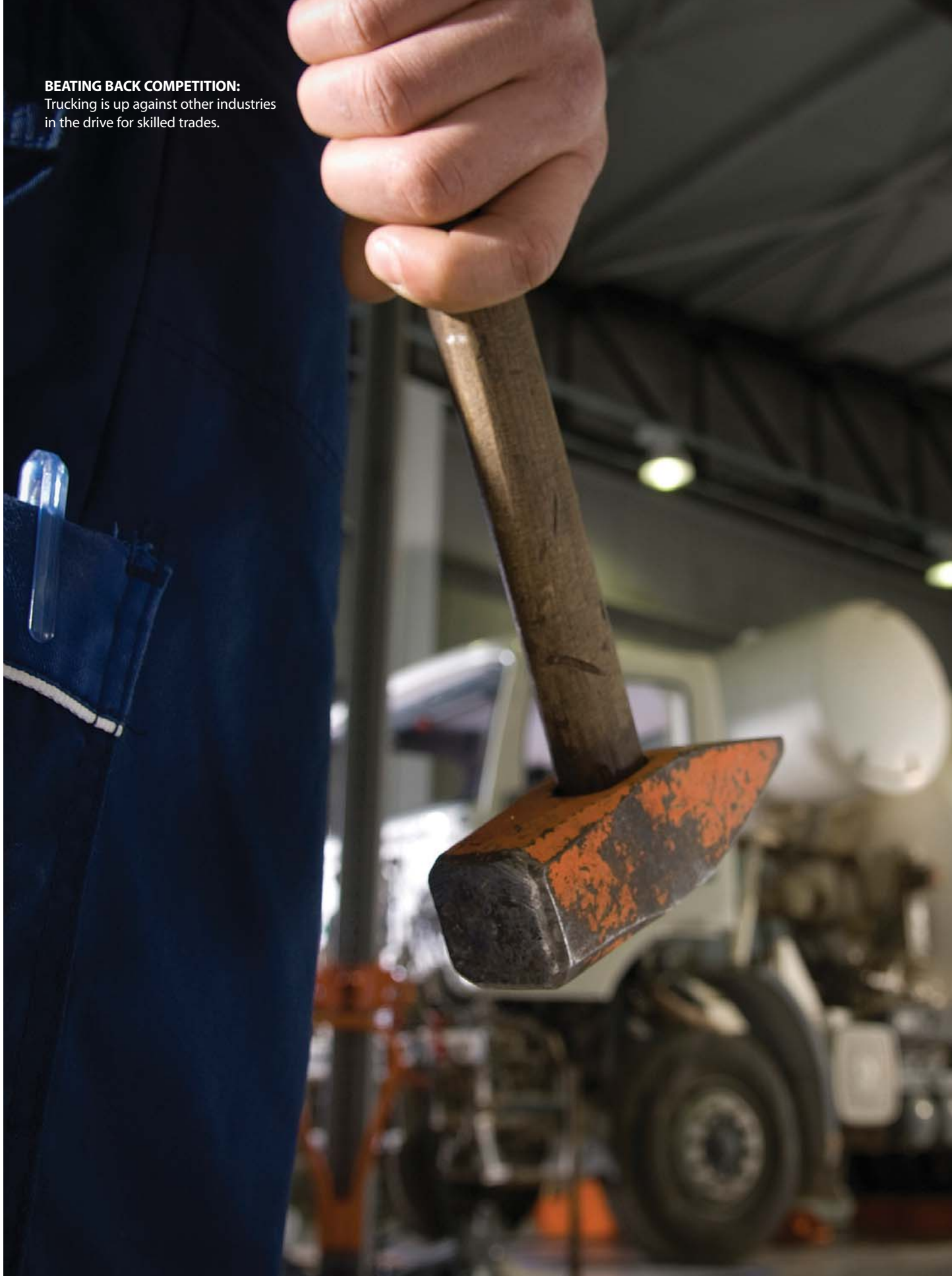
Another way to calculate the distance by jurisdiction is to use the GPS coordinates in conjunction with a digital map. This gives you a high degree of distance accuracy due to the frequency of the GPS readings (one second or better).

Digital maps assign distance by jurisdiction based on creating "borders" using the latitude and longitude of each jurisdictional boundary. When you use this system, check the distance against the vehicle odometer whether you get that reading electronically (from the data engine bus) or manually from the driver. ▲

Sandy Johnson is a partner with Total Truck Management Ltd., of Calgary, AB. You can contact her at sandy@totaltrucking.com.

BEATING BACK COMPETITION:

Trucking is up against other industries in the drive for skilled trades.



Type the keyword “technician” in the search engine at Monster.ca and you’ll get nearly 1,000 returns. Not all the employee-wanted ads are for heavy-duty diesel mechanics, of course, but that’s kind of the point.

Much has been made about the supposed professional truck driver shortage in Canada. On average, we here at *Today’s Trucking* hear about it more than perhaps any other issue—except for (lately) fuel prices and, maybe, speed limiters.

Sure, like similar industries facing a growing demographic crisis, trucking struggles to lure people away from more glamorous, higher-paying industries. But as far as signing up wanna-be truckers goes, trucking more or less competes with itself. Except for some sector-specific differences, driving a truck is pretty much just that.

advancements in equipment technology, the increasing number of long-haul miles driven, and the bubble of older vehicles that owners have held onto longer since the emission regulation mandates requiring more expensive engines kicked in twice (so far) this decade.

The one advantage the mechanic industry has always had, though, is that it has an accredited apprenticeship and licensing mechanism through the provincial educational system; and therefore, a more reputable image and established pipeline to the grassroots sources, like high school shop courses and guidance councilor offices.

Still, like the driver retention and recruitment desk at your fleet, HD shops are yearning for more skilled tradesman, not just warm bodies.

While in Toronto for a seminar at Truck World this past April, Itamar Levine, director of maintenance for Winnipeg-based Bison Transport, told us that, simply put, they don’t build wrench wielders like they used to. Plus, long gone are the days when “the average high school drop-out could be turned into an excellent mechanic ... That’s not the case anymore.”

A Few Wrenches Short of a Toolbox

Why the heavy-duty technician shortage could cost trucking even more than the lack of drivers | **BY MARCO BEGHETTO**

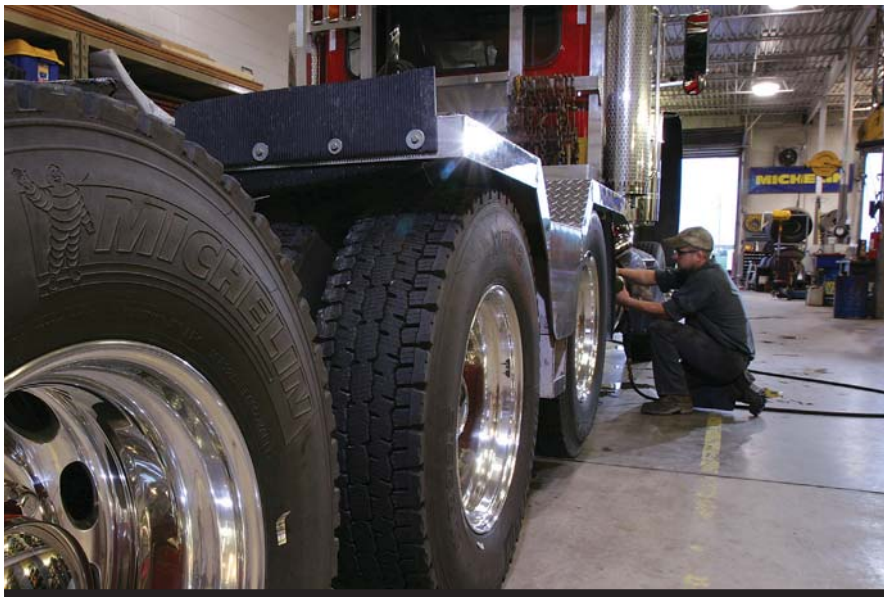
Less so with the heavy-duty repair industry. Not only does this segment compete with the high-tech and skilled-trades worlds for manpower, it also has to fish in a great sea of other repair-oriented sectors—automotive, trailer, fabrication, machining, welding, HVAC, you name it.

It’s little wonder then, that the HD technician shortage is said to be more acute than even the driver dearth; and perhaps has even more significant longer-term consequences for the trucking industry as a whole.

Not only that, but in recent years, the labor gap in the mechanical repair industry has widened even further because of the rapid

Because of the complex and ever-changing nature of heavy equipment technology, streamlining—the so-called practice of funneling underperforming students from high school to skilled trades jobs—isn’t as dependable a strategy as it was 20 years ago, says Alan McClelland, chairperson of the Modified Apprenticeship Truck and Heavy Duty Programs at Centennial College’s School of Transportation.

