

SAFETY: What to do with devil-may-care drivers, PG. 24



Markel's
Rick
Geller

Today's Trucking

The Business Magazine of Canada's Trucking Industry

November 2009

www.todaystrucking.com

Where the
Wild
Things
Drive

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:



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Freightliner's new Coronado, PG. 54

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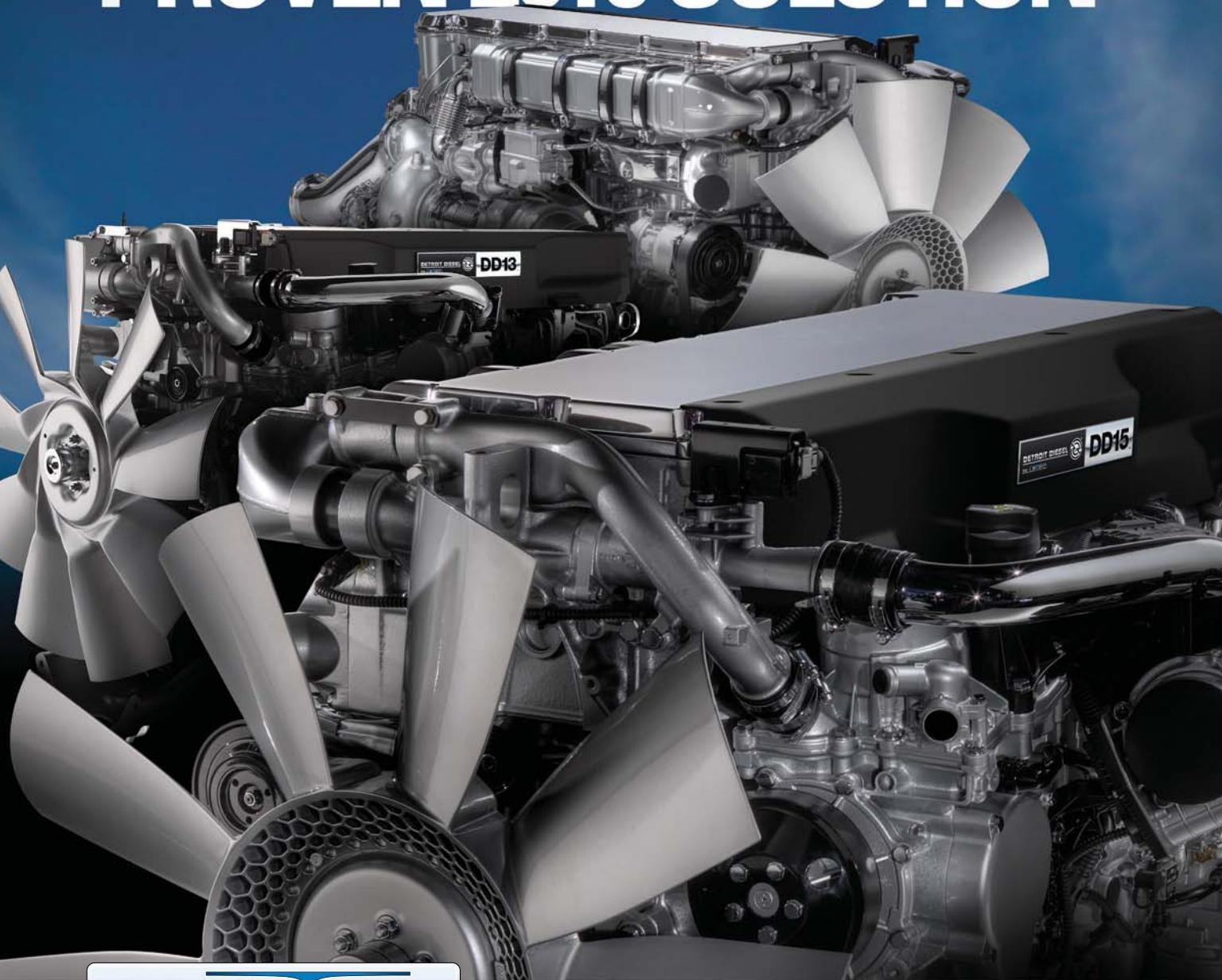
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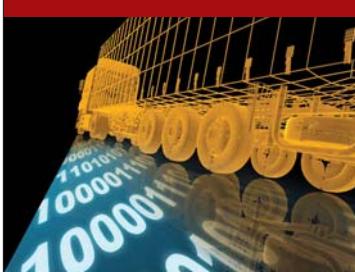
PAYING ITS FREIGHT: This new Coronado is spec'd specifically for severe service.



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Today's Trucking

The Business Magazine of Canada's Trucking Industry

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Today's Trucking is published monthly by NEWCOM BUSINESS MEDIA INC., 451 Attwell Dr., Toronto, ON M9W 5C4. It is produced expressly for owners and/or operators of one or more straight trucks or tractor-trailers with gross weights of at least 19,500 pounds, and for truck/trailer dealers and heavy-duty parts distributors. Subscriptions are free to those who meet the criteria. For others: single-copy price: \$5 plus \$0.25 GST; one-year subscription: \$40 plus \$2.00 GST; one-year subscription in U.S.: \$60 US; one-year subscription foreign: \$90 US. Copyright 2009. All rights reserved. Contents may not be reproduced by any means, in whole or in part, without prior written consent of the publisher. The advertiser agrees to protect the publisher against legal action based upon libelous or inaccurate statements, unauthorized use of photographs, or other material in connection with advertisements placed in *Today's Trucking*. The publisher reserves the right to refuse advertising which in his opinion is misleading, scatological, or in poor taste. Postmaster: Address changes to *Today's Trucking*, 451 Attwell Dr., Toronto, ON M9W 5C4. Postage paid Canadian Publications Mail Sales Agreement No.40063170. ISSN No. 0837-1512. Printed in Canada.

We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Publications Assistance Program toward our mailing costs. PAP Registration No. 10788.

Canada



Kenneth R. Wilson
Award Winner



Member



Even non-smokers are fuming

Once again, the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) have amazed me.

Last month, an owner-operator was fined \$305 for smoking in the confines of his own truck (see Dispatches, pg.14). I'm a non-smoking own-operator who considers smoking a disgusting, unwholesome habit, but I stand behind that driver's rights to smoke in the environment of his own truck.

Which incidentally, is also his home away from home.

How long will it be before our law-enforcement agencies, under the tutelage of the Ontario Liberals, restrict our personal freedoms and pleasures within the habitat of our own homes, cars or backyard patios? This is another classic example of law enforcement only pursuing those infractions that generate a higher revenue than, say, speeding (\$95 for 20 km/h, unless it's racing) or tailgating (more difficult to prove in court). Frankly, I've seen more trucks pulled over in Ohio in one week (they have now raised their speed limit to a more reasonable level) than in all of Ontario in a whole year.

Once, an Ohio State trooper even pulled over an irresponsible trucker who had been tailgating me for several miles.

Which brings me back to a previous argument I made concerning the introduction of speed limiters. Had the OPP been vigilant in enforcing the Highway Traffic Act in regards to speeding and tailgating truckers, there'd have been no public support (for what was a non-existent problem) for the introduction of mandatory speed limiters on commercial vehicles.

All that this amounts to is a trampling of our civil liberties, a revenue/cash grab, and in the case of smoking, an infringement of personal enjoyment of a legally sold/government taxed substance.

That's why I no longer participate in OPP-sponsored safety programs or attend safety award ceremonies where the OPP are in attendance.

I myself personally strive and drive to

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October 2009

Today's Trucking

The Business Magazine of Canada's Trucking Industry

Game-changing GEARS



be as safe as is reasonably possible as well as being considerate and courteous to my fellow drivers without seeking OPP approval or merit. It's time the OPP start doing the job they're so well paid for to ensure our highways are truly safe and not just revenue-producing zones.

Alfy R. E. Meyer,
Cambridge, Ont.

And if that's not enough...

Our website todaystrucking.com recently reported that Ontario's ban on hand-held communication devices might extend to CB radios. The industry has been given three years to come up with a hands-free CB. If such a device doesn't materialize, the legislators will review the regulations. Our website readers seemed to simultaneously stop driving to send in their opinions. And they were unanimous. This one-sentence email summed up their views?

"Another great reason not to truck in Ontario."

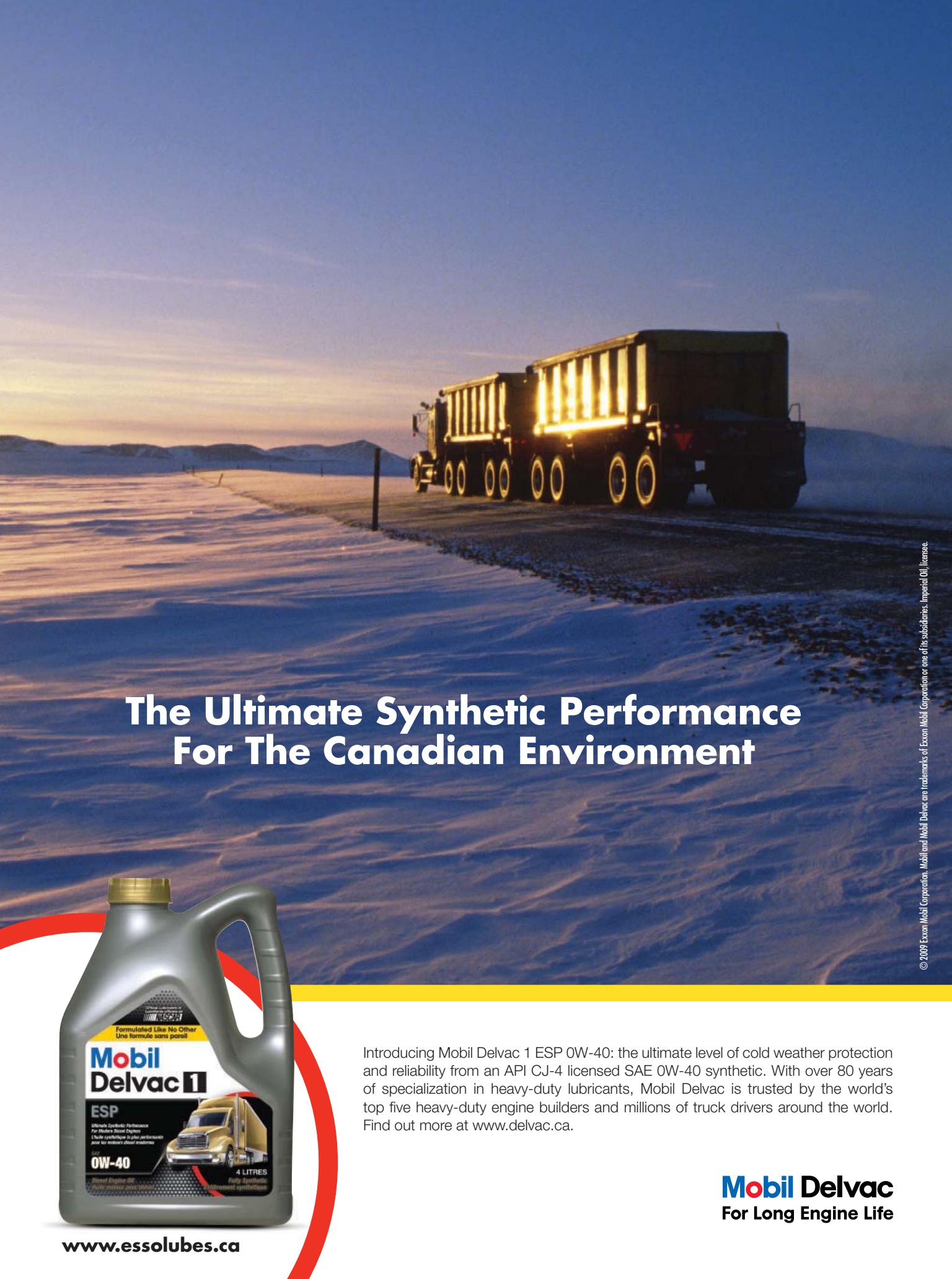
For more, see todaystrucking.com and type in *CB radios* in the search bar.

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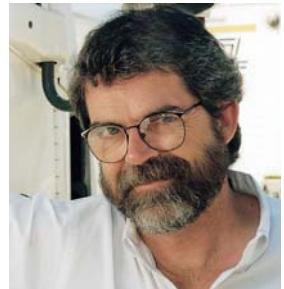
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By Rolf Lockwood



Hate Meetings? So Make 'Em Better

I can't stand meetings, which makes me the perfect judge of what makes a good one.

Some people in our little organization would have us in meetings nearly every day. Others might say weekly is good while a few would be fine with monthly. Me, well, I'm no fan of meetings at any interval. But, admitting that some internal get-togethers can't be avoided, my very low tolerance just makes me better able to judge what makes a good one.

Actually, I'd guess that very few of us like formal meetings very much, which is all the more reason to ensure that the meetings we have to endure are worth enduring.

So what makes a good one?

If you're convinced that the meeting is actually necessary (there's absolutely nothing worse than a meeting called for no good reason), then in my book, brevity is the first and really the overriding priority. Call it efficiency, I suppose. Every once in a while a half-day slog or worse may be required, but that should be rare and should really be avoided if at all possible. An hour is probably about as long as any mortal can endure at a stretch, and if it has to go longer I'd urge a 15-minute break at that point. There's no point to the get-together if minds are tired and wandering. Meetings are draining, after all.

Many will disagree with me on this one, but if the meeting just has to go over lunch, I'd urge that you don't order sandwiches or pizza to be consumed in the boardroom while you continue talking. Let people disperse for an hour or so and reconvene with refreshed brain cells ready to work again.

Assuming you're the one chairing the meeting, there's a few other basic things that you've just got to do to keep it brief and productive.

Naturally, you first have to prepare an agenda and distribute it well ahead of time. Make sure the stated plan fits the time you've allotted to the meeting. How often is an overly ambitious agenda the cause of frustration? Often, I'd say.

Then, make sure in advance—like two or three days ahead of

Poor decisions are sometimes made because they're based on numbers or ideas that were flashed on a projection screen for all of two minutes.

time—that any presentations are or will be ready. I'd suggest sending them, or at least summaries of them, to all attendees in advance to give people a chance to consider them carefully. I'd venture a guess, because I've seen it happen, that poor decisions are sometimes made because they're based on numbers or ideas that were flashed on a projection screen for all of two minutes. Discussion will follow, of course, but I think you'll get better participation and better ideas if you give folks a chance to apply their brains and their experience to the task at their own pace beforehand.

Assuming you concocted a sensible agenda in the first place, then stick to it and don't let people wander off on tangents. Those tangents may well be important or interesting but if they aren't really on topic, they're a waste of time. Be vigilant on this one. I can't tell you how many meetings I've attended that lasted half again as long as they needed to because somebody tore off down some irrelevant path and everyone else followed. Do not let this happen.

All the so-called experts will tell you that good meetings always conclude with a review of things decided and the formation of a plan to turn them into action. Seems like common sense to me, something that hardly needs stating. By far the more important thing is to ensure that action is indeed taken.

I'm going to go off on a new tangent myself now, by way of acknowledging the recent death of William Edward "Bud" Barr, one of the good guys.

Bud retired from fleet management a long time ago, in the early 1990s, but never stopped working for the industry. He served as executive director—and energetic chief fund-raiser—of the Ontario Trucking Association's Education Foundation from 1992 to 2005, when he really retired, at the age of 83. He reveled in that job, overseeing a scholarship and bursary program dedicated to the children of trucking people.

Like few others, Bud was a credit to our industry. ▲

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

Dispatch

BY MARCO BEGHETTO

Over & Out

Ontario's tough rules on in-cab telematics include bans on CB radios, and impending U.S. legislation could be even more aggressive.

Any driver—of the commercial variety or otherwise—can attest that it's darn near impossible not to be distracted by something while behind the wheel these days.

Even beyond the other side of the windshield there's plenty of attention-grabbing objects: Provocative or lurid billboards; zigzagging cyclists; oblivious pedestrians (usually talking on cell phones themselves); and, dare we say it, that first wave of summer dresses to hit the street are just a few head-turning distractions drivers have virtually no control over.

