

**911 FOR OTR:** New company takes fuss out of breakdowns, PG. 13



ERS of  
Canada  
founder  
**Alvis Violo**

# Today's Trucking

The Business Magazine of Canada's Trucking Industry

January 2008  
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## HUGE LOADS

AND HOW TO SPEC FOR THEM, page 34



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Saving money on  
your phones



PG. 38  
Anti-roll gear  
for trailers

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# Today's Trucking

The Business Magazine of Canada's Trucking Industry

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**Kenneth R. Wilson**  
Award Winner



Member





### Enough said?

I have been reading about the plight of Ontario truckers and the unjust and unfair re-testing program that the Ontario Ministry of Transportation has launched against them.

This is only the most recent shot launched across the bow of the professional trucking community in Canada. It only confirms in my mind that we are considered second-class citizens in a country that we all worked very hard to build.

One wonders when the professional driving community will one day say they're fed up and show their disapproval as a group.

Over-enforcement by federal and provincial authorities has made life miserable and the rules are mostly engineered around fines more than safety.

I haven't even gotten to the attitude of the general public.

Is it any wonder after decades of driving I'm about to say enough is enough?

Ross Thompson,  
Mississauga

### Simple Solution

I have been driving trucks and heavy equipment for 39 years and can honestly say the government and trucking industry have done nothing to save lives but instead have created rules to mislead the public and to extract money from truck drivers.

The DOT and the Ministries of Transport and the police are out there with ticket books enforcing their rules on

how truck drivers should live their lives when working and when off duty.

Owner-operators are even considered on duty when at home tinkering on their trucks, which are their pride and joy.

Accidents still happen, and as far as I am concerned, some happen due to the stress of drivers trying to get the job done within the rules.

For example, we're supposed to always stop at brake checks. We all know brake-related accidents are caused by incompetent drivers being dispatched on trucks they don't understand in the first place, and not because there was no brake check at the top of a hill.

A logbook is a waste of a driver's time and it can lead to needless slowdowns and roadside harassment, which causes even more stress.

Instead, educate drivers when to hit the sleeper berth and say no to dispatch or shippers who demand unrealistic deliveries.

Give us back some authority. There would be a lot more happy drivers and a lot less accidents. The only thing the government will lose will be revenue from tickets.

Gord Currie,  
Chilliwack, B.C.

### Grandma's a Role Model: Scholar

The winner of this year's Rolf Lockwood Scholarship is 23-year-old Ryerson University Journalism student Carla Wintersgill.

Carla is a third-year Ryerson Journalism student and every year, Newcom Business Media—the publisher of this magazine—presents a \$1,000 prize to the Ryerson journalism student who writes the "Best example of a magazine article focusing on business journalism."

The student must also maintain a 3.0 grade-point average in his or her second year.

The award is named for Newcom's Editorial Director and co-founder Rolf Lockwood, recognized by the Canadian Business Press as an industry leader three years ago when he was presented with the prestigious Harvey S. Southam Lifetime Achievement Award.

The magazine article that clinched the award for Wintersgill was a very unusual

**Carla Wintersgill,**  
winner of this year's Rolf Lockwood Scholarship.



feature published in the student newspaper *The Ryersonian*. It was about the business of the world's oldest profession. (Yes, *that* oldest profession.)

Carla is the fourth winner.

Originally from Victoria, B.C., her father works for Canadian Utilities Corp., and her mom's with B.C. Ferries.

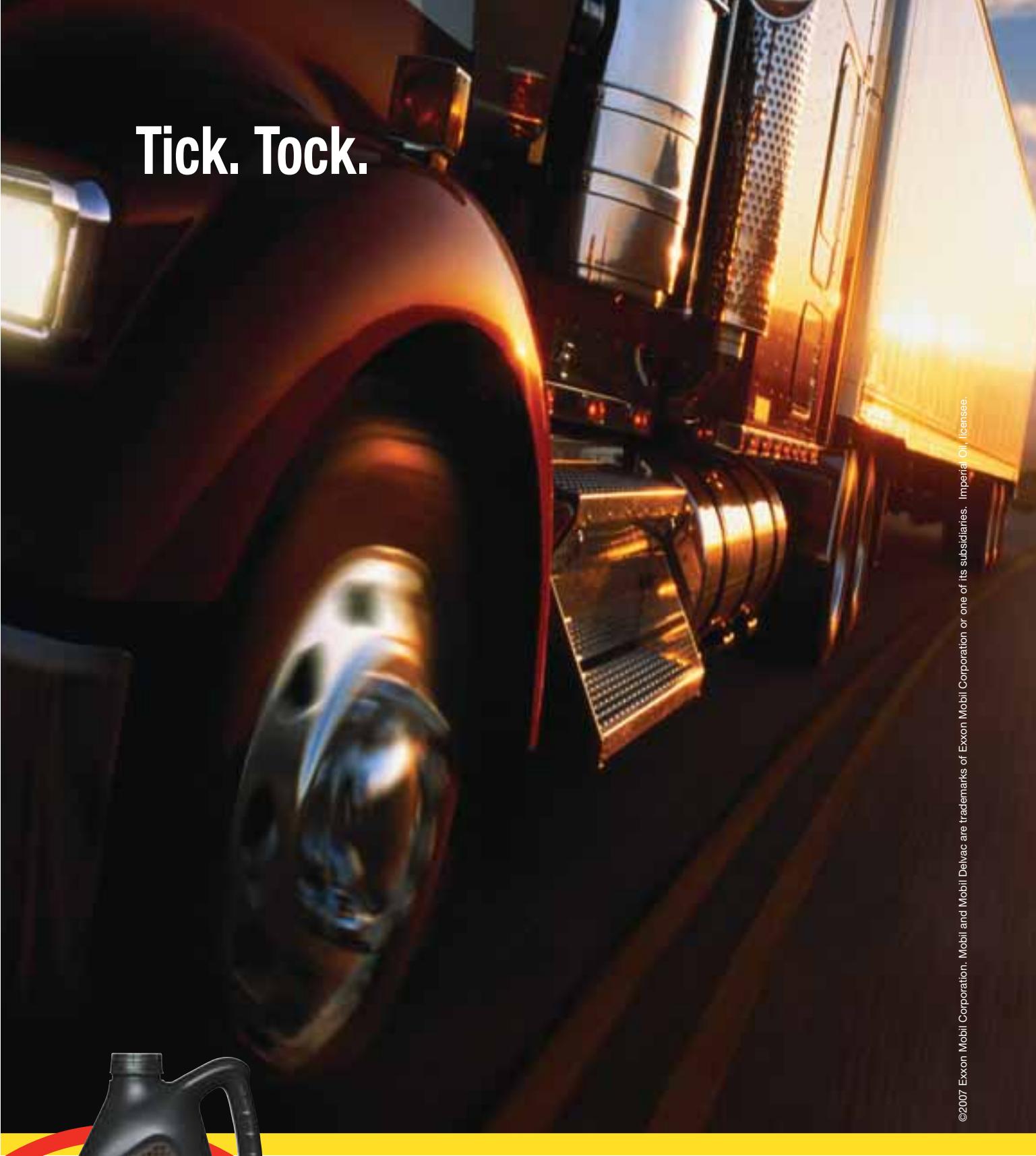
Among her role models, she includes her paternal grandmother Joan Wintersgill, who was born in Barbados but who, in the mid-1950s, travelled all the way to Ottawa to study journalism at what was then Carleton College. "She was a brave woman," Carla said.

**HOW TO REACH US:** We want your feedback. Write [editors@todaystrucking.com](mailto:editors@todaystrucking.com), or Letters to the Editor, Today's Trucking, 451 Attwell Dr., Etobicoke, ON M9W 5C4; fax: 416/614-8861.



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By Rolf Lockwood

# Make Your Own Luck

**In 2008, you'll have to be ready to pounce on opportunities, but that may be easier said than done.**



**F**irst off, let me wish all of you a Happy New Year. And secondly, I wish you good luck. You may or may not need luck, of course, but the truth is I haven't a clue as to the kind of year you'll have. Sure, I know, editorials like this are supposed to prognosticate, but I'm no economist. I'm also a coward.

If I had to, I'd say freight levels won't increase in any big way this year, if at all, even though our own economy is strong overall. The fact is, it's only truly strong in terms of resource industries, and those products are mostly exported without much domestic processing. It's the old Canadian story, which leaves most of you no better off. There are strengths in service industries too, but nothing in that mix gets trucked.

Our manufacturing sector is in rough shape for the most part. To some large extent you're at the mercy of those thing-makers, which are not among the world's most productive enterprises and therefore not among its most competitive. That's fine when the Canuck buck is at 70 cents, but when that currency crutch disappears, those Canadian mills and factories face a softening of demand because they can't cut it on their own merits. That softening of demand can quickly turn into temporary closures or outright bankruptcy, leaving you high and dry. We've seen it this past year and we'll see more of it.

As well, the U.S. economy is hovering on the edge of recession, and there's no way for us to be insulated from that. When houses aren't being built in Chicago and Nashville, we don't export lumber and carpets. We feel the same pain.

But there are good things happening in the larger world beyond North America, which brings mixed blessings. Exporters have opportunities that could mean you do too, but you're at the mercy of unfamiliar economic dynamics. I've been to several presentations by leading economists in the last couple of months, and there was one clear message, as if we needed reminding: markets are increasingly global, not continental. So the influences over your own business—whether it's one tractor in Kamloops, 35 in Brandon, or 3,500 in Montreal—are also global in the end. Your chances of controlling them are nil. Even the IBMs and Coca-Colas of this world can only manipulate things so much.

For all those reasons, I don't see a lot of good news on the immediate horizon, much as I'd like to say otherwise. And I don't think there's much you can do about it.

If it's any consolation, carriers across the Atlantic aren't faring much better. Worse, in fact. Largely due to rising fuel prices and skinny margins, at least one analyst thinks that fully a third of

carriers in the U.K. will have trouble making it through 2008.

Can you guess why? They can't pass those fuel price increases on to the shipper, and it's hitting small operations harder than the big ones. At the same time, with operating ratios in the high 90s, they can't afford to invest in the most modern—and more efficient—vehicles that would make them more competitive. It's a familiar story, isn't it?

So back to luck, I think you'll need some. There's the old adage that suggests you construct your own luck by being prepared to grasp opportunity—and by being able to analyze

**Given the kind of rate-cutting that's going on out there, I can only think that even fleet managers who do know their costs are ignoring them.**

it properly in the first place—and I guess that's more true than ever. In practice, however, I don't really know what that means in 2008 because so little is predictable.

Well, let's amend that a bit. I do know that being ready for the big chance demands an understanding

of your costs and also your capabilities, along with a little vision. Or more likely a lot of vision.

Too few trucking outfits understand or even monitor their costs, or so I've been hearing for donkeys' years, so that's a bad start for some operators. And given the kind of rate-cutting that's going on out there, I can only think that even fleet owners and managers who do know their costs are ignoring them and taking the freight even if it's not really compensatory. Anything to keep the wheels rolling and the driving force intact, I guess.