“When you take a look at the rapid advancements of technology which don’t appear to be slowing down—in fact, they’re probably going to speed up—the ability for somebody to find information; interpret that [info]; figure out how something operates; apply a



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Got a son or daughter (or grandson or granddaughter) drifting around looking for a career where their fingers will be golden?

College training programs for techs have a virtually 100-percent placement rate.

And there's no sign the industry appetite for fresh blood is being appeased.

In the four-wheel world, for instance, the Canadian Automotive Repair and Service (CARS) Council predicted in 2005 that the aftermarket sector can expect to face shortages of maintenance and repair technicians at least for the next decade.

According to The Road Ahead, a human resources report based on a survey of 1,778 employers, 792 employees, and 36 educational institutions in the sector, almost half of automotive repair and

service shops report an insufficient supply of qualified workers. Labor shortages were particularly acute in Quebec, where 58.7 percent of aftermarket employers reported that staff shortages are a significant or very significant problem, and in Western Canada (51.2 percent).

Recent studies by the Automotive Industries Association (AIA) of Canada have confirmed a growing worker shortfall, as the average age of repair and maintenance technicians approaches 50.

In the U.S., the Automotive Aftermarket Industry Association estimates there is a shortage of 60,000 automotive service technicians—or approximately seven percent shortfall in an industry currently employing about almost 900,000 technicians.

— Allan Janssen

process; and finally, make the repair—it all requires a real broad set of skills," he says.

"And problem-solving, communications skills, and math and science are fundamental to understand how systems operate."

So now, he adds, the apprenticeship system needs to evolve from that streamlining approach of blindly pulling-in non-scholastic candidates, and instead do a better job of attracting more academic and technically literate people.

"We will still take people that are directed into the trade and do the very best we can with them—people who haven't done well academically or have challenges in the system—and there will be work for them. But we also need to [consider] new strategies."

On the flip side, older veteran fixers are struggling to keep up with the pace of change. Engines emission-control technology seems to evolve every four years; 13-speed trannies are getting bumped for automatics; and a myriad of complex safety and anti-collision systems all need dedicated service management.

As a result, traditional "mechanic-type work" is in some cases becoming obsolete and getting replaced with computer and diagnostic-based techniques. "With all the new technology that keeps leapfrogging, advanced training is a tremendous challenge," says Levine. "Some of the older people in our case tend to migrate to the lower skilled jobs like clutches and oil changes."

Bison's service data shows that its shop spends as much time working on new vehicles in their first three years of service than it did 10 years ago—not because trucks break down more, but due to the amount of complexity in maintaining and troubleshooting new systems and components.

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“The character has changed from mechanics to diagnostics like fault codes, data link communication, modules and sensors. Those things are the reason for a significant percentage of working trucks coming into our shops,” says Levine.

A typical unit in Bison’s 1,100-truck fleet, he explains, is comprised of a Volvo VN 670 with a Cummins engine, an ArvinMeritor FreedomLine autoshift transmission, an Eaton collision avoidance system, Bendix’s roll stability technology, and a Shaw Tracking package.

“I think you know where I’m going with this,” Levine muses. “This truck is a poor bastard of a child from 15 different parents; with 15 ECMs all separate from each other.”

And, adds Levine, while each piece of hardware has its own bugs, the systems themselves aren’t as big of a headache as the reliability of the network that transmits all this data—things like corrosion of wiring harnesses and battery cables.

As a result of all this technological complexity, many fleet shops have shrunk down and outsourced more of the high-skills work to franchise dealer facilities. The trouble is, OEMs have just as much trouble—if not more—in retaining qualified HD technicians.

Regardless of which strategy fleets choose, a shop puts itself in the best position when it’s diversified. “With such a wide range of skill requirements and diverse operations, managers have to be able to look at the skills of their people and make sure they line up as much as possible with work that needs to be done,” says Centennial’s Alan McClelland, “which means the more diverse the technicians are, the more flexibility managers have in covering all their needs.”

Though, that’s easier said than done for many small carriers whose primary expertise is in hauling freight for a decent return, rather than ensuring the shop is staffed with a balanced variety of technicians for every single type of job.

So, with fleet shops and dealers overwhelmed from the shortage of knowledgeable truck techies, it’s no wonder that a cottage industry of third-party specialty service providers has sprouted as a lower-cost alternative to losing your truck to a dealer for two weeks. “It’s becoming more difficult a to be an expert in all systems,”

says Al Tucker, director of the Canadian Transportation Equipment Association, “So people tend to drift to what they know best, which is probably a good thing.”

“When we talk about a fleet, you have 15 or 20 variations of what a fleet is. As soon as you get into the specialty stuff, all bets are off.”

Everyone’s heard of the supposed lucrative life of a Jaguar mechanic; it’s foreseen-

able that an expert in diesel emission control repairs, for example, could stake out a similar niche of his own.

That said, small fleets and owner-ops, especially, need to be wary of the sort of on-call mechanic that works out of the trunk of his car and totes around a toolbox that doubles as a lunchbox. In that case, you’d be better off leaving your truck at the dealer—even if it’s for a fortnight. ▲

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WHERE ACCURACY PAYS. GUARANTEED.

There's tons of interest out there and OEMs are tripping over themselves developing hybrid trucks. But is commercial viability any closer? A SPECIAL REPORT.

BY ROLF LOCKWOOD

INNOVATION' IS A WORD THAT COMES EASILY TO THE ENGINEERS WHO CREATE THE TRUCKS THAT POPULATE OUR ROADS AND WORKSITES. BUT 'EXPENSIVE' IS NOT A WORD THAT TRUCK BUYERS LIKE TO USE, EVER. SO WHEN THE LATEST TECHNOLOGY IS DEFINED FIRST AND FOREMOST BY HIGH COST OR MULTI-YEAR RETURN ON INVESTMENT, ACCEPTANCE WILL NECESSARILY BE SLOW.

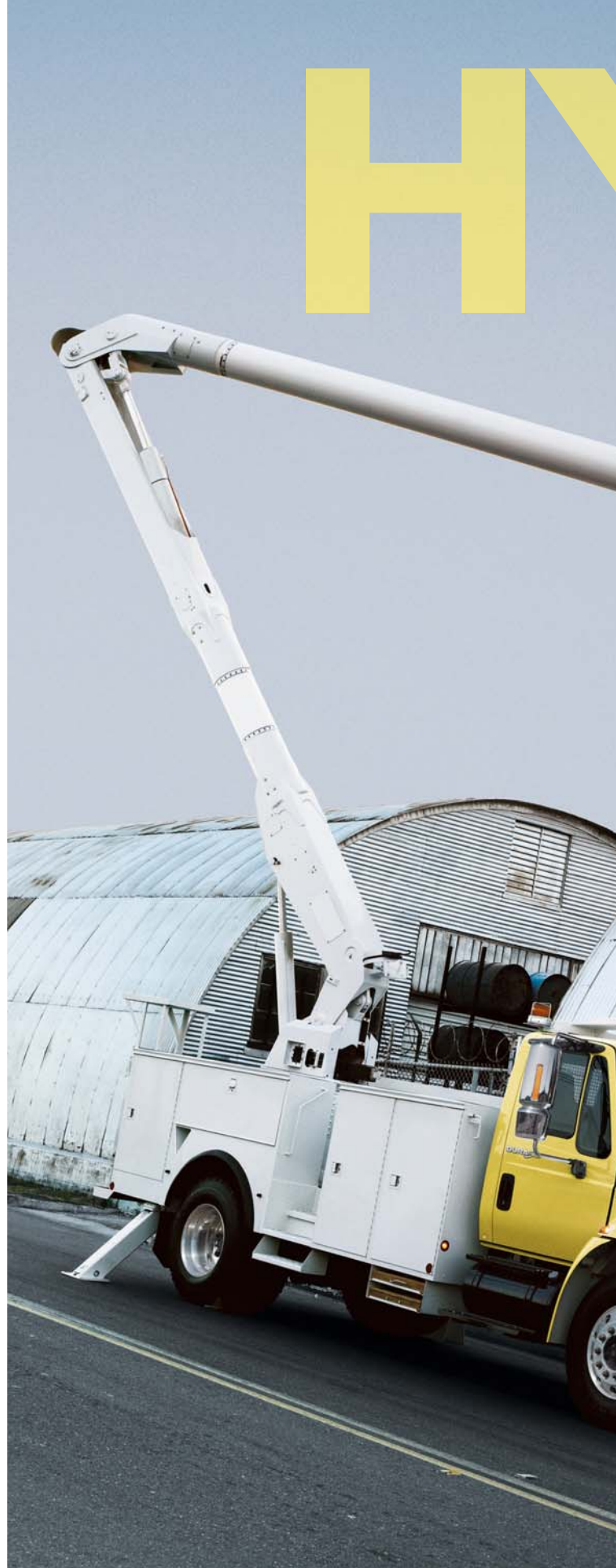
Until, perhaps, the price of diesel fuel skyrockets.

