

FOUNDING FATHER:

"It's easier to keep old customers than get new ones," PG. 23

First Truck
Centre
Founder
Pat Ozirny



May 2011

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Today's Trucking

The Business Magazine of Canada's Trucking Industry

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YOUR FIRST LOOK AT THE
BRAND-NEW CT660

PAGE
19

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:



Fuel-pricing predictions

PAGE
26

MARKETPLACE
CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING SECTION

PAGE
44

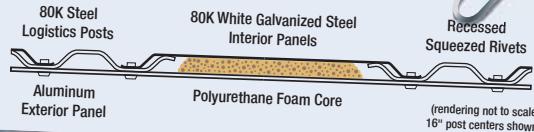
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47

ON A TARE: Freightliner, among others, unveils weight-shedding iron.



REG & HIS RIG: Meet the Highway Star of the year for 2011



FUEL FOLLIES:
26 Have surcharges had their day?

NEWS & NOTES

8 DISPATCHES

ARE OEMS SAYING
"SO LONG" TO LONG HAUL?



9 Daimler: Think locally, dominate globally

11 Speed limiters:
Tested but good

11 Canadians made
me do it: Hebe

11 Trucking events to pencil in

13 Compliance news

14 Tsunami's a-comin'

14 Wanted: Tough-truckers for TV

15 Who's where now?

15 A ferry story about trucks

16 Sited on
www.todaystrucking.com

17 Truck sales statistics

FEATURES

19 COVER

CAMION APPEARANCES

ExpoCam: Where Canadians got a glimpse of CAT's sleek new truck and a look at how the industry's faring in general.

— BY PETER CARTER

23 FOUNDERS

TRIDEM COWBOY

What you can learn from First Truck Centre's Pat Ozirny, the fleet-of-foot dealer who turned a single-man operation into a tri-provincial behemoth. First in a series of profiles of the people who built your industry. — BY PETER CARTER

26 FUEL

DIESEL'S WILD

Fuel prices are the wildcard that could stunt the recovery for some carriers—and push others over the finish line.

— BY MARCO BEGHETTO

30 INNOVATION

GOING FORWARD...

Want to know where trucking's headed? Think—among other things—lighter materials, air discs and ammonia after-treatment.

— BY ROLF LOCKWOOD

OPINIONS

5 LETTERS

7 ROLF LOCKWOOD

54 PETER CARTER

SERVICE DEPT

21 QUEBEC DRIVERS ORGANIZE

24 THE PERFECT DRIVER

35 18 WHEELS OF FORTUNE

There are many ways to improve tire life, and if you've the resources, why settle for less? — By Jim Park

40 SPEC'ING REEFERS

47 LOCKWOOD'S PRODUCT WATCH

IDEAS THAT CLICK | PAGE 16
Some recent star hits on...

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NEWCOM BUSINESS MEDIA INC.

451 Attwell Dr., Toronto, ON M9W 5C4
416/614-2200 • 416/614-8861 (fax)

VICE PRESIDENT, EDITORIAL

Rolf Lockwood, MCILT
rolf@newcom.ca • 416/614-5825

EDITOR
Peter Carter

peter@newcom.ca • 416/614-5828

SENIOR EDITOR

Marco Beghetto

marco@newcom.ca • 416/614-5821

CONTRIBUTORS: **Jim Park, Allan Janssen, Steve Bouchard, Deborah Lockridge**

ART DIRECTOR
Tim Norton

production@todaystrucking.com • 416/614-5810

PUBLISHER

Joe Glionna

joe@newcom.ca • 416/614-5805

SENIOR ACCOUNT MANAGER

Jack Meli

jack@newcom.ca • 416/614-5827

QUÉBEC SALES MANAGER

Denis Arsenal

denis@newcom.ca • 514/938-0639

PRESIDENT

Jim Glionna

CONTROLLER
Anthony Evangelista

PRODUCTION MANAGER

Lilianna Kantor

lily@newcom.ca • 416/614-5815

DIRECTOR OF CIRCULATION
Pat Glionna

CIRCULATION INFORMATION

P.O. Box 370, Station B, Toronto, ON M9W 5L3
416/614-2200 • 416/614-8861 (fax)

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Rules of the hard-rodé

Anyone pushing for the mandatory use of EOBRs for all carriers must think truck drivers are just plain stupid.

Does anybody really believe EOBRs will give us more flexibility?

EOBRs might make sense for carriers with poor records, but they shouldn't be forced on the entire industry. For law-abiding small and medium-sized carriers, EOBRs will result in increased costs, lost profits, and less flexibility.

As a small fleet owner who drives a truck every day, I am—along with my peers in the industry—getting very tired of new regulations appearing every time we round a corner. I'm talking about speed limiters, EOBRs, sleep-apnea testing, cell-phone and CB bans.

Keep it up! See how many truly classy and professional drivers you have left in the industry. Pretty soon it won't be many. We will all go operate pay loaders in a pit or work in a shop somewhere.

And the industry will be left to fill our jobs with more mirror-fogging, steering-wheel holders. Then see what your highway safety stats look like.

Dave Gunson,
Gunson Transport Ltd.,
Tara, Ont.

Decisions on ice

If I am correct in my understanding, snowplows and salt trucks are mobilized on highways after a certain amount of snow has fallen, measured in centimeters. This method does not account for the rate of snowfall or the type and nature of the snow and the effect that these variations have on the surface of pavement.

I drive between Toronto and Cambridge, Ont., on Highway 401 between my home and work. This is the busiest highway in North America and on most days all lanes are shared between commercial vehicles and folks like me getting to work.

In late winter, we had a nasty snowfall that started as wet snow followed by dry snow. Although total accumulation was minimal, the snowfall was followed by a temperature drop. This was the recipe for the perfect storm, on land.

Nature dictated that the surface of the road turn to ice.

Predictable results ensued.

The resultant mayhem could have been lessened if plows and salt trucks were set loose upon the early-falling wet snow.

I don't know who makes this decision, but if the dictate is to call out the plows



only after an arbitrary accumulation of snowfall, then this has to change.

I hope other readers of your publication agree. We are all stakeholders in the transportation system and should have a voice, too.

Commercial and private users of our highways should in unison call for better management, maintenance, and care of our highways. I also think there should be an agreement between the insurance companies and the police who have to deal with—each in a hard way—the consequences of the present conditions.

John O'Callaghan,
Toronto



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By Rolf Lockwood



Emission Impossible

Despite this scribe's best efforts, Ottawa's ongoing biodiesel shenanigans prove they don't know spit from canola.

Sadly, I have proof that Ottawa doesn't listen to me. Shocking as that may sound, it's actually true. Rocks me to the core.

Mind you, the feds—in whichever political guise they happen to appear—never listen to anybody, especially not to those of us who ply the trucking trade in some way.

Election to public office changes a politician's basic chemistry, you see, might even alter his very DNA. It could well be that before a newbie steps into the House of Commons post-election, he's first led to some secret sci-fi sort of laboratory in Nepean, strapped to a stainless-steel table with a little moat running around its perimeter, and then drained of any wish to serve the people. That wish, present in one case out of about 105, sincere in many fewer, is replaced by a demonic dual devotion to staying in Ottawa and to maintaining the party line, come what may.

And the magical thing of it is, the poor darlings don't know they've been remanufactured. For years afterwards, call it permanently, they insist that our collective welfare was, is, and forever shall be their only concern. Codswallop.

Anyway, and we're getting to the point of today's sermon, Ottawa is pushing us toward crop-based biofuels whether we like it or not. I don't know why, because I've been warning them about this folly for years now. And latterly, so has the Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA).

The CTA says "...the Government of Canada needs to re-think its approach to a national biodiesel mandate set to kick in on July 1st of this year and introduce measures to protect consumers of biodiesel from higher fuel prices, a loss of fuel efficiency, and engine and warranty problems from sub-standard fuel."

Earlier this year Minister of the Environment Peter Kent and Minister of Agriculture Gerry Ritz announced a mandate that will eventually require that all diesel fuel sold for on-road use over a calendar year contain an average of two percent biofuel content.

But hold on, just a couple of weeks after that announcement, Environment Canada published a Regulatory Impact Analysis Statement (RIAS) on the mandate that suggests this won't actually do us much good at all. We'll be spending a lot of dough but achieving very little in terms of GHG emissions. Ottawa's own analysis says that the cost of forcing biodiesel down our throats outweighs the benefits by \$2.4 billion over 25 years. The emissions gain is tiny, the feds admit in this study.

The mandate means fuel will cost you more. While a two-percent blend is minimal, biodiesel's energy content is lower than conventional diesel fuel, so you'll be paying a bit more for a bit less. Doesn't work for me.

The CTA notes that American biodiesel presently costs from one to eight cents more per liter. It calculates that the annual increase in fuel costs will be "in the range of \$2,100-\$6,000 per truck depending where biodiesel price increases fall in Canada."

While a two percent blend is minimal, biodiesel's energy content is lower than conventional diesel fuel, so you'll be paying a bit more for a bit less.

will benefit, and maybe twice—since most of Canada's biodiesel seems likely to come from canola, trucks will haul it from field to plant and then from plant to retail site.

I've long been worried that those plants might not all produce fuel of the highest quality, and there are presently no enforceable standards to demand it. The American biofuel industry admits that this has been a problem, while insisting that it's been solved. It hasn't.

The CTA shares this concern, noting "...its members' long-standing concerns over the lack of quality standards for biofuel or the impact that biofuel at certain blend levels allowed under the regulation could have on the operability and durability of their engines and therefore the warranties covering those engines."

All in all, I'm right to worry, and I've only scratched the surface of my concerns. There's just no evidence suggesting that crop-based biodiesel is any kind of panacea for all our energy-supply woes. And certainly not a sensible means of trying to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. But you go tell that to Ottawa. They won't listen to me. ▲

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

Dispatcher

BY MARCO BEGHETTO

Downshifting

Smaller, lighter “regional” truck operations could be the new normal in years to come. And manufacturers have taken notice.

Trucking is on a diet. It only took a decade or so, but the buzz from the annual spring truck show circuit has finally shifted away from “emissions compliance” to another talking point.

Also borne out of impending government regulation, truck fuel efficiency is undoubtedly the new big topic on the minds of industry stakeholders. And if the lineup of lighter, more compact new hardware unveiled this year is anything to go by, truck makers are clearly sensing that some fleet spec’ing habits might be ready for a-changin’.

Nearly every major new truck announcement at the Work Trucks Show, Conexpo, Mid-America and ExpoCam fell into one of three categories: vocational, urban electric, or, for lack of a better term, “light” or “regional” heavy-duty. Virtually all focused on fuel efficiency,

lower weight, aerodynamics, and application elasticity.

(For details check out the truck show reports on pgs 19 and in Lockwood’s Product Watch starting on pg. 47).

Noticeably absent were any major heavy-duty long-haul unveilings at a time when class 8 on-highway sales are pretty encouraging.

By contrast, midrange growth isn’t yet anywhere near at the same pace; and a casual observer could be forgiven for raising an eyebrow at the array of work truck offerings when the construction sector is still in the dumps and cash-strapped municipalities are slashing utility budgets in the face of shortfalls all over North America.

So, what gives?

On both the class 5-7 vocational and regional-haul front, OEMs are clearly aiming to fill the midrange vacuum left when Sterling and GM exited the market.

the company is focused on protecting its turf from more familiar nameplates. “When the highway market deteriorated, immediately we saw Paccar and Freightliner step



FITTING IN: Carriers focused on equipment utilization during the recession, including shifting to more regional operations.

Navistar, the midrange market leader, expected rivals to ramp up. But while the Hino’s and MitFuso’s are certainly emerging, Navistar marketing VP Jim Hebe says

up,” he told us in an exclusive interview at the Mid America Trucking Show. “Boy, it was like a laser shot right into vocational and into medium duty.”

ches

"So, yeah ... we're seeing a tremendous amount of competition from a different form of truck competitor than we've had before."

New activity in the work truck segment, specifically, is unmatched this year. Western Star, Freightliner, Kenworth, Navistar, and of course, Caterpillar (based on Navistar's PayStar platform) released a broad range of iron in this area.

And while the investments don't exactly match current market-economic conditions, the segment is due for an infusion, says Alan Fennimore, Kenworth's vocational marketing manager.

Since vocational customers have arguably been more likely to push back replacement cycles and rebuild existing equipment during the last two rounds of emissions standards, there's a lot of pent-up demand.

"There's guys that because the economy's been so bad they haven't bought trucks since prior to 2007," says Fennimore. "Where they've had the option to keep their trucks longer, they've been doing that, but coming is a time when they're going to have to upgrade."

Martin Daum, who heads Daimler Trucks North

America, agrees the market "is still at a low point," but, he adds, with familiar German pointedness: "To do a new product, you better do it on the downside than investing at the peak point of a cycle and coming out with a new truck just before it goes downhill again."

FLEX MARKS THE SPOT

Certainly, fleets' increasing demand for evermore multi-purpose, light weight trucks is reflected in manufacturers' expanding range of chassis and engine power offerings.

With equipment flexibility top of mind, OEMs are actively trimming down class 8 sleeper configurations while stretching horsepower and torque ratings on 11 and 13-liter diesels as fuel-efficient alternatives to the "big bore" 15-plus-liter highway market.

Market segment volatility in North America is blurring the traditional boundaries of power, payload and setup between truck classes.

As length of haul shrank, many line haul carriers focused on expanding equipment utilization, including shifting to more regional operations. The more scalable a truck is without sacrificing fuel economy or too much power, the more appealing it'll be to the increasing pool of

DAIMLER TRUCKS BRASS: THINK GLOBALLY, DOMINATE LOCALLY

The Germans are very confident these days. On everything from the truck sales economy and engine emissions solutions to new global competition, the leaders of Daimler Trucks insist they're at the front of the recovery convoy.

In a sit-down with *Today's Trucking* at the Mid America Trucking Show, **Daimler Trucks' President Andreas Renschler** and **CEO Martin Daum** discussed a range of issues, including the truck sales landscape.

Daum said that the opening months of 2011 have been most encouraging for the North American trucking industry. While that doesn't qualify as a full-blown trend, underlying factors in core segments of truckload, LTL and leasing are coming back strong.

Daimler raised its original guidance for 2011 from 20-to-25-percent growth to 35 percent, but its projections of 285,000 class 6-8 trucks sold this year is actually more conservative than most of its competitors' forecasts, some of which predict 220,000 class 8 trucks alone.

Reigning in expectations somewhat are supply constraints.

"I would love to ramp up more," says Daum, but the global raw material shortage is keeping a lid on suppliers' production capacity.

Also, there should be expected fluctuations and "bumps in demand" as much of today's purchasing momentum is based on replacements.

Surging diesel fuel prices could also interfere with sales in certain segments as some small carriers and owner-ops struggle to keep up with the cost of running their trucks, but on the flip-side, higher fuel could actually spur sales as carriers do away with older, less fuel efficient equipment, explains Daum.

"Fuel actually has very little impact in the direct sale of a truck because customers don't buy a truck because they have a fancy idea and just want another truck. You buy one because [you need one]," he says. "So, in that sense, the rise of fuel prices could actually spur sales because an EPA '10 truck has such superior fuel efficiency."

Expansion of foreign, start-up truck makers—namely from BRIC countries—into established western markets is a hot topic in OEM circles these days.

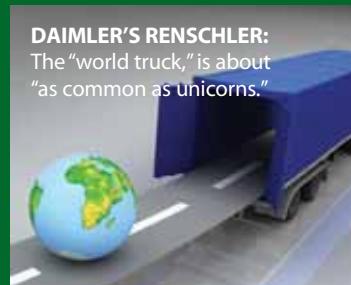
While Renschler doesn't deny that some of these new OEMs might have their eye on the European and NAFTA markets, he says that "it's unrealistic" that they'll be pitching tents on this side of the pond anytime soon.

He says that the so-called "world truck," is about "as common as unicorns."

"If you look at the truck concepts and customer demands in this market, it is very far away from the technology demands customers have here," he says.

"It's easy to buy [your way in], but then you have to manage it."

Renschler says that Daimler's strategy for dealing with global competition is preemptive. "We as a global leader are going into their markets and fighting and becoming competitive ... instead of waiting 10 or 20 years for them to grow and come to [North America] or Europe."



DAIMLER'S RENSCHLER:
The "world truck," is about
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diversifying carriers looking to attract a wider cross-section of freight and drivers that'll haul it.

"Last year, over 50 percent of the class 8 highway trucks built in the U.S. were day cabs. We're seeing a lot more interest in day cabs and regional-type sleepers and there's a lot of factors coming into play, like the whole CSA thing and the growing driver shortage," says Hebe. "I think we will see much more regional haul, a lot more dedicated, and much more intermodal."

Hebe says there's always going to be a need for coast-to-coast and team operations—as a percentage, moreso in Canada than in the U.S.—but generally, he thinks that's going to be "much more of a niche business in the future" than it is today.

"So much long-haul freight has already moved to [intermodal] that it's staggering."

