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- 7 Letters**
- 9 John G. Smith**
- 11 Rolf Lockwood**
- 31 Mike McCarron**

NEWS & NOTES

Dispatches

- 15 Follow the Leader**
Transport Canada demonstrates platooning
- 23 Trending**
- 24 Truck Sales**
- 25 Pulse Survey**
- 27 Stat Pack**
- 28 Logbook**
- 29 Truck of the Month**
- 30 Heard on the Street**
- 54 Faces**

In Gear

- 40 In for the Longhaul**
The new International LT



- 42 Tools that Work**
Must-haves for your shop
- 45 Safety First (and Foremost)**
Volvo's safety enhancements
- 49 New Products**

COVER PHOTO:
NAVISTAR INTERNATIONAL



Features

12 Signs of No Parking

B.C.'s new transportation motto is 'On the Move'. But what happens when drivers stop moving?

By Dave Nesseth

17 The Carbon Cost

The federal carbon strategy will increase prices at the pumps.

By Dave Nesseth

32 Reviewing the New Cascadia

Daimler's newest truck is packed with technology, and offers an environment drivers will love.

By Jim Park

38 Work Horses

Severe-service vocational trucks are a different animal. Think of them as work horses.

By Jim Park

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Companies buy back their shares regularly. This is a good time for government to start the buyback process on the 407 ETR.

— **Blaine Mitton**

Mississauga, Ontario

Lack of contracts is a worry

Re: Liability also runs downhill (October 2016)

I read [Mike McCarron's column] on contracts and it really resonated with me, but also filled me with worry. I'm certain we have many customers without a formal contract in place.

Our contracts are more about agreement on rates versus how to deal with a situation when the "dung" hits the fan, as he said. Unfortunately, we're often willing to "wing walk" and take risk if we are desperate for the business.

We've got a lot of work to do.

— **Julian Grush**

Mississauga, Ontario

Are we suffering from Old Truck Driver Syndrome?

Have you ever woken up in a dark sleeper berth, and lay there trying to remember where you were going? Maybe you are a local driver who sleeps at home. Have you ever gotten up, dressed for work, only to remember it's your day off?

We tend to work long hours, so time off usually means catching up on work at home. We miss most family and social functions for one reason or another. We have been deregulated on the basis of fair competition. We have been regulated, re-regulated and over-regulated in the name of safety. It's been insinuated that we are all lewd, crude and generally untrustworthy. And it's been speculated that there will be a shortage of experienced drivers in the near future. Small wonder.

Why would anyone in their right mind want to put themselves through this abuse year after year?

We can say it's a job; it's a way of life. But I think it's more than that. Many of the truck drivers who do live long enough to retire usually return back to work within a year or two. Bored they say, but I wonder if there might just be something to this – Old Truck Driver Syndrome.

They just don't know how to relax, live a life with regular hours, and socialize with "normal" people.

Personally, I'm looking forward to retiring in a few years, but I'm already looking around to see who I might work for on a part-time basis.

— **Calvin MacPherson**

Ottawa, Ontario

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By John G. Smith



Bill Morneau is Wrong

Despite the promise of automation, drivers will be needed for years to come

Federal Finance Minister Bill Morneau appears to believe drivers are an endangered species.

The observation came during a broad-ranging talk about the changing nature of employment. He referred to the “job churn” that Canadians increasingly face because of precarious, short-term work. Morneau is right about that. But when referencing advances in automation, he also concluded that jobs like truck drivers will be displaced. That’s where he’s dead wrong.

Recent demonstrations of autonomous vehicles have undeniably turned heads, showing exactly what a series of well-placed sensors can accomplish. In the days following Morneau’s comments, San Francisco-based Otto even delivered 55,000 cans of Budweiser using its autonomous technology. Much of that trip was steered and controlled using retrofitted cameras to track lanes, radar to detect obstacles, and GPS to pinpoint locations. It was, in the words of the Uber-owned company, the “first delivery by self-driving truck.”