The future of the hybrid truck sits in that context now. All except the most well-endowed private or government fleet has had to think twice about buying into the hybrid idea, despite real running-cost advantages, because the purchase premium has been many thousands of dollars. So the commercialization process—by which growth in manufacturing volume brings unit prices down—has been less than speedy. But we're slowly getting there.


"With the cost of diesel near or at \$5 a gallon, customers across the board have become increasingly interested in hybrids," says Denny Slagle, recently installed as president of Mack Trucks.

"At Mack, we're currently focusing on refuse because this is a key market segment for us and the technology is so well suited to 'stop-and-go' applications, where fuel economy improvements of up to 50 percent are achievable. But as fuel prices increase, so does the business case for hybrids in other segments of our industry. Suddenly, the nine or so percent improvement in fuel economy achievable with a hybrid long-haul tractor seems a lot more attractive, especially to a fleet running hundreds of them.

"But the key, and quite frankly the challenge, is developing a market for heavy-duty trucks in general—bridging the gap from where we as an industry are today with a handful of developmental trucks to the kind of robust market we need to invest in large-scale production. We think government incentives like those established for hybrid cars would be very useful in helping move this process forward. And how the market evolves is going to drive how soon the technology is commercialized and how soon these products become widely available."



HYBRID'S TIPPING POINT

A utility worker wearing a white hard hat and dark clothing is positioned in a white bucket truck, working on a tall black utility pole. The pole has a white transformer box with the number '50' on it. In the background, there is a large, curved building with corrugated metal siding and a small window. A yellow utility truck is partially visible in the lower-left corner. The sky is a clear, pale blue.

THE BUCKET LIST: International and Eaton led the way with diesel/electric utility bucket trucks, and that application remains a good hybrid market because of savings allowed by having an electric PTO.

Hybrid Trucks

SWEDISH SAVINGS: Two Volvo FE hybrid garbage collectors are on the road in Sweden, promising to use about 20 percent less diesel fuel. One is equipped with an extra battery pack that drives the compactor, charged via plug-in when the truck is parked overnight.



The hybrid long-haul truck that Slagle speaks of is the subject of much development work, but fuel-efficiency gains in the nine-percent range pale in comparison to the 20-to-50-percent rate available in some vocational applications. Even with fuel costs as high as they are, however, this new motivation to look harder at hybrids is likely an emotional response that may not translate directly into signatures on purchase orders quite yet.

So says Kevin Beaty, Eaton's business unit manager for hybrid electric powertrains, a man who's awfully keen to see acceptance of the hybrid idea—and volume manufacturing—take off.

“Fuel at more than \$4.00 a gallon, I don't know if it's a true tipping point,” he told *Today's Trucking*. “When we do an analysis with fuel at US\$4.25 instead of US\$3.85, it makes things better, but it's not a go/no-go point.”

That's because the upcharge for a diesel/electric hybrid medium-duty truck is mighty high. It remains in the US\$40,000 range, says Jeff Sass, Kenworth's director of marketing planning and research. And \$50,000 for a typical utility truck with an

“Today it's affordable if you have the right application, depending on how long you keep the truck. Payback in six or seven years is likely.”

e-PTO. Those figures are generally true across the OEM board, but Sass figures they're not necessarily deal breakers, even in a P&D truck.

“Today it's affordable if you have the right application,” he says, “depending on how long you keep the truck. Payback in

six or seven years is likely. But not if you make just two or three stops a day. Sixteen or 17 stops is a different story.

“Utility, that's where you see the real advantage. You'll get payback in three to five years. It could even be two.

“The hybrid is really going to make a difference,” Sass adds, though he acknowledges that it will happen sooner in the U.S. than in Canada. That's because American buyers can get tax credits up to US\$12,000 on a hybrid truck purchase, while Canadians get nothing at all.

There have been environmental justifications for hybrid powertrains all along, of course, and in some quarters they've been compelling. Allied to that, there are also public relations gains to be had in a world that increasingly values the 'green' ideal. Very public companies like Federal Express and United Parcel Service have extensive hybrid as well as alternate-fuel



Utility trucks have led the way toward commercial viability because they can take serious advantage of battery power to raise a bucket without using the noisy, thirsty diesel to run a PTO. While a hybrid P&D truck, depending on how and where it's used, is said to be able to reduce fuel consumption by as much as 30 percent, a utility truck that makes heavy use of its e-PTO can almost double that figure.

But the opportunities do go further than bucket trucks and, as Mack's Denny Slagle says, the refuse world is likely to be a key market. Volvo, for instance, has just put two hybrid garbage trucks on the road

also equipped with an extra battery pack that drives the compactor, and this is charged via the main electrical system when the truck is parked overnight.

Hybrid technology is the future in all transport segments, Volvo says, including long-haul and construction sectors in the longer term.

"Hybrid technology will play a major role in the future as the climate issue and oil dependency come into ever sharper focus," says Mats Franzén, engine manager at Volvo Trucks. "No matter which fuels dominate in the future, their supply will be limited. Technology that leads to lower



PETE'S PLANS: Peterbilt plans full production of its low-cab-forward Model 320 refuse hauler with Eaton's Hydraulic Launch Assist late this year. Peterbilt Models 330 and 335 and Kenworth T270 and T370 hybrids go into production at the Paccar plant in Ste. Therese, Que., this summer. All will use an Eaton hybrid drivetrain.

fleets partly because their public image is important.

UPS recently ordered 200 hybrid electric vehicles—the largest commercial order of such trucks by any company—as well as another 300 trucks running on compressed natural gas (CNG). All 500 are to be parcel-delivery vans built by Freightliner Custom Chassis, with Eaton supplying the hybrid power system.

Image is just as important for the beverage bottling company or the pickup-and-delivery operation of an LTL carrier. Both of those applications have been getting more attention lately, and earlier this year Coca-Cola Enterprises placed a big order for 120 trucks also featuring the Eaton hybrid electric drivetrain. Most of those trucks will be Kenworths, built at the Paccar plant in Quebec.

in Sweden, the first anywhere. The company says it will start producing hybrids routinely in 2009.

Those two Volvo FE garbage collectors combine a 7-liter diesel engine with an I-Shift transmission and the company's 120-kw I-SAM electric motor, the latter used for launch through about 20 km/h when the main engine kicks in. When the truck stops, the diesel automatically switches off. It uses regenerative braking, of course, as do all hybrids.

These trucks are expected to use about 20 percent less diesel fuel. One of them is

fuel consumption will be of immense interest to our customers, irrespective of the type of haulage operation with which they work. For distribution trucks, fuel consumption may be able to be cut by 20 to 30 percent. In long-haul operations, the percentage reduction will not be as great but since these trucks cover long distances, the total fuel saving will nonetheless be considerable."

Volvo Trucks North America, not incidentally, has just seen its research funding from the Swedish Energy Agency and the U.S. Department of Energy extended.

Hybrid Trucks

THEY MEAN BUSINESS: Freightliner's drop-frame Business Class M2e hybrid beverage truck is engineered and ready to move, with Eaton's electric drivetrain behind a Cummins engine. The company has put M2e hybrid straight trucks into a rental fleet in Seattle.

They'll be providing a three-year grant to Volvo of US\$18 million for the development of hybrid technology and engines for alternative fuels, an extension of the one-year research agreement signed between the three parties a year ago. Volvo has undertaken to invest another US\$18 million of its own money in the program.

Getting back to the refuse world, and on to the diesel/hydraulic hybrid power train, Bosch Rexroth has just unveiled a new hydrostatic regenerative braking (HRB) system and announced that its parallel hydraulic hybrid system has been selected by the Hybrid Truck Users Forum (HTUF) Refuse Working Group for field tests with garbage trucks in New York City.

The diesel/hydraulic option has had much less attention than diesel/electric to date. Eaton has both on the go, but their electric drivetrain is already in production



while their hydraulic work is still at the development stage.

Bosch Rexroth is all about hydraulics, on the other hand. In its HRB system, a hydraulic unit integrated in the drivetrain presses hydraulic fluid into a high-pres-

sure reservoir when a driver presses the brake pedal, decelerating the vehicle through resistance and storing energy that would otherwise be lost. The reservoir is electronically controlled when accelerating to release pressure and relieve the

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load on the diesel engine, meaning lower fuel consumption, fewer exhaust gases, and quieter operation.