Still, when I hear of specialized open-deck loads that fetched over \$5.00 a mile in a long-term contract being stolen at just over \$3.00, I've got to wonder. And how about the cross-border 425-mile rounder, daily tanker loads, that was \$880 in another long-term deal but purloined at just \$500. Is it coincidence that in both those cases the freight will now be pulled by owner-operators?

Folks, you're killing each other out there.

Which leads me to my real fear, that we Canadians, in trucking and everywhere else, aren't quite good enough on the vision front. We just don't see far enough down the road. ▲

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

The search has begun for the

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The highwaySTAR of the Year award is open to

ALL drivers — company drivers and owner-operators alike. If you know someone worthy of such an honour, please take the time to complete the nomination form and return it to us as soon as you can. We'll be presenting the award during Truck World 2008, at Toronto's International Centre on Saturday April 19, 2008. Forms are available on-line at [www.highwaystar.ca](http://www.highwaystar.ca), [www.todaystrucking.com](http://www.todaystrucking.com), or use the form on the opposite page to tell us about your nominee.

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*Jim Park, Editor highwaySTAR*

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# Dispatch

BY MARCO BEGHETTO

## Switching Teams

**Respected dealer changes brands and gives Kenworth a real footprint in the Maritimes.**

**I**t's not often someone in trucking waits 35 years to make his riskiest business move. But that's exactly what one of Atlantic Canada's best-known International dealers did last month when he decided to bat for a rival truckmaker.

It wasn't an easy choice for Mike Nagle of Bayview Trucks and Equipment to take his two New Brunswick dealerships and parts centers and put a Kenworth Truck Co. banner across the top of their front doors. But—and pardon the cliché here—it was an offer Nagle says he simply couldn't refuse.

Sure, that's an old song that's been sung by businessmen since the beginning of economic times. But there's no other way for Nagle to explain his reasons for leaving a successful brand he built his name with—nothing personal.

But with Kenworth having little stake in the Maritimes (just one facility in New Glasgow, N.S.), this was an untapped opportunity that couldn't be ignored.

"Kenworth had an open market down here where they didn't have any dealer representation. We were talking for quite some time, and decided it was the right thing to do because of the opportunities this presented

me and my staff," Nagle tells *Today's Trucking* in an interview. "Kenworth trucks [are] engineered to handle the rigors of over-the-road and vocational applications, particularly here in New Brunswick."

He tells us that he believes the Atlantic Canada market was becoming oversaturated with International dealers to the point that it was difficult to grow his business.

"They may have had more dealers than they need in this region."

Kelly Kennedy, Kenworth Canadian region manager, says the truckmaker had been exploring expansion in Atlantic Canada for a while. It was just a matter of finding the right man for the job.

"Kenworth continually works with our dealer distribution network to expand the number of service points

**DONE DEAL:** After building his lot with International, Bayview Trucks & Equipment owner Mike Nagle says Kenworth now gives him the best opportunity to grow in the Maritimes.



# ches

either by upgrading facilities or establishing new facilities," he says.

"In New Brunswick, the partnership is complementary. It's turnkey from a Kenworth perspective where we can gain access to the marketplace with a respected and talented dealer right away."

Bayview Kenworth, as the franchise is now called, is operating two full-service Kenworth dealerships in Saint John and Fredericton, and parts-only facilities in Sussex and St. Stephen, which will still service just about every type of truck, says Nagle. The company, he adds, is also on the verge of opening a Moncton dealership. There's also been talk

of a PEI location.

Plus, now that Nagle has the support of Paccar Financial and PACCAR Leasing (PacLease), he can offer customers leasing and financing options that weren't available before.

As for the task of advancing a brand that up until now has had minimum presence, at best, in these parts, Nagle says he plans to draw on the experience of his sales force and established customer loyalty. He says he's pretty confident he can convert a large percentage of customers to the new nameplate.

"Yes, I think so. We've been in business since 1972, and we have a strong following of customers, which I think we can continue," he says.

Nagle says he's also looking forward to offering the exclusive Cummins-built, Paccar-branded four- and six-liter mid-range diesels in medium-duty applications. "It's very exciting for us to know there will be a proprietary engine in our products."

In Western Canada, Kenworth has undoubtedly conquered the owner-op, logging, and heavy-duty oilfield sectors. Kennedy says



**DAWN ON A NEW DAY:** Alvis and Dawn Violo, along with new VP Allan Lusk (far left), are batting 1,000 with their new 24-7 roadside service for truckers.

## CALL'EM AS YOU NEED'EM COUPLE LAUNCHES NATIONAL ROADSIDE SERVICE

**M**aybe between now and Spring, Alvis and Dawn Violo might be able to catch a little shuteye. Then again, maybe not.

For just over a year, the Mississauga, Ont.-based couple has been running an emergency call centre for truckers. With almost no fanfare, they opened for business last November and since that time, the company—Emergency Road Services of Canada—has fielded more than 1,000 calls from truckers in distress. The calls come 24/7.

Business has been so brisk that last month ERS of Canada opened a sparkling new call center. This means that finally, there'll be others on hand to field the calls for help.

ERS of Canada is like the CAA, except there's no membership dues and you don't have to register in advance. Basically, it's a one-stop-call service for truckers who need roadside help.

Alvis and Dawn spent a year building ERS. Much of that involved creating a cross-Canadian network of about 2,200 vendors whom the Violos can summon on a moment's notice. They have tow-operators, tire-repair facilities, mobile repair shops, even environmental cleanup people in the data

base, which stretches the height and breadth of Canada.

"I don't know how she [Dawn] did it," says Alvis, "but she has made contacts all over the place."

(It didn't hurt, he adds, that they found and hired a new vice president in the person of Allan Lusk, who brought almost 30 years of experience to the job.)

All the vendors are pre-qualified and their rates are listed with the Violos, so there will be no surprise bills for the broken-down truckers after the repairs get taken care of. The vendors are also required to submit their invoices immediately after doing the job. Alvis audits every invoice.

And the cost? How about \$48 a call? For that, ERS of Canada contacts all the services you need to get back on the road again.

After the new website's operational, says Violo, there will be four ways to contact ERS: via email; phone (1-877-ERS-CANADA), fax or online ([ersofcanada.com](http://ersofcanada.com)). And online, customers will be able to track their requests and the results immediately.

Violo says he tries to get help to the distressed trucker within an hour of the first call. And so far, after 1,000 or so calls, ERS is batting 1,000.

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## Dispatches

the company is poised to grow in a variety of segments in Eastern Canada as well, especially in resource-based sectors and a burgeoning local construction market.

Kenworth's decision to expand its network comes at a time of stagnant class 8 sales, however, as fleets trim capacity in response to a weakened U.S. market and a dwindling pool of professional drivers. Kennedy, though, is far from concerned with the amount of fruit the Canadian market will bear going forward.

"The big picture is we still live in very good times in Canada. It's true it's not like how it was last year because of the artificial stimulation to buy trucks because of EPA emissions rules. What's

also complicating lives right now is our currency, which obviously affects exports and trucking companies that run north-south. So there's less activity in those lanes," he explains. "But as far as the domestic market goes, there's still quite a bit going on. And in Eastern Canada, there's still a healthy demand for trucks."

That'll likely become even more evident in the coming months as carriers who previously chose to stay away from '07 engines now begin turning over their fleets. So far, customers who are running the new engines are pretty comfortable with them, says Kennedy.

"It's a little early... but overall I think it's a pretty successful transition."

### Training

#### School's Out Forever?

It was supposed to be Canada's first professional truck-driver training standard, but less than a year in, the Professional Driver Certificate (PCD) Pilot Program has stalled.

The post-class-1 training certificate program at Alberta's Red Deer College, which is based on the Canadian Human Resources Trucking Council's (CTHRC) Earning Your Wheels program, is not generating enough interest from students and carriers.

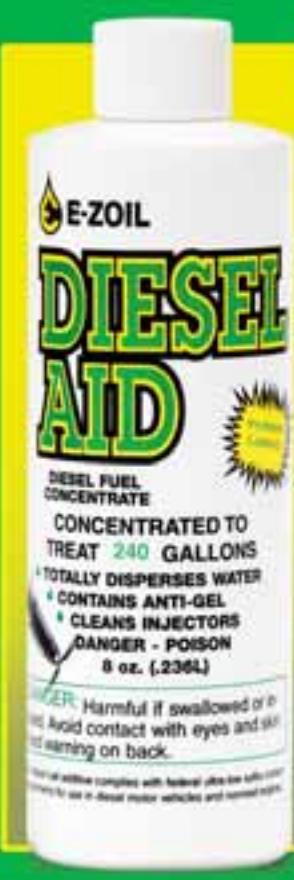
A combination of Alberta's booming economy, the level of training, and the length of the program are

taking the blame for hindering the pilot project.

"I have talked to many students and companies who want to enter and support the program but when they find out that it doesn't include the class-1 licence and as a result the student is unable to earn a wage for the majority of the 20 plus weeks, they don't sign up," noted Dennis McCarty, PDC Program Chair.

Since a class-1 licence is not obtained during the program, a student is not eligible for Employment Insurance, similar to how many apprentices receive funding while upgrading their skills.

"The first session started the first week of August and it was a real struggle finding



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enough people to start the program," explained Mayne Root, executive director of the Alberta Motor Transport Association (AMTA). "My understanding is that we only have two or three signed up for the next session if the program's not changed, so it won't go."

As a result, a proposal was submitted last month to Doug Horner, Alberta Minister of Advanced Education and Technology, to modify the course to include the class-1 licence and to shorten the program from 20 weeks to 12. The revised program would be comprised of eight weeks of theory and supervised driving; and four weeks of a supervised practicum under a company coach/mentor. "It needs to be

## heard on the Street

■ Does it seem that just about every time you read this section, you find out TransForce has bought another carrier? Well, here we go again.

**TRANSFORCE** Income Fund expanded its scale in its home province with the recent acquisition of rival LTL carrier, the Thibodeau Group—the fifth largest fleet in Quebec. Thibodeau, with 430 power units and 1,100 trailers across 14 terminals, is led by Pierre Thibodeau. In 2006, the group generated revenues of more than \$80 million.

"Thibodeau ... will further strengthen our LTL and truckload operations in Eastern Canada," said TransForce CEO Alain Bédard.

■ Speaking of big acquisitions, the majority interest of LTL intermodal carrier **Consolidated Fastfrate** and its affiliates **Canada Drayage Inc.** and **Koch Transport** have been acquired

by **FENWAY PARTNERS**, a N.Y. private-equity firm. Fastfrate is Canada's third-largest intermodal carrier and is the only intermodal transport fleet to have co-located transload facilities in almost every CP Rail intermodal yard in Canada. Fastfrate's existing shareholders, including president and CEO Ron Tepper, will continue to hold a 25-percent stake in the company.