The fact overlooked by our finance minister and many others is that autonomous vehicles, including the Otto equipment, isn’t entirely automated. Drivers are at the controls during different stages in the journeys.

Eager marketing teams have been quick to apply “autonomous” labels to trucks that can control their own speed, direction and braking. For their part, industry lobbyists have attempted to soften that language by introducing a “semi-autonomous” phrase to reinforce the fact that drivers still have a role to play. Maybe it’s time that we describe “autonomous” technology as what it is – the next, logical evolution in cruise control.

The idea of a car controlling its own speed would have been absurd when the first “auto pilot” was offered in a 1958 Chrysler Imperial. Today’s next-generation cruise controls will select the most fuel-efficient gears based on GPS coordinates or data from pre-traveled routes. Using the readings from bumper-mounted radar and windshield-mounted camera, Bendix Wingman Fusion will offer warnings and actually apply the brakes if following distances shrink too much. I recently experienced this first hand in a truck equipped with Volvo Active Driver Assist. (See *Safety First*, page 45.)

Once you introduce steering controls, the “autonomous” vehicle becomes a reality.

The advantages are not limited to avoiding collisions. A recent demonstration by Transport Canada reinforced how

technology can digitally connect a tightly packed group of trucks to enhance aerodynamics and improve fuel economy. The North American Council of Freight Efficiency has suggested that a following distance of 40 to 50 feet can boost fuel economy by 4%. It’s hard to pass up savings like that.

But the role of platooning is no different than embracing B-trains, Long Combination Vehicles, or triples in the name of productivity. Even if trucks to the rear are run on some form of auto pilot, a driver will still be needed to take the wheel during other stages of the journey.

Suggesting that driving jobs are endangered is even a little insulting. It fails to recognize that duties involve more than gearing and steering. Whether the work involves equipment inspections, monitoring freight, or interacting with customers, there is plenty to do when not holding the steering wheel.

Trains still have conductors, even though they follow set tracks. Jets still have pilots, even when much of the flying time is on auto pilot. As for the future truck? Same thing.

If anything, the demand for well-trained drivers is on the rise. A recent update to the *Understanding the Truck Driver Supply and Demand*

Gap study, completed by CPCS transportation consultants, concludes Canada will be short 34,000 drivers by 2024. The shortage could swell to 48,000 drivers based on different trends affecting labor productivity. Like many trades, the trucking industry is facing a demographic cliff, as it races to replace retiring drivers with the next generation of employees. And there will be plenty for them to do.

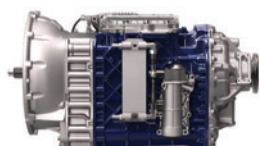
Given Morneau’s mandate to support the national economy, the federal government would be well advised to plan for more opportunities in trades like trucking. They represent the jobs of the future. **TT**

“Suggesting that driving jobs are endangered is even a little insulting. It fails to recognize that duties involve more than gearing and steering.”

John G. Smith is editor of *Today’s Trucking*.

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By Rolf Lockwood



Europe is Different

Are there similarities between trucking in Europe and North America? Sure, but there are more differences.

What are the differences between trucks and trucking in North America compared to Europe? The question intrigues me.

I've been flying across the pond for decades, almost always hosted by a major manufacturer, so I've come back with stories about trucks and engines and the highest of electronic technologies. I've done dozens of plant tours, spent many hours on test tracks, and have driven quite a few clicks on skinny roads both urban and rural.

Once, after driving north from Stockholm, across the Arctic Circle, and then down the length of Finland, I even got lost in downtown Helsinki while piloting a Volvo Globetrotter with a full trailer behind. An adventure, long before the days of GPS.

In a nutshell, the differences between here and there are countless, yet there are also similarities. Trucking is trucking in some sense, no matter where you are, and nowadays technology walks across the water in both directions every day.