CANADIANS PUSHED FOR 15L: HEBE

INTERNATIONAL'S new MaxxForce 15 engine was developed with the needs of Canadian drivers in mind, says Navistar's senior vice-president, North American sales operations. "We had a lot of input from Canadians who said we'd better think seriously about a 15-liter engine," **Jim Hebe** told *Today's Trucking*. "Whether we would have needed a 15-liter engine for performance reasons in the U.S., we would have done it for Canada regardless of the cost."

The company wanted an engine that provided 500 hp and 1,850 ft-lbs of torque, he said, and the MaxxForce 13—although a 500-hp version is coming out this summer—wasn't up to the task for certain "extreme" Canadian applications.

"We look at what you guys do in Canada, and it's really extreme in a lot of places. You have some really tough operating conditions up there," he says.

"Whether a 13-liter works up there, it's not worth the risk to a Canadian trucker when he's pulling Super Bs up over the Malahat, or some crazy thing."

Hebe added that the Canadian market is not an afterthought for Navistar. "We have a tremendous sensitivity to Canada. We have great dealers there. We have phenomenal customers," he said. "We were just not prepared to say, 'We're going to leave you guys to someone else if you really want a 15 liter.'"



"The impact that has had on class 8 trucks and the need for long-haul truck drivers has been pretty dramatic," he says.

"The good news is there are trucks on both ends of that."

Regulatory

Up to Speed On Limiter Loopholes

A possible precedent-setting case on whether the Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) should incur respon-

sibility if a truck engine's computer is damaged during a speed limiter compliance check is set for later this month.

As owner-op Lee Ingratta prepares to defend an appeal by MTO, an increasing

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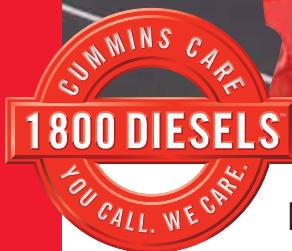
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on the Docket

PRIVACY INVASION?

That's what the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration says it wants to know about EOBRs. The agency is asking for additional comments on whether its proposed EOBR mandate sets up the possibility of driver harassment.

The agency doesn't believe its proposal would lead to driver harassment and privacy violations during roadside inspections, but in reaction to a recent suit by OOIDA challenging that fact, it wants to be sure that everyone has a chance to comment on the issue. The deadline for comments is May 23.

IN HARMONY:

Ontario will harmonize annual safety inspections with the rest of the provinces with a regulation that transitions current annual safety inspections to the National Safety Code Standard. A two-year period of educational enforcement will begin in July.

According to the Ontario Trucking Association (OTA), three specific amendments were made: safety inspections, motor vehicle inspection stations, and a small reference change to Commercial Motor Vehicle Inspections.

number of truckers continue to allege improper readings, reader incompatibility with certain engine models, and ECM malfunctions after undergoing speed setting tests at weigh scales.

(Ingratta, as you may have read in these pages, is the trucker who a traffic court judge ruled did not in fact refuse a speed limiter check by demanding the MTO officer first sign a waiver assuming responsibility in the event of damages to the engine).

OTA says it first called for harmonization back in 1997.

"A lot has changed since then—the gap between Ontario's regulations and the NSC standard had widened and certain aspects of the NSC standard itself had become out-dated—so we needed to work with MTO to ensure a common sense, modernized approach," David Bradley said in a press release.



According to the OTA, the major issues dealt with included: Inspection times; Dated technical issues related to transition; more visible enforcement; and incentives for carriers with solid safety programs. For more details click on <http://tinyurl.com/ontNSCS>

TO ERR IS TO BE HUMAN:

The impact of "human factors" on road safety is the focus of a three-year study being prepared by Transport Canada.

According to the most recent CCMTA newsletter, a draft report suggests actions that might improve safety by putting a greater emphasis on human factors as

Meantime, two more limiter law-busting anecdotes come by way of Mark Richardson, a consultant with Canadian Safety Compliance. He tells *Today's Trucking* he's one of a growing list of people who have fought (and beat) speed limiter charges.

He says one of his clients, Michael Brothers Excavation in North York, Ont., was charged last fall with having engine speed higher than the allowed maximum of 105 km/h, although the owners

insisted it was properly adjusted by a Mack dealer.

Richardson allows that carriers can sometimes think their governor is compliant, but when other work is done to the ECM or battery, the speed can revert back to the OEM setting.

"A lot of carriers don't know that," he says. But that wasn't the case here as the paperwork "was signed off and stamped" by a Mack dealer just weeks before.

On site, the dump truck driver complained to the

key causes of roadway collisions.

Lead author Pierre Thiffault believes that driver error is where the most progress can be achieved in making Canada's roads safer.

CCMTA says that studies show that human factors and driver errors are responsible for over 85 percent of crashes in Canada. Investigating determinants of the "wrong-headed decision to keep driving while drowsy" will be one aspect of the study.

RETROFIT RULE ROLLS OVER:

The B.C. Ministry of Transportation has once again postponed enforcement of its diesel exhaust retrofit requirement due to scarcity of components.

The rule—which mandates that diesel engines in truck models between 1989 and 1993 be retrofitted with emissions-reduction devices such a diesel oxidation catalyst (DOC) filter—is suspended until Sept. 30, 2011, "or longer depending on component availability," the government stated in a memo.

Vehicles that have not yet been fitted with a compliant device will not be penalized.

The rule was originally scheduled for October 1, 2010, but was postponed six month until April 2011 for the same reason.

"Many of the required emission control components are currently unavailable for delivery to product dealers or are on back order," according to the ministry.

officer, but to no avail. Offers to have the dealer's documents faxed to the MTO detachment were rebuffed.

Later in court, Richardson presented the original paperwork to the Crown in a pre-trial discussion.

According to the former SLH driver and insurance exec, the MTO officer interjected and demanded a trial.

"I said to him, 'well, that's not your call,'" Richardson says.

With the prosecutor present, he asked the officer

a series of questions about the Ez-Tap tool MTO uses to gauge compliance.

The exchange, according to Richardson, went something like this:

MR: We've heard from drivers, and it's been noted in *Today's Trucking* magazine (*nice touch—ed.*) that the electronic reader can give false readings or give off a static charge that can blow the computer.

MTO: *I don't know anything about that.*

MR: Is the reader checked for accuracy and calibration like your scales or a radar gun?

MTO: No

MR: Can you guarantee this device is accurate?

MTO: No

MR: Computers carry viruses. Can you guarantee this reader can't transmit a virus after being plugged in from truck to truck?

MTO: No

MR: "So, I say to him," Richardson recalls. "You

can't guarantee it doesn't have a virus. You can't guarantee it's accurate. So how can you say it's properly reading our ECM?"

At this point, Richardson claims, the Crown asked to see the Mack dealer's paperwork again. "After a few seconds, he cancels the trial and withdraws the charges."

In a second case, a North Bay-area client who also insisted the ECM was governed but no longer had the dealer's receipt as proof,

asked for Richardson's help. "I proved it the old fashioned way," he explains. "With math."

Richardson used the data on the drive gear ratio, maximum rpm output, tire size, and rear differential "to prove it can only do 62 mph.

"When all the parameters are set [to certain specifications] it's impossible to overrun your engine. It's pretty simple."

The Crown, who Richardson says was "luckily good at math," withdrew that ticket, too. "That's how we beat that one."

(The MTO doesn't comment on such cases).

Afterwards, Richardson says the officer sidled up to him and conceded the match. "Nice one, he said."

Indeed. Though, somehow we doubt the MTO will be so congratulatory in future cases.

Logistics

Noah Effect: 40 Days After Flood

The waters may have receded and the devastating physical damage revealed, but the full impact of the Japanese earthquake-tsunami-near nuclear meltdown (ETN) on the global supply chain hasn't likely been realized yet.

At press time—a little less than a month after the earthquake and tsunami hit—Japanese auto and electronics production was still reeling with hundreds of suppliers facing disruptions and the ripples had clearly reached Europe and parts of North America.

Toyota, Honda, Nissan, Mazda and Suzuki all had

LIGHTS, CAMERA ... TRUCKING!

A British production company has spent the last few months scouring the globe for about a dozen "tough" truckers—including one or two from Canada—to show off their driving skills in a global competition later this summer.

"There are plenty of people who drive for a living, or to pay the bills. But it's really the next level up that we're looking for," says Dominique Foster, who is helping to cast the show. "We want drivers who have the experience but also a real passion for the job, and who can talk about it with enthusiasm."

The search wraps up this month. Recently, producers from London-based Dragonfly Film and Television Productions were at ExpoCam in Montreal

looking for possible recruits for the show. On top of the all expenses-paid experience (including covered wages) are the bragging rights that go to the winner: the accolade of "world's toughest trucker."

"It's got all the ingredients that go into good television, and visually it's going to be exciting, and quite a journey for all these truck drivers to go on," she says. "There are so many different elements to it, so I think it's going to be quite good."

So what characteristics are Foster and Co. on

the lookout for? "We need people who want to win. It is, after all, a competition. They'll be in situations where they're pitted against one another, on different routes, different types of cargo, different trucks. These will not be simple small challenges; they're quite large-scale competitions with a lot of set-up required."

She says logistics teams are already at work developing driving challenges in exotic locations around the world for the eight-hour television series. A call for participants describes the competition as "a once-in-a-lifetime challenge" involving "mastering tricky loads, and taking on challenging roads around the globe."

The production company is keeping quiet about where the

challenges will be held. For one thing, a lot of details have yet to be ironed out, but for another, they'd like to unveil the challenges as show-stopping surprises.

Dragonfly Productions has developed a number of television programs in the documentary and reality genre, including a big hit in the U.K., "One Born Every Minute," a Big Brother-style show set in a maternity ward. For more info on the show go to www.dragonflyproductions.co.uk/

— Allan Janssen



extended plant shutdowns to various lengths because of components shortages. Toyota, specifically, had at one point suspended production at 18 factories worldwide, including its Woodstock, Ont. plant.

Sony, Toshiba, Panasonic, Canon and Shin-Etsu Chemical—the world's largest maker of silicon wafers—also experienced certain facilities going offline or scaled back for extended periods.

On this side of the pond, supply chain disruptions only recently started coming into focus but the long-term effects remain unclear.

One Citigroup analyst said in a communiqué that the market is underestimating the full extent of damage to the supply chain. "We do not think the fall in earnings and slowness of recovery have been fully priced in yet," he wrote.

Regardless, the disaster at times has been used as a defacto response to deflect other supply-side hiccups.

"The Tsunami in Japan."

That was the quick response of a Future Shop clerk when a *Today's Trucking* editor asked why there were so many empty shelves in the electronics store only 10 days after E-T-N. (We tried to confirm that with head office, but they didn't call back).

Bob Armstrong, the president of Supply Chain & Logistics Association of Canada, was dubious that the lack of goods in the store could be directly attributable to the 'quake after that short period of time.

"Usually that takes longer while they [merchants]

heard on the Street

■ The **MANITOULIN GROUP** purchased Western Canada's 300-unit **EXALTA TRANSPORT**. Exalta is a regional general-freight carrier serving hundreds of communities in Alberta and Saskatchewan. **John Finn**, Exalta's former owner, will stay on briefly in a consulting capacity, and all Exalta employees, including GM Deborah Ziegenhagel, have transitioned to Manitoulin.

■ Two Canadian fleets were deemed to be the safest truckload carriers in North America by the Truckload Carriers Association at the 35th National Fleet Safety Awards in San Diego.

BRIAN KURTZ TRUCKING of Breslau, Ont., won the grand prize in the small carrier division (less than 25 million annual miles), while Winnipeg's **BISON TRANSPORT**—not a stranger to big safety awards on both

sides of the border—won the large carrier division (25 million-plus miles). The two fleets were selected from among 18 division winners announced in January.

■ **Rick Miller**, senior vice president of operations for Guelph, Ont.-based **MACKINNON TRANSPORT**, took charge of the Truckload Carriers Association's (TCA) Open Deck Division. Miller served as the division's vice chairman last year.

■ **CENTRE DU CAMION AMOS** has opened a new Kenworth parts and service facility in Val d'Or, Que., offering local fleets and truck operators easy access from Trans-Canada Quebec Route 117.

Val d'Or, which is French for valley of gold, is the commercial center of the Abitibi-Témiscamingue region, where mining and logging are the main industries of the local economy. The 10,000-sq-ft dealership features six service bays, 650-sq-ft parts department and comfortable driver's lounge. It can be reached at 819-874-6471.

use existing inventory plus inventory that was in transit, too."

Ruth Snowden, the executive director of the Canadian International Freight Forwarders Association explained that it takes about 40 days for a container to go from a Japanese port to Canada.

"Did you see those photos of shipping containers completely turned upside down and thrown around? I'm wondering what's in those containers. And we're not going to find out until [then]," she told us.

Don't look up, but that's right about now.

Marine Atlantic Ferry "cash grab" cost truckers \$1M

Marine Atlantic's commercial reservation system

supposedly dinged Atlantic truckers for over \$1 million in penalties and fees.

The information was obtained by Liberal MP Gerry Byrne, who, according to local media, used the info to blast the ferry's ill-conceived idea of launching a truck reservation system last year.

Byrne, a senior member of the parliamentary oversight committee on national transportation issues, called the now-defunct system a "cash grab" collected "on the backs of the trucking industry."

The reservation system was launched in March, 2010 and cancelled last November after months of complaints by small carriers and owner-operators who said the system allowed larger carriers to block book reservations and cancel them in the last hours

before the ferry set sail with empty slots.

Eventually, the Crown Corporation had little choice to "temporarily" cancel the program after the Atlantic Provinces Trucking Association withdrew its support for it.

"There was reservations that were being booked with no intent of ever actually using them," Byrne told the *Western Star* newspaper.

The indictment won't make it any easier for the ferry service to float the plan again this year—something president and CEO Wayne Follett insisted could happen when the company implements "additional capacity" with two new, larger ferries entering service this summer.

More than a few Atlantic truckers, though, are hoping the idea stays underwater. ▲

SITED ON THE WEB

Hey! Jesters poza godziny*

(**You're out of hours*)

Do you and your drivers ever face language barriers?

If so, you should know about Ortsbo, a new product out of Toronto's Entertainment Media. It's an online chatting software that translates simultaneously. You simply type your message in English and it appears in Polish. Or one of 48 other languages. And the driver can get right back to you, in English. Ortsbo also announced that one of its principals is KISS founder and product licensing guru Gene Simmons.

Simmons created the new Ortsbo logo and provided the artistic direction to the Ortsbo creative team.

MORE @ <http://tinyurl.com/Ortsbo-driver>

Jersey shores up trailer trash law

If you're driving in winter through New Jersey, remember it's a B.Y.O.B. state. In this case, it stands for bring your own brush. As in snow brush. Sure, you have little need to know that now that the flowers are blooming, but keep in mind for next winter, the state has made the fines for snow coming off your trailers even stiffer.

At least now the rule stipulates that the state DOT is to provide snow-removal equipment at weigh stations and rest stops. Although, the cold truth of the matter is the law didn't include a deadline, so good luck with that getting done anytime soon.

MORE @ <http://tinyurl.com/NJ-snowrule>

Take a walk on the styled side



Want a first-hand visual of Volvo's new aerodynamic redesign on its VN highway series?

▼▼▼

Take a virtual walk-around with Volvo's product manager Frank Bio @

<http://tinyurl.com/volvo-walkaround>

**TODAY'S TRUCKING on
twitter**
twitter.com/todaystrucking



YRC nearing end of its rope?

William Trubeck, Yellow-Roadway Corp. board member and interim chief financial officer, denies that the death knell has rung for the beleaguered LTL giant.

He recently told Dow Jones News Service that YRC isn't any closer to bankruptcy despite a recent announcement that it experienced a "milestone failure" in new labor and cost restructuring efforts. He said he's optimistic the company will survive and downplayed a warning in YRC's annual report that lenders could declare the company in default on loan covenants.

In the filing, however, YRC outlined several outcomes from Chapter 11, which, without more concessions from creditors and the Teamsters, could spell the end of the company.

MORE @ <http://tinyurl.com/YRCfailure> and <http://tinyurl.com/YRCnodefault>



From Marco Beghetto's

Right Turn Blog

CBC doubles down on sensationalism

To my surprise, my [previous posts](#) which reveal what appears to be a habitual anti-trucking bias by the CBC actually got some traction in the blogosphere and at the CBC's own readers' forum, and so perhaps it's having a bit of an impact keeping the issue of truck safety in context for the average reader.

It now appears that the "investigative" crack team at CBC is at it again, exposing more 18-wheeled threats on the highway: From an [online report today](#):

"Just weeks after a CBC I-Team report revealed 4,800 Canadian trucking companies were caught violating key parts of safety regulations in the last two years, allegations of bribery involving a safety consultant have also surfaced."

First off, this story about this alleged bribe did NOT in fact occur "weeks after" the CBC's sensational article about 4,800 carriers violating HOS rules in the US, despite the author's poor attempt to try and combine these completely separate events as part of some sort of renegade truck spree in Canada.