So, to limit drivers' sensory overload, politicians in many jurisdictions have legislated controls on the kinds of diversions vehicle operators do have responsibility over—no, not the screaming five-year old in the backseat (which, as this writer knows, might not be such a bad thing)—but namely hand-

held telematic devices like cell phones, Blackberries and other communication tools.

Apparently, Ontario has gone a step further. In a move that could make CW McCall switch to singing the blues, the provincial ban on cell phone chatting and texting also includes the phasing out of truckers' Citizen Band (CBs) and UHF/VHF radios—making the province, as far as we can tell, the only jurisdiction on the continent to do so.

Officials insist CBs present a particular challenge since the receiver and communications unit are separate from each other and are connected by a cord.

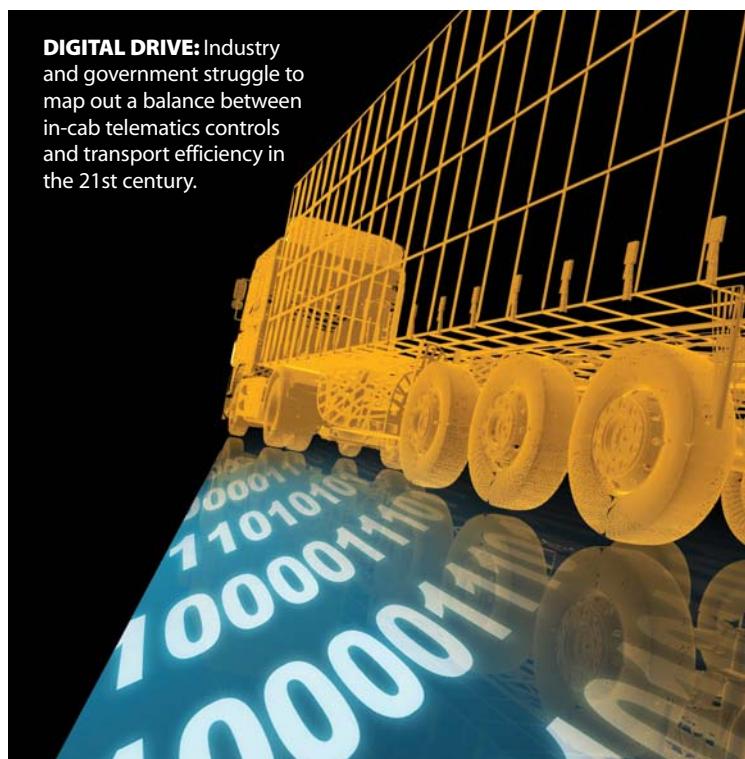
Educational enforcement on the general cell and texting restrictions kicked in on Oct. 26 (Police will issue tickets of up to \$500 starting on February 1, 2010 for non-compliance). CBs, though, will get a three-year exemption. The Provincial Ministry

of Transportation (MTO) hopes the phase-out process will give industry enough time to introduce into the market a hands-free, two-way communication alternative. If not, the MTO supposedly assured the Ontario

Trucking Association (OTA) that it could extend that timeframe should no suitable technology become available.

There are, however, other accommodations for the commercial sector—some a little vague—including per-

DIGITAL DRIVE: Industry and government struggle to map out a balance between in-cab telematics controls and transport efficiency in the 21st century.



Zeppelins

manent exemptions for satellite, navigation, collision avoidance and other fleet management systems for the viewing of logistical information on a display as long as the vehicle is not in motion and the device is not held in hand.

The same goes for hand-held push-to-talk devices, hand mics and walkie-talkies, which are popular in short-haul and vocational applications.

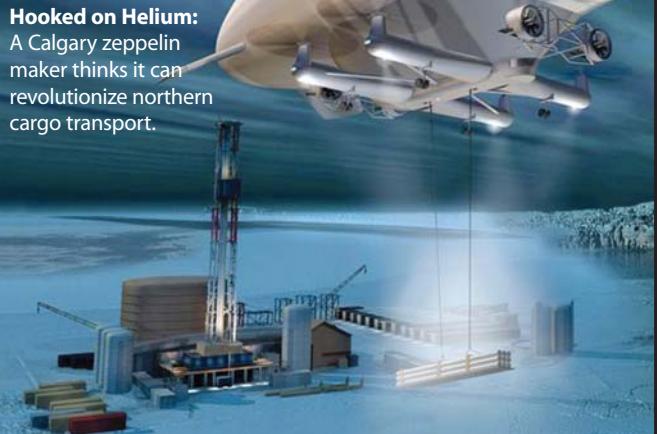
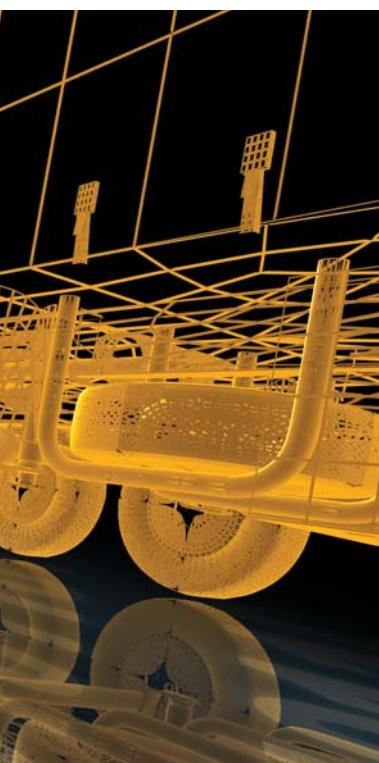
Just as the law applies to standard cell phones, these devices can only be used while driving if they are mounted or secured to the

vehicle and are easily activated by one press of a button. They cannot be hanging from the roof of the cab or dashboard.

The OTA supports “the intent and the principle of the law,” although its president David Bradley tells us that member carriers would have preferred a more general distracted-driving regulation that deals with “all bad behaviors.” Still, Bradley concedes that the CB ban, which came as a surprise to him, is likely to draw the ire of many truck drivers.

“Given the still pervasive use of these devices in the industry, I expect there could be push-back from some truck drivers,” he said. “In many respects the CB is not only an important part of the truckers’ social network, but it is also an important safety device in its own right.”

Geoff Edwards, an OTA Road Knight and driver with Werner Enterprises Canada, also supports bans on most hand-held devices, but questions whether a CB ban would deliver any net safety benefits. It’s true that there’s a lot of needless banter on Channel 19, but truckers also frequently use the airwaves to warn each other of upcoming accidents, road conditions and inclement weather. “They can be very helpful,” he says.



ZEPPELIN ROCKS FREIGHT MARKET

Think some of your competitors are full of hot air? Just wait until the people from SkyHook get into the freight-hauling game.

SkyHook International is a Calgary-based zeppelin builder and its goal is to build a stairway to freight heaven.

In partnership with Boeing, SkyHook is developing a massive cargo airship, capable of carrying 80,000 tons of cargo a distance of more than 200 miles. The so-called Heavy Lift Vehicle (HLV) might be ready as early as 2014.

What does this mean to Canadian transport? According to Dr. Barry Prentice of the University of Manitoba, it’s only a matter of time before airships become the carrier of choice for delivering goods, particularly to oil and mining sites, in Northern Canada.

A new generation of cargo airships would have a revolutionary impact on northern

transportation and logistics, proponents say. Presently, over 16 teams are working in 8 different countries with actual airships and aerostats.

Stakeholders met in Calgary recently at something called the Arctic 5 conference, which brought together more than a dozen companies from the around the world interested in this mode of transport.

“We’re at the tipping point,” Dr. Prentice told *Sun Media*. “Once there’s one airship in the sky, there’ll be a stampede towards airships.”

So does this mean ice-road truckers will soon be ice-road fliers—especially since, supposedly, climate change is shortening the season for stable ice roads?

At about \$50 million a pop, don’t expect the Discovery Channel’s reality TV producers to be knocking on zeppelin-haulers’ doors any time soon.

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While a hands-free alternative sounds ideal, it’s possible, Edwards reckons, that such a technology could be too pricey for the average owner-operator or for some carriers to outfit their entire fleet.

POLITICAL PRESSURE

At the recent American Trucking Associations (ATA) management meeting in Las Vegas, president Bill Graves warned carriers that they should expect to “lead with

their chin,” if they were going to survive not only this difficult economic climate, but, as it’s becoming clearer, an increasingly overzealous Congress and White House as well.

“The regulatory winds are not blowing in our favor,” he said. “The question is how you are able to deal with a myriad of mandates and still find enjoyment in running your business.”

In fact, it appears as if “distracted drivers” is poised to overtake “tired truckers” as the scare issue *du jour* south of the border. After losing recent battles on the hours-of-service front, anti-truck special-interest groups like Public Citizen and CRASH have turned their attention to the “devastating” impact of truckers who

talk, text, or use any “unsafe electronic device.” Not surprisingly, the groups’ national campaign is aimed squarely and solely on truckers and not at all on four-wheelers.

What’s more, the group is against the use of both handheld and hands-free devices. In a press conference, it leaned heavily on a recent Virginia Tech study that found driver distraction to be the cause of 100 percent of crashes; and that certain hands-free wireless devices, including dispatch hardware, were also problematic.

With lobbying groups having racked up political capital with this administration, it’s possible, however unlikely, that a national mandate regulators have been assigned to develop could

put significant restrictions on certain types of hands-free technology on top of hand-held prohibitions.

Graves too admits that decision makers—including, perhaps, DOT Secretary Ray LaHood—are eying a “broader, more aggressive approach.”

Despite recent attempts by some major American media outlets to paint carriers as anti-safety and resistant to telematics controls, most carriers in Canada and the U.S. welcome reasonable limits on truly distracting in-cab hardware.

“This industry routinely meets its challenges,” says Mike Ham, vice-president of business services for Shaw Tracking in Toronto. Whether it’s emissions controls or hours-of-service or

speed limiters, “our customer base has been dealing with technological mandates ... and the vast majority bust their (butt) to make sure they’re compliant.”

In fact, dispatch communications suppliers like Shaw Tracking and PeopleNet already offer hands-free, voice recognition and screen-blanking solutions while the vehicle is in transit. However, they’re voluntary options based on the fleet application. A blanket government mandate on hands-free technology as well is not only impractical for many operations, but also probably unsafe considering the safety advantages many technologies provide.

PeopleNet Canada’s Jamie Williams says many industry products are focused on

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"taking a lot of emphasis away from the driver," but eliminating driver involvement entirely probably isn't practical in today's business environment.

Bradley isn't overly concerned that the highly politicized debate stateside will blow north of the border. "In Canada, while we have truck haters too, we're at least able to have intelligent debate and discourse," he says. "In the U.S., there's a different agenda, which is to try and move as much freight off of trucks and onto some other mode. We get a bit of that in Canada, but not really to the same degree."

Trucker Geoff Edwards is just thankful that Canadian distracted-driving laws for the most part treat 18-wheeler pilots and car driv-

ers the same way. It's quite absurd that any national mandate would consider targeting commercial drivers long before their more compact highway counterparts who cause the vast majority of crashes, whether they're distracted or not.

In all his years on the road, Edwards has seen some pretty peculiar behavior from his vantage point involving mostly four-wheelers, including a few things that can't be quoted in a family magazine. A few that can are: "Reading newspapers. Putting on makeup. And getting dressed," Edwards recalls. "I've seen computer [laptops] taped to the steering wheel and the guy was typing on the keyboard as he went down the road."

Somehow, we don't think

TEXTING VICARIOUSLY

Even though provincial cell phone laws mostly apply to the driver of a motor vehicle, it's not so inconceivable in this over-litigious culture that there could be legal ramifications for employers of those drivers too.

According to Toronto employment and labor law lawyers at Sherrard Kuzz LLP, fleet owners may be held vicariously liable for an act committed by a company driver.

To date, there hasn't been any such case decided in Canada, however, if U.S. blowback is anything to go by, it's quite possible such a scenario will be tested here eventually. And you don't want to be the company to get the leading role in the precedent-setting play.

Stateside in 1999, the family of a motorcyclist sued an investment banking firm after the rider was killed by a bank employee who struck him while talking on his cell phone. They settled for \$500,000.

In another case in Virginia, a lawyer struck and killed a young girl while allegedly talking to a client. A judge determined that her law firm Cooley Godward was vicariously liable because she was conducting business over the cell phone at the time.

Beyond making sure all employees and even contract drivers are equipped with the approved hands-free or Bluetooth alternatives, Sherrard Kuzz advises employers to create a workplace policy that clearly states that breaching the Act will be subject to discipline and possibly termination for repeat offences.



TAKING IT TO THE TWEETS

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It could be road closures, regulatory updates, breaking news that just can't wait, or perhaps, we'll tease you with a musing or two. [Go to twitter.com, sign-in and search for "todaystrucking."](http://twitter.com)

the authorities had that in mind when they okayed electronic devices only if they're secured to the vehicle.

Drivers

Nic-Fit Over Truck Smoking

Part of the reasoning to legislate mandatory speed limiters in Ontario (as many proponents argued at the time) was that there aren't enough highway cops to enforce existing

speeding laws.

But although there are limited resources to catch all the speeding commercial drivers on Hwy. 401, at least one OPP officer seems to have plenty of time to chase down smoking truckers—and we're not talking from out of the stacks.

It seemed like the debate over whether drivers could light up in their truck cabs was ashed out years ago, but last month a lone trucker inadvertently sparked things

up again when he was fined \$305 by an overzealous highway cop under the Smoke-Free Ontario Act for puffing away while driving along the 401.

The story hit the papers, prompting nic-fits from drivers everywhere and raising more questions on which truckers, if any, can indulge when they're alone in the cab.

The Smoke-Free Ontario Act, enacted in 2006, prohibits people from smoking tobacco in any enclosed

public place or enclosed workplaces, including commercial trucks and taxis.

But as we reported then, the Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) sought legal clarification and eventually got a verbal confirmation from provincial health officials that the Ontario law doesn't trump Ottawa's Non-smokers Health Act, which governs federally regulated, interprovincial carriers. The federal rule allows employers to designate smoking areas within the workplace.

OTA, though, was motivated by concerns much bigger than smoking, as the province's incursion into federal jurisdiction might have been used as precedent in other statutes in the future. (Not that it isn't already happening with hours-of-service laws).



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Dangerous Goods Advisory Council Annual Conference and Hazardous Materials Transportation Expo, Grand Hyatt San Antonio. DGAC promotes improvement in the safe transportation of hazardous materials and dangerous goods globally at the 31st Annual Conference and Hazardous Materials Transportation Exposition. Contact: 202/289-4550 or click on www.hmac.org.

November 19

OTA Convention 2009, Doubletree International Plaza Hotel, Toronto. At this year's one-day event, titled Leadership In Tough Times, hear from some of North America's leading carriers, transportation analysts and regulatory decision makers on the key issues affecting your business. Special guests include Gen. Rick Hillier and the Good Brothers. Contact: 416/249-7401 or click on www.ontruck.org.

November 23

North American Cargo Securement Harmonization Public Forum, Intercontinental Montreal. Presented by the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance. Contact: 202-775-1623 or go to www.cvsa.org.

January 18-21, 2010

Heavy Duty Manufacturers Association's Heavy Duty Dialogue and Heavy Duty Aftermarket Week 2010, The Mirage, Las Vegas. Two separate events in one venue, the week kicks off with a jam-packed one-day HDMA event of seminars and educational sessions before giving way to the HDAW conference and trade show. Contact HDMA at 919-406-8847 or www.hdma.org; and HDAW at 708/226-1300 or www.hdaw.org.

January 24-28

2010 COHMED Conference, Hyatt Regency San Antonio. The annual Cooperative Hazardous Materials Education event is presented by the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance and its enforcement agency partners in the U.S. and in Canada. Call 210-222-1234 or go to www.cvsa.org.

Februay 15

World of Concrete 2010, Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, Nev. Exactly as it sounds. Everything you need to see on the commercial concrete and masonry construction industries and related equipment. Contact: 972-536-6371 or click on www.worldofconcrete.com.

Owner-operators for the most part are said to be exempted from the rule as long as no one else—not even a part-time driver, spouse, or friend—enters the cab at any time, including off-duty hours.