Hydraulic hybrid technology, aside from the electronic controls required, is as old as the hills and well understood. It's also cheaper than the electric alternative, in theory at least, and there's no reliance on the vagaries of battery chemistry. Not to mention the weight and bulk of those batteries and the cost of replacing them a few years into the truck's lifespan. Those New York refuse trucks will potentially see fuel consumption and accompanying emissions reduced by 30 to 50 percent.

The Bosch Rexroth folks may have been slow off the mark in addressing the hybrid truck market, and they admit it, but you'll see them coming on strong in the months ahead. They claim that hydraulic hybrids, compared to the electric equivalent, are "better equipped to cope with the extremely high power-handling requirements of regenerative braking, and they require fewer energy conversion steps that reduce efficiency."

Peterbilt also has hydraulic garbage-collection plans. It will go for full production of the low-cab-forward Model 320 with Eaton's Hydraulic Launch Assist in

the fourth quarter of this year. The system captures the truck's kinetic energy during braking and stores it in a hydraulic accumulator/pump to help with launch and acceleration.

There's clearly an enormous amount of activity on the engineering and development fronts, but rather less on the marketing side. Which makes a recent Freightliner move somewhat unique. The

company has put Business Class M2e hybrid trucks—M2 106 models with 24-ft van bodies—into a rental fleet with two locations in the Seattle area. It's a first, and it's the sort of thinking that will help speed up the commercialization process. Try it, you'll like it, is the message.

Liking the hybrid experience is one thing, of course, but writing a cheque is another. ▲



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Fuel-Saving Revolution

How to wring the most out of your fuel-savings program.

BY STEVE MACLEOD

One thing trucking veteran Gene Orlick has learned during his time at the 60-year-old family company that bears his name is, there's no shame in asking for help.

Without the deep pockets of a large fleet, the president of Orlicks Inc., got a little creative—and a little help—in turning his company into a green fleet.

Becoming a green fleet has a lot to do with saving fuel, and spec'ing for fuel efficiency is a good start. Without the luxury of a test program of his own, Orlick took notes from the fleet run by Penske Truck Leasing.

"They have hundreds of thousands of trucks and the resources we don't have, so I learn from Penske," explained Orlick. "I surround myself with good people and use their knowledge to help make good decisions."

Orlick and Rob Penner, vice-president of operations with Winnipeg-based Bison Transport, sat side by side at the recent B.C. Trucking Association's (BCTA) annual conference to discuss greening their respective fleets.

Both are affiliated with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) SmartWay program, but that's where many of the similarities end.

With more than 1,000 trucks in his fold, Penner discussed an arm's length list of initiatives that Bison has undertaken and he





was supported by detailed reports to back up all the benefits.

Meanwhile, Orlick, who has about 30 trucks, revealed the tiny steps a smaller fleet can take, learning from others and making small improvements when he can. It's proof any fleet can make a difference with a few small tweaks, which can lead to more changes down the road.

"The only way to make money is to save it, and you can lose a lot of it if you don't pay attention," noted Orlick.

"There's more to be gained from sharing information and learning from each other than beating each other over the head for a load or two," added Penner. "The best way to make money is to be efficient."

TIRED OF WASTING FUEL?

Tire monitoring may not typically be connected with going green, but if you can reduce rolling resistance you'll improve tire life and notice significant savings.

"Tire monitoring has come a long way," noted Orlick. "We've reduced our service calls and blowouts by just paying attention to our tires everyday."

Orlick has a service technician enter the yard every night before the trailers go out and check every single tire to ensure they are properly inflated.

Tires themselves can also be spec'd differently to save some

money, and wide singles are starting to get more attention. With less rolling resistance and a lighter weight, Orlick explained a truck could be made nearly 800 lbs lighter by replacing eight duals with single tires.

HOW LOW CAN YOU GO?

Setting a truck's governor is an environmental measure any fleet can take, it's just a matter of finding the right speed.

"We govern at 108 km/h on foot speed and 100 km/h on cruise," said Orlick. "We're talking to our driver team now to find out what we need to pay them to get them down to 95 km/h."

Bison puts a sizeable premium on getting the drivers onside with these kinds of projects. With great success.

Bison trucks are set at 100 km/h, but there is a voluntary limit of 95 km/h that comes with a \$0.02/mile bonus. A lot of drivers found the extra couple of cents too difficult to pass up, according to Penner.

Other driver behaviors also affect fuel efficiency, so solving all your problems isn't just a case of setting your governors.

Orlick—a second-generation fleet owner—downloads each truck's ECM on a consistent basis to monitor how the truck is being driven and where the fleet can make improvements. Orlick also reinforces positive behavior through a consistent training process, which ensures environmental measures are being followed.

In the belief that being surrounded by intelligent people raises the general level, the company brings in third-party training four times a year and utilizes a professional driver-improvement course every two years.

Explained Orlick. "We work hard as a group and it's a positive influence because it shows we care about them."

CUSTOM-MADE SAVINGS

With all the environmental products available, it's important to remember not every

piece will fit with every carrier.

"It may make sense, but it may not make sense for you," noted Orlick, on trailer skirts. "I believe in the technology and for long haul it's great, but my guys go for 200 miles and might sit for a couple of days, so I wouldn't see a big enough return on my investment."

While Orlick stresses that each carrier should examine his personal needs before moving forward, he noted that everyone has to start somewhere and tires are a good place.

"Tires are big. Tire inflation and a good management program," he added. "And anything to do with saving fuel."

For smaller fleets, Penner suggested using a personal management style instead of bringing in new equipment in the beginning.

"If you're small, you can stay on top of them and teach them things, and help them make it a profession and not a job," he explained. "Automatic transmissions, I'd say probably not, but APUs are probably a good start." ▲

PEEKING BEHIND THE HEDGES

Making money by investing in diesel futures. *By Aaron Fennell*

Futures contracts have been used by the agricultural sector for over 150 years. In 1850 farmers would meet in Chicago at the beginning of each planting season to lock in the prices of their crops to be delivered at harvest.

They could make planting decisions based on those agreements. Over time the agreements became known as futures contracts.

As the name suggests, they are simply contracts to buy or sell a particular commodity for delivery at a "future" date. The concept survived two world wars, the Great Depression, countless droughts, and food shortages.

In the early 1970's contracts for other non-agricultural commodities began appearing. In 1978, the very first heating-oil futures contract was born.

That has since been joined by contracts for crude oil, gasoline, natural gas, propane, coal, and even electricity. They all do the same thing: They lock in the price.

The original heating-oil contract is the one used to hedge prices of the middle-distillate fuels, such as jet fuel, diesel, and home-heating oil. These fuels are similar and only vary in terms of sulfur content, moisture levels, and taxes, so the pricing of these fuels are closely linked.

A lot of people wonder if a futures buyer actually has to take delivery of the commodity. What good would 1,000 barrels of fuel oil at New York Harbor be when the truck is sitting low on fuel in Winnipeg?

The fact is, it doesn't happen. Futures contracts are used only to create a paper gain or loss, which is opposite to the cost of changes in the fuel price. It is like having an inventory of fuel on paper.

When it comes time to actually fill the trucks, some of the fuel in the paper inventory is sold and physical fuel is purchased where it is actually needed. All of the existing relationships with fuel suppliers can remain intact and unchanged.

Another misconception is that all of the fuel in this paper inventory actually needs to be paid for up front. The great thing about a contract to purchase something for future delivery is that payment is not required until the actual delivery date arrives. Before that time the heating oil contract is usually sold back into the market so that delivery does not actually occur.

The difference between the purchase and sale prices of the heating-oil contract would be used to offset the extra cost or savings in the diesel-fuel market because of changes in the diesel price. The up-front cost to purchase the heating-oil contract is a deposit that is usually about five to 10 percent of its total value. This is referred to as the margin deposit and serves as protection from default on the terms of the contract.

The smallest tradable increment of oil contract is 42,000 gallons. The contracts trade on an exchange in an auction-based format that

trades virtually around the clock.

This is important for two reasons. First, each player at the exchange has access to the same pricing, whether it is a small trucking company purchasing only a few contracts, or a large refinery selling thousands at a time.

The pricing is fair and transparent for all players. Second, it is very easy to make adjustments to the positions. Some or all of the contracts can be easily sold back into the market if something changes with the fuel needs.

A hedge program established today will not protect against price movements that have already occurred.

However, getting involved in the futures markets can be one more tool a trucking company can use to safely quote on shipping contracts without the use of a fuel surcharge.



Aaron Fennell



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON FUTURES, visit the New York Mercantile Exchange website at www.nymex.com. The author is with MF Global Canada Co., a member of the Canadian Investor Protection Fund. You can reach him at afennell@mfglobal.com or 416-369-7933.

DON'T SAY WE DIDN'T TELL YA...

By Peter Carter

There's a story about an investment advisor, offering the following advice. "If you're tired of banks reaping obscene profits off the backs of consumers, buy a few shares in the bank. That'll fix ya."