The [Buffalo News](#) and other outlets reported this story way back in January, more than a month before the CBC's report on the HOS violations and more than two months before this completely rehashed, 'exposé.'

And just what does CBC "discover" on its own? Well, that "some truckers and the companies they work for are willing to pay a lot of money to make safety inspectors look the other way."

This is what this so-called "investigation" consists of: CBC interviewed one anonymous truck inspector who says he's turned down—are you sitting down?—four, count 'em, attempted bribes over a six-year span.

A Pulitzer Prize-worthy revelation, I know.

We don't know how specific the "bribes" were, of course, or, to put it in context, out of how many inspections this nameless officer conducted over the last six years. (BTW: I asked MTO and they told me the average inspector checks about 400 trucks a year).

I'm not trying to downplay the seriousness of alleged bribes by trucking companies. No doubt it happens, but what industry doesn't experience this?

Just like the HOS violations article, this is another alarmist story trumped up as an investigative "discovery."

Charlie Sheen's Twitter ramblings have more substance. At least Charlie's current.

JOIN THE CONVERSATION @ www.TodaysTrucking.com/blog



Canada: Truck Sales Index

February 2011

CLASS 8	This Month	YTD '11	YTD '10	Share
Freightliner	512	829	532	31.6%
International	280	537	601	20.5%
Kenworth	199	372	423	14.2%
Peterbilt	151	296	250	11.3%
Volvo	170	275	167	10.5%
Western Star	85	169	150	6.4%
Mack	73	146	103	5.6%
TOTAL	1470	2624	2250	100.0%



CLASS 7	This Month	YTD '11	YTD '10	Share
International	49	90	90	30.2%
Freightliner	41	76	24	25.5%
Kenworth	35	62	50	20.8%
Hino Canada	18	36	33	12.1%
Peterbilt	20	34	32	11.4%
TOTAL	163	298	232	100.0%



CLASS 6	This Month	YTD '11	YTD '10	Share
International	9	68	30	50.7%
Hino Canada	20	48	40	35.8%
Freightliner	9	18	5	13.4%
Peterbilt	0	0	2	0.0%
TOTAL	38	134	80	100.0%



CLASS 5	This Month	YTD '11	YTD '10	Share
Hino Canada	86	151	77	84.4%
International	14	25	34	14.0%
Peterbilt	1	2	0	1.1%
Freightliner	1	1	0	0.6%
Kenworth	0	0	10	0.0%
TOTAL	102	179	126	100.0%



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U.S.: Retail Truck Sales

CLASS 8	This Month	YTD '11
Freightliner	3900	7070
International	1494	3770
Peterbilt	1271	2993
Kenworth	1048	2082
Volvo	1271	2073
Mack	841	1527
Western Star	133	257
Other	0	1
TOTAL	9958	19,774



Canada: Provincial Sales (Class 8)

CLASS 8	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	NB	NS	PE	NL	CDA
Freightliner	17	89	19	22	292	53	14	0	0	6	512
International	25	46	3	26	79	63	20	14	2	2	280
Kenworth	19	77	9	5	17	67	5	0	0	0	199
Peterbilt	12	40	7	6	39	25	19	3	0	0	151
Volvo	11	16	0	40	38	43	3	18	0	1	170
Western Star	25	21	7	9	16	5	1	0	0	1	85
Mack	3	15	7	9	29	9	0	1	0	0	73
TOTAL	112	304	52	117	510	265	62	36	2	10	1470
YTD 2011	219	516	103	186	904	507	122	49	8	10	2624

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



RADIAL TRUCK TIRES

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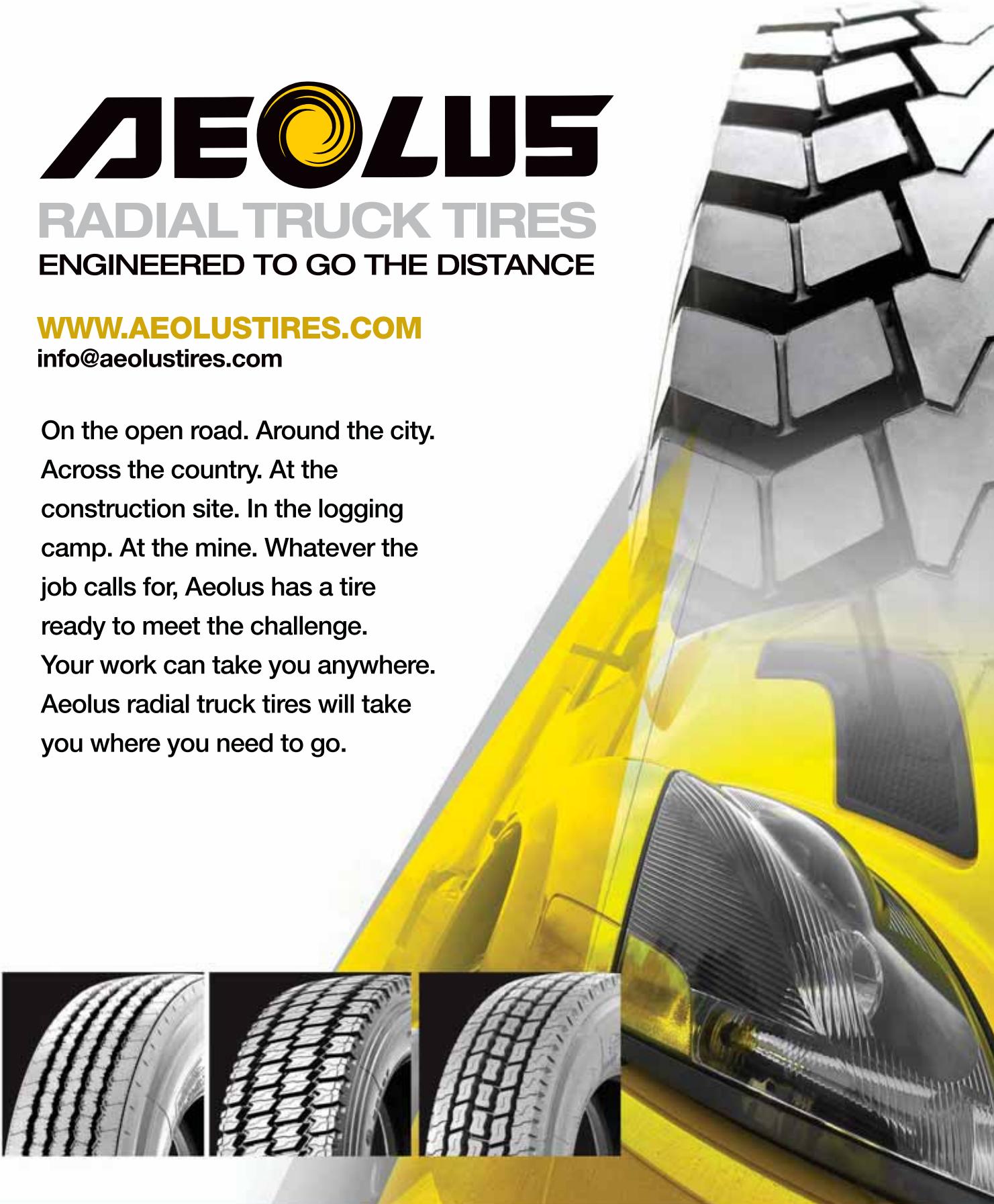
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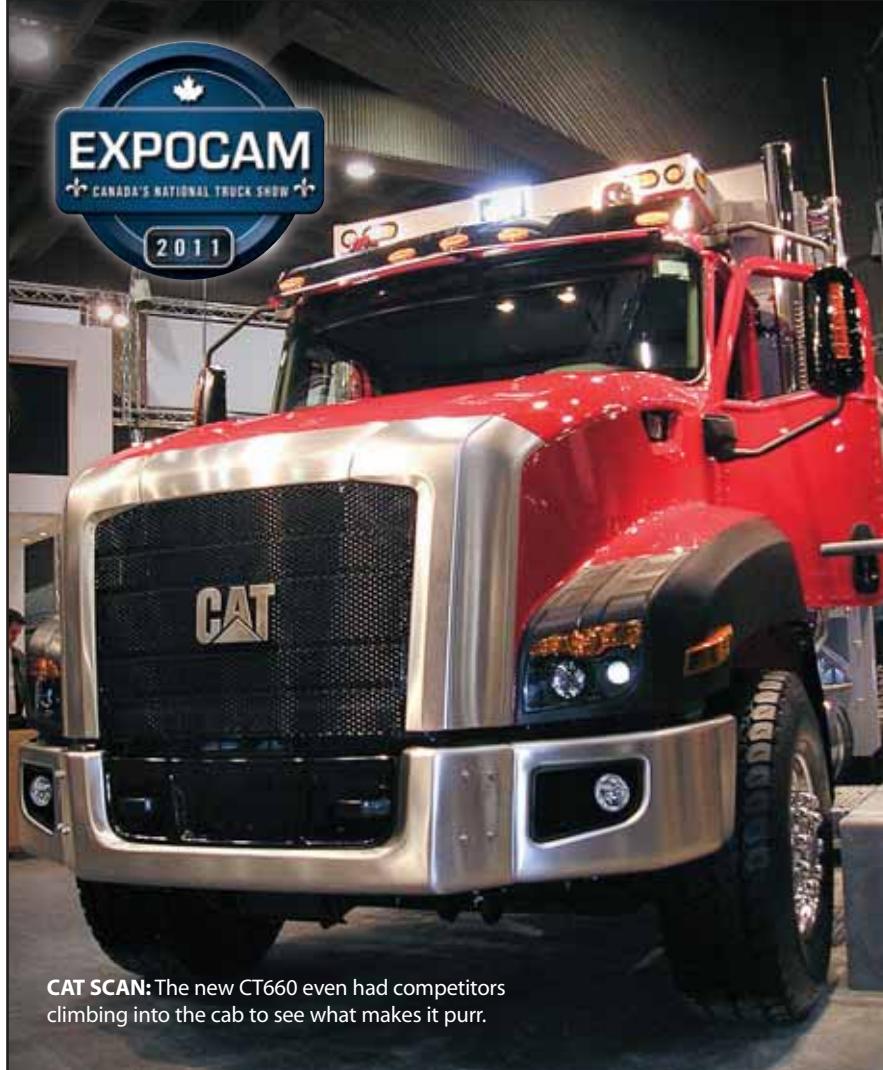


Street Smarts

MANAGING PEOPLE, TECHNOLOGY, BUSINESS, AND SAFETY

INSIDE:

21 Quebec drivers are more organized than you think



CAT SCAN: The new CT660 even had competitors climbing into the cab to see what makes it purr.

THE CAT TALE

THINGS YOU'LL WANT TO KNOW ABOUT THE DIESEL COMPANY'S FIRST ON-HIGHWAY TRUCK

You can get them in colors other than yellow. Production starts in May with deliveries scheduled for June.

Expect a premium price.

The company says 6x6 and 8x6 axle configurations are coming, and early in 2013 you'll see a CT680 model with a set-forward front axle.

The CT660 comes with either 116- or 122-in. BBC configurations.

The CT 660 is based on the International PayStar; in fact it's built under contract by Navistar at the latter's plant in Garland, Texas.

On the same assembly line as the PayStar, no less.

The frame rails are common, but modifications to the cab are extensive; indeed CAT says "everything above the frame is a CAT."

The doors have piano-style door hinges—and the hood and interior are wholly different.

Cat has emphasized driver comfort, and its experience in cab design shows clearly here. Power will come from the Cat-branded CT11 or CT13, and next year the CT15, all using "advanced" EGR emission control.

Aside from the brand, they're all unchanged International MaxxForce diesels with horsepower ratings from 330 to 550 and torque ratings from 1,450 to 1,850 lb ft.

Cat will offer a range of Eaton transmissions plus its own fully automatic CX31 with six forward speeds and one reverse, or its CX36 with the CT15 and its higher torque ratings.

CAT officials estimate that most of the first-time buyers will be users who already operate other CAT equipment.

The CT660 is a very elegant dump truck.

Commented one passerby at ExpoCam: "It looks like one of those Transformer toys."

Commented another: "I guess it'll be going head to head with Mack in the vocational business. It'll be a case of cat against dog."

Watch *Today's Trucking* magazine for a test-drive of the CT660 in an upcoming issue.

Camion Appearances

truck show *Thousands of ExpoCam truck show attendees can't be wrong: business is a-booming.* By Peter Carter

It's rare that you get to see a first of a kind. But that's what thousands of visitors to ExpoCam did in Montreal in early April. They got close enough to pet the new CAT CT660, a fiery red dump truck in prototype condition.

Except it's not a prototype.

The CT660 is the real McCoy. And ExpCam 2011 was the chosen venue for

the Canadian launch of the work truck.

ExpoCam which ran from April 7 to 9, is a production of Newcom Business Media, the company that publishes this magazine. Organizers report attendance leapt 10 percent over the previous ExpoCam; and the huge turnout is a clear sign that the recession is receding as fast as the ice on Lac St. Jean.

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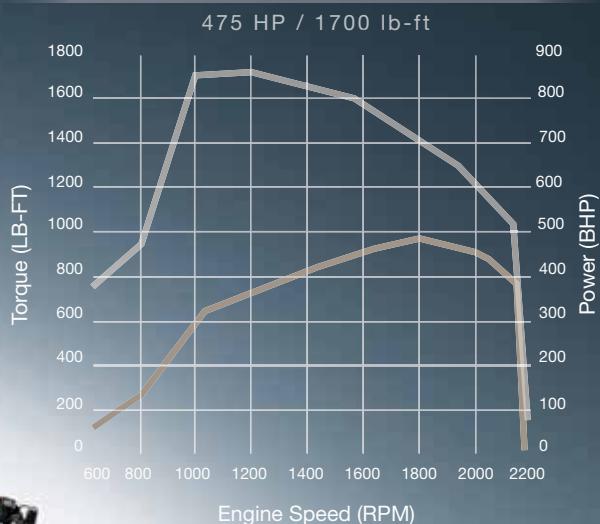
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As you can see, doing what's right for customers doesn't stop with our no-hassle emissions. We zeroed in on maximizing engine performance because fleets like yours told us it was important. The way we see it, working together as ONE keeps your business running at its best.

PEAK TORQUE AT LOWER RPM



A NAVISTAR COMPANY

The CT660 certainly was among the stars of the show but it wasn't the only new product on display.

Row upon row of new products ranging from the tiny (the clever container lockdown system from Tidewater Container Systems, which offers a new way of securing intermodal freight) to the huge. Western Star was showing off its new 4700.

Hino used ExpoCam for the Canadian launch of its new 195h hybrid Class 5 chassis. Mitsubishi-Fuso showed off its



▲ CROWDED HOUSE: Attendance was up 10 percent over the 2009 event.



▲ DRIVER EXTRAORDINAIRE: Veteran owner-operator Denis Leblanc who has driven the same Ford cabover for almost 30 years, consults ExpoCam staffers Mylène Chartrand and Virginie Jobin.

new Canter; Freightliner lined up its new severe-duty vocational trucks and a wide range of companies trotted out their environmentally friendly products along the show's Green Route.

Drivers and ops folks from various sectors packed into the information-laden safety and human-resource seminars and at noon Saturday show organizers capped off the successful show by crowning **Reg Delahunt** Canada's *Highway Star of the Year*. (For more, see "10-Grand Dad" on page 24. ▲



LIGHTS, EXPOCAM, ACTION: Suzie Delisle of the lighting specialists Jimex took the opportunity at ExpoCam to illuminate the APRQ's general manager Charles Englehart.

WHY QUEBEC DRIVERS ARE IN FACT DIFFERENT

A year and a half after its first stirrings, a Quebec-based driver association has signed up more than 1,000 members and is making its presence known in a big way across the province.

The official name of the organization is the **ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL DRIVERS OF QUEBEC** (APRQ) and under the leadership of President Martin Boivin, the group intends to be a powerful voice.

"There is a huge need in the industry to represent the drivers and improve their working conditions," Boivin told *Today's Trucking*.

When the APRQ General Manager Charles Englehart talked to our reporter after ExpoCam—which Englehart described as "a very successful weekend; I think we signed on lots of drivers"—he said APRQ would be willing to help drivers in other parts of Canada organize their own groups.

Membership in APRQ is \$99 a year, and it's the same price for staff drivers or owner-operators.

Membership entitles drivers to a raft of benefits, including access to group insurance.

In Quebec, in order to qualify for the group coverage, truck driving had to be identified as an official trade. APRQ made that happen.

Englehart says having the trade designation was among the organization's first big victories.

Other issues on the table include speed limiters (they're against them) and paperless logs (the jury's still out).

Boivin says he was pretty pleased that Quebec's Minister of Transportation Sam Hamad invited the APRQ to consult on issues last fall. He described the 45-minute meeting with Hama as "amazing."

"Our biggest challenge now is to make ourselves known," Boivin says.

Boivin, Englehart, and all the other executives are working drivers as well as association leaders.

The non-profit group is completely self-supporting and receives no grants from any level of government.

"It's good, because this way, we can represent our members the best way possible without owing anything to anyone," says Boivin, who is actually the fourth generation of a trucking family.