**Marc Kramer**, Managing Director of Fenway Partners, said the equity firm's capital and "business-building capabilities" will allow Fastfrate to grow organically and through acquisitions.

**Ron Tepper** echoed that prediction. "It is very clear to me that there are and will continue to be attractive opportunities for us to grow our business quickly through selective strategic acquisitions ... this deal will now give us access to Fenway's capital, human resources and extensive network in transportation and logistics."

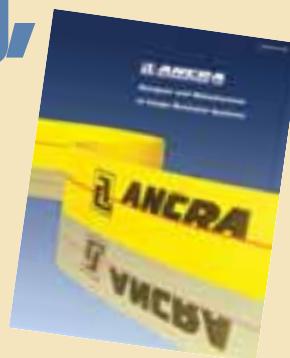
This is the second major takeover of a Canadian trucking company by a U.S. private equity this year. In May, Canada Cartage was bought by Nautic Partners VI, LP, for \$140 million.



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## Dispatches

shortened, but not affect the credibility and quality of the product," added Root.

Some private driving schools in the region have raised concerns about unfair competition if the college is allowed to train class-1 drivers. But AMTA officials noted that any driving school could go through the process to become accredited and provide the training, which meets the national standard for the industry.

AMTA is asking carriers and drivers to support the continuation of the program—with a class-1

component—by contacting their provincial government representative or Minister Horner's office and voicing their opinion.

— Steven Macleod

### **HOS**

#### **US Hours Rule Stays Intact**

There will be no changes to the 11-hour drive time and 34-hour restart provisions in the U.S. federal hours-of-service rule—not if the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) is allowed the final say.

The FMCSA finally announced the details of a new Interim Final Rule (IFR) regarding commercial driver HOS regulations. The IFR keeps the existing provisions in effect and provides the public with a 60-day comment period, before a final rule is issued next month.

The agency issued the new rule in response to a July decision by the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals vacating the two key provisions, because, according to the court, FMCSA "failed to give interested parties an opportunity to comment on

the methodology of the crash-risk model used to justify the (rule)."

This time, FMCSA did a better job of justifying the changes to the rule and included new data showing that safety levels have been maintained since the 11-hour driving limit was first implemented in 2003.

The agency noted that in 2006, the fatality rate per 100 million vehicle miles traveled was 1.94—the lowest ever recorded. Similarly, since 2003, the percentage of large trucks involved in fatigue-related fatal crashes



## LOG BOOK

Go online for more events, visit [www.todaystrucking.com](http://www.todaystrucking.com)

### **February 11-12**

**Canadian Association of Importers & Exporters Western Canada Conference**, Calgary Hyatt, Calgary. Focused on western sectors, this event covers Customs audits, transfer pricing and classification, C-TPAT, and benefits under NAFTA. Contact: 416/595-5333 or click on [www.caie.ca](http://www.caie.ca).

### **February 21-23**

**AmeriQuest 2008 Transportation Industry Symposium**, The Ritz-Carlton Golf Resort, Naples, Fla. The AmeriQuest-sponsored symposium brings together executives from private fleets, truckload common carriers, truck rental, and leasing companies for a high-level business agenda. Contact: 888/999-6957 or check out [www.ameriquestcorp.com](http://www.ameriquestcorp.com).

### **February 25-28**

**The Work Truck Show 2008**, Georgia World Congress Center,

Atlanta, Ga. Held in conjunction with the National Truck Equipment Association annual convention, the event includes dozens of educational sessions, and the latest work truck equipment from Classes 1-8 displayed by over 500 exhibitors. Contact: 800/441-6832 or go [www.ntea.com](http://www.ntea.com).

### **March 12**

**Manitoba Trucking Association Annual Meeting**, Greenwood Inn, Winnipeg. The annual conference where MTA member fleets gather to discuss the trucking issues of the day. Contact: 204/632-6600 or click on [www.trucking.mb.ca](http://www.trucking.mb.ca).

### **March 17-19**

**Supply Chain World 2008 North American Conference**, Minneapolis, Minn. Enabling Profitable Customer Satisfaction through Supply-Chain Integration. Presented by the Supply-Chain Council. Contact: 202/962-0440 or go to [www.supply-chain.org](http://www.supply-chain.org).



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# OTA CONFERENCE WRAP UP

A SUMMARY OF INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS HONORED AT THE 2007 ONTARIO TRUCKING ASSOCIATION'S ANNUAL CONVENTION

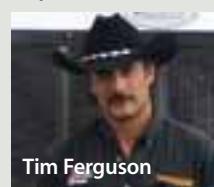
**NOD TO INDUSTRY VET:** This year, Doug Smith, chairman of the Manitoulin Group of Companies in Gore Bay, Ont., was presented with the 2007 OTA-Trailmobile Service to Industry Award—the highest honor bestowed on an executive in the Ontario trucking industry. The award recognizes an individual who, by his commitment, vision, leadership and unstinting service, has made an outstanding contribution to the development and success of the truck transportation industry in Ontario.

The selection was made by a panel of Smith's peers, most previous winners themselves, who recognized Smith's role as one of the industry's major innovators, particularly in developing special truck configurations that maximized the productivity of shipments of various products to and from Northern Ontario.

Smith began his career in trucking in 1957 when the family business, Smith's Wholesale, purchased its first truck and trailer to service produce. By 1960, Doug acquired Hill's Transport and renamed the company Manitoulin Transport.

**HERO'S WELCOME:** There's a teenage girl alive today because of a Mackinnon Transport driver named Tim Ferguson. Last February, Ferguson was on Highway 400 near Barrie when he spotted a young girl standing on the shoulder of the road, hands in the air, and toes to the pavement.

He knew something was up and began braking. By the time he stopped about 20 feet north of her, she had jumped into his lane in an attempt to commit suicide. He leapt from his cab to see if he could help,



Tim Ferguson

guided her back to the shoulder and just as she was calming down she darted out into traffic again. Risking his

own life, Ferguson went after her, slowing cars and stopping traffic, until he reached the young woman, talked her down, and waited with her until the police arrived with an ambulance which took her to hospital. By doing so, he not only saved her, Ferguson

staved off what could have been a multi-vehicle highway fatality.

In honor of his heroics, Ferguson was named the 2007 recipient of the Bridgestone Firestone Canadian Truck Hero Award. "You never know how you're going to affect the people you meet every day, so you should try to make each encounter a positive one," says his boss Evan MacKinnon.

**TOP DRIVER:** Jeffrey MacLean, a driver with SLH Transport in Vaughan, Ont., is this year's OTA/Volvo Trucks Canada Driver of the Year. MacLean has driven two million collision-free kilometres during a career that has spanned 35 years on the road. "Jeff is vigilant in protecting the well being of the motoring public through his defensive driving techniques," noted Gord Gillespie, president of SLH Transport.

**BEST DISPATCHER:** Tandet Dedicated dispatcher Dan Risebrough was named Ontario's 2007 OTA/Shaw Tracking Dispatcher of the Year. He has been with Tandet for 18 years—11 of them spent working as a dispatcher—and he honed his exceptional driver relation skills during the time he spent behind the wheel of a truck. "Dan was selected for this award not by the management team, but by his peers," said Scott Tilley, president of Tandet.

**PIONEERS PROMOTED:** Long-time trucking industry participants were inducted into the OTA Pioneer and Half Century clubs. They are: Dave MacDonald, regional manager signature service with Markel Insurance; Rick Morgan, operations and safety manager with Steed Standard Transport; Kim Richardson, president of KRTS Transportation Specialists; Bob Smith, manager of safety with Mackie Moving Systems; Donald Tait, fleet manager of Natrel.

George Ledson, president of Cavalier Transportation Services, was also named to the Half Century Club. He started in the industry in 1957 with Inter-City Truck Lines in the Credit Department. Joining him is Kenneth Nixon, manager of national accounts with the Rosedale Group.



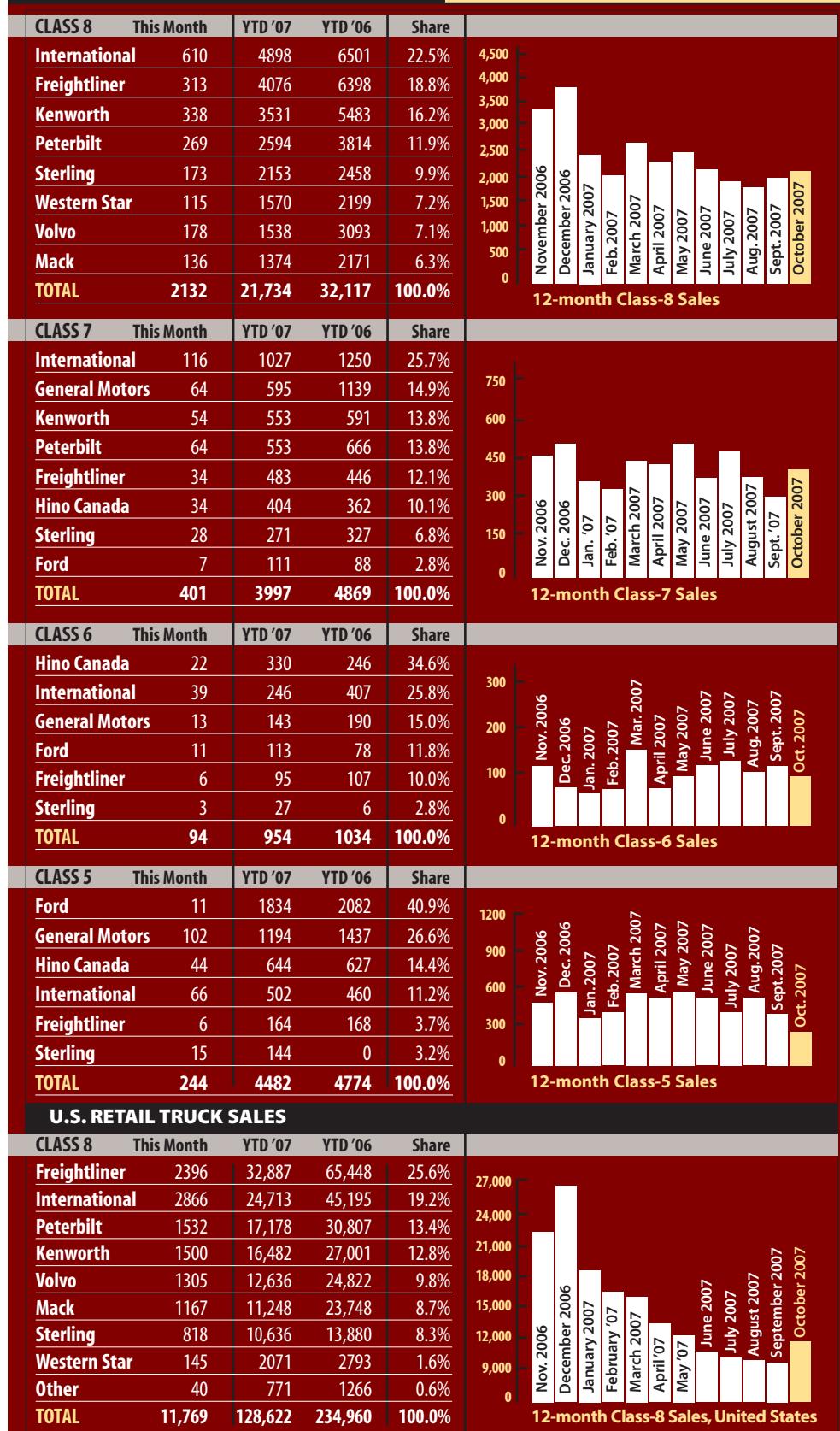
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\*Compared to a Detroit Diesel Series 60 EPA 2007 engine with comparable engine ratings and load weights. \*\*Effectiveness of turbo compound is based on load on the engine. The turbo compound returns horsepower back to the engine's flywheel.