My very first trans-Atlantic trucking trip was to Finland in 1985 – in the biting cold dead of winter – and it proved the wandering technology point a lot earlier than you'd expect. Hosted by Nokia, as in the tire-making side of that enterprise, I was the lone journalist amongst a group of tire dealers. The company set me up to drive with a logger for a day in the boonies outside the city of Tampere. Told that my running mate drove a made-in-Finland Sisu cabover, I was keen to see what sort of truck it was, with what sort of powertrain.

Imagine my surprise, and disappointment, when I found a Cummins 400 under my right foot and a Fuller 13 in my right hand! I wanted something far more exotic. Still, the eight hours I spent in that truck going from forest to mill plus a truckstop lunch in the middle – with a driver who spoke no English and a meal I couldn't identify – were utterly fascinating. Among the lessons: drivers are drivers and, despite a distinctly Finnish configuration in that Sisu, trucks are trucks.

Except they're really not. On that trip and subsequent ones, I learned that people are drawn to the truck-driving thing over there for much the same reasons as here: a simple love of driving and the feeling of independence you get as you grip the wheel and stare at the open road. But even then, and certainly now, European drivers are subject to much stricter rules than we are, and for the most part they drive many fewer hours.

Then there's the cabover thing, of course. Gone the way of the dodo bird over here, dominating over there. Narrow, twisty European roads have much to do with it. Try to drive a long-nose conventional through a small town in Belgium or Poland, for example, on roads that were conceived and constructed in 1403. For that and many other reasons, cabovers work better there.

There are still folks on this side who wonder why we can't bring those big, tall COE tractors across the pond. It will never happen, if for no other reason than cabover aerodynamics are inferior to most of our svelte conventionals, and fuel economy seems to matter more here than there.

I pursued this topic at a recent dinner in Germany with Daimler's two top engineering executives on the powertrain side, Frank Reintjes and Elmar Boeckenhoff, along with Kary Schaefer, general manager of marketing and strategy for Freightliner and Detroit, herself an engineer. I made them laugh in a big way when I asked them to discuss what makes the two markets different.

How long have you got, they chimed. That's a doctoral thesis. **TT**

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Dispat



Signs of No Parking

B.C.'s new transportation motto is 'On the Move'.

But what happens when drivers stop moving?

By Dave Nesseth

British Columbia's newest truck parking area was on the verge of opening in early November. "We're just putting in the poles for the lights," said the project manager, referring to 40 spaces being created at Nordel Way in Delta, the result of a \$2.8-million investment and some provincial land.

As helpful as that is, it barely scratches the surface of the province's broader parking shortage. Nearby Surrey has concluded that about 1,400 trucks are parking illegally on its streets and in neighboring Langley on any given day. Commercial lots can charge about \$250 per month to store a truck and trailer, but

that's if they can be found in the first place. Available spaces are often unavailable, inconvenient, or unaffordable.

"I'm constantly hearing from truck drivers looking to park in a safe place," says Surrey city councillor Tom Gill, who had championed a massive parking development first proposed in 2015. That

project was quickly mired in controversy because of its proximity to aquifers and wildlife around Little Campbell River. Even Canadian literary icon Margaret Atwood joined the fight, joking in a 2015 Halloween tweet that she would haunt proponents as a dead salmon, referring to a hatchery near the proposed 77-acre locale.

Developers GG Metro cancelled the plan last month.

"I still feel like compromises could have been made," Gill laments.

British Columbia's Ministry of Transportation says about 74% of the province's 174 rest

ches

PG. 15

Follow the Leader

PG. 17

The Carbon Cost

PG. 18

TransForce buys XPO TL

stops are suitable for commercial truck traffic. They typically hold 10 to 20 truck spaces per lot, with a few larger facilities offering up to 40 spaces. But spaces are often lacking, particularly for owner-operators and smaller companies lacking dedicated yards. They're often left to find room on streets, farmland, or personal driveways.

Chilliwack-based owner-operator Dale Dickey, who's been on the road for some 24 years, says he's fortunate enough to have a contractor supply him with parking, but feels for any drivers coming from outside the province. He knows they're going to be frustrated.