The OTA chalks up such incidents to regional inspectors



and police not understanding the nuances of federal and provincial oversight of truckers. But that doesn't mean federal carriers and owner-ops will be let off the hook so easily if fined.

As it turns out, a little-known case from 2006 had significant implications on federal carriers' right to designate their trucks as pro-smoke zones. As the *Toronto Star* reported recently, Meyers Transport faced a

BRING IT ON, SAYS NEW DAIMLER TRUCKS BOSS:

The American trucking industry is still scraping along the bottom, but the new president of Daimler Trucks' business on this side of the pond doesn't consider his new job "unenviable" at all.

Martin Daum, who was introduced to trucking writers at the American Trucking Associations (ATA) annual management conference in Las Vegas, said he relishes the challenge of guiding North America's heavy truck market-share leader out of this recession.

The German-born Daum replaced Canadian native Chris Patterson as president of Daimler Trucks North America this past spring. He was previously operations manager at the Mercedes-Benz plant in Woerth, Germany and has been with the Daimler Group for over 20 years, including a 5-year stint in Michigan at Daimler's former Sterling division in the late 1990s.

Daum (who, by the way, is extremely funny, as we learned at a customer appreciation event later on) said he's spent his first 100 days connecting with employees, dealers and customers.

In a follow-up, sit-down interview with *Today's Trucking*, Daum was asked if his task is similar to that of Rainer Schmueckle when he took over for Jim Hebe in 2001.

There are few parallels, he said. "Back then, it was more of a company-induced problem, now it's industry-wide."

Going forward, he says he plans to focus on building on what Patterson already laid down, such as continuing to promote the Cascadia as the

company's flagship highway tractor as well as strongly support Detroit Diesel's and Daimler Mercedes engine platform for 2010.



Martin Daum

On that front, Daum responded with a flat "no" when asked if he's at all surprised that rival Navistar has toned down its criticism of SCR as a solution for next year's engine rules and even hinted that it would entertain SCR to meet future mandates, provided that diesel exhaust fluid (DEF) is not part of the system or if a non-liquid aftertreatment becomes commercially viable.

FILLING GAPS:

Even as the company was shuttering its former Sterling plants and dealers, the former Daimler division seemed to be doing pretty well in sales in the first quarter of 2009.

Part of that was because Daimler "incentivized" keeping the remaining stock on dealer lots (not so much on the selling of the trucks, says Daum), but it's obvious there's still some decent demand in the midrange and vocational sectors that Sterling played in.

Asked about filling that void with Freightliner and Western Star brands, Daum said one advantage is that there's plenty of aftermarket and parts-distribution overlap and the engine offerings are similar as well.

Daum acknowledges, though, that competitors will set their sights on those Sterling loyalists. They'll have their work cut out: "I don't even want to lose one," Daum said.

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Contact : Mr. Joe De Simone

\$10,000 fine for allowing drivers to smoke in company trucks. The federal carrier challenged the ticket all the way up to Ontario Superior Court, but the Crown suddenly and unceremoniously dropped the charges on the first day of hearings—most likely because of the jurisdictional minefield at the root of the case.

The Health and Safety officer who laid the charge told the paper that she was just as surprised as the carrier that the charge was dropped at the 11th hour. Had it been permitted to proceed, and the government won, she thinks the provincial Act would have bound all federal carriers as well.

A turf war, we have little doubt, that will be fought again on another day.

Recovery

Slow and Not So Steady

Walk through the Las Vegas airport or on any casino floor and you're likely to hear "*what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas*" approximately every 33 seconds (not-so-scientific guess). Though discussions on where U.S. freight trends are headed was anything but a secret at the recent American Trucking Associations (ATA) management conference in Vegas last month.

In fact, the unexceptional human traffic along the infamous strip and inside the hotel resorts is pretty indicative of where the American economy is these days.

If you've had your ear out for

heard on the Street

■ **Michael Andlauer**, owner of **ANDLAUER TRANSPORTATION SERVICES** took his shot and scored when he bought a stake in the famed Montreal Canadiens franchise. It also explains why he sold off the retail and electronic goods half of his trucking and logistics business to TransForce in September. "This really is a dream



come true for me and my family," said Andlauer, who grew up as a Habs fan. We hockey fans from the rest of the country (especially us down west on Hwy. 401) won't hold it against him.

■ Almost a year after expanding its special commodities division, **CHALLENGER MOTOR FREIGHT** is at it again. After buying assets last year of INX PRESS, a fleet specializing in the transport of heavy equipment and over-dimensional freight, Challenger has taken over the equipment of special commodities business of heavy-hauler Sandrock Specialized Carriers. Owner Mark Sandrock and his team will stay on with the division, Sandrock Specialized Transport. The acquisition takes Challenger up to 1,500 trucks and 3,300 trailers.

■ **Shane Esson**, the general manager of Moncton-based **KELTIC TRANSPORT**, is the new chair of the Atlantic Provinces Trucking Association. He replaces Gord Peddle of Mount Pearl, Nfld.'s, D.D. Transport, who winds up a two-year term with the election of Esson. He

A large yellow square containing a black silhouette of a tire tread. A small figure of a person is climbing up the side of the tire. The website 'oktire.com' is in the top right corner of the yellow area.

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has been with the 150-truck Keltic for almost seven years. Before that, for 23 years, he was with Midland.

On his laundry list as leader, Esson (his name's pronounced Eeee-son) includes long combination vehicles (LCVs); continuing cooperation with other provincial and regional organizations; fixing Marine Atlantic; the ever-evolving debate on electronic onboard devices; sleep-apnea concerns and, he says, the "general economic future of the industry."

The organization is continuing its search for a new executive director following the recent resignation of Peter Nelson.

■ A trio of recognizable Canadian carriers were among nearly two dozen companies to receive **Environmental Excellence Awards** from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) SmartWay Transport Partnership.

CHALLENGER MOTOR

FREIGHT of Cambridge, Ont.; **BISON TRANSPORT** of Winnipeg; and **MACKINNON TRANSPORT** in Guelph, Ont. were the true north carriers to receive the awards, which recognize fleets that implement innovative, market-based programs or equipment to cut fuel use, greenhouse gas emissions and air pollutants from the freight sector. The awards were handed out at the **American Trucking Association's (ATA)** annual conference in Las Vegas.

Typically, SmartWay-certified equipment can include anti-idling systems, aerodynamic devices and add-ons like skirts or fairings, rolling resistant tires and single-wide-base tires; as well as company-wide fuel-economy training programs for drivers. Bison is one carrier that implements many of these technologies on its fleet of Volvo and

Freightliner tractors. The company also has a notoriously advanced fuel-efficiency training system, which includes, in part, high-tech driving simulators.

And the Winnipeg truckload giant wasn't done representing Canadian fleets stateside. The company's safety record also earned it top spot in a new ATA safety award sponsored by Volvo Trucks North America. The truckmaker gave Bison the inaugural Volvo Trucks Safety Award, which measures the performances of U.S. and Canadian fleets of more than five units. That's a lot of continental competition.

Fleets were ranked by their accident frequency rates for 2008, using the U.S. Department of Transportation's definition of a

"recordable accident," as well as their accident prevention programs.

Bison won the over-10-million-mile category with a rate of 0.19209 accidents per million miles traveled. With 1,050 tractors and 1,400 drivers, Bison handles approximately 3,200 shipments per week across the U.S. and Canada.



Bison simulator

The carrier's safety equation includes a "driver's toolbox" that encompasses the selection of safe equipment, a safe

working environment, in-depth training and the systems of accountability "so that we don't lose sight that safety is in fact a priority," said Don Streuber, Bison's president and CEO.

It also helps that Bison empowers drivers to decide when conditions are unsafe for driving, including in bad weather, traffic or other factors.

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Dispatches

economic news, you'll know that the consensus among most economists is generally summed up as "cautiously optimistic." But a panel of transport-minded economists seemed to put a lid on any runaway enthusiasm.

The much-anticipated discussion, titled "All Eyes on the Economy" (moderated by Stuart Varney of Fox News) was somewhat disheartening for any carrier, including Canadian truckers dependant on southbound volumes, eager to hear about a freight market ready to spring aloft.

The worst may be over, but it "won't be slow and steady ahead," quipped ATA chief economist Bob Costello, "but slow and very choppy."

Sara Johnson, managing director of global macroeco-

nomics at IHS Global Insight, put a wet blanket on some recent forecasts that pegged the U.S. economy growing by three percent in the first six months of 2010 and another four percent in the latter half. She says there will be some "sluggish growth" in the 1.5-percent range to start the year, possibly advancing to about three percent by the end of 2010. It's not exactly a "double-dip recession," but businesses should brace for some retraction after what's expected to be a modest uptick to close 2009.

Unlike in Canada, which has enjoyed a reasonably steady housing market during the downturn, the sheer magnitude and velocity of the housing market collapse



HANGMAN: Yes, there's good news for the economy: Experts are sure (pretty sure, anyway) the worst freight days are behind us.

in the U.S. hit the flatbed sector even harder than general truckload, noted Costello.

On the other hand, while some segments of reefer were hurt nearly as badly, others came out relatively unscathed. "Reefer is a unique animal," says

Costello. "At the end of the day, people still have to eat."

Even as the freight market sputters toward recovery, it's a good bet that other conditions, like new packaging trends, mean that volumes might not get back to what they were a few years ago for a very long time, says Charles W. Clowdis, also with HIS, in the Global Commerce and Transport division.

Driven by reducing both the costs of materials and transportation, "packing is now the supply chain executive's newest biggest challenge," said Clowdis, citing, as an example, one telecom firm that dropped from 300 items on a shipping pallet down to 120 just by redesigning the packaging.

When the economy



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returns to its full robustness, packaging will be another “big issue the trucking industry will have to deal with,” said Clowdis, who guesses that, macroeconomics aside, cube volumes are down as much as 25 percent and down eight percent in weight in various sectors.

These are just a few new realities truckers are waking up to. So what's the “new normal?”

Johnson says don't expect the sort of spending habits of five years ago to return post-recession—at least not in the foreseeable future. A record drop in income net worth means that, for example, the days “of empty nesters who didn't downsize and instead built extensions for the grandkids,” will be missed by freight movers.

So, is there any good news in the short term? Half-jokingly, the panel struggled to find an answer until Costello offered up that finding bottom has been a monumental point in this journey back to recovery. “We've hit bottom ... and stopped the freefall and that really is important.”

Judging by the number of carriers in attendance nodding their heads, that might be all most truckers need to hear right now. ▲

on the Docket

■ A short delay in the implementation of increased border fees did little to please the Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA). The **U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)** said last month that it was delaying for 30 days an increase in the fees it charges to inspect trucks, trains, ships and arriving international airline passengers arriving at U.S. ports of entry. That deadline should be over right about now, though, as it was slated to kick-in on Nov. 1. The APHIS commercial truck user fees will increase from US\$5.25 to US\$6 per trip and commercial truck transponders will go up a significant 14 percent, from US\$105 a year to \$120. “Introducing APHIS fees in the first place on all trucks entering the United States whether they are carrying agricultural products or not was nothing but a cash grab. This increase and the rationale for the increase are both ludicrous,” says the CEO of the Canadian Trucking Alliance, David Bradley.

APHIS says the increase is needed to restore user-fee revenues that have diminished as a result of decreased travel and trade volumes. “To acknowledge that trade is down, you would think that the folks at APHIS might have also acknowledged that this is a reflection of the recession and the impact of the thickening of the border for legitimate trade,” says Bradley. “Instead they increase their fees. Incredible.”

Carriers have begun to renew their transponders at the prevailing fee of US\$205 per unit (US\$100 to the US Customs and Border Protection agency and US\$105 to APHIS).

Now that APHIS has come along and increased its half of the fee, CTA is concerned it will create additional problems in the renewal process.

■ For the second time, **Canadian truckers convinced U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP)** to postpone enforcement of a controversial rule requiring shippers and carriers to report trace amounts of chemical residue on e-manifests when crossing into the U.S. Previously, residue was exempt from the same reporting requirements as any other good entering the U.S.

The rule was supposed to kick in this month, but CBP postponed it indefinitely in order to give the trade community more time to comply. As part of the ruling, the little bit of residue left in a tank truck or container after unloading will have to be measured, valued and treated like a good for customs purposes.

While the Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA) is relieved CBP officials recognized there are many outstanding concerns, CEO David Bradley cautioned that industry is still scrambling to figure out how the owner of the residue will be determined, and ultimately, how enforceable these requirements will be, given the difficulty in accurately quantifying and assigning a value to residual cargo.

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Canada: Truck Sales Index

August 2009

CLASS 8	This Month	YTD '09	YTD '08	Share
International	273	2586	3841	29.0%
Freightliner	125	1741	3064	19.5%
Kenworth	154	1076	2783	12.1%
Volvo	76	896	1543	10.1%
Mack	60	703	1194	7.9%
Sterling	40	665	1446	7.5%
Western Star	81	639	836	7.2%
Peterbilt	114	603	1807	6.8%
TOTAL	923	8909	16,514	100.0%



CLASS 7	This Month	YTD '09	YTD '08	Share
International	42	372	886	32.2%
Peterbilt	22	205	484	17.7%
Kenworth	25	204	472	17.7%
Hino Canada	20	156	280	13.5%
Freightliner	13	137	322	11.9%
Sterling	10	81	202	7.0%
TOTAL	132	1155	2646	100.0%



CLASS 6	This Month	YTD '09	YTD '08	Share
International	28	180	263	40.2%
Hino Canada	10	179	141	40.0%
Freightliner	2	44	92	9.8%
Sterling	3	27	36	6.0%
Peterbilt	0	18	0	4.0%
TOTAL	43	448	532	100.0%



CLASS 5	This Month	YTD '09	YTD '08	Share
Hino Canada	19	266	465	40.0%
Sterling	18	230	607	34.6%
International	11	116	423	17.4%
Kenworth	5	40	170	6.0%
Peterbilt	1	9	0	1.4%
Freightliner	0	4	41	0.6%
TOTAL	54	665	1706	100.0%



Canada: Provincial Sales (Class 8)

CLASS 8	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	NB	NS	PE	NL	CDA
International	4	27	3	10	108	94	24	1	0	2	273
Freightliner	10	20	4	10	34	17	23	6	0	1	125
Kenworth	18	46	14	3	22	38	13	0	0	0	154
Volvo	2	5	15	2	33	7	6	6	0	0	76
Mack	1	6	5	0	36	8	1	3	0	0	60
Sterling	5	2	5	0	4	7	0	0	0	17	40
Western Star	21	30	3	0	12	6	6	2	0	1	81
Peterbilt	10	17	16	23	26	17	5	0	0	0	114
TOTAL	71	153	65	48	275	194	78	18	0	21	923
YTD 2009	636	1376	474	561	3109	1897	456	294	26	80	8909