And Englehart adds that knowing that the membership consists of hard-working financially astute drivers makes the executive even more conscientious.

"Our members are watching our every move," he says. "So we have to make sure we use their money wisely."



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AL11

DL11

DH06

Hankook
driving emotion

Tridem Cowboy

Pat Ozirny, a business-savvy western star, rides into the sunset but leaves huge boots to fill.

By Peter Carter

The city of Lloydminster is unique. It straddles the border of Alberta and Saskatchewan.

The two provinces have different rules. So residents learn early which Lloydminster bars serve under 19s. Or what part of town it's legal to drive while cell-phoning in.

To thrive in Lloydminster, you've got to be flexible.

It makes perfect sense that a man like Pat Ozirny would kickstart a business there. He is, as his friend and colleague David Leeworthy put it, "a man of opposites."

For one thing, Ozirny studied business, finance and marketing plus he's a ticketed electrician. When Ozirny retired earlier this year, his retirement party was attended by the top brass from Daimler as well as frontline managers from the Truck Centre shops.

Ozirny has all the trappings of success but has been known to drop in on one of his shops at 2:00 a.m., on his way home from the airport, just to see how things are going.

First Truck Centres, his brainchild, is one of the most familiar truck dealerships in the west. He built it from a single Lloydminster outfit to a 500-employee giant with outlets in Lloydminster, Edmonton and Vancouver.

As principal he stayed involved on OEM dealer councils, bringing concerns of customers to the truck builders and those of the builders back to the streets.

"Manufacturers don't really

know how to run dealerships," he says, "and customers don't always understand the challenges facing OEMs."

He knew he had to bridge his staff's concerns with the customer's. That, he says, is why First Truck survived and thrived through at least two serious economic downturns.

"The National Energy Plan [in the '80s] was a killer," Ozirny says. "Everybody was going broke."

customer than to start up with a new one," he says.

He also says that the wisdom of experience yields results, especially during the hard times. "You know the downturn is coming but you also know the upturn is coming," he says.

Ozirny can also delegate.

His colleague Fred Foord put it this way: "Pat gives his managers enough room to make their own decisions

devised a WestJet-style employee buy-in program so workers could own a piece of the company.

"My style," he says, "is management by walking around."

Now that he will be, in fact, walking around, in retirement, he can devote more time to his daughters Kim and Vicky, son John, and wife Joan.

Also, a select group of young people will have their careers kick started every year

"The nucleus of our business is the customer."

— Pat Ozirny

Most recently, they survived the recession of '08-'09. Ironically, it was during the depths of that downturn that Ozirny took the First Truck song-and-dance to Vancouver and assumed control of a dealership there.

Among other needs, he says, was the need to bolster the confidence of workers as well as customers.

"You have to work with staff to keep their morale up and keep the customers confident in themselves; we let them know we were sure they weren't going to hang us out to dry."

"The nucleus of our business is our customer and we knew we had to keep their loyalty throughout the downturn because we wanted them there when things got better."

"It's easier to keep an old

and errors but supports them. They know they're not going to lose their jobs because of one mistake. That's very important."

There were no tasks Ozirny wouldn't turn his hand to and he made sure folks working with him never felt intimidated.

In fact, five years prior to his retirement planning, he and his closest colleagues



PHOTO CREDIT: Francois Bibert

thanks to Ozirny. Included among his legacies is an annual post-secondary scholarship, to the tune of \$1,500, to be given in his name, to a son or daughter of a staff member.

David Leeworthy says the scholarship is simply proof that Ozirny not only built his business with a passion for excellence, he wants to see it continue into the future. ▲

R

eg Delahunt gets behind the wheel of a cherry red Lamborghini. It's not his car. Trucking's been good to him, but not that good.

Moments later he's behind the wheel of a Ferrari Testarossa, then a Porsche, then a McLaren SLR.

Beautiful cars, for sure, and fun to drive... but in a trucking career that has spanned 54 years so far (and going strong), they're just another kind of freight. He carefully backs them off the fully-enclosed car carrier, gets a signature on the bottom line, and pulls his rig back onto the highway, heading for the next stop.

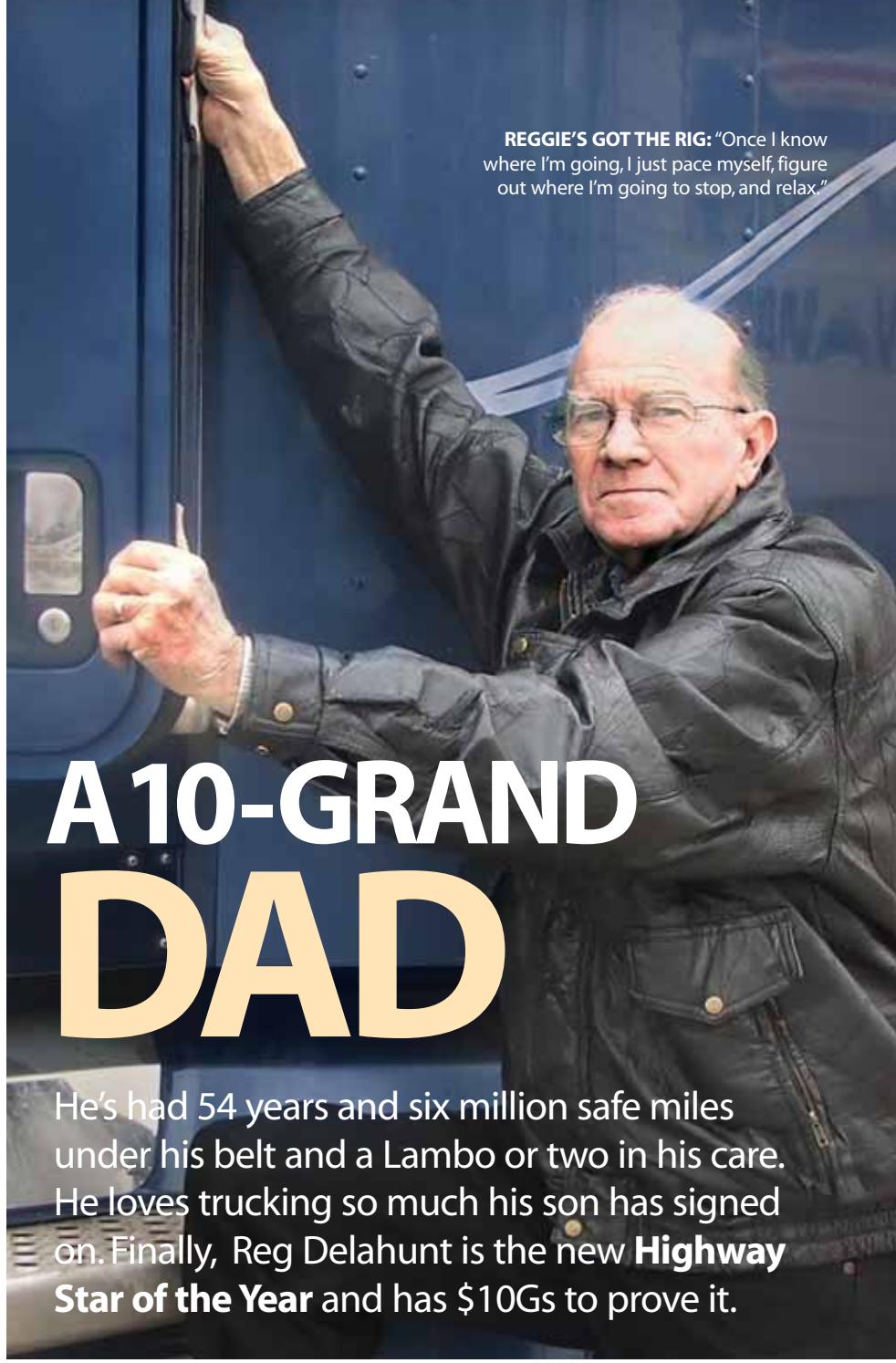
Since 1957, Reg Delahunt has hauled everything from plywood to ice cream, covering more than six million accident-free kilometers, coast to coast, through 10 provinces and 44 U.S. states.

This year the 70-year-old driver who still crosses the continent on a weekly basis for Independence Transportation in Winchester, Ont., was named **Highway Star of the Year** by *Highway Star* magazine.

He was presented with his prizes—including a laptop computer, his and her watches, an in-cab heating system, and a cheque for \$10,000—at this year's ExpoCam truck show in Montreal. (ExpoCam and *Highway Star* are both owned by Newcom Business Media, the same company that produces *Today's Trucking*.)

"This is tremendous," he told the crowd that gathered in the Freightliner booth at the show. "I feel very honored and I want to thank the judges and sponsors very much."

The sponsors of the event—Freightliner, Cummins, Espar Heating Systems, Meritor, and the Owner-Operator's Business Association of Canada (OBAC)—had only one objective: to honor a driver who embodies the term professionalism, who improves the image of the industry, operates safely and efficiently, and gives back to his company, his industry, and his community.



REGGIE'S GOT THE RIG: "Once I know where I'm going, I just pace myself, figure out where I'm going to stop, and relax."

A 10-GRAND DAD

He's had 54 years and six million safe miles under his belt and a Lambo or two in his care. He loves trucking so much his son has signed on. Finally, Reg Delahunt is the new **Highway Star of the Year** and has \$10Gs to prove it.

This year's field of candidates was extremely strong, but Delahunt stood out just a little bit from the rest with credentials that impressed the judging panel of four trucking editors and last year's Highway Star of the Year winner, Cliff Lammeren.

Among the highlights of the nomination, sent in by Delahunt's daughter Jamie were:

- his many years of service;
- the breadth of his experience;
- the assistance he lends to police at accident-scenes;

- his involvement in the industry as a member of the inaugural Road Knight team in Ontario;

- the donation of his time to discuss road safety with young drivers at a local driving academy;

- his participation in local politics and service groups;

- and his dedication to his family, taking pains not to miss important moments, and taking them with him on the road whenever possible.

He has passed his love of trucking on to

his son, Jeff, with whom he has an ongoing competition to see who travels through more North American states and provinces. "I think he's up one on me," says Delahunt. "If someone could get me a load to Alaska, I'd sure appreciate it."

His career started in the mid-1950s, before he was even legal behind the wheel. From the age of 14 he drove a 1941 Fargo—mostly off road but sometimes on the road too—for his father's concrete company in Stittsville, Ont.

"As soon as I turned 16, I went down and got my chauffeur's licence and then I started driving his dump trucks for him," he says. "I got my licence on the 12th of July and I was driving on the 13th."

He worked there for a few years, moving from the Fargo to a brand new GMC dump truck, before leaving the family business to drive straight trucks laden with plywood for Laidlaw.

"They called me into the office one day because the guy who drove the tractor trailer had broken his foot," Delahunt recalls. "The boss asked if I could drive tractor, and I said I could, and he goes, 'Well, you're on the tractor-trailer tomorrow.' But the thing was, I'd never driven a tractor-trailer. I meant a farm tractor."

So, thanks to Lloyd Hudson's broken foot, Delahunt drove a tractor trailer for the very first time the next day.

"I headed out on the highway. And when I got where I was going, I could see where I needed to be, but it was snowing and I was afraid to put my foot on the brake. I didn't know what the trailer was going to do," he says. "So I slowed up and drove right past the place, and then came back a little slower."

The first thing he learned about driving tractor-trailers: it was a lot more fun than driving straight trucks.

"Back then, only the old guys got to drive a tractor trailer," he says. "The young guys started on straight trucks. You started driving a small truck, then you move into a bigger truck, then you move into a bigger truck. That's how it went. Until you got to the big rigs with sleepers on them.

You had to work your way up. It doesn't go like that anymore, and I think that's a disadvantage to our new drivers because each step up gives you little more experience, a little more understanding. You're never stretched too far. Nowadays, you go to a driving school for eight or 12 weeks, and then they put you into 75 feet of machinery!"

Then, from payload to payload, company to company, Delahunt learned his craft.

"The job I really enjoyed was hauling high-end cars," he says. "Some of them

He may be getting older, but his boss Scott Thomson, owner of Independence Transportation, says he'd take as many drivers like Reg as he can get.

"He has the energy and stamina of a 45-year-old. He is the most professionally-minded driver I've ever met," says Thomson, who hired Delahunt five years ago when he hit the mandatory retirement age at Erb Transport, a federally-regulated operation.

Now, Delahunt's regular run is to Vancouver and he loves it.

WHERE THE HEART IS: Delahunt's wife Cathey and daughter Jamie nominated him. In their bid, Jamie noted: "No matter what happens, he will always be our family's highway star."



were worth \$750,000. And, best of all, I got to drive them all. All the big expensive cars you see at the car show, I've driven them."

He remembers one receiver—a man and woman—met him at a truck stop to get the 1958 Chevy convertible they'd been anxiously waiting for. The man was jumping up and down, while the wife cried and took pictures.

"I'm getting too old for that kind of work now," he says. "You're bent over all the time, working in a confined space, doing and undoing the tie downs. It's not like an open carriage where you can do that from the outside. And anything that could scratch the car has to come off. Sometimes you had to work in bare feet because your boots could damage the cars."

"I like seeing all the different stuff out my window while I drive," he says. "Like going through the prairies, one day it'll be snow outside my window, the next it'll be mud. Then you see them working the fields, they're drying up, then they're turning green, turning yellow, turning gold... it changes constantly."

On his last trip through Saskatchewan and Alberta, the stubble was coming up, and he saw thousands of white-tailed deer and antelope.

"They were everywhere you looked!" he says. "Or, a while ago, I was driving somewhere in the United States and I saw a rock formation just sticking out of the ground, sticking straight up like a chimney. I enjoy seeing stuff like that. There's always something different out the window if you want to look for it." ▲

Diesel's Wild

Fuel prices are the wildcard that could stunt the recovery for some carriers—and push others over the finish line.

BY MARCO BEGHETTO

R

ember Pong? The primeval video game—the first-ever, according to Wikipedia—where two, one-dimensional bars bounced a white ball (a pixelated square dot, actually) back and forth until one missed.

That's what Roger McKnight likens the fuel market to these days. Watching fuel prices bounce between global events—from the frightening tsunami and potential nuclear meltdown in Japan to unrest, and now war, in North Africa and the Middle East—is a daily neck-torquing exercise. The only difference, says the senior petroleum advisor for Oshawa, Ont.-based En-Pro, is that pong was at least relatively simple to follow back and forth.

"I'm sort of losing my patience with the whole thing," says the fuel market advisor. "There's a lot of trucking companies asking me what they can forecast for the next couple of months and

ATA: DRILL, BABY, DRILL

The AMERICAN TRUCKING ASSOCIATIONS (ATA) says it's time to expand domestic energy sources and called on the Obama administration to stop blocking access to U.S.-held energy assets.

Recent events in Egypt and Libya have "highlighted how fragile the global oil market is, putting our industry at risk for rapid price spikes, even as we slowly begin to roll to an economic recovery," said ATA President and CEO Bill Graves. "Fuel is our members' second largest expense, so uncontrollable spikes cut right at their bottom line."

The U.S., says Graves, should develop domestic sources of energy, like those on the Outer Continental Shelf, to lessen dependence on foreign oil.



maybe 2011 and I say 'well, how about we try for 1:00 p.m. this afternoon,' because it all depends on what the newswires say about Libya."

McKnight says that based on tangible market conditions there's no way oil should be (at press time) upwards of \$112 a barrel, adding that hour-to-hour speculation based on a series of global incidents is sending prices into orbit. "Just a few years ago [fuel prices] were about looking at supply; let's look at demand, and let's look at refinery runs," he explains. "If you look at those three factors today everything should be wonderful because we have an oversupply, we have anemic demand and refinery runs are at 82 percent, so there's lots of spare capacity and if there's a big bump in demand they can take care of that."

"Prices, therefore, are not making any sense right now ... other than they're artificially being skewed by 'what-if' speculation."

As this sheet slides off the printer, the Pong dot is indicating that diesel will outpace gasoline heading into the supposedly slower summer period. Japan, for one thing, has lost about 29 percent of its refining capacity as the world's third-largest oil consumer. Plus, most of its electricity generating power is from nuclear and they're now importing diesel for generators.

"So even if this Libya thing gets settled—and I don't think it is—you could see crude drop but diesel still increase even during a low-demand time," says McKnight. "Normally gas prices start to drop after May-two-four-weekend and diesel prices drop accordingly before increasing again in October. But everything's gone ass-backwards."

How high into the stratosphere can fuel prices get over the next year? In Canada, a combination of ongoing turmoil overseas, gradual increased demand from improved emerging economies

and the closing of several refineries in eastern Canada could lead to gas and diesel prices north of two bucks a liter by 2012, says Jeff Rubin, former chief economist of CIBC World Markets. He recently told Toronto media that by the end of the year prices could well exceed the \$145 a barrel mark we saw in 2008.

Whether or not that stunts this modest recovery for truck carriers will probably depend on how steep the trajectory is over the coming months.