"It's taken so long for our parking to get this far, it will be hard to ever catch up," Dickey says of the parking deficit.

As land value in B.C. increases at record rates, the British Columbia Trucking Association says truck parking facilities are simply an unattractive option for most private developers. It's a concern that the association raised in a letter to Gill last summer, noting that truck parking facilities "have been slow to be developed due to zoning restrictions and difficulties in obtaining

business licences beyond temporary use."

Gill says that permanent parking spots face high development fees and servicing costs compared to the price of temporary permits, which are issued for three years and can often be extended to six.

If truck parking is unprofitable, why did GG Metro want to develop its project? "The way to make the business work is to have other business around it," says company spokesman Patrick Giesbrecht. The developers had planned to offer low monthly parking rates, but also include an array of other services like repairs and wash bays. "It's a captive audience, those hundreds of trucks," he explains.

Giesbrecht finds it ironic that many locals were against the Surrey truck park on environmental grounds. His team had offered options such as oil and grease sensors to help protect against leaks. There's no such protection for "all the trucks that park up and down the Fraser Valley where I live."

Meanwhile, individual communities have been forming task forces to investigate solutions to the commercial parking shortage.

Some, like Abbotsford, have agreed to fast-track development applications for commercial truck parking lots, and even floated the idea of just letting trucks park where they need to. Others, like Surrey, have seen city councils set goals like trying to get into the truck parking business themselves, at least in



part to understand the shortage that intensifies with an annual double-digit increase in the number of trucks.

British Columbia itself is investing \$9 million over three years to improve and expand rest stops and pull outs. That funding followed a survey conducted by the province in January 2016. Of the more than 800 respondents, drivers overwhelmingly said they needed more truck stops. The province has since announced that one new modern rest area will be built between Merritt and Kelowna on the Okanagan Connector, "providing a safe, and conve-

nient place for the commercial trucking industry and tourists to stop and rest along this stretch of highway," said Ministry of Transportation spokeswoman Sonia Lowe.