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

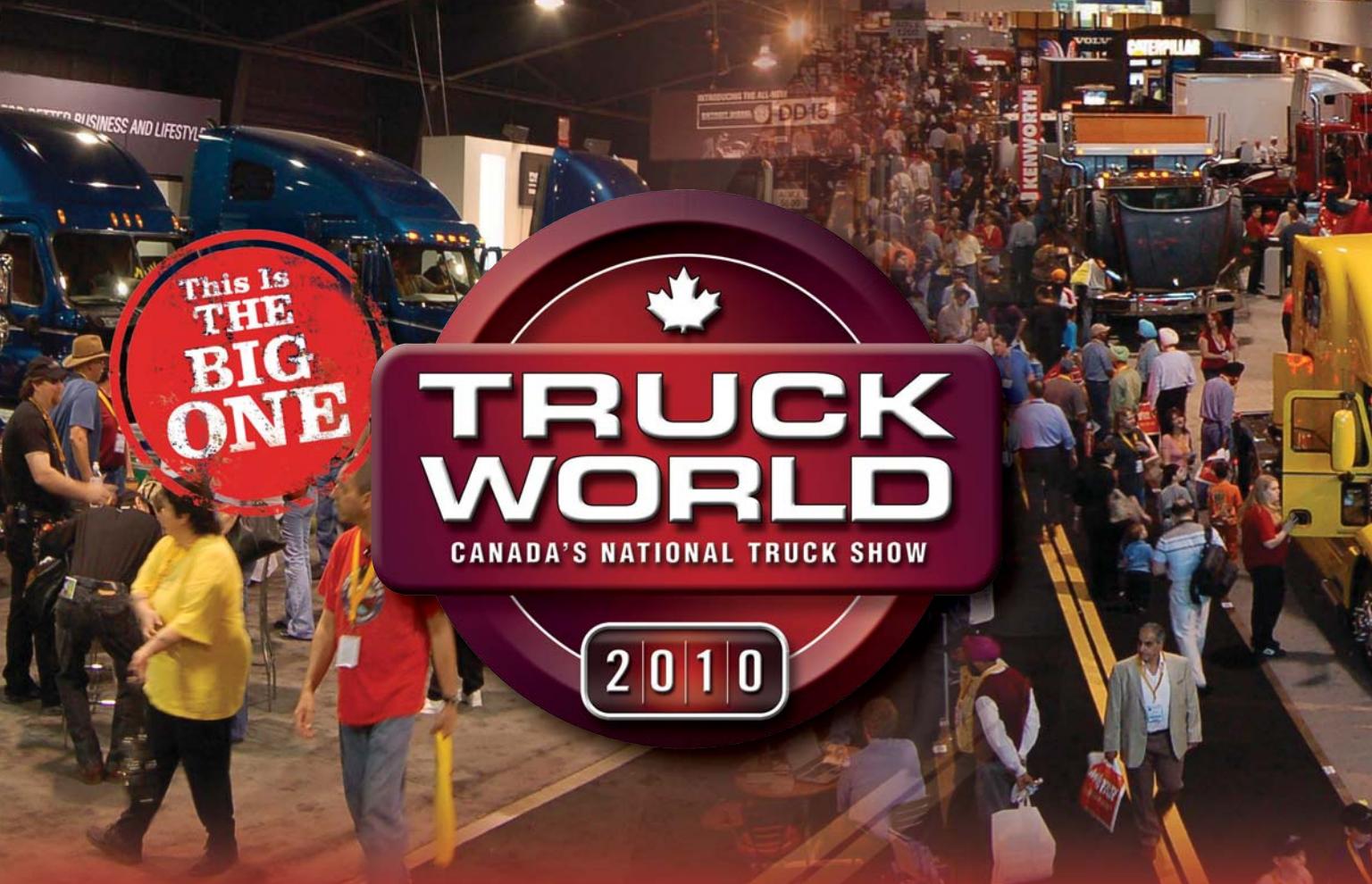
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U.S.: Retail Truck Sales

CLASSE 8	This Month	YTD '09
International	1855	15,926
Freightliner	1870	15,301
Peterbilt	1255	7421
Kenworth	918	6747
Volvo	435	4365
Mack	533	4305
Sterling	237	2565
Western Star	48	457
Other	0	12
TOTAL	7151	57,099





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BRAKING BREAKERS: Pay attention and you can hear at-risk drivers send out a call for help.



Risking Business

drivers *What to do about problem drivers. Before the problems arise.* By Peter Carter

Two truckers, two scenarios. It's winter. The roads are icy. The first driver misses a curve and his tires touch the shoulder. He reacts badly, loses control and the truck, trailer and load slide across the highway and into the opposite ditch. Nobody is hurt.

End result? A \$10,000 expense and a few days later the driver's back out on the road.

Scenario two: Same driver; same weather, same bad cornering.

Except this time, as the truck slides across the highway, it runs into a Smart car. End result? Two deaths.

The question is, should the severity of the crash play a part in how you treat the truck driver who misjudged the corner?

"From a behavioral standpoint," Rick Geller says, "what's the difference? From a severity standpoint, the second crash is much more severe but that's just dumb luck."

"The driver error was the very same in both cases."

Therefore, Geller says, as the driver's employer, you should be managing your reaction to the drivers in both accidents the same way.

He understands how difficult it would be to treat the two infractions identically but Geller maintains that reacting more severely because of the radically different outcomes would be counterproductive.

Your own best interests would not be served. You would also wind up losing your best drivers.

Geller, incidentally, is the director of Safety & Signature Services for Markel, the trucking insurance giant, and he has spent the better part of the last year telling

whoever will listen about his company's "High-Risk Driver" strategy.

Most recently, Geller took his show to the Atlantic Provinces Trucking Association (APTA) annual conference in Charlottetown.

He says a few of his blue-chip clients such as Winnipeg's Bison Transport are advocates of Markel's high-risk driver strategy, but he also says small and medium-sized operators can benefit from the system.

When faced with a driver who causes an accident, most carriers go one of two ways. They either fire the driver or else they yell at him, give him a few days off and then send him back out on the road.

According to Geller, almost 30 percent of all drivers fall into the high-risk category. So if you fire a driver because of an infraction "there's a one in three chance that the next guy who comes in the door will be the same or worse."

First, Geller says, carriers should remind themselves that even the smallest accident is costly. "You have to find an extra \$200,000 in revenues to recoup even a \$5,000 deductible," he says.

Not only do little accidents add up, but statistics show that drivers' accident records appreciate. Drivers who start with little accidents, if left unchecked, will graduate to bigger accidents.

"Carriers," he says "often set themselves up with an excuse to let things slide."

"I've seen situations where the first crash was a fixed object with about \$300 damage. The second crash was a rear-end, the driver just tapped a guy and it was \$1,500, with no injury."

"The third one was going through a red light at 16th Ave. in Calgary. There were nine cars involved in the crash."

According to a study released by the American Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), drivers with violations have crashes at a rate 50-percent higher than drivers without violations. "If a driver has a reckless or careless driving violation on his record he is virtually guaranteed to have a crash in the next 12 months," Geller says.

It seems obvious. Moving violations are the best predictors of future crash involve-

ment. Regardless of whether there was a conviction or if it was in the driver's personal vehicle.

Geller's point: Drivers signal that they need remedial training or upgrading long before they get into accidents.

Geller's other point: It's better to identify at-risk drivers and retrain them instead of just firing them. Hiring a new body can set you back about \$10,000, which of course you have to offset with an additional \$400,000 in revenue. As well, you'll probably end up with another problem driver, one who is just as likely to wind up in an accident.

Retraining should not be viewed as punishment, either. Geller told the APTA he knew of one carrier that had a three-step disciplinary process for drivers who had accidents, and the third step was, ironically, being sent to Geller's own retraining course. "If you really messed up,



Rick
Geller

FOR INFO

Number Crunching

- Single biggest accident-causing mistake: **Bad lane changes**
- Human error: **93 percent**
- Environmental: **34 percent**
- Equipment failure: **13 percent**

The total adds up to more than 100 because sometimes more than one factor contributes to an accident.

you're going to Markel's defensive driving course," he says.

Everybody should be receiving upgrading and retraining on a regular basis. That way, remedial work doesn't seem like punishment and—more importantly—Geller says your drivers can shed their dangerous accident-causing habits before they kill somebody. ▲

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* Modern Tire Dealer, 2008

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Fact: Hankook Tires provide tremendous value to the consumer.

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So, how do you spell tires with high value?
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driving emotion



Bespoke Training

safety *Amazing things can happen when you pay attention to what's going on.*
By Brian Botham

Extra! Extra! Carrier improves safety rating from 48 to 18 percent in just 17 months!

Impossible you say? I am here to tell you not only that it happened but how it happened as well.

True story: Sixteen months ago, a 60-ish truck fleet had a safety rating of 48 percent; just two points shy of the dreaded 50, which triggers a facility audit.

How did it get this way? Easy. No one was paying attention. A review of the safety records showed tons of OOS orders, mostly due to problems with cargo securement, hours of service, and vehicle inspections.

We analyzed the carrier's trends and found that cargo securement was the number-one reason for violations, followed by hours-of-service.

We dug deeper and learned that almost all the OOS orders had something to do with lack of driver knowledge or inadequate equipment. The drivers simply hadn't been taught how to secure loads or fill out log books properly.

Once we investigated the why, our next step was to develop a plan.

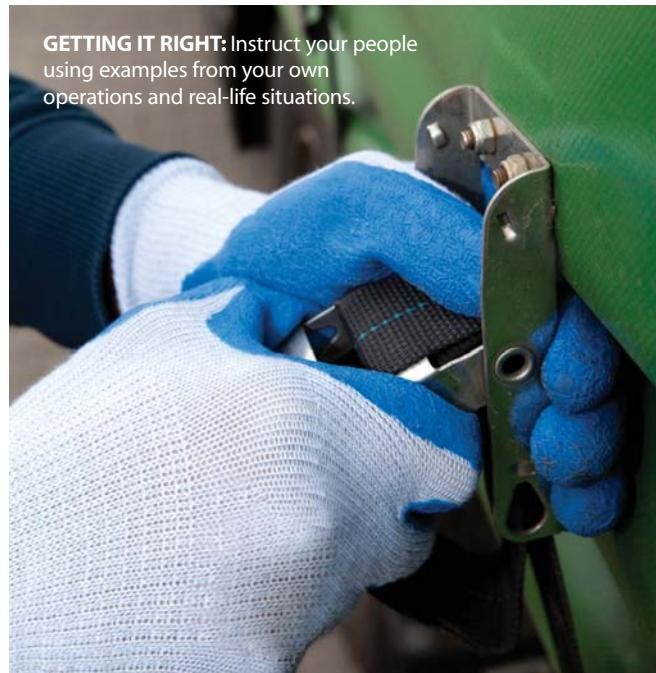
The carrier invested in new chains, binders and straps and changed its recording requirements for HOS and vehicle inspections. Next, all the drivers were brought in for training, but not just some pre-packaged training; this program was tailored

specifically to what the carrier was hauling and the regions they ran. (Previous training had been off-the-shelf packages. Drivers were being taught split-sleeper when there wasn't a truck in the fleet with a sleeper).

This time, trainers used pictures, examples and forms

and inspection reports; they were reviewed for inaccuracies and missing information.

If problems were found they were coached right on site on how to fix their mistakes. Yes it held things up a bit, but the drivers appreciated the help. The safety lanes were run periodically over the



GETTING IT RIGHT: Instruct your people using examples from your own operations and real-life situations.

from their own fleet. Drivers were given explicit detail on how to secure freight and how to properly complete logs and inspection reports.

And it didn't stop there.

A safety lane was the next step. Drivers were stopped as they left the yard a few days after training. Loads were checked for proper securement, and if problems were found they were explained to the drivers and the load securement was fixed on the spot. Same thing for log books

next few weeks; accurate records were kept and improvement was noticed. The safety lanes were operated in the morning and in the evening when drivers were returning to the yard.

Another key element of this carrier's success was getting buy-in from the drivers. How did they achieve that? Simple. The safety ratings were explained to all the drivers during the training sessions and then posted for everyone to see.

They were updated monthly and drivers took an interest in watching the numbers begin to decline. They were truly enthused about watching the numbers drop and began not only participating in the program, but coaching other drivers they felt were not as enthusiastic. The end result was a 30-point percentage drop. Not bad for 16 months.

What else was done? Well they fought every single citation in court. That helped somewhat.

They implemented progressive discipline for those who did not follow the new policies and procedures. A few drivers were let go but they were replaced with better candidates who knew only the new policies.

I have to admit our results were extreme. Even a drop of 10 percent in one year would be excellent.

So set achievable goals. I once established a goal of a 50-percent decrease in collisions in a 12-month period. We actually attained 15 percent, but because I aimed so high, the 15-percent was not as well received as it should have been. If I had tried for 10-percent and we hit 15, everybody would be high-fiving each other.

Now's the time to set your safety goals for 2010. ▲

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

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First and Foremost

strategies *Why your early lessons are also the hard and fast ones.*
By Geoffrey Medweth

I do not know where Ron and Frank are, I lost touch with them decades ago, but these men were my first introduction to this industry.

It is kind of sad, in a way, but because of the transitory nature of this business, it's not just freight we move, sometimes it's ourselves. However, it is also a reminder that in the right time and place, the things we learn early on will stick with us for the rest of our lives.

Summers on the dock at IBM introduced me to Ron, an owner-operator who had his own late '70's Ford Louisville. You remember those: that odd round air thing on the side, a screamin' demon 318, a 13-speed with a big silver hockey puck shifter. Tooling around Toronto on an LTL run, always telling me how he was making "five hundred bucks a day, that's good dough". Perhaps he was trying to justify our industry's low status with the oodles of cash we can make.

Ron did his job well. He was seriously hurt when a maxi pot exploded in his face, tearing half of it off. Saved by a passing motorist, he had it sewn back on and was hard at it a few months later. When the Louisville finally died, he replaced it the next day with a '74 Dodge cabover and went to work five days a week, 12 hours a day, one week off a year.

On occasion, in my off hours I would ride with him. I had never been in a big truck

before, so the power, noise and size gave me the feeling of being king of the road. I liked it and wanted to try it myself.

I was 20. I wanted a job but had zero experience. The only way to get one was to do what nobody else would. In my case, that meant drive 8 km from our yard and lump

In short, he was a teacher. We piled boxes for hours. He corrected my errors, never settling for close enough.

Knowing that people enjoy answering questions, especially if they are generally never asked for their opinion or expertise, I peppered Frank with questions.

The company I started with has been gone over 20 years. Ron's two trucks have both been scrapped. Frank's was sold and sent to South America to pillage rain forests. I keep pictures of the first truck ever assigned to me on my office wall. I miss my old Mack.



boxes for eight hours straight. That is where I met Frank.

Frank was a get-it-done type, ready to do dog work, and I think that was what was in his mind when assigned, or more succinctly, saddled with the task of evaluating the new kid. His first reaction was "if he hits something it's not my fault." I was just glad to have a job, so I did not see this as a slight.

Frank and I spent a week together. He showed me the system, let me spend hours backing into places, gave me hell when I made sloppy turns.

He dutifully answered them.

Thursday of our week together, we went out in one of those crazy October snowstorms. The next day, I was unsure if I would be kept on or let go. Frank said if I could drive in that blizzard, I could start soloing on Monday. My confidence was restored.

I learned a lot about professionalism that year, courtesy of Ron and Frank. Significantly, I discovered that if I shut up and listened, I would learn a lot.

TRAINING WHEELS:
Want to make something stick?
Teach it as soon as the person's hired.

It is an unfortunate commentary that people (and things sometimes) who mean so much over the course of your life drift away as quickly as they will drift in. I do not know where Ron and Frank are. I hope they are doing well and that they know that my limited successes in this business are largely based on theirs. ▲

Geoffrey Medweth is Milton Terminal Operations Manager for Arnold Bros. Transport Ltd.

The search has begun for the

2010 highwaySTAR of the Year

We're looking for one driver who embodies the term professional. A driver with that certain outlook on life and the industry that sets them apart from the rest. A driver who gives to the community, operates with the highest regard for other road users, and who generally sits tall in the saddle. In short, we're looking for a driver with STAR quality to be the 2010 highwaySTAR of the year.

The highwaySTAR of the Year award is open to

ALL drivers — company drivers and owner-operators alike. If you know someone worthy of such an honour, please take the time to complete the nomination form and return it to us as soon as you can. We'll be presenting the award during Truck World 2010 at Toronto's International Centre on Saturday April 17, 2010. Forms are available on-line at www.highwaystar.ca, www.todaystrucking.com, or use the form on the opposite page to tell us about your nominee.

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Hero on the Highway

BY PETER CARTER

“**W**hen the police show up at your door at about six o’clock in the morning and your son’s serving in Afghanistan, you know something bad has happened.”

That’s Raynald Bouthillier talking about the night he learned his only son Jack was killed in action.

Bouthillier, who runs out of the northern Ontario town of Hearst, was home when the cops showed up but his wife Elaine and daughter Michelle were in Edmonton, visiting Elaine’s niece.

It was March 20, 2009. Only three weeks earlier, Jack, 20, had shipped out to Afghanistan on his very first mission.

“I lost a few minutes of what happened next,” Bouthillier says, recounting his horror. “The police told me later that I just sat on the stairs crying. I couldn’t take it in.”

What he was told was this: Trooper Jack “Bouts” Bouthillier of the Royal Canadian Dragoons was killed instantly when the armored vehicle he was riding in struck an improvised explosive device (IED).

Bouthillier then had to phone and tell Jack’s mom. By Monday, the three Bouthilliers found themselves at the Canadian forces base in Trenton, from where Jack’s body moved along the Highway of Heroes, along with three other of his comrades, also killed the same day.