These days some people feel the same thing applies to the oil industry. As more and more fingers point at speculators as among the chief catalysts behind the oil spike of the last two years, more and more market experts are finding ways to get a piece of the action.

One year ago, *Today's Trucking* printed a story about buying diesel contracts.

The story featured an interview with Bob Tebbutt, an investor and hedging specialist

with PEREGRINE FINANCIAL GROUP CANADA, INC. in Toronto. He's been specializing in options and futures longer than anybody else in the country and last year, he said that if a carrier used at



Bob Tebbutt

least 84,000 gallons of diesel every month to fuel a fleet, he (Tebbutt) could help that trucker save big money on fuel price.

That was then.

Since that time, diesel has risen by almost \$1.50 a gallon. Had you taken his advice and bought a futures contract for 42,000 gal of diesel he says you could have saved, oh, about \$70,000.

If you'd wanted his less risky product (options), you would have saved about \$62,000 on 42,000 gallons of diesel between the time of the story being published and now.

The thing is, with futures and options contracts you can lock in oil prices and bet against them going up.

"If somebody called me last year [when the story appeared] and bought futures, he would have locked in diesel at \$2.08 a gallon," Tebbutt says. "Since then, the price has increased by \$1.6485. Times that by 42,000 gallons and you would have saved \$69,237 on a that contract.

"If he'd bought options, it would have been \$1.4885 times 42,000, or \$62,517 difference."

Tebbutt says the hedger could have taken

the difference, put it in the bank and used to to offset the huge oil-price increase that most people are paying.

"He'd basically be saving \$1.64 off a \$3.68 gallon of diesel."

Don't buy that much fuel? Tebbutt says he

can help coordinate your fuel-purchasing with other operators so you can combine your hedging efforts.

(At this point, you might be thinking "Okay, so how do I contact this guy?" You can reach him at rtebbutt@pfgcan.com.)

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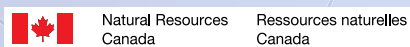
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EQUIPMENT NEWS, REVIEWS, AND MAINTENANCE TIPS



EASY AS 123: Software can track and order spare parts.

ries as much as 50 percent with an automated system.

“Being able to manage your inventory is the immediate savings that people see.” Cooper says fleets that do not use some sort of inventory system have very little idea how many parts they have, or even which parts may be obsolete.

A number of vendors offer trucking-specific maintenance software as a stand-alone product. Many integrate with leading enterprise software products. Some enterprise software vendors offer separate maintenance management modules. Whatever the configuration, they all do one primary thing: organize the shop operation.

“The software will be the impetus to organizing your parts inventory, in many cases for the first time,” Arsenault says.

Automating the parts inventory makes a dramatic difference in shop operations, says Jeffrey Sipio, strategic vertical marketing director for Intermec Technologies Corp. Moving from a paper-based inventory system to an automated, bar-coded system not only gives shops better control of their inventory, but also enhances a fleet’s ability to keep trucks on the road.

“If you have better control of the parts in your parts room—in your inventory—you can do a better job of making sure that you have replacements for a frequently failing part or a consumable part on hand

Bit Parts

maintenance software *How new software can downsize your spare-parts inventory to a minimum. By Jim Beach*

You already know how tracking software can help you keep an eye on your iron, your drivers and your accounting department. Increasingly, carriers are investing in shop software that lets them track vehicle histories, work orders, technician performance, warranties, PM schedules and other maintenance-related tasks.

Plus, many of these products can be integrated into other dispatch and accounting and this is not only for the big guys.

The first benefit is inventory control. Most maintenance software provides this capability. Many enterprise packages and middle-ware vendors also offer maintenance modules that automate tracking and ordering inventory. When coupled with wireless devices, such as bar-code scanners and mobile PCs, shop managers know when parts arrive, when they are used and how many are in stock.

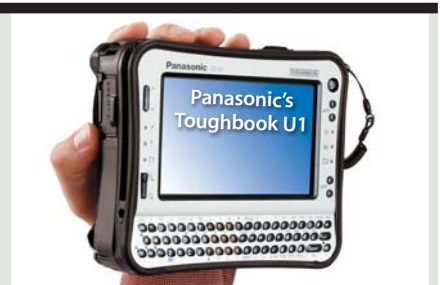
“One of the first savings you’ll see with maintenance software is in parts inventory,”

says Charles Arsenault, Arsenault & Associates in Burlington, N.J., the developers of Dossier Maintenance Software. Arsenault says a fleet could see as much as a 30-percent reduction in on-hand parts once it begins using a software package.

Ed Cooper of Squarerigger Software says fleets can often reduce their invento-

HUMMER OF A LAPTOP

As shop software makes parts inventory more manageable, so too is the hardware more shop-friendly. Many fleets include laptops and rugged computers as tools. Latest and sturdiest out of the blocks is Panasonic’s musclebound Toughbook U1. Weighing it at just under 2 lbs and about 7 in. x 5.75 x 2 in., the U1 has a 5-in. screen and is Windows ready. It’s wireless enabled for



remote operation and is designed specifically for transportation and logistics industries so it’s as useful as a web browser in the office, a scanner in the driver’s hand or a diagnostic tool in the shop.

when you need it," Sipio says.

Plus, the better your inventory control, the more you know about which parts are failing more frequently. To track such data, you need an automated system.

"In an old-time environment, you had purchase orders going out, bills coming in and checks going out. An inventory system manages exactly what parts you're taking in and what parts are actually getting billed out to a repair order," Sipio says.

A bar-coded parts room allows a maintenance manager to set minimums and maximums for each part. Another plus, according to Sipio, is that you don't have to do physical inventories. Scanning the part updates the inventory.

"When you go to a system where everything that comes in the back door is bar-coded and inventoried and everything that goes into the shop is billed to a repair order the minute it leaves the parts room, that helps that entire flow."

Even small fleets can benefit from an automated shop. Maintenance software allows fleets to predict what parts will be needed based on PM schedules. Automating purchasing is a huge benefit for fleets of any size. "Purchase order management, even for a small fleet—linking to their accounting or dispatch system such as McLeod or even Quickbooks—is something they can benefit from," he says.

Managing your parts inventory does not necessarily mean a huge investment in computer hardware and software. Some fleets can benefit from the various web-based applications, such as the Cetaris Web Fleet Assistant. The system can be hosted on a fleet's server, or on Cetaris' servers. This web-based maintenance application includes a parts module for parts inventory management.

The system supports bar-coding, maximum and minimum levels, re-order points and part number cross-referencing, among other capabilities. Wireless hand-held devices allow technicians to access work orders, scan parts and look up repair documentation from anywhere in the shop.

Targeted at smaller fleets is a recently introduced parts module for EBE Technologies' SHIP software package. The

module allows for automated repair order and purchase order generation. The module is now in beta testing and is targeting fleets of 250 or fewer trucks, according to Larry Kerr, EBE president.

The system automates parts management by using bar codes, Kerr says. "You create bar codes on the receiving side. As you use a particular item, you can scan the bar code of that item and then scan the

vehicle's VIN number"

When the PO is approved, it is automatically sent to a vendor. When the part comes in, its bar code is scanned and that goes into both the AP and inventory systems.

All the data eventually provides historical information on how well vehicles, components and parts perform over time, the kind of information that is vitally important when specifying new equipment. ▲