## Dispatches

### truck sales index

October 2007



**Online Resources:** For more truck sales stats, go to [todaystrucking.com](http://todaystrucking.com)

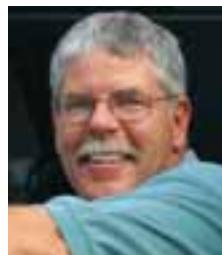
Sources: Canadian Vehicle Manufacturers Association and Ward's Communication.

in the 11th hour of driving has remained below the average of the years 1991-2002. In 2005 alone, the agency noted, there was only one large truck involved in a fatigue-related fatal crash in the 11th hour of driving while in 2004 there were none.

The Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association (OOIDA) expressed support in response to the IFR. "We agree with the agency's decision and appreciate its efforts toward ensuring that professional truckers aren't hamstrung by regulations that limit their discretion and unnecessarily keep them on the road, tired or not," said OOIDA Director of Regulatory Affairs Rick Craig.

But the fat lady hasn't even begun warming up her vocal cords yet. This action too may be challenged by the usual opponents who have been suing FMCSA since the HOS regime was entirely rewritten in 2004. Here's just a sample of the latest rhetoric: "FMCSA is continuing the sweatshop conditions for truck drivers rolling down our highways, which endangers Americans all over the country," according to Joan Claybrook, president of watchdog group Public Citizen.

FMCSA strongly maintains that the rule is based first on safety, and that despite "allegations and innuendoes that the rule is not safe," the most modern data shows it is. ▲



# Thirty Year's Experience

**driver's side** *I wrote my Class A licence renewal test today and passed. I wrote the same test in 1978. By Jim Park*

For twenty-nine-and-a-half years I've had a Class A licence in my back pocket. I earned the licence in June or July 1978, and rewrote and passed the written portion of the test again today, on my 49th birthday. I'm good to go for another five years, and this year, I'll be getting one of those new-fangled Ontario licences encoded with all kinds of personal information. I can hardly wait.

I got my Class A when I was nineteen, while working for a grocery distribution outfit called Lumsden Bros., based in Burlington, Ont. My Class A training consisted of riding and driving in the fleet's tractor-trailers on Fridays—after I had accumulated 44-or-so hours on my tandem straight truck, slugging groceries into corner stores all over the province. It was tough work wrangling that heavily loaded two-wheel cart up and down stairs, and dealing with the store owners, who wanted me to pretty well put the product on the shelves for them. I was never in better shape, though.

We had one call in Hamilton on Fridays that everyone dreaded—a popular pizza shop. They'd take about one hundred 100-lb sacks of flour, and we had to carry them over our shoulders, down into the basement of the place. You can imagine what we looked like on a sticky, humid southern Ontario summer day after

slugging 10,000 lb of flour off the trucks.

I couldn't wait to get my Class A—you couldn't get a tractor-trailer anywhere near that place.

For a period of a few months early in 1978, I'd arrive at the yard on Sunday afternoons to shunt trailers for the loaders. It was a tricky setup. Back to the right off the street, through a narrow gate, and then swing left into the dock. I was averaging 30 minutes or more at first, but soon had it down to a single sweeping motion. Practice makes perfect—or pretty good anyway.

**In all the years I've been driving, I've never seen a drive belt on an air compressor, but I guessed correctly.**

My Class A "training" consisted of driving while the regular drivers slept in the passenger seat—all except one, who I hold entirely responsible for everything I've done since. A patient chap named Jim Anderson talked me through most of the situations I encountered, providing a running commentary of what would be going through his mind if he were behind the wheel.

"Watch that car; he's going to come over. Set yourself up for this turn by keeping left, it's tight. Leave yourself an out, you're too close, pull to

the right and you'll have the shoulder in case something goes wrong."

I still talk to myself like that while I drive.

I guess by now guys like Andy Roberts are cringing. He's a driving school owner that would pooh-pooh my rather informal training. I

brakes, and 15 on truck driving theory. I did review my Air Brake Handbook, and aced that portion. I aced the road signs portion (duh?), but botched two questions on truck driving theory. ("Aha!" says Roberts. "See, a weakness in Park's training.")

I'd be lying if I said that I



never had a lesson in my life, and having learned my craft nearly 30 years ago when the roadways were considerably less crowded, I got away with it. Mind you, I had two years experience on straight trucks at the time, but I truly don't think that kind of learning experience would work today. There's just so much more at stake.

All of which brings me to the test I wrote today. Give or take a few questions, I wrote the same exam in 1978.

Here in the center of the universe, we have been talking about toughening the standards for Class A testing since 1997. I've written two Class A tests since then, and aside from a couple of air brake questions, nothing has changed.

The written Class A test consists of 55 questions: 20 on road signs, 20 on air

didn't like the fact the test was a cakewalk, but I really do wonder what today's exercise proved to the Ministry. I've had the licence for 29 years. I should know about road signs. Even the trucking theory questions were barely relevant. For example, "What should a driver look for when inspecting an air compressor drive belt? The choices were: fraying; cracks; cuts; all of the above.

In all the years I've been driving, I've never seen a drive belt on an air compressor, but I guessed correctly.

I wonder how long we'll have to wait until we see questions about what to do if an oh-seven engine goes into regen mode while parked in a field of dry grass? ▲

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

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**Closing the Gap** — Research on barriers to trucking's future

### Career Awareness Initiatives

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**Career Awareness** — Educating the public

### HR Tools and Programs

**National Occupational Standards** — For trucking in Canada

**Youth Employment Strategy (YES)** — Encouraging youth recruitment through subsidies

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**Professional Driver Recognition Program (PDRP)** — Professional development

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# Street Smarts

INSIDE:

- 27 Audit survival tips
- 29 Keep the F8TH, baby

MANAGING PEOPLE, TECHNOLOGY, BUSINESS, AND SAFETY

**DON'T GET FUELED AGAIN:** You might be paying too much diesel tax.



## Fun With Fuel Tax

**money** You might be paying too much of the stuff and here's how to get some back. *By Peter Carter*

**S**lower driving, aerodynamic trucks, idling limits, and keeping close tabs on all your assets are all great ways to minimize fuel costs.

But, asks Will Molson, CA., of Deloitte & Touche LLP, have you considered the possibility that you might cut fuel costs by keeping better track of all the fuel tax you pay and then recouping some of it from the government? That's the gist of what Molson, an accountant who specializes in the transportation industry, asked an audience at September's Annual Transportation Innovation and Costs Savings Conference at the Ontario Science Centre in Toronto.

"There's money being left on the table," he says, "and a thorough, systematic approach puts it back in your business where it belongs."

Plus, he says, this is particularly applicable if you do business in Quebec.

A major element of fuel cost is the "indirect" fuel taxes imposed by the federal and provincial governments. Provincial fuel levies are supposed to help pay the cost of roads and highways, while the federal excise tax was introduced in 1975 to reduce dependence on imported fuel.

According to Molson, not only has the rationale for these taxes changed, these levies have now been joined by "green" taxes. Ten years ago, the blue-ribbon Technical Committee on Business Taxation endorsed the idea that "Canada should consider converting the existing fuel excise taxes into broad-based environmental taxes..."

Molson suggests you talk to your

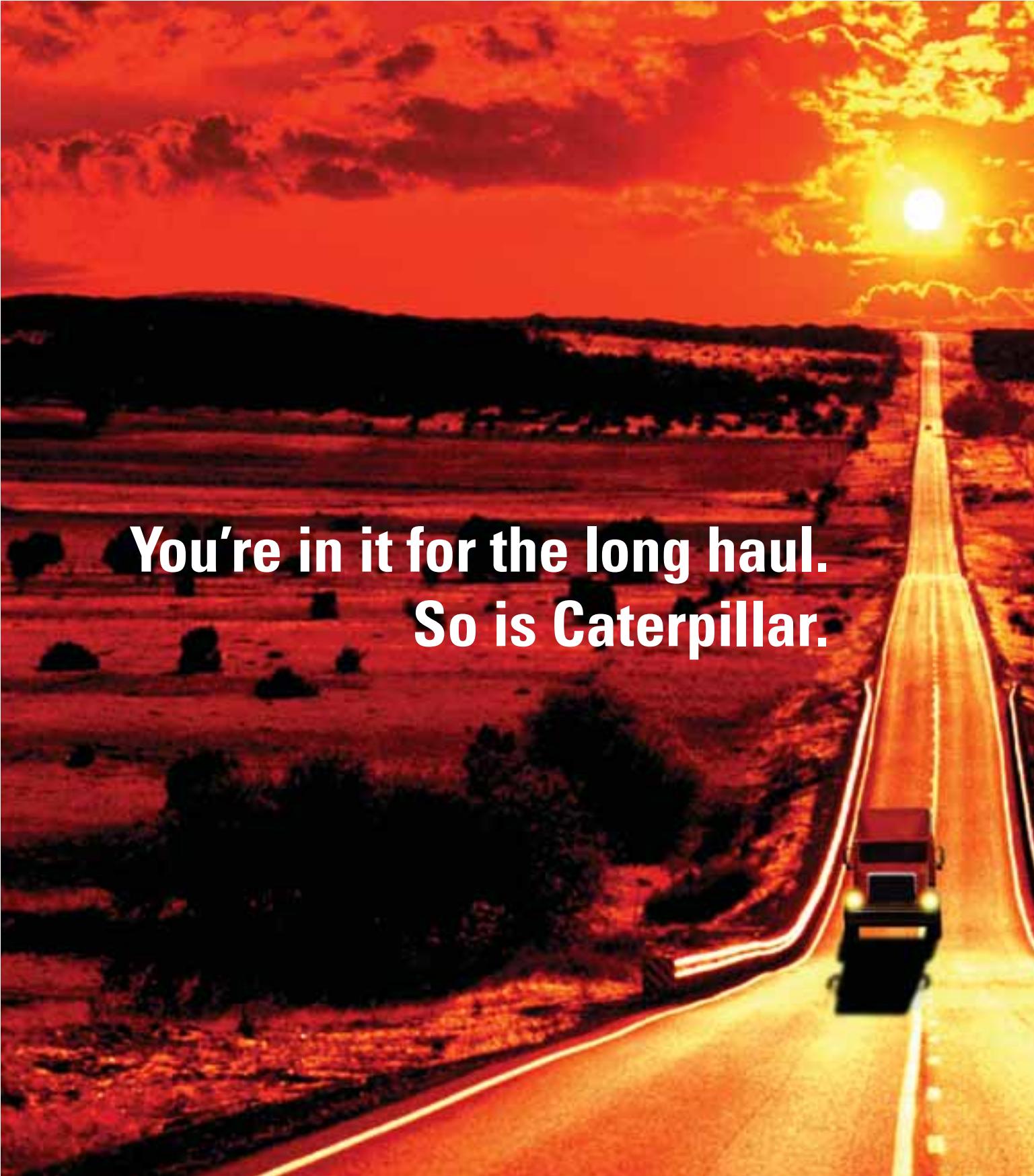
accountant about taking "a supply-chain management approach" and trace all your fuel from point-of-origin (i.e. purchase) to point-of-consumption or use.