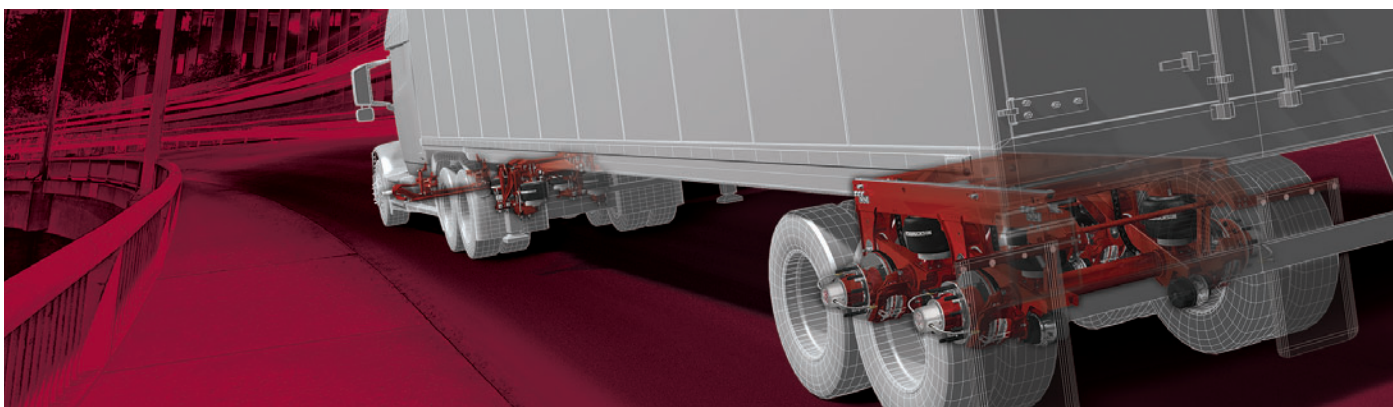
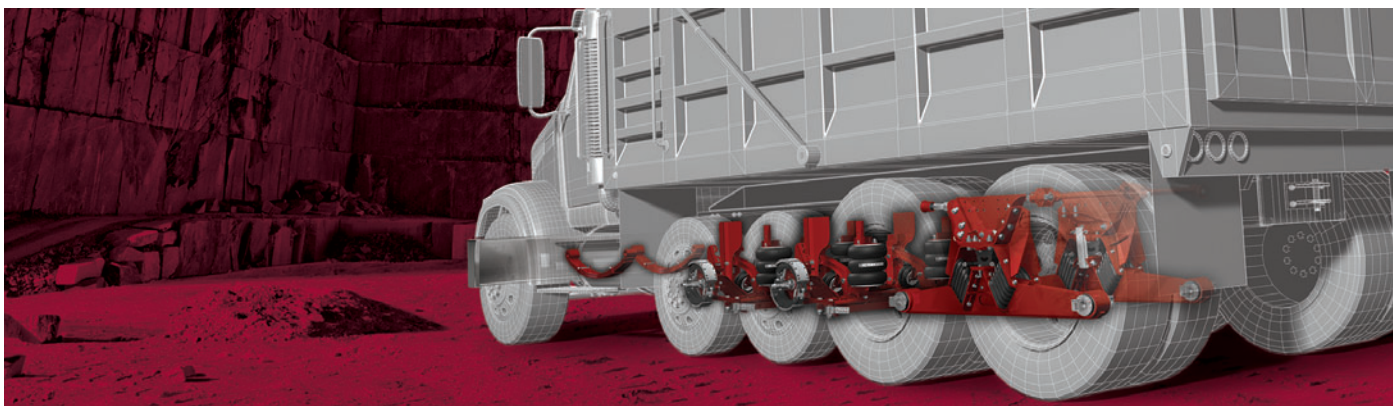
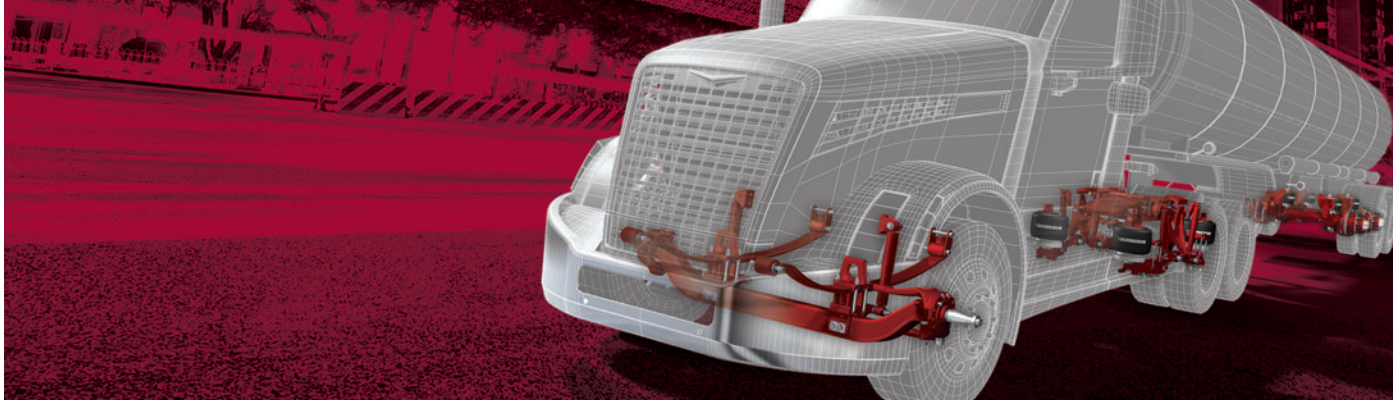
When asked if an eventual mandate for Electronic Logging Devices (ELDs) would create even more pressure around truck park-

ing – as drivers vie to stay on the legal side of Hours of Service – Lowe responded that, "The Hours of Service rules are not changing in Canada. The same rules that current-

ly apply today will continue to apply in the future regardless of an ELD mandate."