How Raynald and Elaine Bouthillier turned a tragedy into a trucking triumph.

Trooper Jack Bouthillier’s body is now buried back home in Hearst.

His deeply religious parents are confident Jack’s soul is in Heaven. But emblazoned on the side of their 2007 Pete 379 (No. 409 of the last 1,000 379s ever built) Jack’s boyish beaming face is visiting communities and highways and truck stops around Ontario and the Northern United States.

It started with Bouthillier, after the funeral, deciding to put a small image of Jack on the side of the cab.

But a friend convinced him to do something more elaborate.

With the help of the artists at Nord-Est Printing in Hearst and then Creations Jules Internationales in Brossard, Que., the job became a complete wrap. And now, added to Jack’s name, are, high up on the back of the sleeper berth, the 131 names of Canada’s deceased soldiers.

(While he’s not too specific when discussing the cost of the spectacular graphics on his Pete, Bouthillier says with a smile, “this is not a profitable part of my business.”)

Neither he nor Elaine have withdrawn support for our troops.

A TRIBUTE TO TROOPER JACK:

Seeing that rig “makes me sad and proud, all at the same time,” says Jack’s mom Elaine Bouthillier.



In fact, they hope Canada continues its mission so Jack won't have died in vain.

As Raynald told the *Globe and Mail* at the time of Jack's death, "it doesn't matter how it's going to end, but it's worth trying to do something for the people who are there [in Afghanistan]. Jack didn't die for nothing."

Raynald has been an owner-operator since 1988 and purchased his first truck the same year Jack was born. He no longer drives but he and Elaine run this Pete and seven flatbed trailers. The 2007 Pete, he entrusts to Luis Dufour, who also knew Jack. And Dufour says whenever he wheels the rig into a parking lot, it's an attention magnet.

"You want to empty an office building? Just drive this truck up beside it because that's what happened in Milton a few weeks ago, when I stopped in a parking lot. Everybody came out to look," he says.

Born two decades ago in Hearst, Jack was named after Elaine's brother. He, too, died young, at 11, suffocating while playing around their father's cement-making

operation when Elaine was 13. Elaine says she now understands a bit more how her mother felt, all those years ago.

Still, she says, that doesn't make the pain any easier. After all, this is a boy whose parents home-schooled him and his sister. While other kids were in elementary and junior-high classes, the Bouthillier kids could often be found traveling throughout Ontario and the Northern U.S. with Raynald and Elaine.

Elaine would conduct their formal lessons in the mornings. She says because there are no other kids to distract the students, it's easy to get through the obligatory three-r stuff quickly.

The rest of the days would be open to other, real-life learning. Home-school kids must also pass regular Ministerial exams to prove that their parents are doing as good as, or better than, the regular schools.

And anybody who can remain profitable trucking in a lumber mill town like Hearst should be teaching business at Harvard.

Elaine's two students returned to the classroom for the latter years of high

school and scored top marks.

Michelle is enrolled in a bilingual university program in Sudbury.

Not only, as Raynald says, did he and Elaine win some very precious moments with their home-schooled kids, and not only did Jack and Michelle experience life like very few others, but there's something almost fateful about Jack's image and patriotic message trucking around the country on a semi.

After our breakfast in Toronto, driver Luis Dufour pulled the bob-tailed Pete out on to the ramp, heading to the 401 to pick up a load in Milton.

As we watched him gear up; he yanks on the air horn. The truck pulls away, the names of the fallen soldiers becoming smaller and smaller on the horizon.

"When I see that truck on the road," Elaine offers, "it makes me sad and proud, all at the same time."

I asked Bouthillier what he thinks when he sees his truck drive by like that.

"Well," Bouthillier says, wiping away a tear, "it doesn't make it any worse." ▲



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Smokes 'n mirrors



I started smoking when I was about 14. Not an especially good move in retrospect but back then I needed all the help I could get in order to be cool. It actually worked. One girlfriend from that distant past said she was first attracted to me because, "You look so cool when you light a cigarette."

After a comment like that, what were the chances that I'd quit the habit early on? Absolutely zero. Like any other teenaged male then or now, I was programmed to foster the continuation of the species, and anything that promoted the quest was all good.

So, with perfect conviction, I blame my smoking on women.

Forty-eight years later, while I'm sure I go through the exact same motions when lighting a smoke, it just doesn't have the same effect. In fact it doesn't matter now anyway, which is just as well, because today my smoking has the exact opposite effect in most quarters.

I don't much care. I simply smoke. After all this time, smoking is like my right elbow, just another part of me.

The analogy isn't all that far off in some respects, because any time I've tried to quit, the feeling has not been unlike what I imagine I'd experience having an arm torn off.

But I'm not here to talk about the nature of my own addiction. Nor do I seek sympathy any more than I listen to the rampant disdain. I am what I am, take it or leave it.

In any case, having been convinced by others to write this piece, I'm just setting the stage, offering you my biased context.

CRIMINAL CAUGHT!

You'll all know by now that an absurdly over-zealous Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) officer recently pulled over a truck travelling on Highway 401 in western Ontario and ticketed the driver for smoking (see Dispatches, pg.14, for the legal details). But by all

A driver gets nabbed for lighting up in his cab. What does that say about our industry, our country, our enforcement agencies?

BY ROLF LOCKWOOD

accounts that's why he was stopped—alone in the truck, he was spotted smoking and thus deserved to have the weight of the law descend on him. Spare me.

And the fine? A silly \$305.

Not at all by the way, I would characterize the cop in question as "absurdly over-zealous" even if I wasn't a smoker. The "nanny state" is just growing too big and broad. It's utterly insufferable but nobody seems to notice. And incredibly, there are those in our very own trucking industry—home of what I once thought was the last independent spirit left in Canadian business—who actually promote its growth. It truly makes me sick.

Forgetting that immense frustration for the moment, doesn't a cop cruising the highway have better things to do? Like nailing the hordes of four-wheeler who mile after mile concoct a ridiculous number of ways to be stupid or illegal or downright dangerous or more likely all three. All of us see those idiots—the tailgaters, the left-lane or middle-lane hogs, the racers—and we see them get away with it all the time.

Besides, cops never, ever pull trucks over anywhere but Ohio. Not even for the most grievous offence, so what was the deal here? A quota to fill? Maybe, but there are easier ways to do that, unless the quota specifically needed a certain number of truck hits. And don't tell me there aren't ticket quotas, in whatever form.

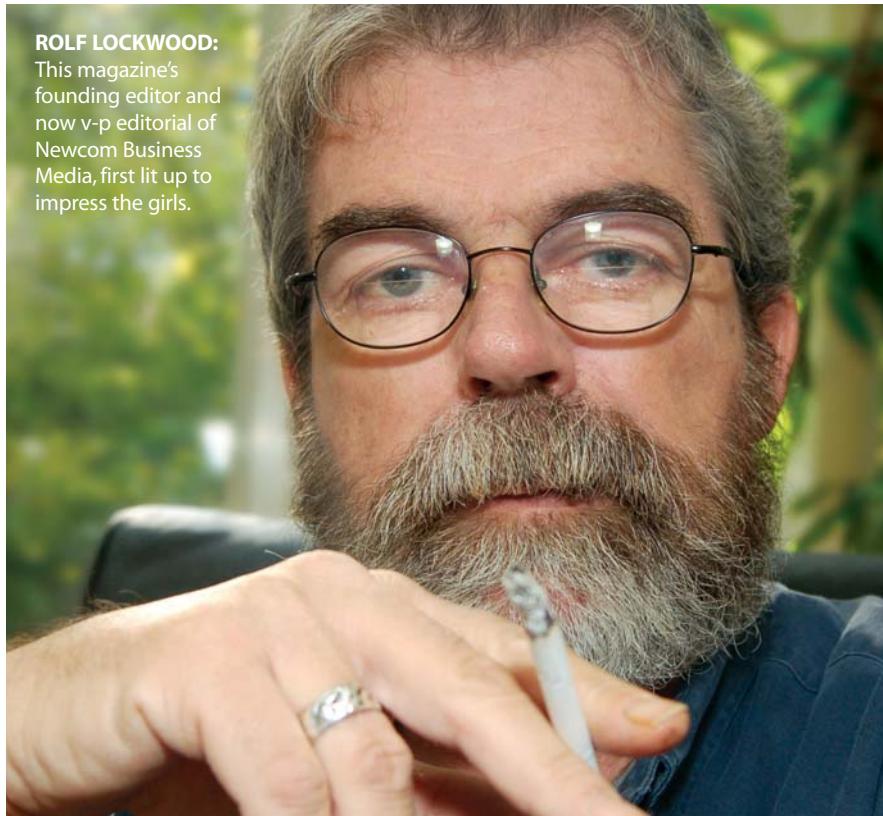
A Personal Essay

Hey, maybe an anti-smoking zealot spotted this particular n'er-do-well and in a spirit of generalized revenge for imagined trucker crimes demanded that the police do something. Hadn't thought of that one before.

And then there's the simple victimization theory. I bitch all the time about the victim complex I often see in individual

ROLF LOCKWOOD:

This magazine's founding editor and now v-p editorial of Newcom Business Media, first lit up to impress the girls.



drivers and owner-operators, but it seems like a plausible explanation in this case.

I mean, for a police officer bent on upholding the letter of the law no matter what, a smoking trucker represents a dream. The opposite of the perfect storm. What's that, a perfect rainbow? Two easy targets in one, two of the most reviled people in the country in a single person. Whoa! A gift from heaven!

Both truckers and smokers seem unable to mount a decent defence of themselves when the official world feels like exercising its power by levying a new tax or some weakly justified new restriction. Or just a ticket. Find me two other groups who suffer the weight of the state as often as this pair. We're the easiest of targets and we never, ever fight back. Worse, nobody ever comes to our defence.

REAL CONFUSION

Lest I be accused of ignoring the reality here, on June 1, 2006, Ontario workplaces were declared smoke-free zones, and that included truck cabs. Well, a lot of them, but certainly not all. Truth is, there's real confusion about this law and not all cabs are created equal. The confusion extends to the smoke police too,

provincial or international borders, fall under Ottawa's Non-Smokers Health Act, which allows employers to designate smoking areas within the workplace. Could certainly be their truck cabs.

One Ontario fleet beat a fine not long ago, probably because of that federal/provincial distinction. Peterborough's Meyers Transport challenged a smoking fine and had the case suddenly dropped just before their first court appearance. The provincial prosecutor offered no explanation but presumably the suits finally realized that Meyers, being a federal carrier, was actually not bound by Ontario's law.

All of this is just one more example of busybody law-makers looking for something to do, but not doing it very well at all. I'm reminded of another piece of Ontario brilliance, namely the new ban on the use of CB radios in moving trucks. C'mon, folks, that's totally nuts. The good old CB has been saving lives for years, not taking them. I might mention speed limiters in the same context but I'll hold my tongue.

I could hardly deny that smoking is bad news in general, and I accept all manner of restrictions on where I can light up (though the smoking ban on California beaches baffles me entirely). But at some point we have to realize that we simply cannot legislate a perfect world into existence. We don't need a government nanny

"Both truckers and smokers seem unable to mount a decent defence of themselves when the official world feels like exercising its power."

actually. I heard a CBC phone-in show the other day in which a Kitchener, Ont., smoking-bylaw enforcement officer got it very wrong.

She didn't know that owner-operators for the most part are exempted from the rule. Independent truckers can light up in their own trucks as long as no one else enters the cab at any time, including off-duty hours.

As well, federally regulated fleets aren't bound by Ontario's smoking ban, and the Kitchener enforcement lady didn't know that either. Such carriers, those that cross

and we shouldn't want one. More to the point, we shouldn't accept one.

Smoking in the cab is obviously an issue best left to the fleet in question. I can't argue that non-smokers sharing a cab shouldn't be protected, but let fleet management deal with it internally via its own rules. We don't need police intervention.

And let me leave you with one final note: an earlier ban on smoking came via that master of the perfect world idea, Adolf Hitler. True fact, Nazi Germany was the source of the world's first such crackdown. Think about that one. ▲

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fuel visions

Keeping track of how money flows around your company is easier—and more profitable—than ever.

BY PETER CARTER

An American private fleet that has been known to spend up to US\$3.1 million every month on fuel saw its diesel and gasoline charges drop by almost \$1.4 million over a two-month period in the summer of 2008.

And while a small part of that amazing saving came from delivering less product, the people in charge of corporate security at the company know that it's also a result of a new internal auditing procedure, used to track the 3,000 or so fuel cards used by the fleet's drivers around the continent.

"In some areas of the United States and Canada, company delivery vehicles are fueled before they hit the road, but in many places, the drivers receive purchase cards to buy fuel," the auditor who checks the company's expenditures, Penny Borjas, says.

"We have standard operating procedures for card usage, but in reality, each driver carries the fuel card around the clock and knows the authorization codes for use at the pump. Unfortunately, it's not difficult for a driver to get a personal transaction past an overworked manager assigned to review the purchases."

Borjas and her team felt this posed a significant risk, particularly given the high cost of fuel last summer, so they conducted a

few simple tests. They checked to see if drivers were fueling on their days off or outside regular work hours.

Well now.

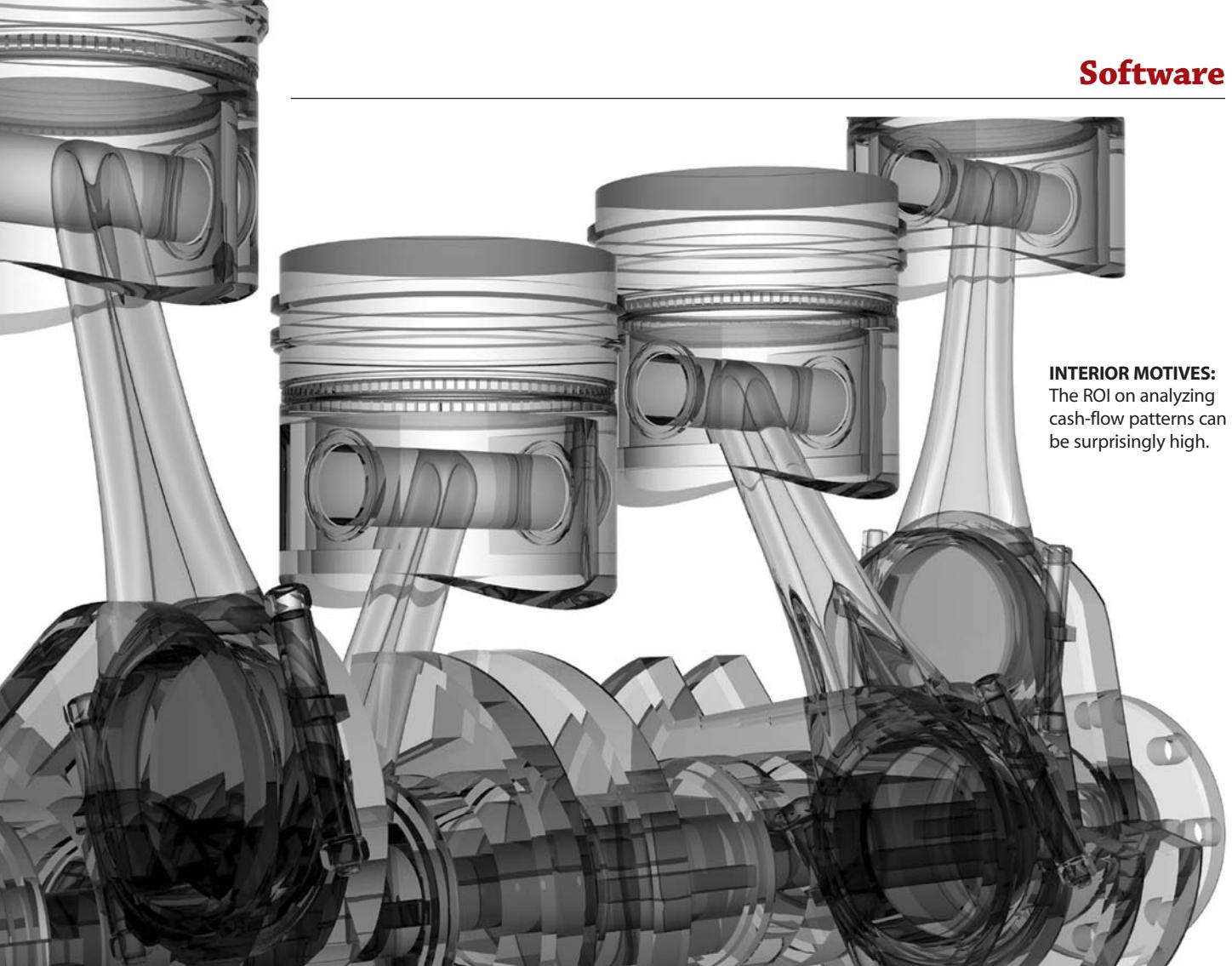
"The project immediately found employees using the fuel cards for personal purchases and sent a clear message that employee transactions were being closely monitored. Between June and July 2008, our company saw a \$1.4 million drop in fuel costs, despite record prices at the pumps during those two months.