Depending upon what the fuel is used for, the taxes you paid on it may be treated as a separate cost and refundable. Most often, he says, this will be a portion of the tax that's paid at the pump and included in the price, and that is eligible for refund.

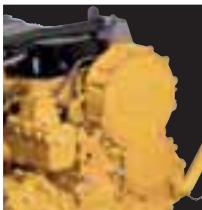
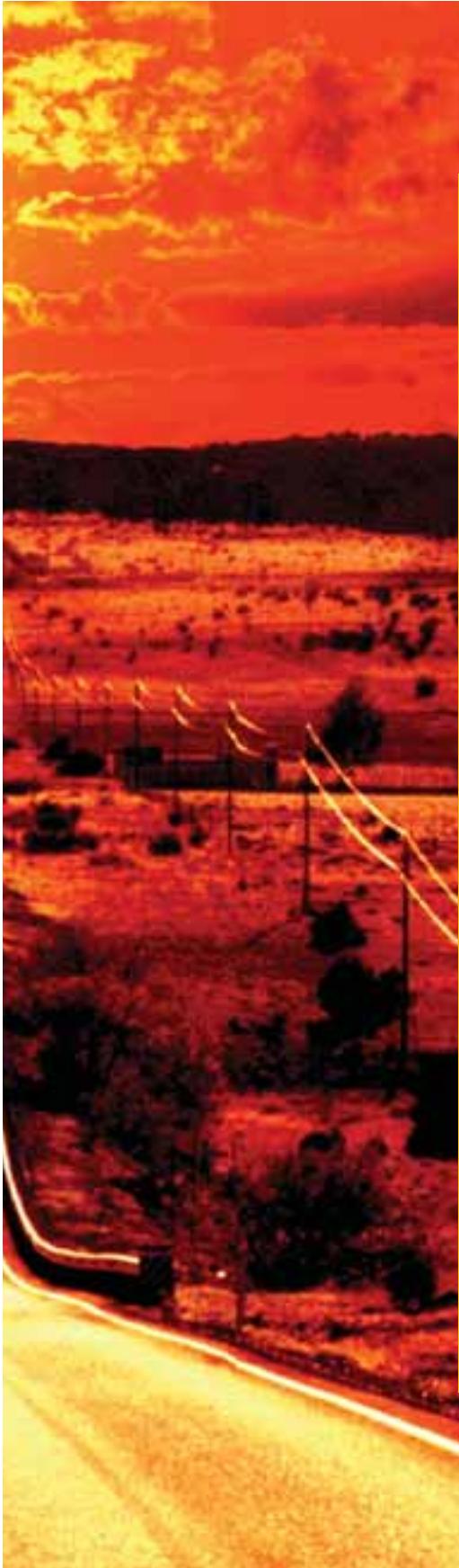
So where is it most likely to be found? Molson says one example of a recoverable tax is the levy paid on fuel used for heating or on colored fuel. "It's not always understood," he says, "that colored fuel still includes federal excise tax, which can be recovered when used for heating—and that now includes use in reefers as well as other applications in APUs, where the potential saving may be considered too small to manage, but should be evaluated."

Molson says, if you operate in Quebec your accountant will help you figure out if you're eligible to recover sales tax paid while there.

There's no downside to asking. ▲

A photograph of a long-haul truck driving on a highway at sunset. The sky is filled with warm, orange and yellow hues, and the road stretches into the distance. The truck is positioned on the right side of the road, moving away from the viewer.

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— Robert Long, CFO, USA Logistics Carriers

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# Under Promise; Over Deliver

**safety** *Surviving a facility audit, part III. By Brian Botham*

**T**he single biggest reason carriers flunk facility audits is maintenance. The law says you must have a written maintenance policy and you have to follow it. If you don't, you fail.

In this, the final article of my series on "Surviving a Facility Audit," I will tell you how to make sure that doesn't happen.

In anticipation of an audit, your best defence is to write a maintenance policy that you can live with. Otherwise, you'll find yourself exceeding your own guidelines and ultimately flunking the audit.

Say your policy states all your trucks get a PM every 25,000 km. I'm sure you do your best to ensure it's followed. But if trucks are regularly coming in late, take a hard look at your practices to see how to get them in on time. Maybe it's a matter of rewriting the policy, just so you don't keep breaking it.

A good maintenance policy will "under promise and over deliver." For example, maybe



## An auditor will want to see how you track your vehicle inspections.

your policy states a truck has to get a PM every 50,000. Good policy, but you don't have to let the trucks go that long between PMs. It's smart to have a built-in cushion, just for unforeseen circumstances.

The auditor will want to

see how you track your vehicle inspections and annuals. Do you use a computer program to remind you of PMs or inspections? And what sort of records do you have to show which items were inspected?

None of your vehicles can operate with an expired annual inspection. The auditor will want two years' worth of proof.

When the auditor chooses a sample of vehicles to inspect he will choose vehicles that have had defects found at roadside. This will ensure that all defects found at roadside were repaired.

Auditors will also want to see drivers' vehicle-inspection reports.

Far too often drivers will find a defect in the yard or terminal and have it repaired before departing, so in the driver's mind it never was a defect and does not get recorded on their vehicle-

inspection report. However, that repair generated a work order in the shop. The auditor will try to match work orders with VIR'S and when they can't a violation will occur. In other words repairs don't magically appear in maintenance files without someone first finding the defect.

Don't forget that this all applies to owner-operators, too, so they must be willing to share their maintenance records with you as well.

Finally, audits differ slightly province to province. For audit-survival tips, contact your provincial ministry of transport. I also recommend conducting mock audits.

Because if you fail the real item, you're looking at conditional or unsatisfactory ratings, thousands of dollars in fines or—worst-case scenario—the loss of your operating authority. ▲

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



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# Pray It Doesn't Happen To You

**right turn** *Why I have a lack of F8TH in government.* By Marco Beghetto

**T**here are occasions when errors are an inevitable part of the human condition. Other times however, they're a symptom of a bloated, redundant system.

Truckers who get pulled over by MTO inspectors at roadside can attest to both situations. Tire condition, for example, is a common irritant. Sure, a scale inspector can make an honest mistake in placing trucks out-of-service with tires that are actually within tolerance. But how often is that situation triggered by overzealousness—a government worker trying to meet some real or perceived quota, perhaps?

With that in mind, allow me a comment or three on some recent events.

You've probably already heard something about the so-called licence-plate controversies in Ontario. In one case, a Peterborough, Ont., man was denied the renewal of his vanity plates because the Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) deemed them to be too "religious."

The inscription (which Russell Henry has had on his plates for 20 years) apparently no longer "meet the ministry's current criteria since [the] configuration could be considered by some members of the public to connote religion," says the ministry.

So what was the offensive message the MTO all of a sudden finds unacceptable? GODSGR8? Um, No. JSUSSAVS? Guess again. Try this: HV F8TH—as in "have faith."

Faith in what, exactly? Well, presumably Henry is referring to God. But how does some clerk in the ministry come to that conclusion? For all that MTO staffer knows, Henry could be a die-hard (albeit misguided) Maple Leafs fan imploring Leaf Nation not to give up hope. And seeing the plates are 20 years old, that makes as much sense as anything else.

Days after that story erupted, the MTO made headlines again—this time for rejecting United Church Rev. Joanne Sorrell's personalized "REV JO" plates. Even more unbelievable

is the litany of quasi-justifications the MTO offered up for its decision. First, the ministry said the plates referenced speeding, like "REVving" an engine—geddit? Then, it cited the pro-Christianity thing again.

Finally, the government said the inscription could be confused with Rev—some sort of vodka-based cooler drink. I think they're still trying to untie the guy who twisted himself into knots coming up with that one. And these are the folks we're supposed to entrust a controversial decision like speed limiters to?

In fairness, Premier Dalton McGuinty himself reversed the decisions a week later, calling them "outright laughable." Good for him. But neither he nor the media will be around every time bureaucrats get drunk with authority.

Before McGuinty stepped in, ministry spokeswoman Emma Dhahak told a newspaper that the MTO review committee uses specific criteria to "ensure a plate doesn't imply, condone or appear to condone anything

that could relate to anything such as violence, religion, racism, alcohol or public officials."

I've spoken to Ms. Dhahak several times, and honestly, she's one of the most pleasant government PR around. But this is the kind of bureaucratic boilerplate that just makes me cringe, because I know it's imbedded in the system.

When the cameras and microphones are out of sight, the MTO doesn't often own up to mistakes. How many truckers have been placed out-of-service even after proving the inspector wrong at roadside?

Often, the only way to vindicate yourself is a trip to court. But the hassle and expense can be inconsequential at that point. Usually, you pay up front to have those tires changed—or you accept the licence plate the MTO computer spits out for you—and you get back on the road. Right? ▲

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



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## Communications

Can you afford not to consider investing in voice-over-internet technology? **BY PETER CARTER**

# CALL CONTR@L

**H**ere's *Today's Trucking's* Senior Editor Marco Beghetto's first brush with what many telecom experts are branding "the next big thing" in our industry. Doing some Christmas shopping, Beghetto placed an online order with Amazon.ca.

A few days after the order he realized that the item he selected wasn't exactly what he wanted. Intending to amend the purchase, he returned to the Amazon website looking for a phone number he could call to fix things.

While there was no number, he did see an icon that said "Contact us by phone." It requested his phone number, and seconds after he typed it in, his phone rang and an Amazon rep was on the other end, eager to help and Beghetto wound up buying the Christmas gift he was aiming for.

Similarly, if you phone the City of Mississauga municipal offices, at the point when most answering systems say "to leave a message, press one," Mississauga's says "if you'd like to leave an e-mail, press two."

Emails, phone calls and message machines are all part of one seamless unit. That's only one of the hallmarks of the Voice Over Internet Protocol, or VOIP IP.

And even though Beghetto first noticed VOIP calling Amazon, it's unlikely it was his first experience with the system. Corporations of all sizes have been replacing their networks with VOIP for years, but customers don't necessarily know it.