Certainly, the recent sharp run-up in fuel costs is like a speed limiter for many small carriers and owner-ops and, if sustained, puts a great deal of pressure on marginal truckloaders struggling to keep cash flowing. "A major wild card is fuel prices. The time lag between the increase in the cost of diesel and their ability to recover the cash via fuel surcharges will put stress on already-shaky balance sheets," FTR Associates' Eric Starks recently commented in a memo to industry stakeholders.

Luckily, it comes at a time when capacity is tight once again. Provided the increases are gradual, those who forge through the headwinds in the short-term and withstand the gaps between price spikes and surcharge recovery could enjoy rate increases later on due to accelerated bankruptcies resulting in further capacity shortages.

The potential cold shower for all of trucking, though, is if fuel price inflation becomes so severe as to undermine the wider economic recovery as consumer spending and manufacturing are curtailed.

Fred Zweep of Abbotsford, B.C.-based bulk hauler, Vedder Transport, says fleets and shippers are certainly stymied with where fuel prices are headed. So far, "top tier" shippers are absorbing the fuel component, he tells us.

Over the last month, though, some of Vedder's clients have found that 37-percent fuel surcharges attached to the invoice are becoming hard to swallow for corner-office types. So, in an ironic reversal of what made itemized surcharges popular in the first place, some customers now prefer reducing the surcharge in half while renegotiating the base difference of their upfront transportation cost. "So really, the net impact is zero, but the dynamic of the look is different and allows them to manage that better in the view of what their executives want."

Although Vedder and its customers are navigating the turbulence relatively well, Zweep doesn't doubt that fuel might be the last big pitfall that permanently sinks "unsophisticated" carriers and owner-ops—particularly, he says, those who are dependant on load boards.

"There are shippers who buy on the spot market who expect a flat rate and fuel to be built into that and then there's the owner-operator who doesn't understand the complexity of fuel," he says. "They definitely feel it because they have to pay that invoice each month or each week, but they don't have negotiation skills to get themselves ahead of it again."

"Many guys just book the load and [if fuel goes up], they don't seem to recognize the impact until they see the invoice. And they have to absorb it."

Owner-ops tethered to carriers with refined surcharge or fuel-bonus programs will be fine rolling forward, predicts Zweep, who says he's never had an owner-op leave Vedder because of the cost

CTA TO FEDS ON BIODIESEL: "FAIL"

If you think diesel prices are high now, you ain't filled up nothin' yet, warns the **Canadian Trucking Alliance** (CTA). Just wait until July 1st when the national two-percent (B2) biodiesel requirement kicks-in, says the CTA, which calls the mandate nothing more than a "fuel tax increase."

Not only is it going to make diesel at the pump more expensive, and research shows it won't help the environment one droplet, says the trucking group, but the government's approach to mandating the fuel in Canada "fails on all counts."

According to the government's own research, the feds have doled out over \$2 billion in subsidies to the renewable-fuels industry in recent years. And over the next 25 years, there will be a \$2.4-billion net cost to taxpayers with only an incremental reduction (a mere 1 megaton of CO2 per year) in GHG.

In the U.S., where there is a somewhat more mature biodiesel market, prices are one-to-eight-cents-per-liter higher than regular diesel fuel.

Canola, a leading product for biodiesel, is already at record highs.

In addition, there's a severe shortage of biofuel production and blending capacity in Canada, which likely have to import 85 percent of the biodiesel needed to comply with the policy.

"It really makes you wonder why we're doing this," commented CTA's David Bradley.

Plus, forecasting the biofuel market could get tricky. As Today's Trucking has explained in past issues, the mandate consists

of a "pool average," meaning that as long as the national blend averages out to B2, the supply of higher or lower B blends is free to fluctuate in certain regions based on market demands. And there's no protection for consumers who run into engine and fuel filter problems because of higher biodiesel blends in cold climates.

"Biofuel producers are getting literally everything they want—regulatory certainty, a captive market and massive subsidies—all of which they can take to the bank, whereas the consumer, mainly truckers, will get even higher fuel prices ... after being ravaged by the recession," says Bradley.

CTA called for safeguards that protect consumers, while the Canadian Petroleum Products Institute urged the government to delay the requirement until the necessary blending facilities are ready.





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LNG-WHIZ

Scaled back from its original proposal, the NAT GAS Act was reintroduced in Congress last month to provide incentives for the purchase of natural gas trucks and to build refueling infrastructure across the U.S.

The idea is to reduce America's dependence on the volatile global oil market.

Although there are many partisan sticking points to this year's budget, the legislation enjoyed wide support from both sides of the aisle, including President Obama's backing.

The proposed incentives—mainly in the form of tax credits to jump-start LNG truck purchases and refueling development—were clawed back to five years, down from 17 years in the original legislation.

The plan will provide a tax credit for up to 80 percent of the incremental cost of buying a natural gas vehicle (from \$7,500 for a light-duty passenger vehicle to \$64,000 for the heaviest trucks). A 50-cent-per-gallon fuel tax credit is also in place and an infrastructure tax credit of 50 percent up to a maximum of \$100,000 per fueling station will be available as well.

In Canada, meanwhile, LNG proponents are hoping that similar legislative breezes blow north.

One, undoubtedly, is Claude Robert, who purchased 180 LNG Peterbilt trucks last summer to run between Montreal and Toronto, but unfortunately, they haven't yet seen the pavement in Quebec because of bureaucratic snags.

Jean-Robert Lessard, Robert's vice-president of marketing, recently said at a conference that the company was having trouble getting the greenlight for refueling stations. Efforts to get permits were rebuked by provincial officials because "it hasn't been done [before] ... there are no regulations," he said. So, in the meantime, the carrier built a mobile fueling station from a tractor-trailer and got a permit from Transport Canada to operate it.

Lessard expects the first of Robert Transport's LNG trucks to be on the road by August.



of diesel. "However, it's the next tier that's hurting our business and there's far more of them."

As well, Zweep agrees that carriers with more fluid cash flow are in a better position to take advantage of the fuel efficient technology available today. "Since 2004, we as an industry have had to put fuel economy aside and focus on meeting the [emission] standards imposed. Now we're in a position to be able to start looking at fuel economy in a serious light again."

Fuel economy is pivotal in low margin businesses like dry van. The engine is only one component, says Zweep, so trucks that aren't properly spec'd will blow profit out of the exhaust stack when diesel's a buck-forty like it is today.

"Go to a local dealership and ask the long-term sale people what the average owner-op is looking for. Typically they'll tell

you only [a few] have done their homework and truly understand the specs they need."

If diesel costs exacerbate the driver shortage, then so be it, exclaims Barry O'Halloran, an oil patch owner-op from Alberta. "There's nothing wrong with having a driver shortage," he says.

The one big problem he has with carrier companies is that far too many keep the surcharge or short-change owner-ops after collecting it from the customer—a common anecdotal complaint among independent truckers. But he has a message for truckers who continue work for such fleets: "You gotta charge for it, and then you got nothing to bitch about."

"I had one guy and told him you're two-percent of my profit and 40 percent of my headaches. See ya."

He sure makes it sound easy.
But not as simple as Pong. ▲

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Going Forward...

Want to know where trucking's headed? Think—among other things—lighter materials, air discs and ammonia after-treatment.

BY ROLF LOCKWOOD

After the usual bevy of shows and conventions through the first few months of the year, a few clear themes can be seen in the development of trucking technology. One of them—the emergence of alternative engine designs—is wildly interesting even if nothing comes to see the light of commercial day.

The others are wholly predictable—the rise of natural gas as a near-future fuel, a new appreciation of aerodynamics, the emergence of lightweight tractors as a mainstream option, and of course a mad rush to save fuel by any means available. Nothing really new in there but we're clearly moving forward on all those fronts.

And perhaps the most significant single introduction at the recent Mid-America Trucking Show in Louisville definitely points the way forward even if it doesn't yet constitute a trend. Peterbilt made waves at the show by declaring that air disc brakes are now standard fare on all class 8 models. It's a first, and perhaps a bold move, but at least somebody has started what is likely—we can only hope—an inevitable transition.

Air discs offer the shortest stopping distances possible today and they also trim weight, reduce maintenance demands, and will help in meeting the stopping-distance standards coming up on August 1. Drivers uniformly love the extra stopping power discs provide, not to mention their excellent fade resistance.

Yes, there would be balance problems if a disc-braked tractor were mated to a poorly maintained S-cam'd trailer, possibly even a well maintained trailer, so this won't be the right option for all players right away. But our European counterparts went this route way back in 1996—adding electronic braking control (an advance on antilock brakes, known as EBS) to the mix, in part to manage that tractor/trailer balance issue—and now you're hard pressed to find trucks or trailers without discs. We'll get there eventually.

SAVING WEIGHT

Elsewhere at Mid-America the urge to save weight was a very clear theme in the show's many product introductions. Almost every truck maker was singing the praises of lightweight this and lightweight that, and some major component manufacturers were doing the same. The virtue in losing a few pounds seems to have come up as often as fuel efficiency did, which



obviously reflects the wishes of truck buyers. It's something on the lips of more and more fleet operators, and not just bulk carriers, so this should come as no surprise. Still, it was a more universal tune at Mid-America than you might imagine.

Meritor, for instance, showed off a new lightweight aluminum carrier option for its 14X tandem axle, which saves about 100 lb compared to the standard cast-iron equivalent. It's compatible with the DualTrac configuration that accommodates wide-base single tires, so there's some more weight saved. This option won't be available until 2012, but it was shown on a lightweight configuration of the Freightliner Cascadia at the show.

You'll note that I didn't call the company ArvinMeritor. That's because the Michigan-based outfit has changed its name, having recently shed its light-duty division, reverting to Meritor Inc. The company initially assumed the name Meritor following the spin-off from Rockwell International in 1997. It remained Meritor until the merger with Arvin Industries in 2000.

Peterbilt's lightweight option package is a good example of what's now on offer, and it's significant to see it available on nearly the entire lineup of linehaul and P & D trucks. Pete says it will get you a day cab weighing as little as 14,200 lb and sleeper configurations as low as 15,800 lb. They get there by predictable means—composite front springs, aluminum cabs and crossmembers and battery boxes, wide-base single tires with aluminum wheels, etc.—and none of those are in themselves unique. Being able to order all that stuff in a single package is the key there.

Almost as common as that "lightweight" word in Louisville was the claim of much

THE NEXT TARE DROP: Peterbilt's lightweight Model 386 day-cab tractor can weigh as little as 14,200 lb by way of the new lightweight package option. Air disc brakes are now standard on all class 8 Petes.



improved aerodynamics, and in quite a few cases we had trucks shedding pounds and getting slippery at the same time, to very good effect. Is it not a little ironic that we should be returning to the idea of smooth, rounded shapes sliding through the air more readily than square slabs? It's really a very old notion. Look at the trailers of the 1950s, for instance, and you'll see an awful lot of rounded leading edges, not the right angles we've come to know.

Mack, for example, rolled out redesigned roof fairings for some of its larger Pinnacle sleeper models. Along with lighter, longer chassis fairings that cover fuel tanks as big as 140 gal, the improved aerodynamics can get you up to 6 percent better fuel economy, Mack claims. That ain't small change.

Freightliner is running this road too, offering aerodynamic enhancements like "next generation" chassis side fairings and 20-in. side extenders, claimed to provide up to 1.8-percent better fuel economy over current 72-in. raised-roof models.

Lightweight options on the Cascadia include Steelite X30 brake drums; Hendrickson Steertek/Airtek axle and suspension; aluminum frame rails and aluminum air tanks; and SAF-Holland aluminum air slide fifth wheel.

ENGINES OF ALL SORTS

Cummins says its ISX15 engine now delivers six-percent better fuel economy with optimized combustion and improved calibrations released earlier this year. That's compared with the 2007 ISX engine.

"Using our extensive bank of real-world data from customer field units and by working closely with our customers, we have been able to deliver significant calibration improvements that positively impact both fuel consumption and Diesel Exhaust Fluid consumption," said Steve Charlton, vice president and chief technical officer on the engine side of the business. In a press meeting in Louisville, he added that some customers might do even better.

"The range of improvement will vary depending on the customer's actual load factors and duty cycles," he said.

A key feature in the Cummins offering is PowerSpec, a free software tool available to any on-highway customer for configuring engines to the specific needs of their operation. PowerSpec includes a gearing calculator, feature/parameter settings, fault-code management, and trip information, among other things. The use of PowerSpec begins when you're choosing powertrain options, but it also lets you configure proprietary engine features and parameters like the road speed governor, idle speed management, Load-Based Speed Control, and Gear-Down Protection. The software can also read fault codes and trip information, making it easy to get accurate information from the engine's black box.

PowerSpec—which can be downloaded for free at www.powerspec.cummins.com—supports all Cummins 2010-spec on-highway engines (ISX15, ISX11.9, ISL9, ISC8.3 and ISB6.7), 2007 engines (ISX, ISM, ISL, ISC and ISB), and earlier motors as well.

This isn't new, of course, but all engine makers are forever saying that nobody except the most buttoned-down truck operators really optimizes things along these lines. More often than not they take the truck off the dealer's lot and never fool with parameters and such. Are you leaving something on the table?

Still with engines, Navistar's DT MaxxForce medium-duty motor now has EPA certification, though not quite at the EPA's 2010 0.20g NOx limit. The company announced last week that its 2011 model-year MaxxForce DT diesel has been EPA-certified at 0.39 g/bHPhr NOx using "advanced" EGR.



EIGHT-PERCENT SOLUTION: This Volvo VNL 780 sports new powertrain enhancements and advanced aerodynamics that can deliver as much as eight-percent better fuel efficiency over earlier trucks with EPA 2007 engines.

The company says this represents a 22-percent emissions reduction from the original 0.50g certification and demonstrates progress toward achieving the 0.20g standard.

Navistar has also received EPA and California Air Resources Board certification for the 2011 MaxxForce 15 diesel (available in International ProStar Plus trucks later this year; in the Cat CT660 next year) and recently submitted its MaxxForce 13 at 0.20g NOx for EPA certification.

Navistar has also been exploring natural gas, like everyone else, but with a different and interesting approach. At Mid-America it demonstrated a prototype tractor with a "Dual-Fuel" engine running both diesel

and liquefied natural gas (LNG).

In partnership with Clean Air Power, developer of that technology, Navistar has built and tested a 2011 International ProStar Plus tractor with a 430-hp, 1550-lb-ft MaxxForce 13-liter engine. The motor uses diesel pilot injection for combustion on the compression stroke and mixes air and LNG on the intake stroke. The result is an engine that runs on a mixture of 15-percent diesel and 85-percent natural gas.

The MaxxForce engine needed few changes to the stock diesel engine other than the addition of a natural gas injection system. Changes to the chassis included the addition of a 119-gal stan-

dard LNG tank that provides a 400-mile range, a coolant-heated fuel vaporizer, and an LNG regulator and filter. Navistar is currently working with the EPA to define the regulatory requirements of a compliant dual-fuel engine.

Clean Air Power says its "Dual-Fuel" combustion technology for heavy-duty diesels substantially cuts fuel costs and carbon emissions without sacrificing the original engine's efficiency or reliability.

NAVISTAR'S NEXT STEP?

Interestingly, Navistar owns a subsidiary company called PurePower Technologies, formed last year, which has just announced the purchase of the Eaton

THE OPOC ENGINE, A GAME CHANGER?

NAVISTAR recently announced that it's involved in the development of an all-new way to power trucks, the "OPOC" engine. That acronym stands for an **Opposed-Piston/Opposed-Cylinder** engine, the brainchild of Prof. Peter Hofbauer, chairman and chief technical officer at EcoMotors International in Troy, MI. Navistar has signed a non-exclusive development agreement with that small outfit to help bring the engine to market.

The first OPOC product targeted for commercial applications is a turbocharged diesel version, but it can actually run on pretty much any fuel, including gasoline, natural gas, ethanol, even hydrogen.

It's all promising enough to have Bill Gates of Microsoft fame as one of two key investors, the other being Khosla Ventures' Vinod Khosla, EcoMotors' primary backer.

So what's this wonder engine claimed to offer? Two to three times the power density of conventional engines with 50-percent fewer parts and at least 15-percent better fuel efficiency—rising as power rises to as high as 55 percent—with attendant gains in emission levels. Its mechanical simplicity means it should cost 20-percent less to manufacture, we're told. And its small stature would mean signifi-

cant packaging gains and thus truck designs that could better optimize aerodynamic efficiency.

And how about this? An existing prototype pictured here, model EM100, produces 325 hp and 664 lb ft of torque, yet weighs only 296 lb. That's an astounding power-to-weight ratio of 1.1 horsepower per pound. Yet it displaces just 2.5 litres. In fact, the OPOC equivalent to the 15-litre diesel of today might only be 7 litres, as I



BETTER MOUSETRAP?

The EM100 OPOC motor produces 325 hp and 664 lb ft of torque, yet weighs only 296 lb for an astounding power-to-weight ratio of 1.1 horsepower per pound. Yet it displaces just 2.5 litres.

two cylinder heads as they met. The OPOC is a variation on that theme.