"It was a huge success, and these tests are now performed monthly. An unanticipated success [of the investigation] was the breaking down of silos within our company. Though initiated by the search for fraud, the fuel card project became a collective, multi-department effort that got various departments working together towards the same goal."

Internal audits can reveal a lot more than employee fraud.

At the Atlantic Provinces Trucking Association (APTA) conference last month, two representatives from J.D. Irving Ltd., told delegates that internal auditing has saved the company millions because it stemmed theft, double billing, invoicing errors and inappropriate use of company resources.

With a company the size and scope of Irving, the potential for skullduggery and mistakes is enormous. In addition to its petroleum, retail, forestry, shipping, printing and assorted other indus-



INTERIOR MOTIVES:
The ROI on analyzing
cash-flow patterns can
be surprisingly high.

tries, the 15,000-employee giant also owns Sunbury Transport, the Midland Group, and the bulk hauler RST Industries.

Rod Belyea is the manager of internal audit. He says that one particular project almost a decade ago underscored the importance of scrutinizing the comings and goings of money in your fleet. About eight years ago, Irving invested in software devised by Vancouver's ACL.

The cost of the software package—\$3,000 per license.

Inexpensive by any standard. And only a few hundred bucks per year for ongoing tech help.

Quickly, the software earned its keep.

"When we first brought in the software... we had a co-op student in and he did a check and found that the company had made duplicate invoice payments—not for \$50,000; not \$100,000, but for \$500,000."

"And remember," Belyea told the audience, "If you overpay a supplier, they don't come back and tell you."

From there, the internal audit procedures permeated the Irving empire.

"If a truck should go through 5,000 liters of fuel a week and it's going through 10,000, you have to know about that."

That's precisely the kind of information ACL's audit software is designed to flag. Anomalies.

ACL was founded 22 years ago in Vancouver and has grown to

be the internal audit program of choice for, according to the company, 95 of the largest 100 corporations in the U.S.

Don't feel bad if you haven't heard about ACL. David Chiang, the director of professional services at ACL, tells *Today's Trucking* that ACL is "a quiet success story."

Basically, the firm specializes in conducting investigations into fraud, inefficiency, billing errors, or, as one financial writer put it, "anything else that costs money that organizations don't want to spend."

One of their recent client coups has been the \$72.4-billion German firm Siemens, which installed ACL software to monitor the purchasing behaviors of its 1,300 divisions.

In his presentation at the APTA conference, Irving's Belyea, who describes himself as "definitely not an IT guy," said the auditing package was not only inexpensive it was extremely user friendly and simple to understand.

Later, Belyea said "I guess I sounded like an advertisement to them, but it has saved us a lot of money. That software paid for itself 10 or 20 times over."

And the really good news is, according to ACL's Chiang, the software is applicable to small companies as well as the behemoths. You can use the internal auditing to your drivers' fuel purchases, their fuel-purchasing patterns and billing practices. Chiang says an ACL representative will discuss your particular

Software

concerns and prescribe what sort of internal auditing system would suit your operation best.

Regular internal audits, with or without software, can mean the difference between bankruptcy and prosperity.

Belyea's co-presenter at the APTA conference was Jerry Pretty, from JD Irving's corporate security department. A former

mountie, Pretty outlined a grim picture of how frequently and creatively a company like Irving gets targeted. Ongoing vigilance is key.

In another battlefield on its war against lost income, Irving has implemented Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT) for about "97 percent of the dollars and 91 percent of the number of all payments" to

suppliers. EFT, which is available through most major banks, eliminates almost all your check writing.

"Checks," Pretty says, "get stolen, scanned, and copied. So we pay all our suppliers electronically."

J.D. Irving has developed an elaborate cross-company system that identifies and address possible security risks in seven areas: Procedural security, physical security, personnel security, access controls, educational and training (awareness); manifest procedures; and conveyance security.

Still, even with all those systems in place and the finest software money can buy, transport security sometimes boils down to good old-fashioned instincts.

Take the case of one fraudulent claim that arrived on Pretty's desk a few years ago.

A man in Pennsylvania submitted a claim to Irving, saying his SUV had been sideswiped by an Irving truck but the truck driver hadn't noticed and drove away.

So far, so possible, right?

The guy submitted photos of the damage and an estimate from a body shop. There was \$1,500 in damages. He said he could provide witnesses but he was also suggesting getting the matter over with handily.

So Irving could simply send him along a check and everything would be fine.

"The claim came so long after the fact it was hard to check for damages to the truck," Purdy says. Fortunately, before sending the man money in response to his claim, Purdy wrote back and asked for some insurance information.

The claimant phoned back a few weeks later; and when Irving's people asked for some specifics, he said he didn't have the insurance papers handy; they were in his wife's car, and on and on.

The guy suggested a compromise. He said he'd accept a check for \$1,000 and that would be end it.

"Who," Pretty says, "would be prepared to write off a third of a claim just like that?"

Suspicious, Pretty contacted the police in the man's area, they poked around, found out he did in fact run a body shop in Pennsylvania but he has also contacted another trucking company in Ontario, with the exact same fake claim.

Same photos, same estimate.

It would be hard to find a software program that can think like an old cop. ▲



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TOUCHY FEELING TRUCKING

It's easier than ever to stay in touch with—and by extension—keep tabs on, your drivers. The new technology is safer and easier than ever to use, so you'll probably get more buy-in from your operators. Everybody wins.

"I would say in the competitive landscape, companies are trying to attract good drivers, but also retain good drivers," says Jamie Williams, president of PeopleNet Canada. "This technology is easy to use, it's cutting edge, and it's all to benefit drivers."

For instance, **PeopleNet's** BLU technology has a seven-inch, touch screen display, and it has full multi-media capability. It provides messages in real-time with voice-to-talk, so the message is read out loud, instead of a driver having to stop to read it.

The system can also be programmed to provide drivers with a scorecard against company objectives, such as how close the driver is to earning a bonus for particularly good fuel mileage.

The BLU technology is adaptable and can interface with any other third-party operation, which means new features are being created and released constantly. Right now there are more than 50 approved applications.

"For drivers, a lot of personal cell-phone use can be eliminated," says Williams. "Many of the applications eliminate unnecessary stops and out-of-route miles."

Says Kate Rahn, director of marketing and business development with **Shaw Tracking**: "All the new regulations seem to play against a driver's time."

One recent development from Shaw is an enhancement to their driver email service. The service allows drivers to send and receive personal emails directly from the cab of the truck. The messages are kept strictly confidential.

"Every time a driver pulls over to fax something or make a phone call they increase their chances of getting in an accident and lose time," adds Rahn. "We're trying to make those 13 hours as productive as possible and allow drivers to do their jobs."

Shaw's OmniVision platform was also developed with drivers in mind. The device includes an integrated, color touch screen

and a remote-control. The system provides advanced text-to-speech capability to listen to messages without pulling over.

TMW Systems' DriverSeat lets drivers and their families log into the system from any computer with Internet access.

DriverSeat allows drivers to make trip updates, check weather, traffic and fuel prices on the road ahead, upload and view photos, track pay schedules, and

access personal e-mail accounts.

"It's web-based so it doesn't require any installation or specific hardware," says Ray West, director of product management with TMW Systems. "We wanted something that was easy for drivers to use, and it's easy for carriers to setup and operate. It's a good communication tool to get information out to drivers and their families."

— by Steve Macleod

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EQUIPMENT NEWS, REVIEWS, AND MAINTENANCE TIPS



KEEP'EM ROLLING: Why stop the truck just to check tire pressure?

PSI Love You

tires Telematics-linked tire-pressure monitoring systems can be your best friend—as long as they know how to communicate with the rest of your system. By Jim Park

You don't need anybody else to tell you that maintaining correct tire inflation pressure across a fleet of trucks and trailers is a challenge of biblical proportions. Even if road damage and punctures weren't an issue, a tire will lose a couple of pounds of pressure a month through osmosis. Pick up a nail or a bit of steel somewhere and a tire could drop to half its operating pressure in less than a day—if it's not completely ruined.

If your drivers aren't diligent in their trip inspections, a leaker may go unnoticed and could eventually become another of the thousands of chunks of rubber littering the highways.

If only that was all you had to worry about.

Soft tires play havoc with fuel economy too, they're prone to irregular wear, miles-per-thou are reduced dramatically, and casing values suffer as well. Then there

are roadside service calls, outrageously expensive replacements, downtime, service failures, loss of customer confidence, unhappy drivers.

What would you pay to make all that go away? At the risk of oversimplifying the equation, a tire-pressure monitoring system (TPMS) can relieve much of your tire-related stress—but only if you're informed and in a position to do something about it.

Real-time feedback on low-pressure events is a quantum leap from pleading with drivers to do real tire checks—even occasionally—but what good is all that information if it's provided only to the driver? Visual warnings such as blinking lights or wheel-mounted gauges are useful, provided your drivers are willing to take



AIR APPARENT:

T-RAC from Trans Technologies provides tire inflation and deflation capacity along with visual dual-tire pressure monitoring.

TPMS FOR SMALL FLEETS

Size shouldn't matter when it comes to tire-pressure management, though the workload may shift a little. Smaller fleets may not have all the data-management capabilities of their bigger competitors, but they can still keep a watchful eye on tire pressure. And don't think for a minute that small fleets can't be as sophisticated as the big ones—some are, and even more.

Wheel-end pressure gauges and radio-frequency **TPMS systems** exist that provide effective visual alerts to drivers, even if the on-board inflation system isn't there to do the heavy lifting. Drivers have a role to play in keeping tires properly inflated, and fleets can minimize the hassle by providing an easy warning system, such as a wheel-end pressure gauge.

Some of the smaller systems also provide on-board, downloadable data-logging capability to help with tire management, and some have telematic capacity as well. So, if you're looking at a TPMS for your small fleet, or even as an owner-operator, ask yourself what you may need in the future, and what you might do with more data if you had it. Chances are you'll find more compelling reasons to track tire inflation than just keeping the tires rolling and the customers happy.

the next steps—like airing up the tire and checking for the cause of the low-pressure warning—but what if they just won't take the next step?

Carl Tapp, vice-president of maintenance at P.A.M. Transport of Tontitown, Ark., says he sees drivers split into two camps here. One—the prudent ones—will stop and attempt to rectify the problem. The other—average drivers—will place tape over the light and keep going.

"I don't want to leave that decision up to the driver," Tapp says. "He has nothing in the tire, but he knows that stopping will cost him time and money, and maybe a missed appointment. I need to know that I have a tire issue so I can advise the driver how to proceed."

GET THE MESSAGE OUT

TPMS with telematic data transfer capability hands control of the situation over to dispatch and the maintenance department. Tapp says when alerted to a problem, he can locate a suitable repair facility en route, advise them that a truck's coming in, and can instruct the driver to have the tire repaired.

"Sounds simple enough," Tapp says, "But there have been hurdles to jump over getting here. We're still having trouble getting the monitoring systems talking to the inflation systems."

Tapp worked with the Meritor Tire Inflation System (MTIS) by PSI and Qualcomm to establish the link, but until now, there was still one element missing: info on the damaged tire.

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PRINCE GEORGE	89.1	0.6	61.8
KAMLOOPS	93.9	-0.3	66.4
KELOWNA	95.9	-2.0	68.3
FORT ST. JOHN	99.9	0.0	72.1
YELLOWKNIFE	103.4	0.0	85.4
CALGARY *	82.7	-0.2	65.8
RED DEER	85.2	-0.7	68.2
EDMONTON	79.6	0.8	62.8
LETHBRIDGE	82.9	-1.7	66.0
LLOYDMINSTER	86.9	-1.0	69.8
REGINA *	85.9	-2.0	62.8
SASKATOON	89.4	1.5	66.1
PRINCE ALBERT	87.4	-1.5	64.2
WINNIPEG *	87.9	0.0	68.2
BRANDON	83.9	0.0	64.4
TORONTO *	88.9	0.0	66.4
OTTAWA	89.3	0.0	66.7
KINGSTON	89.9	0.2	67.3
PETERBOROUGH	88.9	0.0	66.4
WINDSOR	85.9	-0.2	63.5
LONDON	87.9	0.0	65.4
SUDBURY	89.9	0.5	67.3
SAULT STE MARIE	89.9	-3.0	67.3
THUNDER BAY	91.3	1.2	68.7
NORTH BAY	89.2	0.0	66.6
TIMMINS	92.1	-1.6	69.4
HAMILTON	86.7	-0.6	64.3
ST. CATHARINES	87.3	0.2	64.9
MONTRÉAL *	94.9	-0.5	63.9
QUÉBEC	93.4	-1.1	62.5
SHERBROOKE	92.9	-1.0	62.1
GASPÉ	93.9	0.0	66.8
CHICOUTIMI	92.4	0.0	65.5
RIMOUSKI	93.9	-0.5	64.9
TROIS RIVIÈRES	94.6	-0.3	63.6
DRUMMONDVILLE	91.9	0.0	61.2
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MONCTON	94.0	-2.4	62.2
BATHURST	95.5	-4.1	63.6
EDMUNDSTON	94.4	-2.6	62.6
MIRAMICHI	94.7	-2.7	62.9
CAMPBELLTON	94.7	-2.7	62.9
SUSSEX	93.2	-2.8	61.6
WOODSTOCK	95.9	-2.1	64.0
HALIFAX *	92.1	0.2	62.1
SYDNEY	94.8	0.0	64.5
YARMOUTH	93.9	0.0	63.7
TRURO	92.6	0.0	62.5
KENTVILLE	92.7	0.0	62.7
NEW GLASGOW	95.2	-0.1	64.8
CHARLOTTETOWN *	90.8	-1.8	63.1
ST. JOHNS *	101.6	0.0	69.4
GANDER	104.0	0.0	71.5
LABRADOR CITY	108.9	0.0	75.9
CORNER BROOK	100.3	-0.2	68.3
CANADA AVERAGE (V)	89.7	-0.7	65.3

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

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KNOWLEDGE IS MONEY

With many TPMS providers boasting 24/7 monitoring capability, and pressure-reporting gradients down to two psi, what's a fleet to do with all that data?

Jesse Lopez, director of maintenance at TSI Equipment Inc. in Mesquite, TEX., flags out-of-parameter data for further attention. His fleet uses Stemco's AIRBAT RF Driver Alert TPMS, which he describes as an idiot light for the driver. The real value, he says, lies in the tire data that can be harvested from the uploads.



"The driver gets a blinking-light low-air-pressure warning at the wheel-end, but I get a report of how long the tire has been in service, its inflation and service history, and a report on the actions the driver or technician took when the truck returned to the shop," says Lopez. "The drivers and techs are really happy because we've all but eliminated the chore of checking tires, and I'm really happy because I've cut my roadside tire service costs way back."

PressurePro's Zaroor says there could be an even more compelling reason for fleets to demand tire-data tracking.

"We could be looking at trading carbon credits in the near future, and if a fleet can prove that its tires have been running properly inflated for optimum fuel efficiency, I have every reason to believe the fleet could be given credit for lowering its carbon emissions," he says. "Tire-data tracking would make that possible."

If you can measure it you can manage it, and that's the beauty of having good data and lots of it. You may not find a need for all that's available, but when it comes to tracking cost and performance of a brand or model of tire, you just can't ignore the numbers.