When it works right, it's invisible. And its proponents say, all it does is make you money.

Not only that, say Jeffrey Keller, a New-York-based consultant who specializes in communications systems for trucking companies, VOIP will also render your company more productive, economical and manageable.

"Traditionally," he told *Today's Trucking*, "the trucking industry is conservative in some areas of technology so at this point I know of no fleets who've embraced this completely."

"But it's only a matter of time," he adds. Truckers will jump aboard as soon as VOIP proves its ROI.

To understand what Keller's talking about, it's important to know what VOIP IP isn't.

You—or teenagers—are likely familiar with smaller personal voice-over-Internet systems such as SKYPE, the free downloadable program that allows you to use your PC as a phone to call other SKYPE subscribers for free or non-SKYPE for as little as little as \$.21 per minute. If you have a headset and microphone and webcam you can hook yourself up to the computer and connect cheaply all over the world. The operative word is cheaply. These free programs, while entertaining, are unreliable and extremely limited.

What Keller's talking about is your fleet's internal network, and, by extension, how it's linked to the outside world. VOIP IP bundles all your data into common conduits and unbundles it when necessary.

## Communications

VOIP is particularly suited, he says, to an LTL operation. "Because of the highly distributive nature of a typical LTL operation, with head office, dispatchers, break-bulk facilities and terminals, voice over IP can play a significant role in keeping all aspects of the facility networked."

He also recommends VOIP if you have or are developing a call center for your company.

But not only will your internal communications be more efficient, you can link your external phone calls to your VOIP system, thereby lowering your long-distance and cell-phone costs considerably.

Think of it this way. If you replace your current phone and computer networks with Voice Over Internet, when a customer calls in—or if one of your in-house staff sends information about a customer to another member of the staff—the call itself will be bundled with all the data you have on the customer.

The Voice Over Internet Protocol sends all that information together and unbundles it at the other end, so, for example, when your sales rep sends a message

about Joe's Cartage to operations, the information will contain everything you have on Joe's credit background, his history with your company as well as a contact list so your people won't have to go searching around for names and numbers and email addresses if they have any questions.

Furthermore, says Keller, VOIP disengages your company's phone system from outside providers and allows almost universal access to your staff, regardless of where they are.

If, say, you're on out-of-town business, you can just take the handset from your desk with you, plug it into the jack in your hotel room, and if somebody calls head office looking for you, you'll get the call just as if you were sitting at your desk.

"These systems can also track if you're actually at your desk, or not," he says. Voice messages can be automatically rerouted as emails. Or else, the system will "hunt" on behalf of in-calling customers. By that, Keller means, if a customer phones in and wants to talk to a specific person somebody in accounts receivable right at that instant but the A-R person is,

say, on holidays, the system will automatically re-route the call to the appropriate alternative person.

One trucking company that made the switch to VOIP is a tanker line out of Bluegrass, Iowa, called Gless Brothers Trucking. Steve Berger was president of the company until a few months ago. He has since retired but told *Today's Trucking* that he was responsible for implementing the VOIP system and that he got interested when his local telephone integrator, Midland Communications, introduced him to ShoreTel's system in a presentation.

Gless, which runs 110 tractors and 200 trailers and has 145 employees, saved money with its new system, but just as important, it let them have complete control over their communications. Says Berger: "Your computer terminal can be an extension [of your phone]."

He also says the VOIP system proved to be an attractive feature to the new firm that bought Gless from Berger earlier this year. "They tell me they like it," he says.

If you've ever tried growing your business in new locales, you'll know the headaches

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- Nemertes Research:  
[www.nemertes.com/in\\_the\\_news](http://www.nemertes.com/in_the_news)

### FOR VOIP EQUIPMENT

- Avaya: [www.avaya.com](http://www.avaya.com)

WANT MORE INFORMATION BEFORE SIGNING YOUR LIFE AWAY ON VOICE OVER INTERNET? HERE ARE SOME SITES THAT'LL HELP THE CAUSE:

#### ■ Cisco Systems: [www.cisco.com](http://www.cisco.com)

#### ■ Nortel: [www.nortel.com](http://www.nortel.com)

#### ■ Shoretel: [www.shoretel.com](http://www.shoretel.com)

### FOR CONSULTATION

- Keller Services:  
[www.kellersvs.com](http://www.kellersvs.com)
- Traxi Technologies:  
[www.traxitech.com](http://www.traxitech.com)

that come with integrating different phone systems. In one part of Alberta, for instance, you might have high-speed lines whereas in your east coast operation your offices might be limited to dial-up lines. Then there's the various speeds of data services. VOIP lets you consolidate them all, integrating voice, emails and data movement.

Keller says once your lines are integrated, your operational costs will plummet. Especially the costs associated with your IT department. For one thing, you won't have to call in a phone company guy every time you hire a new person or move offices. You

just pick up a phone and plug it into the jack.

Still, warns Keller, this is no Value-Village purchase.

Keller warns that upfront cost quotes might be higher than what you want to hear. It could be up to as much as \$1,000 per handset, depending on the number of users.

He also advises against buying bargain-basement systems.

"There are probably," he says, "thousands of different solutions out there in the couple-of-thousand-dollar range targeting companies with less than 20 handsets. But if you go that route, you'll probably end up

spending too little money and you'll get frustrated and scrap the whole idea and return to the traditional system."

At this point, he says, the fleets with over 50 handsets are the ones that can reap the most benefits of a VOIP system.

"For a company that might be spending \$150,000 for a new tractor, this is something that would hopefully be able to make your organization much more efficient as to how you use your people and your infrastructure.

In addition to lower cell-phone and long-distance costs, the real payback, Keller says, will come when your company simply runs more efficiently, with less communications-systems downtime and more productivity.

Finally, Keller says your investment in VOIP is definitely one area where you will want to have a provider, from a company such as Nortel or Cisco Systems, come to your firm and do an assessment of your needs and then customize your installation.

"They are at a price point now that makes them feasible," Keller says, "but you have to make informed decisions." ▲

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# In Gear

## INSIDE:

- 37 Anti-corrosion tips
- 38 Lockwood's Products

## EQUIPMENT NEWS, REVIEWS, AND MAINTENANCE TIPS



**SIZE MATTERS:** Over specing can lead to extra expense.

## Buying Big

### heavy haulers Specing tips for oversized haulers.

By Today's Trucking Staff

**H**auling loads above 110,000 Gross Combination Weight (GCW) pounds requires trucks that have been carefully spec'd. They must have the right gearing and power to pull the weight and they have to be durable. But if they are over-spec'd, they may end up costing the operator more in fuel mileage and maintenance.

The lowest-cost-per mile is a matter of striking the right balance between the job's requirements and how many on-highway miles the truck is expected to run, according to Brian Lindgren, director of vocational sales for Kenworth Truck Company in Kirkland, Wash.

One of the primary spec'ing considerations should be the truck's wheelbase—local length-and-weight regulations generally dictate the ideal length. "Each province has its own regulations, which may impact the number of axles needed and how they're spaced," Lindgren says.

"However, you don't want to make the truck's wheelbase any longer than necessary because it reduces maneuverability, which is critical for heavy haul tractors that need to negotiate crowded job sites."

Proper positioning of the fifth wheel is critical to ensure full use of the rated capacity of all axles, especially the front. "Front axles rated at 20,000 pounds are most common," says Lindgren. "But a 22,000-pound rating is available for extra-legal loads."

"At those kinds of ratings, wide-aspect front tires are needed not only to handle the load, but also to meet some provinces' tire-width requirements. The rule is typically 560 pounds per inch [10 kg per millimeter] of tire width. Mounting 445/65R22.5 tires on the front will be good for up to 19,625 pounds on the steer axle in most provinces, and higher in some areas."

Wider tires can come at a price. Steering geometry is restricted and turning circles

are limited. Lindgren recommends a dual-steering gear system but other manufacturers may install a single steering gear with an assist ram.

For heavy haulers, big horsepower is a given. Engines under 15 liters are rare and most are rated at 500 hp and 1,850 lb-ft of torque and higher. Cooling is a big consideration since today's new engines run hotter than the pre-2007 engine offerings.

"These trucks can spend extended periods pulling a heavy load up hills at slow speeds with little air circulation, so the radiator package is critical," Lindgren says. "And don't forget air filtration," says Lindgren. To keep that big engine breathing easy, Lindgren recommends dual, 15-in.cowl-mounted air cleaners. "Cowl-mounted air cleaners give the engine cooler air than an under-hood air cleaner, and the 15-inch duals have four times lower restriction than the typical single air cleaner."

The approach to spec'ing transmissions for heavy haulers is similar to that of power: the more, the better. In this case it's ratios. An 18-speed manual is typical, but in very heavy applications, a two-speed auxiliary transmission or two-speed rear

axle are options. In both cases, they double the number of available ratios, allowing improved startability and driveability. A two-speed auxiliary transmission will double the reduction, while a two-speed rear axle will increase the reduction by a third. "A two-speed axle works well up to about 190,000-pounds GCW, but above that I'd recommend an auxiliary transmission," Lindgren says.

The rear axle ratio choice will also affect startability, but choose it carefully to ensure a good balance between cruise speed and low gearing. Lindgren recommends a startability of 15-to-20 percent for most heavy-haul applications and suggests an operator wouldn't want to spec anything faster than a 4.11:1 ratio unless he's running a two-speed rear axle or an auxiliary transmission. Says Lindgren: "In extreme applications where they're hauling bridge decks or oilfield equipment, you may see ratios upwards of 10:1 or even 12:1."

For haulers running long distances at highway speeds, the ratio chosen should be as low as possible without undermining startability. Engine maker Caterpillar recommends gearing that will achieve 1,550-rpm engine speed at 65 mph. "As a rule of thumb, pick the rear axle ratio for efficiency on the highway, and get the startability you need from your transmission ratios," Lindgren suggests.

Durability is another issue to consider when spec'ing the rear axles. "The 46,000-pound axles with heavy wall housings are most common for heavy haul tractors," says Lindgren. "For extreme heavy haul applications, Kenworth offers planetary axles with capacities up to 150,000 pounds, and GCW capacities well over 300,000 pounds."

## SEEING THINGS

**S**ince heavy haulers are often dealing with large, oversize loads, try to specify as much glass area as possible and plenty of mirrors. Four-way adjustable, cowl-mounted mirrors can be complemented with convex mirrors. Cowl mounting sometimes helps because the mirrors are not subjected to countless door slams and stay in adjustment longer.

Brian Lindgren suggests picking low-replacement-cost windshields, when available. "Most vocational fleets replace at least one windshield side per truck annually. Two-piece flat-glass windshields with roped-in seals can be replaced in 30 minutes for less than a hundred dollars, which can save thousands of dollars over the truck's life," he says.

Many heavy haulers want a sleeper to enable them to run farther without risking logbook hours violations, but want a more cost-effective solution than paying for the extra length of a big sleeper.