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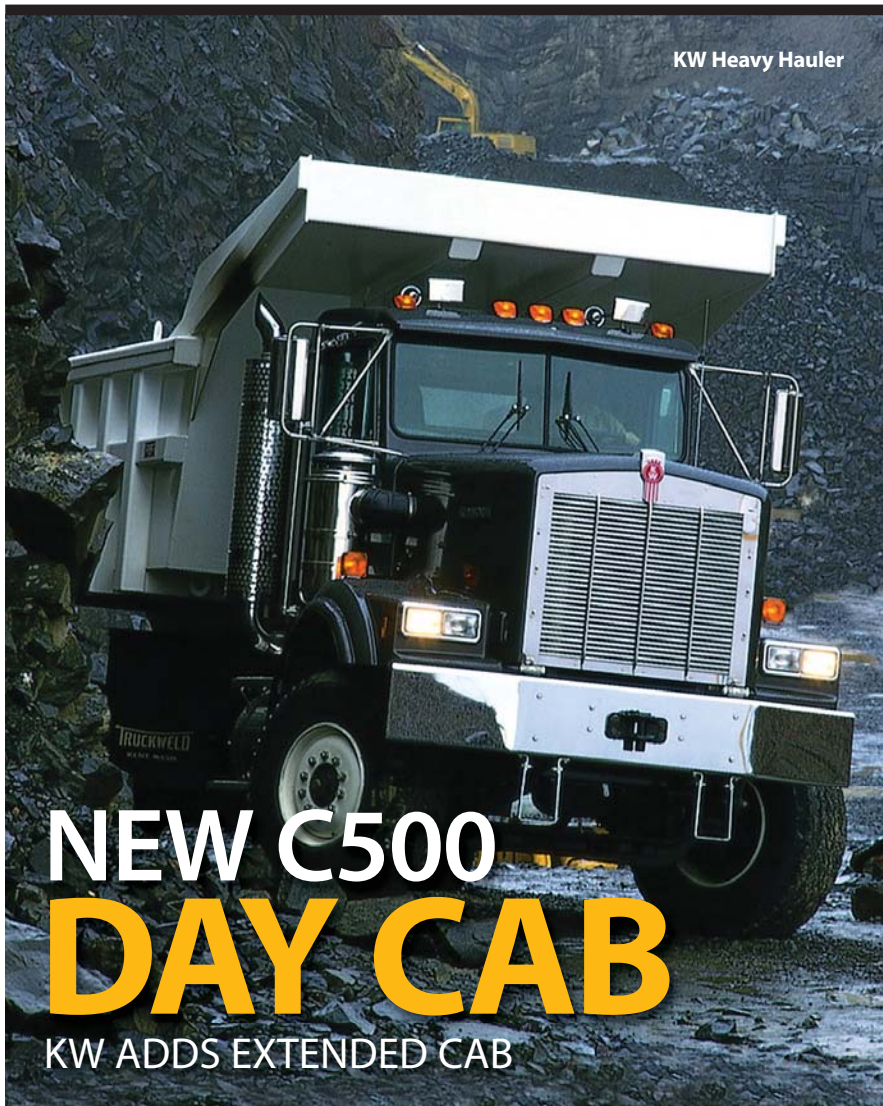
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NEW C500 DAY CAB

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You can now get **KENWORTH'S** extended day cab on the heavy vocational C500 truck. It's to be found doing serious work in the oilfield, and in mining, heavy hauling, logging, and construction.

The cab enhances driver comfort with an additional 6 in. of length and 5 in. of height compared to Kenworth's traditional day cab. There's also two more inches behind the wheel, additional leg room, up to 21 degrees of recline in the driver's seat, and 2 cu ft of additional storage behind the driver's seat.

It's available for new C500's with a 2007 or later engine and with either one-piece or two-piece curved glass windshield. The extended day cab can also be spec'd on the Kenworth T660, T800, and W900 models.

See www.kenworth.com.

FUEL OPTIMIZATION

PROPHESY SENDS PLANS TO DRIVERS

Prophesy Dispatch v5.6 now generates optimized fuel plans for dispatched loads and electronically sends them to the cell phone or on-board computer of the

assigned driver. Optimal fuel solutions can be requested and quickly generated within the booking screen. Then, with a mouse click, the system electronically sends the optimized fuel plan to the assigned driver—including detailed information about the fuel stop (city, number of gallons to purchase, current price, phone number, and road/exit information).

Prophesy claims it can save trucking companies an average of six to eight cents per gallon with this FuelLogic tool. It's fully integrated within Dispatch.

If you're enrolled in the Prophesy software maintenance (SIPP) programs, you'll get this update free of charge.

See www.mile.com.

AUTOMATED SIDE LOADER

HEIL TRAILER GETS DURABILITY UPDATES

Heil Environmental's maneuverable full-size refuse collection vehicle has been updated to offer better durability, easier maintenance, smoother operation, and greater flexibility. The latest STARR (Semi-Trailer Automated Rapid Rail) automated side loader is said to be the only such semi-trailer refuse and recycling collection system.

To strengthen its automated arm, Heil designed a tapered cross-section main lift beam to better match the stresses imposed on the lift's backbone. The teeth on the arm's grabber gears have been made 80 percent larger. And the limit switches that formerly regulated the arm's hydraulic controls, which needed regular adjustment, have been replaced with proximity switches that demand minimal maintenance. Heil also smoothed out the arm's motion by replacing its original electric shift valve with a new 'soft shift' valve metered by advanced controls.

The STARR system consists of an automated 'Rapid Rail' arm mounted

on a tractor plus detachable, semi-trailer packer bodies with 18 tons of payload. This configuration is said to create a tight 42-ft curb-to-curb turning radius, and Heil says that's 40 percent better than a standard straight-frame truck. That means this side-loader has an easy time of it in cul-de-sacs, alleys, and tight corners, without risky reversing.

When a STARR body is full, the operator can simply detach it, hook up an empty one, and continue on his route. With no need for a transfer station, the full trailers can be parked at a yard, serving as 'mini transfer trailers' until it's



Heil STARR Trailer

convenient to take them to the disposal site. At that time, two trailers can be attached to a standard tractor and pulled in tandem, meaning half as many trips and reduced operating costs, as well as less wear and tear.

First introduced in 1995, the STARR was designed for easy maintenance, Heil says. And all the new parts were designed to retrofit to existing STARR side loaders in the field. Retrofit kits are available through Parts Central, a Heil company.

STARR System trailers are available in 33- and 37-cu-yd capacities. Double-trailer systems are available with 66- and 74-cu-yd capacities.

See www.heil.com.

ACE STATUS MESSAGES

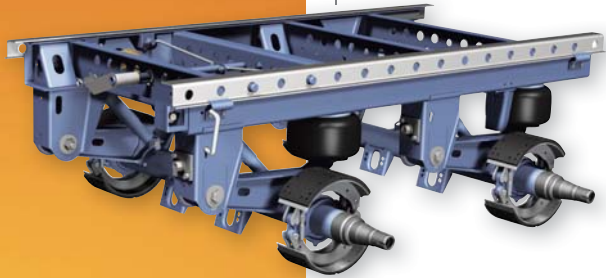
SMOOTHER BORDER BY SHAW TRACKING
Shaw Tracking says ACE status notification is now available through the optional CrimsonLogic application directly to OmniVision and OmniTRACS units. This includes important information for

crossing the Canada/U.S. border such as the customs broker's entry number when they clear PAPS shipments. Drivers will also be alerted when an ACE manifest has been accepted by U.S. Customs and Border Protection. A smooth border crossing should be the result, saving both time and money. Drivers are spared from having to make phone calls to the broker or back to dispatch.

Once set up, dispatch can store the complete list of driver profiles including driver names and e-mail addresses in the CrimsonLogic application. When dispatch selects a driver in a manifest it will automatically associate the events for that ACE manifest to the OmniVision or OmniTRACS unit of that driver.

See www.shawtracking.ca and www.crimsonlogic.com.

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In Gear

FAN DRIVES

HORTON'S NEW DM ADVANTAGE

The new DM Advantage fan drives from **Horton** are offered in on/off and two-speed versions, said to handle the highest-heat under-hood applications. Features include premium bearings, a "superior" air cartridge, and a long-wearing friction liner.

The spring-engaged on/off fan keeps engine coolant at a more consistent operating temperature and has increased reliability in high-horsepower applications, Horton says. It features high torque for turning larger fans, a lighter weight, low parts count for simplicity, and what's called "a fail-safe design".

The two-speed version alternates between eddy current and spring-actuated cooling for precise and efficient



Horton DM Advantage fan drives

temperature control and faster engine warm-ups in cold weather, the company explains. It's ideal for vehicles with little or no ram air. While using eddy current, it turns the fan at a lower speed, which reduces operating noise, increases available horsepower for auxiliary systems, and minimizes radiator abrasion from dust and debris. When additional cooling is needed, it spring-actuates and runs the fan at full input speed.

These drives have undergone two years of field testing in the highest-heat under-hood applications, the maker says. The tests involved over 250 trucks driven more than 45 million miles.

See www.hortonww.com/cooling.

RATCHETING CRIMPER

PHILLIPS HEAVY-DUTY TOOL

Phillips Industries has introduced a new heavy-duty ratcheting crimper tool built for professionals. It's said to be the only heavy duty crimper on the market that accommodates eight gage through 22 gage wire. The positive-lock mating mechanism ensures uniform crimp termination every time, the maker claims, and the easy-access terminal release switch releases if terminal or wire is inserted improperly. The new crimper has a longer-handle design for better leverage when crimping connectors. It's Part No. 4-230.



Phillips ratcheting crimper

See www.phillipsind.com/product.

REEFER MAINTENANCE

CARRIER ONLINE

ASSET-MANAGEMENT TOOL

Carrier Transicold has enhanced its RoadCare contract maintenance programs for transport refrigeration units with a new Web-enabled asset-management tool called ViewPoint.

ViewPoint improves Comprehensive Maintenance and Repair Agreements (CMRA), says Carrier, by helping dealers and customers with tracking, managing



Carrier Transicold

and planning preventive maintenance, warranty service and other service needs. Via the agreements, fleets give the joy of service requirements—scheduled and unscheduled—to Carrier's dealer network.