"We can alert the driver and send him to a repair facility, but when he arrives, we have no idea which tire is running low because the MTIS is keeping up the pressure," notes Tapp. "I want the inflation system working to save the tire, and the monitoring system telling us which tire is bad. We're still trying to get the inflation people talking to the monitoring people."

As these two technologies have evolved, it seems they've been on opposite sides of the building. Actually, getting data from the truck to the terminal isn't the challenge; the stumbling block has been creating a place for the data to land.

Phil Zaroor, CEO of Advantage PressurePro, says there is a lack of back-end software written for tire-management systems. While that information can be

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transmitted, you can't do anything with it until the software applications are written.

"Of some 22 telematics providers we work with, only seven have written software applications to accept the tire-pressure info and document it," he points out. "Those applications can provide useful tire-management information, such as how often it was low, how often it needed to be filled, how well it performed, how

long it held up, tire wear, tire problems, etc."

TireVigil by Tire Stamp is one such provider of tire management data. The cellular-based system can upload data right to your office servers, giving you near-instant updates on tire condition. Naturally, only the faults would be of interest, but TireVigil can also ping every tire in the fleet on a daily basis as part of a fleet tire survey. And don't forget to ask about

FOR MORE **INFO**

There's more to be found on these subjects at www.todaystrucking.com where using the search engine will serve you well.

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backward compatibility. You don't want existing platforms rendered redundant by development on this front.

TAKE CONTROL OF PRESSURE

When you consider everything associated with a tire or wheel-end failure, the potential costs are staggering. From lost driver productivity and utilization to the raw tire and repair costs, right up to the fines levied by some shippers for service failures, you have a pretty compelling case for staying right on top of your tires and wheel-



▲ PRESSURE'S ON: Tire pressure monitoring systems make manual tire checks a chore of the past.



▲ IN THE LOOP: A warning light for the driver and short-range RF data transmission keep everyone in up to speed.

ends. I say wheel-ends here because of the potential built into some TPMS systems for out-of-normal temperature warnings (think brakes, bearings, etc.).

A simple red blinking light might not be enough to target the difficulty. On the other hand, a five-psi pressure drop caused by a change in ambient temperature might be more than the driver needs to know about. The fleet, on the other

hand, can filter and sort incoming data and advise the driver of what needs to be done. Pushing those decisions upstairs takes the responsibility off the drivers' shoulders, advises Frank Sonzala, vice-president of sales and marketing at Pressure Systems International. "It gives the fleet some leverage in choosing the right course of action."

Data transfer capability, and tire-man-

agement applications are with us now, to some degree, as are inflation and monitoring systems. What's missing is integration, but that's beginning to happen. If fleets keep driving these problems back to the manufacturers, and they can figure out how to make a little money off the problem, it looks like tire management might actually become less onerous as we move forward. ▲

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The screenshot shows the homepage of TruckandTrailer.ca. At the top, there's a search bar and a 'Quick Search' button. Below that, there's a banner for the 'Rodeo du Camion Truck Rodeo' from July 30 to August 2. The main navigation menu includes 'HOME', 'FEATURED DEALERS', 'FIND A DEALER', 'SEARCH EQUIPMENT', 'PRODUCTS & SERVICES', and 'MEMBER SERVICES'. The 'Sell' section is highlighted with a large 'SOLD' stamp and a red circle. Other sections like 'Buy - Rent - Lease', 'Featured', and 'Member Services' are also visible.

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Big Shoes To Fill

brakes *New stopping-distance regs can be handled by bigger s-cams in many cases, but what if you run heavy? Like it or not, it's time to say hello to disc brakes.*

By Rolf Lockwood

Forever was about how long it took, but after almost four years of public comments we finally have revised stopping-distance regulations for new tractors. Except don't hold your breath.

The new regulations, launched with a proposed rulemaking in late 2005, don't come into effect until 2012-model-year trucks, in 2011 at the earliest.

The U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has created a standard for new-truck brakes (they'll be mirrored in Canada, as brake rules always are) that requires a typical loaded-to-maximum GVW tractor-trailer traveling at 60 mph to reach a complete stop in 30-percent less distance than now.

That will bring them to 250 ft, down from 355. That's for a standard three-axle tractor and a tandem trailer grossing 59,600 lb or less.

For a "small number" of what NHTSA calls "severe service" tractors, the stopping distance requirement is reduced by a smaller amount, namely 13 percent, which translates to 310 ft.

When they say "small number" in the U.S., they actually mean just one percent of the total fleet; specifically those units grossing over 70,000 lb on three axles or 85,000 lb on four axles. But hold on. Here in Canada even a five-axle rig is allowed 87,100 lb nationally, and as much as 102,500 lb in some jurisdictions.

The implication is that the 30-percent rule really only applies to a minority of Canadian tractor-trailers, though almost all of those in cross-border service, of course. And while meeting that challenge is relatively easy, NHTSA allows that heavier trucks present some difficulties in order to become compliant. Many will need air disc brakes, it seems clear, and even then a lot of them couldn't meet the 250-ft demand.

Here's exactly what the rule says:

The reduction applies to service-brake stopping distance but does not, however, apply to emergency braking distances. For heavy trucks in the loaded-to-GVWR condition, the stopping distance requirements from an initial speed of 60 mph are as follows:

- A tractor with two or three axles and a GVWR of 70,000 lb or less must stop within 250 ft.
- A tractor with three axles and a GVWR greater than 70,000 lb must stop within 310 ft.
- A tractor with four or more axles and a GVWR of 85,000 lb or less must stop within 250 ft.
- A tractor with four or more axles and a GVWR greater than 85,000 lb must stop within 310 ft.

For heavy trucks in the unloaded condition, the agency is reducing the specified stopping distance from 60 mph by 30 percent to a 235-ft requirement [down from 335 ft]. This requirement applies to all tractors, including those severe-service tractors for which the loaded-to-GVWR stopping distance requirement has been set at 310 ft.

The new rule applies only to new truck tractors, and does not yet include straight trucks, trailers, or buses.

Incidentally, air-braked straight trucks must stop within 310 ft as things stand now. That won't change in 2011.

The new rule will be phased in over the next four years beginning with 2012 models. More specifically, NHTSA requires implementation on typical three-axle tractors to be completed by Aug. 1, 2011. Manufacturers get an extra two years to work on two-axle and so-called "severe service" tractors, the new mandate having to be met by Aug. 1, 2013.

As noted, the present NHTSA rule

In Gear

demands that an air-braked three-axle tractor pulling an unbraked trailer (for testing purposes only, not as an attempt to mimic real highway life) must be able to stop in 355 ft from 60 mph.

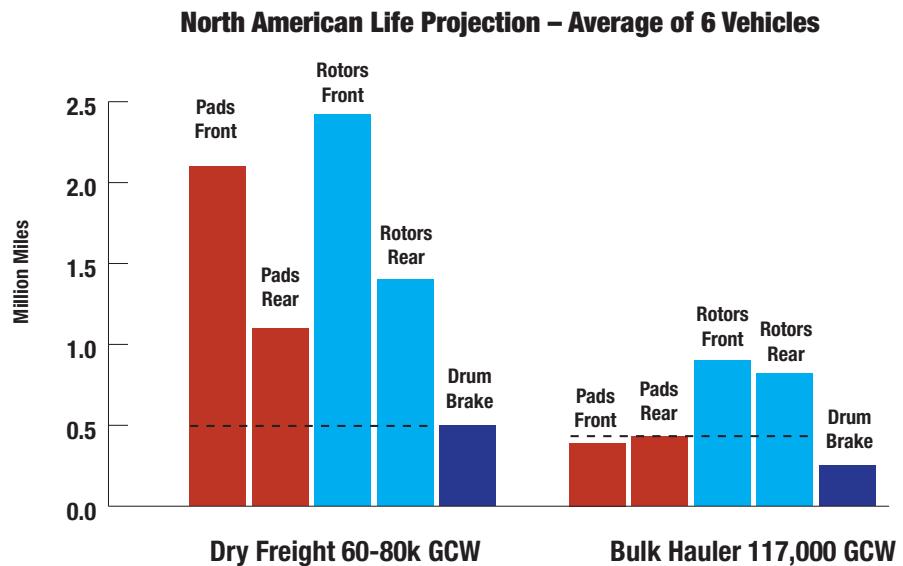
In fact, truck makers now test for stops in about 280 ft. In practice, OEMs will likely aim for—and reach—220 ft, which is getting very, very near to car territory. Cars presently have to stop in 216 ft.

WHAT TO DO

So what does a 30-percent reduction actually mean? How will 2012 and later trucks meet the new rule? By adding brake torque, possibly even on the steer axle alone.

That could simply mean bigger cam brakes, maybe a combination of cam and disc brakes, or possibly disc brakes all round, depending on the size of the truck and its application. Meritor WABCO says you can gain 20-percent brake torque with bigger cam brakes, 28 percent with discs up front and S-cams out back, or 38 percent with air discs at all tractor wheel positions.

Bendix Spicer says that a standard five-axle rig equipped with air disc brakes all round the tractor and grossing 56,470 lb can actually stop in 213 ft from 60 mph. Meritor WABCO tests showed 204 ft. Amazingly, those numbers are below



the present NHTSA car threshold. Think about that.

Key question: Will you need air disc brakes when you buy a truck post-2012?

No, says NHTSA, not if you're running standard highway machinery at a maximum gross under 80,000 lb. That may still demand bigger drum brakes at least on the steer axle, like Meritor WABCO's 16.5-in. Q-Plus or Bendix Spicer's High-Performance ES model.

They'll cost a little more and there may be a small weight penalty, but you'll see significantly longer brake life to offset the downsides. Note that a 16.5-in. steer-axle drum brake provides a 65-percent increase in wearable lining volume compared to the current 15-in. brake you're likely using up front, which means fewer relines.

If you're running heavyish, and that probably means a gross weight in the 90,000-lb range, chances are you'll need air



BRAKING POINTS: Some manufacturers claim that a truck equipped with air-discs all around the tractor and grossing 56K lbs will stop in 213 ft. from 60 mph, which is below the car threshold.

discs at least on your steer axle even to meet the 13-percent stopping distance reduction at 310 ft. More weight than that may well demand discs all around your tractor.

NHTSA says that for "most two-axle and most severe-service tractors...more powerful disc brakes and other design changes may need to be implemented in order to stop within the required limits without detrimental effects on stability or brake balance.

"For a small number of severe service tractors with three axles and a GVWR of 70,000 lb or more, or equipped with four or more axles and a GVWR of 85,000 lb or more, the agency is setting a 310-ft requirement. This is due to the fact that even when fitted with current disc brakes at all wheel positions, it has been demonstrated that these vehicles cannot achieve 30 percent reductions in stopping distance."

Despite costing more at the outset, discs should be cheap to run. Beldix Spicer projects that dry-freight vans in the 60-80,000-lb GVW category can get over two million miles on front disc pads and nearly 1.2 million on the drives, compared to 500,000 miles on ordinary drum-brake linings. The rotors should be equally long-lived—2.4 million miles up

front and 1.5 million out back.

The company's projections for a 117,000-lb bulk hauler are significantly different, but the disc advantage is still clear. In that configuration, front pads should last just under 400,000 miles, rears close to 500,000. Compare that to something like 225,000 miles for conventional drum linings. Rotors front and rear will last over 800,000 miles, the company says.

There are five other key disc advantages: shorter stopping distances, no fade, truly automatic adjustment, much increased side-to-side braking balance, and very quick, very easy friction changes.

Chances are pretty good that a lot of you will come to know those characteristics well in the near future. We now have four years to figure out who gets discs and who doesn't. ▲

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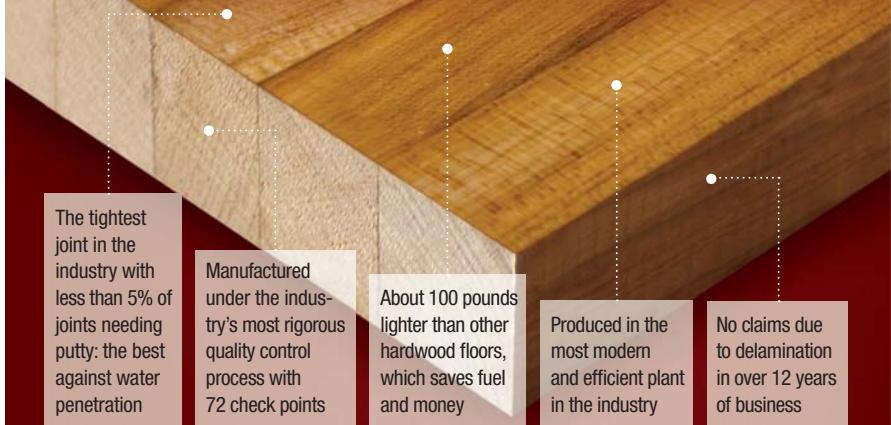


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SEVERE-SERVICE CORONADO

CORONADO SD IS
FREIGHTLINER'S
NEW FLAGSHIP
VOCATIONAL TRUCK



FREIGHTLINER TRUCKS offers the new Coronado Severe Duty (SD), calling it the company's "flagship vocational product". At the same time, the original on-highway model has been improved, featuring "improved fuel economy and revamped comfort features." The truck benefitted from aerodynamic refinements developed in Freightliner's state-of-the-art wind tunnel.

Available in both set-back and set-forward axle configurations, with as much as a 50-degree wheel cut, the new SD truck is said to improve upon the durability and dependability of the FLD SD while adding more driver comfort and style, plus several

new elements specifically engineered for the vocational market. It's available with the Detroit Diesel DD13, DD15, and DD16 engines, as well as the Cummins ISX, all to the 2010 emissions spec.

In front of its high-strength, light-weight aluminum cab, the Coronado SD's fiberglass hood has been designed for maximum durability, says Freightliner. The fenders come standard with impact-absorbing material that's said to help eliminate the damage and cracks common with vocational work. Its new headlights feature single, high-tech reflectors for "excellent lighting capability both forward and to the side."

The Coronado SD's cab is also equipped with updated doors. The outer door frame and belt rail are made from aluminum and combined with a steel inner reinforcement, said to result in a lightweight, sturdy design that provides excellent door sealing and less mirror vibration. A standard courtesy light illuminates the entry steps, and there's a wide 70-degree door opening.

Dual intakes come standard on both new trucks, air entering the system through two chromed steel grilles on either side of the hood. The air intake's air plenum is designed to minimize the infiltration of water, snow, road debris or dust.

The revised Coronado is also equipped with a new single air filter with "improved" filtration capability. Also available on the SD are optional pre-cleaners that create a vortex effect to spin dust and heavy water particles out of the air and away from the engine. As a system, these components are said to have dust-holding capacity equal to or better than traditional external dual cleaners—while lasting longer between changes and saving money because only one filter is replaced instead of two.

Freightliner says some of the truck's key features—such as its 90-degree hood tilt for easy engine access—were developed specifically with vocational drivers in mind. The truck's headlight bulbs are readily available at any auto parts store, and are easily replaced without any special tools.

The Coronado's large cab, with double-sealed doors and well-sealed windows, sports an all new dash with controls and switches located within easy reach, and gauges that are said to be well-lit and easily seen. All switches and instruments are backlit by LED lights for non-glare nighttime viewing, and extra-large panels provide greater flexibility and convenience in gauge combinations and installation of radios and navigation systems.

The dashboard was also designed with minimal joints to remove rattles and squeaks, claimed to be one of the quietest dashboards Freightliner engineers have ever designed. To further reduce noise, the Coronado includes noise-abatement materials such as noise panels in the floor, front wall, sides and back panel.

The Coronado can be equipped with the Detroit Diesel BlueTec 1-Box configuration, which combines the diesel oxidation catalyst, diesel particulate filter and SCR catalyst into one component. Not only does it improve fuel economy by reducing backpressure, says Freightliner, but its design allows for a clean back of cab, a critical element for many vocational applications. The 1-Box configuration also eliminates the protruding exhaust tail pipe, so bodies can be mounted close to the back of the cab, optimizing weight distribution and maximizing payload.