There have been other engines using the opposed-piston concept, perhaps the best known being the Deltic

understand things.

There's a design similarity to the flat, boxer engines in old Volkswagen Beetles and present-day Subarus. Hofbauer calls it a cross between the little VW motor and various Junkers aircraft engines that propelled an awful lot of German planes starting in 1929—like the Jumo 104 that had six cylinders and twelve pistons in an opposed-

engine built by Napier & Son in England starting in 1950. It was a two-stroke diesel used in marine and locomotive applications for many years. This motor was actually triangular, of all things, with the cylinders in three blocks forming the sides and with crankshafts at each point of the triangle.

It may be no coincidence that Hofbauer conceived the OPOC engine in 1997 while

Corporation's aftertreatment business. And it says the solid-ammonia dosing technology developed by a small Danish company—in which Navistar invested two years back—is the aftertreatment answer for the future.

In a somewhat complicated history, PurePower results from a series of partnerships and joint ventures that go way back to 1999 when Navistar and Siemens got together to make fuel injectors. A few years later Navistar and Holley, better known for carburetor manufacturing, collaborated to develop intake throttle valves and actuators.

In 2009 Navistar bought Continental AG's American injector business (you

thought they only made tires?) and invested in Amminex, the Danish start-up firm with that interesting product called AdAmmine. That's the ammonia storage system that uses a solid "brick" of ammonia to reduce NOx emissions in an engine's exhaust stream. Call it selective catalytic reduction, or SCR, without the liquid urea. A small brick of AdAmmine contains the equivalent of 75 liters of ammonia gas. Interesting stuff.

Anyway, last year Navistar bought Holley's actuator and valve business, along with a foundry, and PurePower was formed. It is firmly in the diesel aftertreatment business, addressing hydrocarbon and soot reduction by way of diesel oxida-

FOR INFO

www.cleanairpower.com
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www.peterbilt.com
www.purepowertechnologies.com

tion catalysts (DOC) and diesel particulate filters (DPF). Additional products include a variation on that Danish NOx-reduction catalyst.

And now the company has acquired Eaton's aftertreatment technology along with a development lab and testing facility in California.

"Like fuel and air systems, diesel aftertreatment is a core technology necessary for the future success and profitability of the world's businesses that rely on diesel-powered commercial vehicles," says PurePower president Houman Kashanipour. "Further, the catalyst development capability gained through the Eaton aftertreatment technology acquisition will uniquely position PurePower in meeting customer aftertreatment needs."

The company will apparently bring the Danish technology to market. That NOx gas reduction system stores ammonia in a stable, rechargeable cartridge that has unlimited shelf life, will not deposit solids in the system, is tamper-resistant, and won't freeze. Taking a sizeable but quiet shot at the competition, Kashanipour says their aftertreatment answer requires less maintenance and packaging space than aqueous-urea SCR systems. Packaging is also said to be much more compact.

The technology minimizes NOx emissions and particulate matter in compliance with all current global diesel emissions standards, the company claims, including EPA 2010 and Euro emissions standards for on-highway vehicles and through Tier IV, final stage for off-road equipment.

Many questions remain to be answered, like when will this solid-ammonia technology hit the ground? And does this constitute the foundation of Navistar's future emissions strategy? No answers yet. ▲

working as head of powertrain development at VW (he designed the original VW diesel engine that was the foundation for the Jetta 'Clean Diesel' of today). Six years later a working OPOC motor existed.

Its direct-gas-exchange operation—making it a two-stroke motor—comprises two opposing cylinders per module, with a crankshaft between them, and each cylinder has two pistons moving in opposite directions. This eliminates the cylinder head and valve train, meaning there's also no camshaft or timing chain. It may be a two-stroker, but unlike others we've known it's said to have the emissions benefits of a four-cycle design. The EM100 motor mentioned above produces peak power at 3500 rpm.

A key feature here is that the basic single engine is really a module that can be "stacked." A complete engine might be two or even three modules, conjoined by an electrically controlled clutch assembly housed between them. It's engaged when power demand requires both modules but when that demand drops, the clutch is disengaged and the second engine module stops completely. This will obviously improve fuel economy dramatically by reducing parasitic losses,

but will also improve the efficiency of the primary module.

Another key is the electrically controlled turbocharger that puts an electric motor in the turbo assembly to regulate boost pressure. The claimed advantages include improved combustion efficiency to meet emissions mandates; precisely controlled and thus variable compression ratio; the absence of turbo lag; and enhanced drivability due to improved low-end torque. Like at least 10 percent more torque at low rpm, but it can be "trimmed" any which way apparently, and can even improve on that 10 percent at higher rpm.

Hofbauer says that development work at this stage is concentrated on combustion and fuel management in general, which are Navistar specialties.

Navistar Engine Group president Eric Tech adds that the engine "has good potential" not to require SCR to meet the Environmental Protection Agency emissions mandate when it hits the street.

And when will that be?

"In two to three years we want some in the marketplace," says Dan Ustian, Navistar chairman, president and chief executive officer. Test engines will be installed in a truck and a genset later this year. That's extremely hopeful, I've learned from other sources.

For two interesting short videos explaining the OPOC engine, see these URLs:

www.ecomotors.com/videos/introduction-ecomotors-prof-peter-hofbauer and

www.ecomotors.com/videos/introduction-opoc-powertrain

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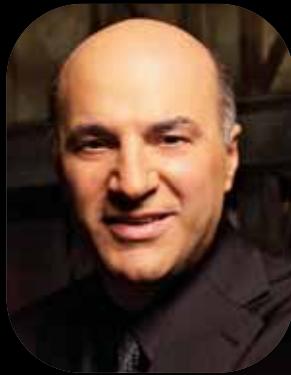


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EQUIPMENT NEWS, REVIEWS, AND MAINTENANCE TIPS



WHERE THE RUBBER EATS THE ROAD:

If you want to make your tires last longer, find out what's killing them.

18 Wheels of Fortune

tires *There are many ways to improve tire life. If the ROI works, and you've resources, why settle for less?*
By Jim Park

How much are you willing to invest to make your tires last longer? There are no shortage of tools or strategies available to help prolong tire life, and thereby reduce tire costs, but are they worth the effort and expense? Maybe there comes a point along the cost/time/effort continuum where good enough is truly good enough.

We've noticed over the past few years that some fleets do tires better than others. At least it appears that way. Many fleets with what some would call a bare

minimum tire program seem satisfied with the results, while others never give up tinkering in pursuit of the quarter-million-mile steer tire and the half-million-mile drive tire. In many applications, tires can be made to last longer; it often comes down to how much it costs to reduce tire expenses.

Application obviously has a lot to do with a tire's potential service life.

Ken Bartos, maintenance director for Hoovestol, a postal contractor based in Eagan, Minn., is averaging 160,000 to

212,000 miles at removal on the steers, and 450,000 to 550,000 miles on his drives. His tire-maintenance strategy consists of aligning trucks when new, and doing tire pressure and wear checks at the 15,000-mile A-service interval. His trailer tires get a pressure check every three months. He does not use a tire-pressure monitoring system or automatic inflation system. His drivers thump the tires before each trip, and he has people at some of the mail distribution centers who watch for problems. That's it.

"Tires aren't a big problem for us," Bartos says. "We've considered tire pressure monitoring and inflation systems, but we don't think we'd see return on the investment. If I was having a lot of flats, I'd be looking more closely at a remedy, but we don't."

HOW MISALIGNED TIRES GUZZLE FUEL

You can save money on oil changes by not changing your oil, or not changing it as often. Eventually, you'll spend more money replacing engines than you saved by not changing the oil. That's false economy at its silliest. But it's the same with tires and alignment.

Poor alignment is usually manifest on steer tires, and experts can describe an alignment problem just by looking at the condition of the steer tires. Toe-in or toe-out conditions have specific wear characteristics, for example, showing up as edge or shoulder wear in patterns related to the chassis condition. Steer tires also compensate for misaligned drive axles, by counter-steering in the opposite direction of a positive or negative thrust angle. So, in addition to excessive scrubbing of the rubber on the shoulders or edges of the tires, you're also wasting fuel overcoming the drag cause by scrubbing tires, says Mike McCoy, national accounts sales manager at Beeline.

"Look at what fleets are spending today to improve trailer aerodynamics. There can be as much fuel economy lost to alignment-induced tire scrub as is saved with sideskirts," McCoy points out. "And when you factor in the cost of shortened tire life, you've got a ready-made case for alignment."

Greg Brook, the heavy-duty training instructor at Hunter Engineering suggests it's possible to reduce tire costs by as much as 33 percent if vehicles are aligned properly.

"Worst to best-case scenario, we can go from 75,000 to 80,000 miles on a steer tire to 140,000 or better," he says. "I won't say that doubling the life of every tire is always going to result from an alignment, but it does—frequently."

TMC's RP 642A recommends a full vehicle alignment every 80,000 to 100,000 miles or 12 to 18 months as a preventive



AND NOW TO RECAP:
A full wheel alignment relieves stress on all chassis components, and can improve tire life by as much as 30 percent.

measure. But if irregular wear is occurring, don't wait until the tires are destroyed. You'll save \$200 on an alignment, but maybe cut the lifecycle on two expensive steer tires by half. Where's the savings there?

McCoy says half the trucks and trailers on the road today have major alignment issues. When asked what order of improvement is possible after doing a full alignment, he says the standard industry response is something like a two percent improvement in fuel consumption and up to 33 percent better tire life.

Even if your results are only half that estimate, the ROI is still there. Wanna make your tires last? Get them all running in the same direction.

Hoovestol does have nearly 100-percent consistency in its recordkeeping, maintenance and repair practices across its seven terminals. The trucks run all over the system and may be anywhere when a service interval arises.

At the other end of the spectrum, Steve Cooke of National Waste Services in Ajax, Ont., says he's working hard to get one year's service out of his drive tires. Cooke is in the refuse collection industry—traditionally one of the toughest applications for tires—and is now up to nine to 10 months' service from the drive tires on his urban packer trucks.

"That's remarkable enough for this industry where three to six months service from a tire is more common. It's quite an improvement from where we were, and I still think we can do better," Cooke says.

Cooke is quite proactive. The province

of Ontario uses transfer stations to collect waste from the refuse trucks before shipping it to out-of-town landfill sites on tractor-trailer units. His rear-loaders don't visit landfill sites anymore, so the need for deep lug tires on those trucks disappeared. He switched from a deep-lug traction tire to a combination lug and rib tire with a broad shoulder, and service life doubled. His biggest problem now is right-hand turns.

"We see very predictable wear on those tires and a lot of curbing damage on the right side, so I rotate them in a criss-cross pattern about half-way through their life cycle," he says. "If I get it just right, I can almost double the tire life again, and we're getting a much higher percentage of reusable casings for retreading."

Cooke's mechanics do tread depth and pressure checks every 150 hours, and he has a service provider come in monthly to

do tire rotations and replacements as required. The contractor also provides estimates on future replacement needs so tires can be ordered, mounted and reinstalled on schedule.

On the highway trucks that do run into landfills, Cooke has spec'd Goodyear's DuraSeal to minimize the damage caused by foreign material picked up at the dump sites.

"We took a tire off recently that had no fewer than 25 nails in it—and it still held pressure," Cooke says. "I figure if I save one service call, DuraSeal has paid for itself. With a tire like that one, I'm money ahead on half the fleet already."

So there you have two different approaches, one very hands-on, the other much less so. Each produces the desired results; is one better than the other? It's all about what works for you.

MEASURING WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Tires are a significant asset to any operation and should be treated as such. They can have a significant fleet operating costs and an impact on fuel consumption—both big expenses in any trucking operation. According to Doug Jones, customer engineering support manager, Michelin Americas Truck Tires, a good tire management program can save a lot of money without costing a lot of money.

"You have to start with a cradle-to-grave tracking and analysis plan, and back it up with good preventive maintenance," he says. "You won't see the fruits of your efforts if you're not tracking the improvements."

Jones advises starting with the right tire for the application.

"We have seen drivers and even some fleets spec the wrong tires for the application and that leads to poor tire life. Truck tires are optimized for specific applications," Jones notes.

Ron Szapacs, maintenance specialist at Air Products and Chemicals in Allentown, Pa., recently hit on the right tire for the application. He had been running balanced and matched duals on his power units, and getting 350,000 miles in mixed highway and urban service, which is respectable. He then tried a fuel-efficient wide-base single tire with less than spectacular results. Then he tried an XDN2, the deeper tread traction tire.

"We recently pulled a set of those that had run on two different trucks. We took them off the tractor at 480,000 miles with 9/32 of tread still on them, and moved them back to a trailer position," Szapacs said. "That's tremendous life. And they saved us 400 lb of payload and some fuel too. I took them for the weight savings, and got spectacular mileage in the bargain."

Szapacs has all his trucks aligned when new, and runs a tire pressure monitoring system to maintain inflation pressure. He used to rotate drive tires, but hasn't seen any wear issue that would prompt him to rotate the wide-single tires—so he no longer does.

HOW TO READ TREADS

Dead tires do tell tales, if you're willing to learn from them. Of course, a pile of irregularly worn, prematurely retired tires

won't tell you much of any value unless you know where they came from. As Jones advises, a good tracking system will help immeasurably here.

"You can learn a lot from the tires about the condition of the vehicle, but if you just throw them on the scrap pile you're losing that link to what's going on with the truck," says Tim Miller, Goodyear's commercial tire marketing communications

manager. "Train your shop people to note the tire and wheel position so you can trace problems back to the truck or axle. Check the tire as it comes off the truck. It's a bit late after it hits the scrap pile."

Too many tires with big differences between the wear on one side of the tread and the wear on the other side indicates that alignment issues are not being addressed. "And those differences may be

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In Gear

a sign alignment checks need to be reviewed," Miller notes.

Even day-to-day operating issues can make a difference says Bridgestone's Guy Walenga. Inflation pressure is obviously important, but more so if you're running heavy or at higher speeds.

Weight, speed and pressure are all closely related, and one will impact the other two. Walenga recommends check-

ing the load and inflation tables for the proper inflation, weight and speed ratings for the tires, and we advise fleets not to exceed those recommendations, he says. "If you want improved life from your tires, stay within the parameters, and keep a constant eye on them for irregular wear and signs of deterioration. Catch it early and you can save the tire. Fix the problem, and you'll save the next tire too." ▲

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DON'T SHOOT THE MESSENGER

Irregular tire wear is merely the bearer of bad news; it's not the actual problem.

Tires generally do not self-destruct. If some condition exists that is chewing up tires prematurely, doesn't it make sense to fix the problem rather than continuing to throw tires at it?

External influences range from improper inflation pressure to worn shock absorbers. Somewhere in between, we have worn or loose suspension components, improper alignment, an out-of-round condition related to tire or wheel installation, and more. And then there are the driver-related



TIRED OUT: This tire is on a trailer now, but from its days on a steer axle, you can see evidence of edge and scallop wear, likely caused by improper toe condition and a balance problem.

conditions, such as speeding, high-speed cornering, curbing, etc. Simply put, there are so many factors conspiring to shorten the life of your tires, it's pure folly to assume that replacing the tire will solve the problem. In all likelihood, it won't, and you be consigning another expensive asset to an early grave.

The definitive guide to irregular tire wear is TMC's RP 219B, Radial Tire Wear Conditions and Causes: A Guide to Wear Pattern Analysis. If something is happening to your tires, chances are this guide lists the condition and source of the problem.

While tire maintenance is nothing short of a chore, it's a worthwhile investment. TMC recommends tracking tire condition and wear over time because the problems won't show up overnight. The sooner you catch a problem, the better your chances of salvaging the tire and the better your chances of correcting the condition to prevent future wear on the next set of tires. RP 642A recommends cold inflation checks every two weeks minimum, and wear checks every 45 days or at A-service intervals. Observe and record wear on each tire, and compare with previous inspections. If wear is evident, find out what's causing it and fix it.



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TRU Grit

reefers *What you need to know about spec'ing reefers in 2011 and beyond.* By Tom Berg

Transport refrigeration units—TRUs—are the main thing separating temperature-controlled trailers from dry freight vans. But insulation is just as important.

Without it, reefer units would huff and puff and accomplish very little. Foam-type insulation is what retains the cooled or heated air inside and maintains perishable cargoes at proper temperatures.

The exact type of foam varies among trailer and body builders, and some claim superiority over others. Generally speaking, though, more means greater capability, and more relates to wall thickness, according to Mike McCluskey, national account director for VT Hackney Inc., which makes Hackney beverage and Kidron reefer trailers.

Chatting inside a Kidron multi-temp trailer displayed last month at the Technology and Maintenance Council's (TMC) equipment expo in Tampa, Fla., McCluskey said a wall can range from as little as 1.5 inches in thickness for produce haulers that also transport dry freight to six inches for ice cream carriers.

Obviously, required commodity temperatures determine how much insulation is needed. The new Kidron trailer on display was built for local and regional food-service deliveries, and had 2.5 inches of wall insulation. It will operate with two cold compartments and a third non-cooled compartment for dry groceries. The three will be separated by movable insulated bulkheads. There was no air chute. Instead, the Thermo King TRU will work through a pair of evaporators in the ceiling, blowing cool or freezing air into the two refrigerated compartments.