Dealers use ViewPoint software to determine exactly what preventive and predictive maintenance is needed. It provides customers with access to a wide variety information about their reefer units.

With ViewPoint, customers receive several CMRA program enhancements, including notification of maintenance due, via email or ViewPoint inbox; online

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scheduling services; work-order generation for non-emergency repairs; an online view of unit maintenance and repair history; and quick and easy identification of problem units; and key performance indicators (KPIs).

The latter provide an overview of a fleet's current maintenance status, including information about open and scheduled orders, percentage of units that are due for maintenance, units overdue for maintenance, and customer-defined metrics.

See www.trucktrailer.carrier.com.

PRODUCTIVITY JACK

ROTARY LIFT JACK NOW FEATURES AIR ASSIST, IMPROVED CASTER SYSTEM

Rotary Lift has updated its GUWSFF5 Productivity Jack to make it more user-friendly and easier to service. Its job is to help in the removal and installation of vehicle assemblies like transmissions, fuel tanks, and axles.

An air-assist feature has been added, meaning technicians can use shop air to quickly raise the adapter to the desired height with just the push of a button.



Rotary Lift's
GUWSFF5
productivity jack

The jack's lowering valve is metered, making fine height adjustments possible. Rotary also redesigned the jack's caster system to improve its ability to roll over uneven surfaces. The lockable casters combine with a low center of gravity to enhance stability.

The jack is built with a corrosion-prevention system, which submerges the hardened chrome cylinder in oil every time the lift is raised or lowered, protecting the cylinder walls.

The jack has a lifting capacity of 1,100 lb and offers a stroke of more than 43 in. It's 31.5 in. high. A variety of lifting tables are available for use with the jack.

See www.rotarylif.com.

FLIPAWAY LIFTGATE

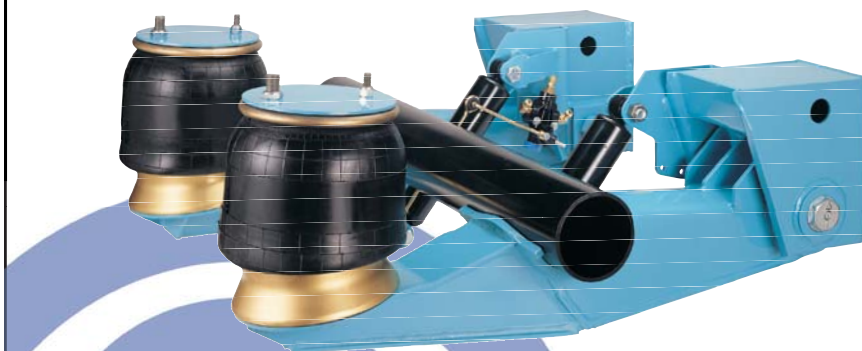
WALTCO EXPANDS PLATFORM SELECTION
Waltco Truck Equipment offers two key updates to its E-RM Series, a flipaway liftgate that's said to be easy to operate and maintain. Previously available in 36- and 40-in.-deep platform models, it now comes with a large 46-in. deep by 80-in. wide, gently sloping wedge-style platform as well. In addition, all E-RM gates can

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WEEKLY PUMP PRICE SURVEY / cents per litre

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CITY	Price	(+/-) Previous Week	Excl. Taxes
WHITEHORSE	148.9		130.6
VANCOUVER *	151.5	3.0	116.6
VICTORIA	150.3	2.6	117.9
PRINCE GEORGE	140.9	2.2	112.5
KAMLOOPS	145.8	1.4	117.2
KELOWNA	147.8	1.9	119.1
FORT ST. JOHN	152.3	2.8	123.3
YELLOWKNIFE	150.9	-1.5	130.6
CALGARY *	137.2	-0.3	117.7
RED DEER	137.9	-0.4	118.3
EDMONTON	135.9	-2.0	116.4
LETHBRIDGE	136.0	0.8	116.5
LLOYDMINSTER	137.9	-1.0	118.3
REGINA *	140.7	1.0	115.0
SASKATOON	143.4	0.2	117.6
PRINCE ALBERT	143.9		118.0
WINNIPEG *	142.5	1.2	120.2
BRANDON	137.9		115.8
TORONTO *	141.2		116.2
OTTAWA	143.9		118.7
KINGSTON	140.9		115.9
PETERBOROUGH	140.9		115.9
WINDSOR	139.7	0.5	114.7
LONDON	142.3	1.3	117.3
SUDBURY	142.9		117.8
SAULT STE MARIE	144.9		119.7
THUNDER BAY	143.1		118.0
NORTH BAY	141.8		116.7
TIMMINS	147.2		121.8
HAMILTON	140.9	-0.1	115.9
ST. CATHARINES	139.2	-0.8	114.2
MONTREAL *	154.7	-2.9	116.8
QUÉBEC	155.2	-2.9	117.3
SHERBROOKE	155.9	-3.0	117.9
GASPÉ	153.9	-2.0	116.1
CHICOUTIMI	151.7	-5.6	114.2
RIMOUSKI	155.2	0.3	114.2
TROIS RIVIÈRES	154.4	-0.2	114.2
DRUMMONDVILLE	151.9	-7.0	114.2
VAL D'OR	155.9	-1.5	114.2
SAINT JOHN *	152.7	-3.9	114.2
FREDERICTON	153.4	-3.7	114.8
MONCTON	153.9	-3.9	115.3
BATHURST	154.5	-3.2	115.8
EDMUNDSTON	154.7	-3.9	116.0
MIRAMICHI	154.5	-3.8	115.8
CAMPBELLTON	154.5	-3.9	115.8
SUSSEX	152.9	-3.9	114.4
HALIFAX *	151.1	-3.8	114.3
SYDNEY	155.0	-3.7	117.7
YARMOUTH	153.3	-3.4	116.3
TRURO	152.4	-4.0	115.4
KENTVILLE	152.8	-3.4	115.8
NEW GLASGOW	154.1	-3.4	116.9
CHARLOTTETOWN *	150.7	-3.7	119.3
ST JOHN'S *	162.8		123.6
GANDER	165.3	3.0	125.8
LABRADOR CITY	170.2		130.1
CORNER BROOK	161.5		122.4
CANADA AVERAGE (V)	144.7	-0.3	116.7

V-Volume Weighted

(+/-) indicates price variations from previous week.

Diesel includes both full-serve and self-serve prices.

The Canada average price is based on the relative weights of 10 cities (**)

www.espar.com



In Gear



Waltco flipaway liftgate

now handle bed heights as low as 38 in., which makes it especially useful for low-cab-forward chassis applications. The maximum bed height is 54 in. The Series is available in 2,500- and 3,000-lb lifting capacities.

The big new wedge-style platform makes moving life easier, and a parting bar, along with dual torsion springs and a torsion bar, make it possible to fold the platform with less than 25 lb of force. The platform flips away under the truck body for unobstructed loading access.

Other features include self-lubricating, fiberglass-reinforced Teflon-coated bearings that eliminate the need for grease zerks; a closed-loop hydraulic system with hydraulic cylinders; and hardened pins that are said to reduce deflection and prolong bearing life. The E-RM Series also has a thermally protected power unit that protects the motor from overheating damage.

Several options are available and Waltco can also modify the E-RM Series to meet individual requirements.

See www.waltco.com.

ONLINE TRAINING

DRIVER HANDBOOK FROM CARRIERSEGE **CarriersEdge and Techni-Com Inc.** have formed a partnership that will see the 'Practical' series of driver handbooks added to the CarriersEdge driver development system online. Practical Vehicle Inspection is the first program to be developed for the web, ready this month.

Run by Rolf VanderZwaag, technical advisor to the Ontario Trucking Association, Techni-Com's handbooks and training materials also include

Practical Cargo Securement and Practical Air Brakes, currently sold through the provincial trucking associations and the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance.

CarriersEdge will develop online training programs based on the Practical series and offer them to its fleet, school, and owner-operator customers. Techni-Com customers will be able to purchase the programs directly, through existing channels. CarriersEdge will also re-sell the Practical handbooks.

CarriersEdge also offers online testing, training and reporting tools, along with business analysis and consulting services.

See www.carriersedge.com.

REFUSE-TRUCK SCALE

AIR-WEIGH'S ON-BOARD SCALE FOR REFUSE TRUCKS

Air-Weigh now offers "cost effective" scales designed for refuse vehicles built with air or walking-beam rear suspensions. The refuse-vehicle scales are available in the company's LoadMaxx and QuickLoad product lines. As with



other Air-Weigh digital on-board scales, you get an in-dash display that shows GVW and net payload, plus steer- and drive-axle weights.