British Columbia will soon issue a Request for Information through BC Bid to explore private sector interest in supplying commercial services at rest areas, such as service stations, convenience stores, restaurants, and other amenities. In fact, next spring the province is installing wi-fi at five rest stops, with another 20 to follow.

Dickey is unimpressed by the focus on the latter service. "Great," he says. "We have wi-fi, but we still can't take a dump or wash our face." **TT**



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Trucks paired at PMG Research's test center in Blainville, Quebec, showed how far platooning has come. (Photo by Nicolas Trepanier)

Follow the Leader

Transport Canada demonstrates platooning tech

By Nicolas Trepanier

PIT Group began studying the aerodynamics of closely traveling vehicles as early as 2008, and the research was conclusive. Just like closely paired cyclists and migratory birds, those at the rear of a pack could benefit from the efforts of the leaders.

Last month, a demonstration at PMG Research's test center in Blainville, Quebec, showed how technology has brought the required following distances closer to reality.

The Transport Canada ecoTechnology for Vehicles initiative emerged through a collaboration between different agencies including Canada's National Research Council (NRC); the University of California, Berkeley; Transport Canada; and PIT Group itself.

Three Volvo trucks were connected using video cameras, a 5Hz Global Positioning System, and Dedicated Short-Range Communications (DSRC) antennae. Considered to be Level 2 automation, it worked much like the Adaptive Cruise Control available as an option on some of today's commercial vehicles.

When the predetermined cruise speed of 105 kilometers per hour was reached, the two trucks trailing a lead vehicle shifted into an "automatic" mode and allowed participating drivers to lift their feet off the accelerators. The gaps between the trucks closed to within 0.6 seconds, or less than 18 meters at these speeds.

The tight following distances were obvious to the naked eye. Unseen was the data being exchanged between the trucks at a rate of 10 times per second. Drivers also had access to emergency release

buttons that would allow them to break away at any time.


"More tests are needed to know exactly how much fuel you can save with this technology," said Brian McAuliffe, senior research officer and group leader at the National Research Council.

There are limits. At least for now. Officials involved in the test said the idea

of Level 4 or 5 automation – not requiring a driver at the wheels or even in the cab – is not coming anytime soon. Drivers, they noted, are certainly still needed for roles including pre-trip inspections, loading and unloading, and addressing issues with Customs. Sensors and radar fall short of doing that. Public opinion, regulations and infrastructure challenges would need to be addressed, too.

An early idea that existing trucks could be retrofitted for platooning is also becoming less and less probable, added Steven Shladover of California Partners for Advanced Transportation Technology at the University of California, Berkeley.

But the platooning demonstration showcased one of the early steps. And it proved it works.

"We can control many things, but not the weather," said Yves Provencher, PIT Group director, as rain poured down on the test track. "But if the system works in these conditions, it means that it works well." 

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The Carbon Cost

Federal carbon strategy to increase diesel prices

By Dave Nesseth

Pending Greenhouse Gas limits will require several updates to the next generation of trucks and trailers, but everyone will pay a price for emissions that remain.

This October, the federal government announced that all provinces must have a carbon pricing plan in place by 2018, meeting a minimum of \$10 per tonne of carbon dioxide, and rising by \$10 per year until costs reach \$50 per tonne in 2022. That means higher prices at the pumps. The \$10 per tonne equates to 3.5 cents per liter of diesel, with prices pushing up another 14 cents per liter by 2022.

Trucking represents 7.5% of Canada's annual Greenhouse Gas emissions, or about 54 million tonnes, according to Environment Canada.

Transportation as a whole is responsible for 23% of the national total.

The focus on these emissions is not limited to fuel islands, either.

Shippers are also taking a closer look at the related emissions throughout their supply chain, says Joe Rogers, director of research and technology services at Delphi Group.