For those heavy haulers that do not need a sleeper, but are still looking for a little extra room in the cab, an extended day cab might be the right choice.



Traction needs will also dictate axle choices. "We recommend wheel differential locks or a cross lock on at least one drive axle," says Lindgren.

Lindgren says heavy haulers needing pusher axles to comply with local weight and axle requirements can choose from steerable and non-steerable types. A 20,000-lb steerable is most common, but a 22,000-lb non-steerable is also available if needed. Operators who run non-steerable pushers often have to lift the pusher to negotiate corners or they end up scrubbing the tires. Steerable pushers offer the benefit of improved tire life because the axle will steer through the corner rather than scrubbing the tires. This also reduces the stress on the truck in these situations.

"The most versatile configuration is a 22,000-pound steers axle, 46,000-pound tandem drive axles, and a 20,000-pound steerable pusher," notes Lindgren, except

where pushers are not allowed.

Fleets running lift axles may want to consider upgrading their braking system. "A four-channel antilock brake system is standard," says Lindgren. "We'd recommend a six-channel system for anyone running lift axles because it will help prevent flat-spotting of the lift-axle tires."

To haul heavy loads, frame rails typically need to be reinforced. The amount of reinforcement will depend on the truck's wheelbase and axle capacities. "An inserted three-eighths-inch frame is usually required for most heavy haul tractors, but you can get two inserts," Lindgren says. "The longer the wheelbase and the more axle capacity you add, the more rigid the frame needs to be."

Finally, rear suspensions on heavy haulers have historically been mechanical types, but air suspensions are rapidly gaining popularity. ▲

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# Rust Resistors

**anti-corrosion** *Tips for battling that truck-eating monster known as corrosion.* By Deborah Lockridge

If it's steel—even mild steel—it's vulnerable. Frame rails, cross members, suspension components, air tanks, fuel tanks, battery boxes, brackets, brake shoes, electrical systems, air-conditioning condensers, radiators, metal coolant tubing, steel wheels, inside the floor of the cab—they're all targets.

That's why the Technology and Maintenance Council (TMC) of the American Trucking Associations (ATA) has set up a Corrosion Control Action Committee. Job one: Recommend practices for equipment builders as well as to prevent corrosion problems.

At issue are the new liquid de-icers that have become a common weapon in highway-maintenance crews' battle against snow and ice. While these chemicals can prevent ice from forming on the road and melt snow, they also turn into a fine mist and get everywhere. Any exposed material or exposed connection—the whole truck and trailer gets coated in this fine mist, and it seeps into tiny little crevices and cracks and starts to do its damage.

Mac Whittemore, regional manager with ArvinMeritor, explained the situation at TMC's corrosion committee presentation. "Because this spray is finer, it starts penetrating into areas where you wouldn't necessarily think it can get to—underneath the paint, inside the brakes."

Also these chemicals are hygroscopic, which means they will absorb moisture from any source.

This means that even when the weather and your equipment are dry, the chemicals continue to attract moisture.

There are an increasing number of options you can spec when buying a truck to help prevent corrosion.

The electrical system is one area that is particularly vulnerable, and with increasing use of electronics on vehicles, it's more critical than ever to keep corrosion at bay. As the electrical system is powered and

unpowered, and wires heat up, they expand. When they contract, they draw in the air around them—and contaminants and moisture.

Fleets should look for products that are specifically built to resist corrosion. That can apply to everything from plugs and sockets to gladhands.

Little details can make a big difference. For instance, a seven-way connector's design inherently lets in moisture. Phillips Industries, for one, now offers a foam socket insert that slides over the pins in the seven-way connector socket into the base to seal out moisture.

You can also purchase dust flaps to cover glad-hands, protecting them even further.

Any time a tractor or trailer is repaired, use a heat shrink terminal that seals out moisture. The old nylon and PVC terminals are unsealed, easily allowing contaminants inside.

When it comes to maintenance, washing vehicles to try to keep the chemicals off the metal is important.

There is no clear answer to the question of what washing strategies are best.

Pressure washing may only push the chemical mixture further into tiny cracks and crevices. In addition, the new chlorides tend to stick to surfaces more than traditional road salt, and may need physical action to get them off rather than just spraying them with wash water. Keep in mind that more cleaning liquid is not necessarily better—in some cases, an over-concentration of washing compound may actually attack some of the plastics that are there to provide corrosion resistance.

A new area where fleets are reporting corrosion, according to several people at the TMC fall meeting, is the air system—the control ports of air brake valves are developing corrosion.

That means it's more critical than ever to maintain the air driers and keep water drained from the system. ▲

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**Roll Stability Support trailer system**

# ROLL STABILITY IMPROVED

MERITOR WABCO SIMPLIFIES SYSTEM, ADDS FEATURES

**M**eritor WABCO Vehicle Control Systems has introduced its new Roll Stability Support trailer system, RSSplus, designed specifically for the North American trailer industry. It's the third generation of Roll Stability, the first two having been adaptations of the European product.

RSSplus will be available late in the first quarter of 2008 through trailer manufacturers and as an aftermarket retrofit through trailer dealers. Retrofit is quite easy, the company says, taking just two hours or so to accomplish if the trailer already has ABS wheel sensors installed. A full retrofit program, accessible to

owner-operators as easily as to fleets, will be in place by next summer.

The new system builds upon the company's current RSS offering which incorporates ABS functionality with other safety features such as improved roll mitigation. The new system retains the company's side-by-side wheel end control to provide stability management and help prevent tire flat-spotting and abnormal tire wear. As well, the system offers simplified installation and advanced 'intelligent' communication capabilities through on-board data recording with event broadcasting capability via Power Line Carrier (PLC) communications or telematic devices.

Jon Morrison, president and general manager of the Meritor WABCO joint venture first established in 1989, says the company has the largest population of trailer stability systems in place today. RSS was first introduced in 2003, and there are now over 4,000 of the company's units in the field.

RSSplus is a two-modulator (2M) roll mitigation system that integrates several features, including ABS and PLC functionality, reducing the number of individual components. The new system is compatible for use with both spring and air suspensions. A new cable connector system allows for more positive connections and cable stabilization to prevent damage and mitigate potential problems with connector corrosion.

Standardized SAE diagnostics make troubleshooting much simpler and are now a conventional feature of the system. The diagnostics have also been integrated into the company's Toolbox PC software. System diagnostics can also be performed using standard blink codes which eliminate the cost of additional diagnostic tools.

By adding PLC capability to the RSSplus electronic control unit, the system can communicate between the tractor and trailer utilizing a PLC display. Additional messaging can also be accommodated via telematic devices. Events that can be communicated include suspension weight, tire pressure, wheel-end temperatures or other customer-specific data. On-board data recording within the ECU allows for the retention of vehicle performance data in the ECU memory to enhance fleet management.

Configurations of the new system include: 2S/2M1, 4S/2M and 4S/2M + 1 (for most 4S/3M requirements). Applications include tandem and tri-axle vans, reefer units, flat beds, tankers, hazardous material haulers, B-trains (though not A-trains) and high-center-of-gravity

trailers. The new system is compatible with current tractor stability technologies as well as future technologies. RSSplus is also backward-compatible with existing trailers in the marketplace making it an easy retrofit. It works independently of the tractor, needing only a power supply from up front.

While the system's price is controlled by OEMs, Morrison expects it to cost end users \$700 to \$900, but that includes the ABS on which it's based. That's about a \$300 reduction. Retrofit won't be much more than that, topping out at an estimated \$1,500.

*See your trailer dealer or visit [www.arvinmeritor.com](http://www.arvinmeritor.com) and [www.wabco-auto.com](http://www.wabco-auto.com).*

### LIGHTWEIGHT FLATBED

UTILITY'S NEW, STRONGER FLATBED

The 4000A flatbed is the latest offering from **Utility Trailer Manufacturing**.

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**Utility Trailer  
4000A flatbed**

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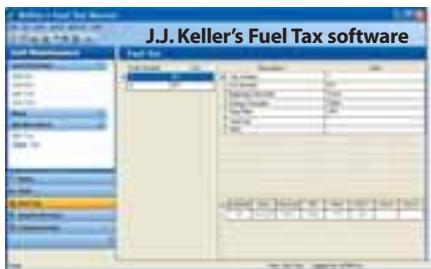
It uses the one-piece plasma-cut main beam webs and 80,000-lb frame rating of the 2000A, but adds the increased strength of a newly designed hat-shaped main beam top flange made of 80,000-psi, high-tensile steel. The 4000A also features the well proven Hendrickson narrow hanger AANT 23k spread air-ride suspension. Equally important, says Utility, the main beams are contoured at the rear for uniform axle loading. Finally, the 4000A is the next generation of light weight flatbeds designed and tested on Utility's own real-world test track to ensure reliability.

*See [utilitytrailer.com](http://utilitytrailer.com).*

### FUEL-TAX SOFTWARE

J.J. KELLER INTRODUCES NEW VERSION

J.J. Keller's updated Fuel Tax Master software helps carriers report accurate fuel tax information. It generates IFTA, bulk fuel, permit listings and mileage



reports. The software also allows users to enter, monitor and audit drivers' trip data; set their own reporting options, data verification and fuel settings; track and report on non-taxable reefer fuel purchases as well as overall fuel expenses; and print a wide variety of detailed reports in the latest formats: IFTA, state mileage reports, IRP and Schedule A.

Users of the traditional CD-ROM version of the software can choose to subscribe to an update service that

allows them to download current state tax rates to meet filing deadlines.

The new version has also been completely redesigned to work with Windows 2000 and XP operating systems. Users can now access vehicle and fuel info using on-screen tabs and links.

The software can be integrated with mileage databases, such as J.J. Keller's KellerMiles, as well as the latest version of the company's Maintenance Manager software (both programs available separately).