It can be installed on any refuse truck with an air-ride suspension, Hendrickson HAULMAAX, or Hendrickson HN462 suspension. The new scale incorporates Air-Weigh's deflection-sensor technology, which allows for accurate weight measurement on steer and drive axles with mechanical suspensions.

Air-Weigh says its scale offers programmable alarms to indicate warning and overweight conditions, multiple digital data interfaces capable of transmitting weight information to on-board computers, PIN-protected dual-point calibration, and are easy to install, calibrate, and maintain.

See www.air-weighscales.com.

SMARTWAY TRAILERS

GREAT DANE OFFERS EPA SMARTWAY SPEC

A partner in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) SmartWay program, **Great Dane** offers performance specifications and options for new and existing trailers that achieve greater fuel efficiency.



Options in the EPA-certified SmartWay trailer spec are available on 53-ft or longer dry freight vans from Great Dane, and the base trailer model must be equipped and/or retrofitted with the following: aluminum wheels, low-rolling-resistance tires, side skirts, front fairings, and construction with lightweight materials.

The company has been actively engaged in exploring aerodynamic efficiencies with EPA, Wal-Mart, and other industry players for some time. In recent tests with International Truck and Engine, the Great Dane trailer's aero design yielded a double-digit aerodynamic improvement.

See greatdanetrailers.com.

AERODYNAMIC TRAILERTAIL

FIVE PERCENT FUEL GAIN BUT NOT OK IN CANADA

ATDynamics, Inc. has launched the TrailerTail, an aerodynamic device claimed "...to increase fuel efficiency of long-haul tractor-trailers by greater than 5 percent" at highway speeds. It's an extension mounted to the rear of a standard van trailer, and "in less than 8 seconds collapses from 4 ft to a few inches in length" to enable normal trailer door operation.

This patented drag-reduction device's

VOLVO DESIGNS COMPOSITE SLEEPER

VOLVO TRUCKS NORTH AMERICA is working on new lightweight sleepers made with advanced composite materials for the U.S. Army. Aiming to reduce truck weight and improve fuel economy, it's part of the Army's Military and Commercial Truck Weight Reduction Program. Volvo will be partnering with TPI Composites of Scottsdale, Arizona on the project.

Composite components are not only light but they also resist corrosion, insulate better, and should provide a quieter sleeping environment. Knowledge gained in this project will find its way into commercial products.



Volvo's working on lightweight sleeper cabs made with advanced composite materials as part of a U.S. Army program.

The cabs will consist of three pieces: a one-piece composite sleeper, a composite roof, and Volvo's steel cab. Testing will include the 'cab shaker', in which a full-size cab and sleeper, complete

with all interior fittings, is attached to a large hydraulic device and then subjected to prolonged violent shaking. It's a tough test of durability and integrity, and a standard part of product development and testing. One of the three cabs will also be subjected to the very severe Swedish Impact Test.

Three sleeper cabs will be produced as part of the project, with the first to be delivered in late 2009.

See www.volvotrucks.us.com.

fuel-saving potential has been documented in SAE J1321 third-party tests, the maker says, and the devices are components on EPA SmartWay-certified trailers. Wind tunnel and on-road tests conducted in partnership with major fleet vehicle operators have shown the



TrailerTail's ability to reduce tractor-trailer drag by 12 to 20 percent, the company says, by creating a smooth airflow at the rear.

They're currently available as retrofits to any existing swing-door trailer application or as factory-installed options on some OEM trailers.

But there's a catch: the device adds

four feet to the overall length of a trailer, which makes it illegal in every Canadian province. In the U.S. there's an exemption of five feet for aerodynamic extensions. The manufacturer is working to resolve the Canadian issue, and at least one fleet here—Quebec's Transport

Groupe Robert—is apparently interested in pursuing it.

B.C. has just amended its Commercial Transport Regulations to allow width and length extensions for trailer aerodynamic devices, but they don't go far enough—just 2 ft.

TrailerTails don't inhibit the use of a trailer's rear doors and require minimal effort for opening and closing. Drivers are said to think that the devices

make driving easier by providing additional stability and reduced spray at the trailer's rear. The device collapses when a driver opens the rear doors. Patented hinge systems allow swing-door trailers to access loading bays normally. Roll-door variations will be available commercially in 2009.

www.atdynamics.com. ▲

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By Peter Carter

Horse Droppings vs Bar's Leak

How my fleet-owning dad got smarter as I got older

My dad used to do something that drove me nuts. I was a teenager. My pals and I would have plans for an evening—I'd have the keys to our pickup and be on my way out to meet them.

Moments before I'd get away, Dad would come up with an errand for me to run en route.

It could be to drop off an envelope at a driver's house (we employed a bunch of bus drivers and often their personal lives were part of ours), stop at a jobber to see if a spare part arrived, or do a bank drop.

I hated it. Sometimes I thought he did it to bug me. I learned recently that my friends from back then who I still hang around with used to laugh at me because of it.

Fast-forward to now. My father has been gone 17 years. My daughter Ewa is 17. Recently she was taking her first trip to the Cineplex in our car with her pals. She was proud and excited.

She was at the door. I stopped her and said, "Ewa. Since you're going that way anyway why don't you drop this Tupperware at your grandmother's?"

Instantly I heard Dad's voice inside my head: "Never make two trips when one will do."

I had vowed NEVER to say that. But there you go.

I was subconsciously trance channeling Tom. Because, I guess, he was right. On that and many other fronts.

Dad never offered much advice on stuff like what we ate, how we dressed or how many minutes we were supposed to spend on homework.

But when it came to driving, equipment-maintenance or customer service, Tom was the Dr. Phil of Northern Ontario. He and his brother Ed ran a municipal bus fleet for about 40 years until the City of Sudbury took it over. They had lots of guys to give advice to and lots of reasons to give it.

And the older I get—plus the more I ask my seven surviving brothers and sisters to remind me—the more Tom-isms I come up with. Like, "The most dangerous part of a vehicle is the nut behind the wheel!"

Or, "The driver to worry about is the guy behind the guy in front of you!"

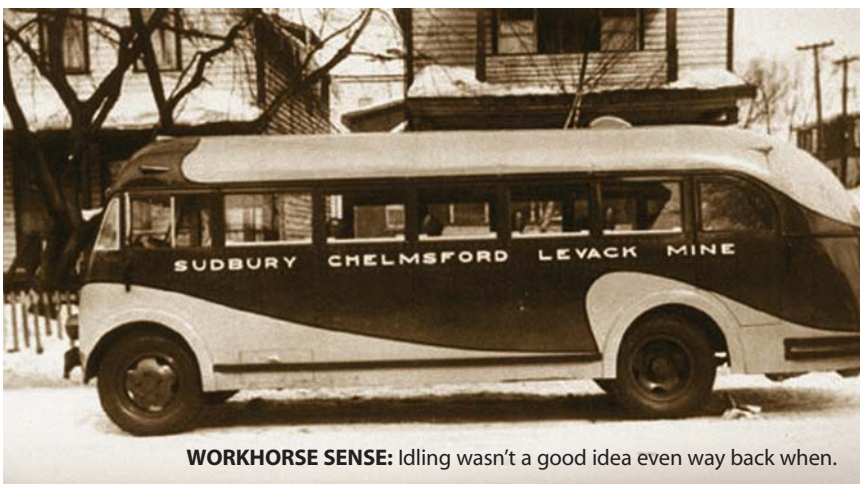
Or, because he knew how a beater can nickel-and-dime you

into the poorhouse, "Anyone can afford a new car but only a rich man can afford an old car."

Tom, who could also drive a team of horses, said, "It's easier to know when an old horse should be put out to pasture than an old bus."

Also, "If you're going to drink and drive only do it if you're driving horses because they remember the way home."

He also said horse manure worked as good as Bar's Leak.



WORKHORSE SENSE: Idling wasn't a good idea even way back when.

My brother Tom (Jr.) recently reminded me that some of the aphorisms were for rookie ears only. To wit: "The proper setting for points was the thickness of a dime—or two nickels."

Dad warned us against unnecessary wear and tear on equipment and I have had to break myself of a really bad Tom-inspired habit. I don't use signal lights unless there's somebody around to signal to. (Okay, so some of Dad's advice stale-dated.)

But lots didn't. My brother Alex told me the other day that even back in the days when gas was 25 cents a gallon, if Dad saw a driver leave his engine on, he'd ask him what was wrong with the starter. The driver would of course say "nothing" and dad would follow with, "then turn your motor off, you're wasting fuel."

That one still holds. And yes, so does the one about not making two trips when one will do. And hey, the more I share his advice, the more it seems Dad's one trip around is indeed doing the trick of two. ▲

Peter Carter is the editor of *Today's Trucking*. You can reach him at 416/614-5828 or peter@todaystrucking.com.

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