See www.freightlinertucks.com

MOBIL DELVAC SYNTHETIC

IMPERIAL OIL'S NEW "STATE OF THE ART" OIL

Imperial Oil says the new Mobil Delvac 1 ESP SAE 0W-40 heavy-duty synthetic motor oil was made for those critical 60 seconds after a diesel engine fires and oil begins flowing from the crankcase to vital components. Until lube makes its way throughout the engine, bare metal scrapes against metal. Over time, microscopic layers are shaved from the surface of key engine parts.

Rigorous testing, says the company, shows that Mobil Delvac 1 ESP SAE 0W-40 reaches the farthest parts of an engine within that all-important first minute, even in temperatures as low as minus-43 Celsius.

The company calls the new lube "one of Imperial Oil's most important achievements."

The oil is said to maintain a strong,



stable film of protection under heavy-load and high-temperature conditions. This stability allows it to resist thermal degradation that can lead to sludge, viscosity breakdown and the formation of harmful deposits. As a result, says Imperial, "Mobil Delvac 1 ESP SAE 0W-40 customers may find they can extend oil-drain intervals."

Mobil Delvac 1 ESP SAE 0W-40 "significantly exceeds" the engine-protection requirements of the American Petroleum Institute's CJ-4 standard for 2007 and later low-emission engines. There should be emissions benefits as well, like faster, cold-morning start-up meaning less time idling.

Imperial also says the new lube can improve fuel efficiency by 0.5 percent.

Mobil Delvac 1 ESP SAE 0W-40 is supported by Imperial's technical application experts at 1-800-268-3183.

See www.imperialoil.ca

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The screenshot shows the Today's Trucking.com website. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links for LOGIN, SUBSCRIBER SERVICES, CONTACT US, ADVERTISING, SITE SEARCH, and Advanced Search. Below the navigation is a banner for 'THEFULLSTORY'. The main content area features a sidebar with 'DECISION CENTERS' and a list of trucking categories. The 'THEFULLSTORY' section is highlighted with a red circle around the 'FULL STORY' link in the top navigation. An orange arrow points to the 'THEFULLSTORY' logo. The page content includes sections for 'Fuel Issues' and 'Labor Issues', each with a sub-section for 'Most recent articles'.

So... what's The Full Story?

The Full Story offers a deeper look at the industry's most important issues such as border-crossing, hours-of-service legislation, the upcoming diesel emission regulations and much more.

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



www.todaystrucking.com

ASSET TRACKING

THERMO KING LAUNCHES CELLULAR VERSION OF TRACKING ASSET TRACKING AND MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Thermo King's new cellular web-enabled temperature-management system will complement the existing TracKing satellite system, which provides the ability to monitor and track untethered fleet units in real time. Using cellular, satellite and Internet technology, it can also interact and control.

The system can monitor an entire fleet's actual position and route history at regular intervals, or on demand. It provides the pertinent information needed to schedule, control and manage operations of any size, improving overall productivity.

TracKing also provides added security. Its alarm and notification features, along



with the mapping and dealer locator, can mean greatly reduced losses and risks by ensuring that temperature-sensitive products are transported at

the correct temperature. These risk reductions may even qualify for reduced insurance rates, says Thermo King. Food safety and freshness are also enhanced, of course.

The cellular option is said to work best for local and regional distribution customers, while TracKing satellite is for cross-country carriers. Applications for both systems include frozen and fresh produce, meat, packaged foods, dairy, pharmaceutical products, flowers, ice and sensitive equipment and machinery.

TracKing allows for monitoring through a secure website where all data is available, with remote diagnostics on demand and multiple reports to improve efficiency. Mapping of vehicle locations is available with both systems, and geo-fencing within the maps is available on the cellular system, along with the ability to monitor route history within a fleet at predetermined intervals or on demand.

See www.thermoking.com

LOCKING GLADHANDS

PHILLIPS SAYS ITS NEW 'STA-LOCK' MODEL MAKES A SECURE CONNECTION
New Sta-Lock gladhands from **Phillips Industries** are said to ensure a secure trailer connection when space is tight and reduced weight is a goal. They



combine a lightweight aluminum body with a cast-iron connector plate. That plate includes a spring-loaded, stainless-steel ball bearing that provides a positive lock for gladhand mating.

The 'locking' dimple on standard

gladhands can flatten out over time leading to a lower breakaway threshold, says Phillips, and road vibration and turning can cause enough pressure to uncouple the gladhands. Heavy-duty cast-iron gladhands can also be heavy and bulky, and often do not fit on trailers with space constraints. The STA-LOCK gladhand is claimed to solve both problems with the right blend of strength and size, offering a single product ideal for any trailer operation.

See www.phillipsind.com

DIGITAL BORESCOPE

SNAP-ON'S SOLUTION FOR INSPECTING HARD-TO-SEE PLACES

Snap-on's new digital image capturing borescope (BK6000) is an aid for inspecting components that are difficult to reach. Technicians are said to be able to diagnose problems more quickly and accurately, avoiding disassembly when not required, resulting in significant savings in time and effort.

The new borescope is ideal for:



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Taming the Fuel Monster



By Jamie Williams
President
PeopleNet Canada

Fuel is unquestionably the toughest cost driver to tame for trucking firms due to volatile prices.

What trucking executive wouldn't snag the opportunity to improve fuel efficiency if the program paid for itself? If that sounds too good to be true, just read on.

When fuel costs spiked at over \$4.00 per gallon last summer ('08), P&S Transport VP Scott Smith pressured his drivers for better results. When he heard about PeopleNet's MPG Guarantee Program's guarantee, he couldn't pass up an opportunity to try it. And that was after P&S had already saved a million dollars conducting its own initiative.

PeopleNet Professional Services garnered ROI results in less than one month that far exceeded Smith's expectations. He says that PeopleNet's fuel-management process expanded the company's view of fuel economy beyond raw speed and idling time to include less evident factors like routing, maintenance, customers, drivers and trucks.

- \$35,000 hard-cost savings after two weeks
- \$70,000 in first month
- \$105,000 at 45 days
- 9% increase in MPG
- \$12,000/month savings from the sale of underperforming trucks
- Earlier identification and resolution of mileage issues

This new perspective is a departure from how fleets are typically managed. Instead of managing to the fleet's average truck performance, PeopleNet customizes an expectation for each truck based on years of historical performance data in our database. What's more, the information is delivered in a format that makes it easy to manage to the expectations for each truck.

Don't think P&S' results are an aberration. USA Logistics Carriers increased MPG from 5.5 to 6.9 on more than 500 trucks that log millions of miles each month – an incredible savings. The list goes on and on.

In fact, the program has saved fleets \$2,000-\$10,000 per truck and improved fuel economy by 5-15 percent during the first full year of a focused fuel management program. In some cases, it has even doubled a firm's profitability.

Intrigued by an average savings of \$1.7 million for each fleet we've worked with over the past five years? Think about calling the PeopleNet fuel monster tamer.

Williams can be reached at
jwilliams@peoplenetonline.com

In Gear

inspecting cylinder bores and valves through the spark plug hole; examining for gear wear in differentials and manual transmissions; viewing inside door and body panels to check for malfunctions, defects, hidden damage; inspecting under the dash for electrical routing, HVAC actuator operation, radio code verification; and locating fluid leaks without a direct line of sight.



Key features include: it records and plays back still images and video clips; the 3.5-in. display offers a large viewing screen; quick-change connector enables use of optional length, special-purpose imagers; removable, rechargeable lithium-ion battery pack; it can be operated while charging the battery; integrated stand and hangar for flexible positioning; multi-language interface; 2x digital zoom for increased viewing and recording flexibility; mini USB connector for uploading images and video to a computer for viewing, e-mailing; external SDHC card slot to save images and videos to take anywhere; and audio input jack for recording comments with optional ear bud and microphone attachment.

It comes with a two-year warranty.

See www.snapon.com

WEIGHT-SAVINGS CALCULATOR

HENDRICKSON LAUNCHES AN ONLINE CALCULATOR ON ITS UPDATED WEBSITE
Hendrickson Truck Suspension

Systems has launched an online weight savings calculator to estimate the value of weight savings, part of the company's recently updated website. The "easy-to-use" online tool calculates potential payload revenue increase and fuel-cost saving opportunities with the company's

lightweight suspensions, lift axles and bumper and trim components.

The tool utilizes calculations that estimate the effect that overall weight savings may have on payload increase and fuel efficiency improvement.

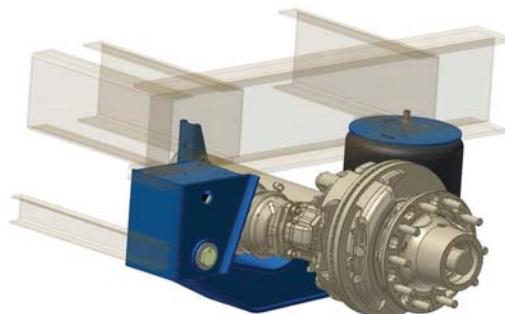
The calculator is said to be useful for 'what if' scenarios, fleet planning, potential fuel-cost impact, or other such weight-critical hauling analyses.

See www.hendrickson-intl.com

RIDEWELL SUSPENSIONS

RIDEWELL HAS RELEASED NEW SUSPENSIONS FOR DISC BRAKE AXLES

Ridewell says its two new RAR-240 trailer air-ride suspensions were specifically designed to accommodate the IMT/WABCO PAN series air disc brakes. These "banana beam" suspensions will work with any of the PAN series: PAN 17, PAN 19, or PAN 22. However for customers using just the PAN 17 brake, the previously released



2400200 may still be preferred because of its overall shorter footprint.

The following part numbers are now available for order: 2400205 for 6.0-7.5-in. mounting height, and 2400206 for 7.5-9.0-in. mounting height. The 2400206 is shown here, looking inboard.

See www.ridewellcorp.com

AIR DISC FRICTION

A BROAD NEW LINE OF ABEX BRAKE PADS FOR AIR BRAKES FROM FEDERAL-MOGUL

The Abex line of commercial vehicle braking products has been expanded to include a comprehensive offering of brake pads formulated for today's air brake systems.

Abex air-disc brake pads feature **Federal-Mogul's** patented cast-iron backplate technology, which is said to ensure a more secure bond between pad

**Federal-Mogul's Abex
line of commercial
vehicle braking**



material and backplate as well as reduced risk of corrosion, in a lighter weight design. Each Abex pad also incorporates an integrally molded friction V-groove that greatly improves heat dissipation and eliminates excessive material stress for outstanding performance under most temperatures and conditions.

Abex air-disc brake pads also feature application-engineered friction formulations compatible with anti-lock braking and/or electronic stability systems.

Abex commercial vehicle sets are delivered complete with installation hardware kits to help speed the repair and eliminate unnecessary costs for the customer.

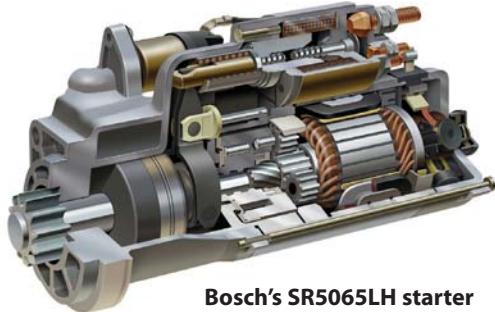
See www.federalmogul.com

HEAVY-DUTY STARTER

NEW BOSCH 'LONG HAUL COMMERCIAL STARTER' IS SAID TO BE BOTH LIGHT AND STRONG

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Bosch's SR5065LH starter

solenoid contacts, dual-composite 'long life' brushes, and an integral magnetic switch that should provide quicker starts and increased durability

See www.boschusa.com

RETREADING INFO

A NEW 16-PAGE FULL-COLOR BROCHURE "Understanding Retreading" is a newly updated 16-page brochure produced by the **Tire Industry Association** and the **Tire Retread & Repair Information**

Bureau to improve the public's knowledge of the retreading process. Chapters include: Why Retread, Are Retreads Safe, If You Want To Be Green, and all 6 steps of the retread process, with photos.

Trucking fleets in the private and public sectors, as well as others with an interest in retreading will find this to be a very useful document.

Full color copies of the Understanding Retreading brochure are available for purchase, with quantity prices available.

See www.retread.org and www.tireindustry.org ▲

sensitivity to low battery charge for more reliable starts; a planetary gear reduction system to increase torque and provide faster starts; O-rings to increase resistance to dust, dirt, and moisture, thereby increasing life; a weight of only 21 lb, said to be as much as 38 percent lighter than comparable units; a two-stage solenoid that prevents damage to the engine ring gear and extends the life of the starter pinion gear; and conical



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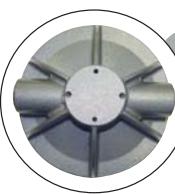


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By Peter Carter

This Bud's For Us

Understanding some economics is as easy as P.E.I.

When I first heard that the McCain french fry folks were growing potatoes in China, I worried. It wasn't the inexpensive product or offshore agricultural practices that concerned me. And neither was it the effects on Canadian potato farmers. (They're farmers. They can handle change.)

My issue was this: If we import Asian potatoes for our fries, would that mean Stompin' Tom Connors' big hit "Bud the Spud" would be outdated?

That wonderful song came out when I was a pre-teen in Sudbury. (Youtube it. The first version that comes up with a search is a splendid 2007 rendition.)

"Bud the Spud", which is about a P.E.I. potato hauler, and Connors' other masterpiece, "Sudbury Saturday Night," held anthem status in the Carter household.

I'm sure I was the only freshman at Carleton University's journalism class in 1976 who knew the lyrics to both.

The world will never have enough trucker songs. Everybody likes "Six Days on the Road." And it'd be a crime if Ontario's new CB laws rendered Red Sovine's "Teddy Bear" series outdated. And there's a new crop of younger guys like Corb Lund, Jason McCoy and Paul Brandt turning out very palatable trucker material. (Can you tell I'm a fan?)

But there's only one Bud. And he's a Canadian institution.

If his loads were to be lost to some far-eastern-based ocean-going behemoths, what sort of shape would our country be in then? What, I ask you, rhymes with Maersk?

See what I mean about a serious problem?

Happily, I am here to tell you that we won't have to send Tom back to the stompin' board.

I know this because I recently attended the Atlantic Provinces Trucking Association (APTA) conference in—you guessed it—P.E.I.

For more than two days, the owners and managers of Canada's easternmost trucking companies discussed pressing issues. I'm talking about the general economy, ferry rates, the problems with LCVs, the sleep-apnea phenomenon, and security.

On that last matter, the audience listened to a team from the Irving Group talk about investing in a simple \$3,000 software program that soon proved that Irving had doled out, believe it or not, almost half a million bucks in duplicate payments. (More on that revelation on page 39 of this issue).

The APTA also elected a new leader, Keltic Transport's General Manager Shane Esson and played some very important golf on one of the island's famous courses.

While they golfed, I put on my investigative journalist hat and poked around. And I found out that Bud's spot on the Canadian trucking landscape is safe. P.E.I. potatoes are alive and thriving.

A McCain's person has reassured me that Canadians won't be eating China-grown French fries. The Chinese spuds will be sold in other markets. Bud the Spud will not become Chang the Spud.

The 90,000 P.E.I. acres given over to potatoes remain the biggest single source of spuds for the rest of Canada—mostly via Cavendish Farms (which is owned by the Irving's) or McCain's.

What a province. Not only is it alive and fertile with those breathtaking potato fields, PEI is rich with culture and lore. For one thing it's home to Skinner's Pond, where Stompin' Tom grew up.

Also, Canada's and perhaps the world's tiniest public library is in Cardigan, seven minutes from where the conference was. The 2,000-edition building is barely bigger than this page and sits across the street from one of the most uniquely constructed small-town historical museums I've ever seen, tended to by a guy named John A. Macdonald.

I met somebody who said she could taste the difference between lobsters from various sides of the island, and lots of folks will attest to the variations in local potatoes.

The older I get, the clearer it becomes. More and more jobs and services can be handed to foreign workers or clever software, but some things—P.E.I. potatoes, historical buildings, good songs and, of course, trucking—you simply can't get done somewhere else.

Bud will continue to be driving for the foreseeable future. ▲



PRODUCT OF P.E.I.: Stompin' Tom penned his classic trucking tune "Bud the Spud" before McCain's opened up its China operations.

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