*A free tour of the updated version of Fuel Tax Master is available at [www.jjkeller.com/ftm3](http://www.jjkeller.com/ftm3).*

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VICTORIA	112.4	0.7	84.5
PRINCE GEORGE	116.2	3.5	90.6
KAMLOOPS	116.1	1.0	90.5
KELOWNA	118.6	1.3	92.9
FORT ST. JOHN	118.9		93.2
YELLOWKNIFE	123.0	2.0	102.9
CALGARY *	112.8	0.9	93.4
RED DEER	111.6	0.5	92.3
EDMONTON	111.4	0.5	92.1
LETHBRIDGE	110.9	-1.0	91.6
LLOYDMINSTER	114.9		95.4
REGINA *	116.4	0.3	90.8
SASKATOON	116.7	0.6	91.1
PRINCE ALBERT	114.9		89.4
WINNIPEG *	114.3	0.8	92.3
BRANDON	106.9	-5.0	85.3
TORONTO *	108.9	2.8	84.4
OTTAWA	107.6	1.7	83.2
KINGSTON	103.2	-5.0	79.1
PETERBOROUGH	108.4	2.5	84.0
WINDSOR	104.1	0.2	79.9
LONDON	105.6	1.3	81.3
SUDBURY	108.9	1.5	84.4
SAULT STE MARIE	106.9		82.5
THUNDER BAY	113.9	-1.7	89.2
NORTH BAY	106.9	-1.0	82.5
TIMMINS	111.2		86.6
HAMILTON	108.1	1.5	83.6
ST. CATHARINES	103.8	0.7	79.6
MONTRÉAL *	118.7	2.5	84.0
QUÉBEC	119.7	-0.2	84.9
SHERBROOKE	120.9	4.0	85.9
GASPÉ	119.4	2.5	84.6
CHICOUTIMI	118.1	1.7	83.4
RIMOUSKI	119.9	3.0	83.4
TROIS RIVIÈRES	120.9	4.3	83.4
DRUMMONDVILLE	116.9	2.0	83.4
VAL D'OR	119.9	3.0	83.4
SAINT JOHN *	123.3	2.9	87.3
FREDERICTON	122.5	2.6	86.5
MONCTON	123.6	3.3	87.5
BATHURST	121.4	3.6	85.6
EDMUNDSTON	125.0	4.0	88.7
MIRAMICHI	125.0	4.0	88.7
CAMPBELLTON	121.9	4.0	86.0
SUSSEX	123.7	4.8	87.6
WOODSTOCK	125.9	3.0	89.5
HALIFAX *	117.2	-0.3	83.4
SYDNEY	120.8	-0.1	86.6
YARMOUTH	119.7		85.6
TRURO	118.2	-0.1	84.2
KENTVILLE	116.1		82.5
NEW GLASGOW	119.7		85.6
CHARLOTTETOWN *	116.3	3.1	85.5
ST. JOHNS *	126.4	5.8	90.4
GANDER	125.9	5.5	89.9
LABRADOR CITY	133.8	5.5	96.9
CORNER BROOK	125.1	5.5	89.2
<b>CANADA AVERAGE (V)</b>	<b>114.0</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>87.2</b>

V-Volume Weighted

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

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

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# DAIMLER AIMS FOR ZERO-EMISSIONS TRUCK

**D**AIMLER TRUCKS recently launched its 'Shaping Future Transportation' initiative at a press conference in the spectacular Mercedes-Benz Museum in Stuttgart, Germany. Dr. Wolfgang Warnecke, global manager of automotive fuels development for Royal Dutch Shell, opened the affair.

"Transportation continues to be the preserve of oil," he said, adding that oil supply and use will peak by about 2050. Biofuels are the only viable non-fossil-fuel option in the short term, he added, but "not all biofuels are created equal." First-generation biofuels like ethanol and its variations have limited usefulness, Warnecke said, while second-generation fuels like BTL that use whole plants and such waste as wood chips are more promising. The key, he said, as we heard several weeks earlier from Volvo trucks chief Leif Johansson, will be having standards that guarantee users fuel of the right quality.

"The cost and economics of operating on alternative fuels will be a major challenge," Warnecke said. "We must find solutions that are ultimately marketable to the commercial vehicle industry."

Andreas Renschler, head of Daimler Trucks, claimed that with around 1,500 Orion buses, more than 100 Freightliner vehicles, and 200 light trucks and buses by Fuso, Daimler is the world leader in hybrid-drive commercial vehicles.

He went on to say that the global commercial vehicle market will grow by 50 percent over the next 10 years, making the demand for oil—and alternatives—a crucial issue. Daimler is hard at finding solutions, he said, redoubling its efforts especially in the hybrid area.

"Our long-term goal is to make the vision of the zero-emissions commercial vehicle a reality," he said. "We believe that two factors will play key roles in turning that vision into reality. The first is the achievement of clean combustion through the use of alternative fuels, including everything from natural gas to biodiesel and hydrogen. Secondly, such combustion must be made efficient with the help of modern drive system technologies like BlueTec diesel technology [that's selective catalytic reduction], hybrid drives, and fuel cells."

Renschler announced that Freightliner will build 1,500 M2 hybrid diesel/electric trucks over the next three years and will also produce a hybrid Thomas Built school bus. The M2's hybrid drivetrain is the one developed by Eaton and also used in trucks from several other manufacturers.

Daimler is also investigating alternative fuels. The most promising fuels from renewable resources, the

company says, are vegetable oil-derived hydrated fuels (HVOs). Later, they'll be joined by second-generation biodiesel fuels known as BTL (biomass to liquid). These synthetic fuels made of straw and waste wood are carbon-dioxide neutral, emit 50-percent percent fewer particulates than diesel, and contain no sulfur. Happily, they can be used in today's diesels with no problem, Renschler said.

Beyond that we'll see a biofuel enriched with hydrogen, called NExBTL. Renschler said it has energy properties much like diesel. Daimler has launched a three-year test of this fuel in co-operation with courier company DHL, the Stuttgart public transport authority, and the OMV oil company.



**LOFTY AMBITIONS:** This Freightliner M2 hybrid utility truck was on display at the Mercedes-Benz Museum in Stuttgart, Germany.



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## IN-CAB TRAINING

IT'S A-COMING PEOPLENET OPTION

**PeopleNet** has partnered with Instructional Technologies, Inc. (ITI) to bring interactive driver training technology to PeopleNet customers via the new BLU platform. It will be available some time in 2008. In practice, at-risk driver actions will be identified by data that's being constantly collected, and then a remedial lesson will be immediately offered in the cab.

"This new capability will revolutionize safety and risk management for our entire industry," says E. Bruce Weiss, executive vice president of ITI.

His company is a risk-management specialist that applies technology developed in advanced pilot training to the trucking industry. Its 'Pro-Tread' and 'Tread-' programs currently provide interactive computer-based and online driver training to some 170 fleets in the U.S. and Canada. These programs will be viewable on the BLU in-cab display, which represents a new way for drivers to interact with onboard systems.

Pro-Tread will provide pre-emptive, targeted, in-cab driver training in response to real-time performance data collected from trucks on the road. PeopleNet customers can already use this data with the PerformX application to monitor driver behavior and the health of a truck's engine, drivetrain and other operational systems. Driver-related performance data can include hard braking, speeding, hours of service, tailgating, excessive G-forces, and other recorded events.

PeopleNet says Pro-Tread uses "intelligent algorithms" and considers all reported events in detail and in context.



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It then makes smart training recommendations that drivers are far more likely to appreciate than resent, the company claims, which results in enhanced driving remediation. Critical training does not have to wait for drivers to arrive at company locations or to seek Internet connections. Drivers can fulfill training requirements in the cab at their convenience during non-driving hours or

while waiting for loads. PeopleNet's wireless network enables transmission of lesson-completion data to the private database which ITI provides to each client fleet for documentation of training.

PeopleNet's BLU onboard platform provides a new interface for drivers using a 7-in. full-color display.

See [www.instructiontech.net](http://www.instructiontech.net) and [peoplenetonline.com](http://peoplenetonline.com). ▲



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By Peter Carter

# Wanna Buy Some Real Estate in Florida? No. Really.

**N**ame a classic book; say, "A Tale of Two Cities" or "Tarzan." Or anything by Shakespeare. Chances are, I haven't read it. I've seen lots of movies and in high school made great use of Coles Notes for the books we were forced to study. And does anyone besides me remember Classic Comics? As far as I was concerned, those full-color illustrated versions of the great works of literature told me everything I needed to know.

That's why, to this day, I'm amazed when I encounter anyone reading the classics for fun. Which is what this guy I met in October when I was on my way to the American Trucking Associations (ATA) conference in Orlando was doing.

In between chores, he was going through "Robinson Crusoe".

When I asked him about the book, he said most people think it's just an adventure story about some guy stuck on an island and his man Friday but in fact Robinson Crusoe deals with important themes like Christianity and old-fashioned values such as right and wrong.

As we talked, he expertly chauffeured me from the Orlando airport to the conference center.

Did I mention that this friendly knowledgeable chap was a cab driver?

Not only was he a talker, he'd been to Toronto and had walked one day from the Rogers SkyDome downtown to the posh neighborhood of Forest Hill. Finally—and I've been itching to tell somebody this last part—the taxi driver is actually married to former Maple Leaf Tie Dom's first cousin. "I don't know if that's a good or bad thing," he added.

All I know is that I suddenly became one cab-ride and a handshake away from Belinda. But I digress.

Halfway through the trip, the driver asserted that he wasn't going to be a cabbie for long. It was just a stopgap position. Only a year earlier, he was making oodles of dough at his regular job—selling real estate.

Since last summer's sub-prime mortgage crunch, his business had gone belly up so he had to find another way to support the family.

He vowed he'd be back in the real-estate game by the middle of this year.

You'd have liked this guy. Independent. Funny. Not about to be discouraged by some temporary economic circumstances. I wish we had more time to talk.

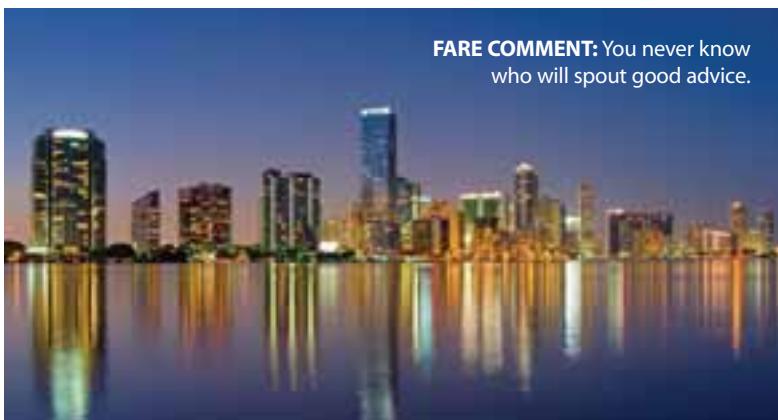
The following two days I traipsed around the ATA, where the

best American minds in this business gathered to make sense of their not-so-great times. Tonnage is off; some of the big companies are making staff cuts; the news is not good.

Heavy on everyone's mind sat the question: "What's going to happen in '08?"

One of the many presentations starred a British gentleman named Nigel Gault, whose terrific accent sort of advertised his Harvard PhD in economics.

Gault's one of the chief analysts with the New York consulting firm Global Insights Inc.



**FARE COMMENT:** You never know who will spout good advice.

He told the audience the same thing Mr. Taxi Driver told me. There may never be a better time than right now to buy Florida real estate.

In fact, Gault said, if you really want a deal you should wait a couple of months because he expected the land values to sink even further. (My trip to Orlando was in late October) But then they'll start going up again, he said.

Florida was one of the areas hardest hit by the mortgage crunch and although it officially only affected less than seven percent of the economy as a whole, when housing starts suffer, everybody does time.

As I listened to Dr. Gault, I thought. "That taxi driver was like the Coles Notes version of this speech. And a lot more entertaining."

Two things I learned. First, now's a darn good time to invest in vacation property in Canada's 11th province; a.k.a., Florida, and second, it's always a good idea to listen to what your drivers have to say. ▲

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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