The rearmost compartment will usually be the "dry" one. Would it make sense to not insulate the walls back there? No. It would actually cost more to alter the manufacturing process, McCluskey explained.

Walls are made in long sections, and making the rear third or so of the trailer with dry walls would take extra time and

money. An all-insulated trailer also adds flexibility for when varying amounts of commodities require longer cooled compartments.

Food-service trailers are usually built more stoutly than long-haul reefers, he explained. That's because customers want strength and durability in every component so they can run them 10 to 20 years. Long-haulers want light weight to carry higher payloads, so they specify things like aluminum structural members and thinner walls. Such trailers wear out faster, but planned life cycles are correspondingly short.

Such considerations are what experts in trailer specifications deal with. As with any spec'ing task, they look at what commodities will be hauled, where they need to go, and how they will be loaded and unloaded. These factors help match the trailer to the reefer unit. They also consider the trailer's intended life span and how much resale value the buyer wants.

David Kiefer, director of marketing and product management for Carrier Transicold in Athens, Ga., thought through the spec'ing process and came up with some recommendations. His business is TRUs, but he's also concerned with the trailer it'll go on. The object, he says, is optimizing the balance between refrigeration demands and fuel efficiency.

TRAILER CONFIGURATION AND VOLUME

■ **Size always matters, but it's not the only thing.** The amount of insulation determines the amount of refrigeration required, and airflow is impacted more by the length of the trailer. Airflow around the product is important, and the use of air chutes is generally recommended, especially in longer trailers and in circumstances where constant temperature is wanted throughout the load.

■ **Insulation thickness and type.** Insulation must be adequate on walls, top, floors and doors. The "Ua" value is a measure of the



trailer's thermal efficiency, and the higher the Ua number, the more refrigeration will be required. Over time, insulation degrades—crumbles, absorbs moisture, etc.,—and heat and cold will move more easily from outside and inside the trailer. So it's wise to specify additional reserve capacity in the TRU when spec'ing a new trailer. (See "I'm talking to U, eh?" on page 42.)

■ **Whiter vans are cooler.** This affects "solar gain," so the darker the truck body, the more of the sun's heat will be absorbed and the more cooling capacity will be required from the TRU.

■ **Number, type and use of doors.** Swing doors generally seal more completely than roll-up doors. Side doors add delivery con-



COLD HARD FACTS: Size matters, but it's not the only thing.

venience, but introduce more openings through which cooled air will be lost.

■ **Floor type.** The best floors have channels that promote airflow underneath the cargo, as opposed to a flat or "diamond plate" type floor. In addition, palletized loads provide additional room for air circulation and warm air return to the TRU. Pallets are a must on flat floors in order to ensure proper air circulation and temperature control.

OPERATIONAL CONCERNs

■ **Contents, setpoint and temperature.** What kind of products will be carried and how large are the loads? What temperature set points will be required, and is the

product loaded at the correct temperature or must it be "pulled down"?

Cargoes such as fresh produce "respire," generating heat and moisture that sometimes must be removed from the trailer. That's why small ventilation doors are built into the nose and one of the rear doors. Cargo respiration also demands more from the TRU. If the trailer will be used to transport more than one type of product, it may require a reefer with a wider range of cooling capacity and airflow capabilities.

■ **Where do you work?** In what geographic area and weather conditions will the unit be operated? Is it long haul or local distribution? Equipment used in the Southwest U.S. will require greater cooling

capacity than one being used back home in Canada.

■ **Deliveries.** How many of those doors will be opened for deliveries and for how long? What are the average time intervals between delivery stops? Long-haul trips will have few door openings, but a local distribution trailer has many, requiring a reefer capable of quickly recovering from the intermittent heat gain.

■ **Electric standby.** This is a must-have if distribution points provide access to plug-in electric power, and state or local regulations require using it to reduce noise and diesel fumes. Some TRU models have this built in. With others it's optional. Standby electrical power can also be cheaper than diesel fuel. With the proper guidelines and documentation, it can also be an approved compliance strategy in California.

■ **Low-fuel alert.** One of the most costly TRU maintenance problems is running out of fuel on the road. A low-fuel alert warns drivers when the engine might be shut down and reduces the chance of the diesel losing its prime, requiring technical intervention before restarting.

■ **Programmable temperature profiles.** Programmable set points for a variety of products simplifies TRU set-up and helps prevent driver mistakes. A control may have parameters for lettuce, ice cream, apples, strawberries, etc., each selectable by the push of a button.

■ **Sound suppression.** Although today's TRUs are much quieter than those of just a few years ago, some loading areas that are near neighborhoods, or fleets want to help assure long-haul operators aren't bothered by TRU engine noise. So optional sound-suppressing packages are available. Units using standby electric power tends to be quieter than mechanical refrigeration systems because they eliminate many of the traditional sources of noise.

■ **Door-open switch.** In the past, door switches could only shut off the TRU when the door was opened to avoid wasting fuel. Today's microprocessor controls can use the door switch to order the unit to run at low speed, or shut it off only during a pre-configured ambient temperature range that is programmed by the user.

Additionally, the controls record door-opening events in the on-board data logger to track theft and monitor security.

Those are some of the details to be considered when spec'ing the trailer and ordering the reefer unit to go with it. Trailer and TRU experts know more, and the wise buyer will consult with them.

TMC's TLC for A TRU

It's not enough to write the correct specs for trailer insulation values when you order. Proper maintenance and repairs are vital. The Technology & Maintenance Council (TMC) of the American Trucking Associations has a task force on preserving reefer insulation values, headed by Lori Coleman, Gordon Food Service. Members plan to write a TMC Recommended Practice on the subject.

Early on they identified a basic problem: When trailers are damaged, repairs too often don't get done, because there's always pressure from operations people to keep the trailer busy moving cargo.

"Triage repairs" are the best the maintenance department can do, said one fleet manager during a meeting of the task force at TMC's recent annual meeting.

I'M TALKING TO U, EH?

Engineers typically use the term "K-value" in formulas to calculate the heat loss of an insulated panel because K is a property of the material itself, independent of thickness.

WHAT IS K-VALUE? It is simply the R-value divided into the thickness of the material.

Still more calculations are needed to determine the thermal efficiency of a trailer.

Because the trailer is made up of several materials, some conducting heat from one to another in series, and some conducting heat along a path parallel to others, many calculations go into determining the thermal efficiency of a refrigerated trailer.

The value known for this is called the "U-value." Trailer sidewalls, roofs, floors, rear doors and frontwalls all have a unique U-value because all of these components are constructed differently.

When you put them all together you have a "Ua-value." The little "a" means the value over the entire "area" of the trailer's surfaces, Great Dane explains. The next time you want to know how well your trailer will perform thermally, ask your trailer sales representative or manufacturer for the Ua value of the equipment. The lower the number, the more thermally efficient the trailer is.

Some rips and punctures in a trailer's inner or outer skins are ignored or simply patched up in a hurry.

Why is this a problem?

Damage allows moisture to enter the walls, ceiling or floor and degrade the foam insulation. Water crushes the foam's

bubbles and forms voids. Heat can then move easily between outside and inside the trailer, and the reefer unit has to work harder and use more fuel while trying to maintain the desired interior air temperature.

How much water can a reefer trailer absorb?

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Cost Savings



Customer Service



Hundreds and even thousands of pounds, said Chuck Cole of Utility Trailer Manufacturing. He cited one example where 2,500 pounds of water had accumulated where insulation had been. The easiest method of determining water contamination is to weigh the trailer. Top off all fluids in the reefer unit, fill the fuel tank and park it on a scale. Of course, you have to know what it weighed when new, so scaling it the same way should be part of a delivery procedure.

Failing that, the manufacturer should be able to provide an estimate of a trailer's as-built weight.

The most effective solution to timely repairs is regular inspections of reefer trailers and giving the maintenance department the ability to sideline it for enough time to repair things right.

"That's the ideal," said Coleman, a manager at Gordon's facility in Grand Rapids, Mich. "Then there's the real world."

Inspections should be part of regularly scheduled preventive maintenance visits.

Repairs to forklift-inflicted tears and

other damage to walls, floors, ceilings and doors must be done quickly but effectively, using good quality sealants.

Use methods approved by trailer builders. "Do what they say," advised Bud Rodowick, a former fleet manager who now represents Thermo King. "The information is available. Just ask 'em." Among other things, badly damaged panels should be pulled out and replaced, and insulation repacked. Hire third-party repair specialists if you can't do it yourself.

Water also gets in through seams between side sheeting and along roofs, Utility's Cole noted. There are 400 to 500 linear feet of seams along the sides and top of a typical 53-foot reefer trailer. Age and road vibration cause caulking to dry and shrink and the seams to gradually open.

These should be recaulked and repaired where necessary.

Doors, particularly the relative merits of swing versus rollups, occupied about 10 minutes of the task force members' time. Most agreed that gaskets on swing doors

did a superior job of sealing in cooled air. Rollups, while convenient in some operations, cannot press hard enough against their brush-type seals to keep out summer heat or winter cold.

No matter which type of door is in use, inspect them regularly for damage and deterioration and do repairs promptly. One remedy for a weak rollup door seal is to place a movable bulkhead against the rear of the load, Coleman said. But that takes up valuable floor space.

Floors are another problem area. They can leak like sieves and you won't know it unless you look at them closely, said Cole. Crawl under the trailer and look up and you might see points of light from the interior lamps.

Or look down from inside a dark trailer and you might see daylight. Acidic cleaning solvents used for flushing out debris and sanitizing trailer interiors can eat aluminum floors and eventually form tiny holes.

Cleaning must be done, but beware of potential damage. ▲



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1 OF 15 2009 VOLVO DAY CABS, Cummins isx 485 hp, 13 speed, 12/46 axles, 4.10 ratio, 22.5 tires. -59877



2008 VOLVO 670, Volvo eng., 13 spd Autoshift, 61" sleeper, Stk #3017C. -57071



2009 VOLVO 780, Cummins ISX 550 hp, 18 spd, 13.2/40, 3.58 ratio, 11r22.5, Stk #3036. -60642



2007 VOLVO 780, Volvo 500 hp, 13 speed auto, 12.5/40 axles, 3.73 ratio, 22.5 rubber. -59878

\$46,900



2008 KENWORTH T660, Cummins isx 485 hp, 13speed, 12/40 axles, 3.55 ratio, 22.5 rubber. -59879



2009 VOLVO 780, Volvo D16 500 hp, Volvo trans., 12.5/40, 3.42 ratio, 11r22.5, Stk #31087-1 -60643



2004 KENWORTH T300, Cat C7 300 hp, Allison trans., 12/23, 11r22.5, new 12' dump body, stk #31108-1 -60644



(2) 2009 VOLVO 670, Volvo D13 485 hp or Cummins ISX 450 hp, 13 spd, 22.5" LP tires, 3.55 ratio, 61" sleeper, stk #2965 & 2966 -57069

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Cascadia aerodynamic
enhancements

LIGHTWEIGHT & SLIPPERY

FREIGHTLINER CASCADIA AERODYNAMIC ENHANCEMENTS

FREIGHTLINER showcased three Cascadia models at the recent **Mid-America Trucking Show** that feature lightweight specs and fuel-efficient options. Plus enhanced aerodynamic features on all models from big sleepers to day cabs.

The Cascadia's lightweight options include the Detroit Diesel DD13 engine, a new ArvinMeritor aluminum carrier for the M-14X tandem rear axle; Steerlite X30 brake drums; Hendrickson Steertek/Airtek axle and suspension; aluminum frame rails and aluminum air

tanks; Michelin X One rear tires and Alcoa forged aluminum wheels; and SAF Holland aluminum air slide fifth wheel. As well as a wide selection of lightweight sleeper options.

Optional aerodynamic enhancements include next-generation chassis side fairings and 20-in. side extenders, claimed to provide up to 1.8 percent better fuel economy over current 72-in. raised-roof models. Previously introduced improvements include the roof deflector, chassis skirts, valence panel and bumper with closures.

See www.FreightlinerTrucks.com

LIGHT PETE, AIR DISCS

AIR DISCS NOW STANDARD, PLUS NEW LIGHTWEIGHT OPTION

Peterbilt is the first North American truck maker to make air disc brakes standard on all class 8 models, partly as a way to meet stopping-distance rules going into effect this August. The U.S. braking standard, mirrored in Canada, requires tractor-trailers to be able to come to a complete stop within 250 ft, down from 355 ft. In most cases, a properly configured drum-brake setup can meet the standard too.

Peterbilt has also announced a light-weight option package that includes a variety of weight-saving components with day cabs as low as 14,200 lb and sleeper tractors down to 15,800 lb.

The package includes composite front springs rated at 12,000 lb;

aluminum cabs with lap-seam construction plus aluminum



bell housing, crossmembers, and an aluminum space-saver battery box; the Holland aluminum-top-plate FWAL fifth wheel; Peterbilt's own FLEXAir suspension; and wide-base single tires with aluminum wheels.

As well, Peterbilt says its Extended Day Cab is now available for its complete lineup of class 8 trucks—models 389, 388, 386, 384, 367 and 365.

See www.peterbilt.com

CUMMINS CARE

ENHANCED CUSTOMER ASSISTANCE WILL RUN 24/7

Cummins has launched Cummins Care, an enhanced customer assistance program providing 24/7 response. The company employs 110 specialists at its new 25,000-sq-ft Customer Support Center in Nashville, Tenn., who can

Product Watch

help with finding the nearest authorized service location.

They can also answer questions on all the latest on- and off-highway technology and deal with all operational questions on topics like fuel and oil specs.

Cummins Care uses the same 1-800-DIESELS number that customers may already know. The enhanced support hours will be extended to 24 hours a day, seven days a week, starting in July.

See www.cumminsengines.com

LIGHT AXLE CARRIER

MERITOR 14X AXLE SAVES 100 LB

Meritor showed off a new lightweight aluminum carrier option for its 14X tandem axle at the Mid America show. Already claimed to be the lightest axle in its class, this version of the 14X saves about 100 lb compared to a standard cast-iron carrier. The carrier will be available on the 14X in a wide range of ratios



including the very fast 2.47, and it's compatible with the DualTrac configuration that accommodates wide-based single tires. It won't be available for production until 2012.

The Meritor 14X is an evolutionary axle system built on the legacy of the RT145.

Features include a more robust inter-axle differential; premium amboid design as standard equipment; and what's claimed to be the industry's most complete range of axle ratios—from 2.47 to 7.17.

Meritor has also launched a redesigned online search engine for Literature on Demand, allowing easy access to the latest product sales brochures, technical bulletins, maintenance manuals and training information. It's accessible through the online Customer Center.

See www.meritor.com

CONTINENTAL TIRE LAUNCHES RETREADS

CONTINENTAL'S new retread program is one with a difference, and its new **ContiLifeCycle** business unit has been formed specifically to support retreading in the Americas. It's going to form a dealer network in the U.S. and Canada with what it calls the industry's first "completely clean distribution footprint."

The key is that Continental's retread offerings are "built around the technologies and tread designs of our new tires," says Paul Williams, commercial tires vice president. That means the tread design you originally chose on your new tire will be what you get when you retread that casing. There won't be any retread-only tire types. Quality will be the same too, the company says. They call it their "lifecycle solution."

Supporting all this is the recent opening of a precurse tread manufacturing plant in Mexico, capable of producing roughly a half million flat treads per year. The plant will be expanded to produce more than double that number by 2015.

Continental says it's looking to engage partners as part of a distribution network that will span North America coast to coast. Its dealers will not be competing geographically for Continental retread business.

AERODYNAMIC MACKS

MACK ADDS NEW AERODYNAMIC FAIRINGS TO PINNACLE HIGHWAY TRACTORS

Mack unveiled an assortment of product enhancements at Mid-America. Re-designed roof fairings are offered for the Pinnacle 70-in. high- and mid-rise sleepers as well as the 60-in. mid-rise, as well as stronger, lighter, longer yet less expensive chassis fairings covering up to a 140-gal fuel tank. Pinnacle model sleepers with improved aerodynamics can get up to six-percent better fuel efficiency, Mack claims.

Mack also announced the addition of four new Econodyne engine ratings—MP7-405E, MP8-415E, MP8-445E, MP8-505E. Through an enhanced fuel-mapping strategy, Mack claims its



EconoBoost intelligent torque-management system offers an extra 200 lb ft of torque. It initiates at 1,300 rpm, providing additional power that allows drivers to remain longer in the top two gears.

Mack also introduced a new twin-steer package for its Granite model, available in axle-forward or axle-back

packages. The twin-steer now offers vertical back-of-cab aftertreatment—DPF and SCR.

Mack's vocational trucks now also feature Body Link III. Designed with extensive input from body builders, the company says, the new Body Link III provides a conveniently located under-cab 29-pin connector, cab pass-through boot for a quick and reliable body hookup, and assignable in-cab switches.

See www.macktrucks.com

WESTERN STAR INTERIOR

NEW 34-IN. STRATOSPHERE SLEEPER AND UPDATED INTERIOR ON ALL MODELS

Western Star offers a new 34-in. Stratosphere to its sleeper product line, and has updated the interior for all of its truck models, including the recently introduced 4700 model. The enhanced interior features customizable compartments and shelving, and brighter color options.

Available on the 4800 and 4900 models, the new sleeper option allows vocational and short-haul drivers flexibility to meet hours-of-service regulations without requiring a larger sleeper.

The new 34-in. bunk combines additional headroom and greater storage space with the look and feel of a day cab, plus the specially contoured roof fairing improves cab-to-trailer gap while reducing the chance of contact with a refrigeration unit.

Product Watch



The new sleeper is now available to order for 4800 and 4900 truck models.

Western Star's new interior includes an electronic interface prep package with factory-installed mounting and power connections enables customers to choose their own applications such as navigation systems and Bluetooth-enabled cell phones.

See www.WesternStar.com

VOLVO FUEL GAINS

BIG FUEL-EFFICIENCY IMPROVEMENT ON OFFER, SAYS VOLVO

Volvo Trucks says its new powertrain enhancements and advanced aerodynamics on VN highway tractors aim to deliver eight-percent better fuel efficiency over EPA 2007 engines.

The company introduced new interior features too, designed to increase comfort and productivity.

Volvo has a new 455-hp, 1550/1750-lb-ft torque rating for the D13 engine to



complement existing Eco-Torque and Dual-Torque ratings of 405, 425, 475, and 500 hp. They're designed to maximize fuel economy by rewarding fuel-efficient driving and encouraging low-rpm operation. On demand, engine torque will increase by 200 lb ft—300 lb ft with the 425-horse motor—to allow the vehicle to remain in top gear on most grades. Volvo offers Eco-Torque ratings on D11 and D16 engines too.

Volvo has also rolled out an online driver development program—www.edrivertraining.com—focused on equipping drivers with technical knowledge about their truck and techniques for maximizing fuel efficiency.

See www.volvo.trucks.us.com

ESI GREASE

CHEVRON INTRODUCES NEW DELO GREASE ESI

Chevron Lubricants says the latest member of its product family, Delo Grease ESI, is an extended-service-interval grease engineered to reduce friction and wear in a wide variety of on- and off-road applications. Able to extend service intervals up to and beyond 30,000 miles, the new grease is claimed to deliver optimum protection for wheel bearings, kingpins, transmission cross-shaft spring pins, brake cam shafts, and other components in both high- and low-temperature conditions.

The grease is formulated with highly refined base stocks, says Chevron, with a lithium complex thickener, rust and oxidation inhibitors, and extreme pressure and tackiness additives. The new grease is fine in automatic centralized greasing systems and in wheel bearings with disc brakes.

See www.DeloPerformance.com and www.chevronlubricants.com

REGIONAL-HAUL T660

KENWORTH SHOWCASES REGIONAL HAULER, 6X6 T370

Kenworth says its latest T660 is a regional-haul configuration with shorter wheelbases, tighter chassis packaging, enhanced maneuverability and weight savings of 250 lb. Fuel-tank capacity is the same as a standard T660 with forward chassis fairings.

The regional hauler removes the standard under-cab chassis fairing and replaces it with a cab-mounted extension of the fender for significant wheelbase gains. This allows larger diameter 24.5-



and 28.5-in. fuel tanks to fit under the cab. Previously, only 22.5-in. tanks could slot in there.

In situations where wheelbase is not critical, the customer can order the same wheelbase as with a standard T660 configuration, but with a higher fuel capacity.

Retail Diesel Price Watch

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CITY	Price	(+/-) Previous Week	Excl. Taxes
WHITEHORSE	135.4	0.0	117.8
VANCOUVER *	132.9	0.0	93.5
VICTORIA	128.9	0.0	95.2
PRINCE GEORGE	122.2	0.0	92.2
KAMLOOPS	123.7	1.0	93.7
KELOWNA	127.3	0.0	97.1
FORT ST. JOHN	127.9	1.7	97.7
YELLOWKNIFE	125.0	0.0	105.9
CALGARY *	115.5	0.0	97.0
RED DEER	114.9	0.0	96.4
EDMONTON	112.2	-0.3	93.8
LETHBRIDGE	114.4	-0.5	96.0
LLOYDMINSTER	114.6	0.0	96.1
REGINA *	120.9	0.0	96.1
SASKATOON	121.3	-0.6	96.5
PRINCE ALBERT	122.9	1.5	98.0
WINNIPEG *	117.2	0.0	96.1
BRANDON	117.4	0.0	96.3
TORONTO *	132.2	0.7	98.7
OTTAWA	130.9	0.3	97.5
KINGSTON	128.9	0.0	95.8
PETERBOROUGH	128.4	0.5	95.3
WINDSOR	131.2	0.8	97.8
LONDON	128.2	0.7	95.2
SUDSBURY	129.9	0.5	96.7
SAULT STE MARIE	127.7	1.6	94.7
THUNDER BAY	130.1	0.4	96.8
NORTH BAY	129.6	0.3	96.4
TIMMINS	132.6	0.0	99.0
HAMILTON	128.6	-0.1	95.5
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MONTRÉAL *	135.5	0.5	97.7
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SHERBROOKE	134.2	0.3	96.6
GASPÉ	134.9	0.0	101.0
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RIMOUSKI	134.4	0.0	98.7
TROIS RIVIÈRES	134.9	0.0	97.2
DRUMMONDVILLE	135.4	0.0	97.7
VAL D'OR	133.9	0.3	100.2
SAINT JOHN *	133.9	-1.8	95.3
FREDERICTON	134.3	-1.7	95.6
MONCTON	134.9	-1.0	96.2
BATHURST	136.6	-1.7	97.7
EDMUNDSTON	136.2	-1.1	97.3
MIRAMICHI	135.6	-1.8	96.8
CAMPBELLTON	135.7	-1.8	96.9
SUSSEX	134.2	-1.8	95.6
WOODSTOCK	137.5	-1.9	98.5
HALIFAX *	128.4	-4.0	92.2
SYDNEY	131.5	-3.9	94.9
YARMOUTH	130.4	-4.0	94.0
TRURO	129.2	-3.9	92.9
KENTVILLE	129.8	-4.1	93.5
NEW GLASGOW	131.6	-2.8	95.0
CHARLOTTETOWN *	128.4	0.0	98.1
ST. JOHNS *	139.2	-1.9	102.7
GANDER	135.6	-2.0	99.5
LABRADOR CITY	144.5	-1.0	107.4
CORNER BROOK	139.9	-1.8	103.3
CANADA AVERAGE (V)	127.5	0.0	96.9

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1988 VOLVO LADDER TRUCK FIRE TRUCK, DETROIT ENG; 6V92, 250 HP, AUTOMATIC TRANS; 20 & 44 AXLE(S), WALKING BEAM SUSP; 226" WHEELBASE, 75' LADDER, STK#Y1...more 

2007 FREIGHTLINER FLC 120 HIGHWAY TRACTOR, 73" CONDO SLEEPER, DETROIT ENG; 14L, 455 HP, 13 SPD TRANS; 12 & 40 AXLE(S), AIR LINER SUSP; 229" WHEELBASE,...more 

(2) 2006 VOLVO VNL670 HIGHWAY TRACTORS, 61" HI-RISE SLEEPER, CUMMINS ENG; ISX, 450 HP, 12 SPEED AUTO-SHIFT TRANS; 12 & 40 AXLE(S), AIR-RIDE SUSP; 215"...more 

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Building on the 4x4 setup introduced last year for the T270 and T370, Kenworth also announced that it will offer its first factory-installed 6x6 configuration for the medium-duty T370. It features a front drive axle in ratings from 10,000 to 16,000 lb and a 40,000-lb rear suspension.

Both the Paccar PX-6 and the PX-8 engine are offered.

See www.kenworth.com

BENDIX IN LOUISVILLE

NEW WINGMAN SYSTEM PLUS

TRAILER DIAGNOSTICS

Bendix has launched Wingman Advanced collision mitigation technology, building on the company's ESP stability system. As well, its Trailer Remote Diagnostic Unit (TRDU) can now be used to diagnose trailer ABS problems on most trailer systems, including those from WABCO and Haldex.

Using a front radar sensor, Wingman Advanced delivers both warnings and active interventions to help drivers avoid rear-end collisions or reduce their severity. It provides following-distance and stationary-object alerts which are available whether or not cruise control is engaged. When drivers use the adaptive cruise control with braking feature, the system will actively intervene to help them maintain a safe following distance behind a forward vehicle by reducing throttle, engaging the engine retarder, or if necessary applying the foundation brakes.

The collision mitigation feature provides additional interventions, whether or not cruise control is active, by alerting the driver and automatically applying the brakes to help decelerate the vehicle when a rear-end collision is imminent. About two-thirds of the available braking power of the vehicle can be delivered this way, compared to about one-third through adaptive cruise control with braking. The driver maintains control.

Said to be easy-to-use, the Bendix TRDU is designed to help technicians identify the exact location and component of the trailer ABS problem. Just 1.5 in. in diameter and less than 2 in. tall, it simply plugs into the trailer's seven-pin connector using an adaptor.

See www.bendix.com



PARALLEL HYBRID FOR HEAVY TRUCKS

The latest version of a parallel hybrid electric propulsion system for heavy-duty trucks has been launched by New York's **BAE Systems**. Designed for class 6, 7, and 8 vocational trucks, a variation is already in service on more than 3,000 transit buses in cities around the world—including Toronto and Ottawa.

The new HybriDrive system is said to address the needs of trucks with duty cycles that involve higher operating speeds and less frequent stops in non-urban modes. For truck users the company promises "fuel savings not before seen in these truck classes," a rather bold statement.

The HybriDrive parallel system is based on a single electric machine integrated between the engine and the transmission. The system can be installed with minimal impact to the vehicle, says BAE, and its power and torque ratings range from 95 to 145 hp and 300 to 400 lb ft. It's designed to support big-bore diesel engines ranging from 350 to 600 hp, with associated torque ratings of 750 all the way up to 2,150 lb ft.

It's in the final stages of development, with first road trials this spring.

SEVERE-DUTY FREIGHTLINERS

A NEW FAMILY OF TRUCKS FOR CLASS 7 AND 8 VOCATIONAL MARKETS

Freightliner offers two new Severe Duty (SD) truck models, providing a set-back axle position in both a 108- and 114-in. BBC configuration.

The expanded SD product line features options such as front frame extensions and radiator-mounted grilles for body attachment installations; front and rear engine power-take-offs; and body-specific chassis layouts that give vocational customers spec'ing flexibility.

The 108SD features a 42-in. set-back axle with ratings from 10,000 to 20,000 lb for front axles, and single and tandem rears from 21,000 to 46,000 lb. Power comes from Cummins ISB or ISC engines.

The 114SD model features a set-forward axle (SFA) configuration with a standard 31-in. front axle position

and optional 29.5-in. bridge-formula configuration, and a set-back axle (SBA) configuration with a standard 48-in. SBA setting for maximum maneuverability. Front-axle ratings go up to 23,000 lb, and configurations for single axles are available up to 38,000 lb, tandems up to



58,000 lb, and tridems rated to 69,000 lb.

The SD family also incorporates SmartPlex, a multiplex electrical system that simplifies chassis-to-body electrical integration.

The 114SD SFA begins production in this quarter, while the 108SD and 114SD SBA will launch closer to the end of this year.

See www.freightlinertrucks.com ▲



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Peterbilt	back cover
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Private Motor Truck Council	39
www.pmtc.ca	
Ridewell	29
www.ridewellcorp.com	
Simard Suspensions	17
www.simardsuspensions.com	
Suppy Chain Canada	34
www.supplychaincanada.com	
Today's Trucking	52
www.todaystrucking.com	

Truck & Trailer	50
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Utility Trailer	
Manufacturing Co.	2
www.utilitytrailer.com	
Yokahoma	46
www.yokahoma.ca	

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COMPANIES IN THE NEWS

B	
BAE Systems	51
Bendix	51
Bison Transport	15
Brian Kurtz Trucking	15
Bridgestone	38

C	
Canadian Safety Compliance	13
Carrier Transicold	40
Caterpillar	9, 19
Centre Du Camions Amos	15
Chevron	49
CIBC World Markets	27
Continental	48
Cummins	21, 24, 31, 47

D	
Daimler Trucks	9
DragonFly Productions	14

E	
En-Pro	26
Espar	24
Exalta Transport	15

F	
First Truck Centres	23
Freightliner	8, 17, 21, 24, 30, 34, 47, 51
FTR Associates	27

G	
GM	8
Goodyear	36
Gordon Food Service	42
Great Dane	42

H	
Hino	8, 17, 21, 56
Honda	14

I	
International	17
Intertainment Media	16
Isuzu	21, 57

J	
Jimexs	21

K	
Kenworth	9, 17, 21, 34, 49

M	
Mack	17, 31, 34, 21, 48
Mackinnon Transport	15
Manitoulin Group	15

Mazda	14
Meritor	24, 30, 48
Michelin	37
Mitsubishi Fuso	8, 21

N	
Navistar	8, 11, 21, 31
Newcom Business Media	24

P	
Paccar	8
Peterbilt	17, 21, 30, 34, 47

R	
Robert Transport	29

S	
Sterling	8
Suzuki	14

T	
Thermo King	43
Tidewater Corp	21

Toyota	14
Transport Robert	29

U	
Utility Trailer	43

V	
Vedder Transport	27

Volvo	17, 21, 34, 49
VT Hackney Inc.	40

W	
Western Star	9, 17, 21, 34, 48

Y	
Yellow-Roadway Corp.	16



By Peter Carter

Just Say Yo! To Drugs

We were on the hunt for monster trucks.
Turns out they're mostly hallucinations.

My nephew Paul Fairman stands six six and weighs about 270. He's solid, too. He could bench press me, if he chose. He has degrees in music and education and teaches elementary school in Scarborough, Ont.

In an effort to encourage his students to read and write, he invited me to talk to his class about life as an editor. He thinks I have fun here.

Most of his students are Tamils whose parents emigrated to the best country in the world from Sri Lanka. A lot of the youngsters have dads or uncles who drive truck.

I told them that one of the best things about being an editor is we get to ask people any questions we want. "We can go up to random people and ask them whatever," I said.

To prove how enjoyable it is, I encouraged the students to cross-examine me.

The weirder the question, the better, I said.

They started off easy. They asked where I bought my shoes, what the coolest car I ever drove was, and what was my most embarrassing mistake.

One little girl, about the size of a first-generation cell phone, looked me in the eye and asked: "Are you afraid of your wife?"

"You bet," I said.

Then she said—get this—"My grandpa told me, 'A good man should be afraid of his wife.'" (I vote her for the next Dalai Lama.)

Another of my favorites came from another liter-sized boy. Remember. Elementary school desks come up to your knees.

"Sir," the little guy asked, peering upwards, "Do you trim your nose hairs?" (Again, yes.)

Toward the end of the session, one of the boys tried, "Mr. Carter, what do you think of drugs?"

I turned and looked at him. I said, "I love drugs."

I went on. "If it weren't for drugs I couldn't be here. I have bad allergies. It's only because of drugs that I'm not sneezing and snorting."

"My mom lived a whole lot longer because of drugs and I don't mind going to the dentist because they give me drugs to make the pain go away."

I told him "Every day, I thank God for drugs."

At that point, Paul's co-teacher said something like, "Boys'n'girls. Mr. Carter is talking about another kind of drug. Not the illegal kind."

Indeed I was talking about the vast majority of drugs. The ones that make our life better. The kind that get us through the day.

The kind we take for granted.

Last week, my son and I drove to Montreal from Toronto. Before we hit the 401, I handed him my camera. I told him to snap a photo of every truck we pass that looked unsafe. Anything that appeared even vaguely dangerous or illegal.

We could, I told him, publish these losers in this magazine.

It was mid-week. The drive took six hours.

We got one photo. And it was the municipal-owned contraption shown on this page.

The great majority of the trucks we passed were just great.

Tie-downs looked secure, paintjobs were good, mud flaps were securely attached the only real exceptions were some rusty



GOTCHA! We planned to snap pictures of the unfit trucks and print their photos here.

intermodal cans, which tend to fade, but overall, the fleet looked fine. Congratulations. (Stats bear this out, by the way.)

Just like with bad drugs; there are lots of nasty trucks out there that need fighting. Some truckers run unsafe equipment, and a few drivers are tired or under-qualified. And we can never let our guard down. One lousy operator can wreck it for everybody. But most? A-one.

A University of Toronto psychologist named Dr. Gary Walters once told me that a minuscule percentage of moms (I think he said eight) are responsible for 90 percent of child-welfare problems. Most moms know exactly what they're doing and do it well.

Moms, wives, drugs, trucks—they can all sometimes be a bit on the scary side.

But if it weren't for the fact that the huge vast majority of 'em are good, none of us would be here. ▲

PHOTO CREDIT: Michel Carter

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