"As you go through the supply chain, carriers are only going to represent a piece of that, but I can think of some specific examples of clients who are looking at their carriers because it's a significant enough a piece of what they do," he said in a presentation during the Atlantic Provinces Trucking Association's annual meeting. "The issue is how widely you want to cast your net when you're looking at these issues."

Fuel already accounts for 35% of the transportation industry's total operating costs, but he expects more fuel-related regulations, such as mandated levels of renewable fuel blended with diesel. Existing plans simply fail to meet proposed targets. "You end up with

gaps between what we say we're going to do and what we actually need to do," warned Rogers. "Fuel consumption is one of the places the government can do more."

"It has been proven that this is a good way to stop major emitters from fueling climate change and threatening the entire planet," Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said on October 3, as he unveiled the national carbon tax timeline.

Not every jurisdiction is a fan of the approach. As Trudeau made his announcement, environment ministers from Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Saskatchewan walked out of a Montreal meeting with their provincial counterparts.

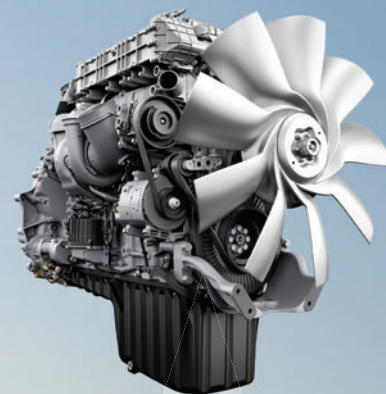
British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario and Quebec already have a direct tax on carbon or utilize a cap and trade framework. Rogers said that while polluters pay a carbon tax equally, a cap

and trade system focuses on isolating Greenhouse Gas emissions with the smallest financial impact on companies.

Provinces will be able to maintain their current carbon strategy if it meets the minimum of the pending federal carbon plan, or otherwise shows "equivalency of effect".

"It may be streamlined for Canada in the future, but for now everything will change when you cross a border," said Rogers, who noted that policy differences may get quite complicated from province to province.

This all adds to the rising price of equipment regulations that have the same goal. In 2021, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency mandates are expected to add more than \$8,280 to the cost of a typical tractor and more than \$1,100 to a trailer. Canada is expected to follow suit. 



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TransForce buys XPO's TL business

TransForce has purchased XPO Logistics' truckload business for US \$558 million in cash.

The divested truckload operation encompasses approximately 3,000 tractors, 7,500 trailers, and 29 locations – reportedly making it the 19th-largest asset-based truckload carrier in the U.S.

"This acquisition significantly strengthens TransForce's presence in the North American truckload landscape with prominent market positions in domestic U.S. and cross-border Mexico freight," said Alain Bédard, chairman, president and Chief Executive Officer of TransForce. "We believe we are investing into the truckload space at a critical time and are well-positioned to benefit from future growth opportunities."

Con-way Truckload's operations appeared to be an odd fit for XPO, which bought Con-way a year ago and

bills itself as the second-largest freight brokerage provider in the world. Then TransForce approached XPO about a deal, according to the *Wall Street Journal*.

XPO said it will use the proceeds from the transaction to pay down debt, which currently stands at about US \$5 billion following more than a dozen acquisitions since 2011.

TransForce said the acquired business is expected to generate annual revenue of approximately \$530 million and EBITDA of approximately \$115 million in 2016.

XPO still plans to offer full truckload services to customers in North America through its brokerage network.

— With files from *Heavy-Duty Trucking*

Mondor invests more in natural gas

A new Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) station in Lanoraie, Quebec, will complement Express Mondor's truck fleet, as it looks to cut fuel



costs and its carbon footprint.

It's the ninth fueling station in Quebec's so-called Blue Road, which offers access to natural gas.

The CNG station represents a \$3.5 million investment from GAIN Clean Fuel and Express Mondor. It is expected to be built by the end of 2016. The fleet also plans to purchase 50 new CNG trucks.

Schneider explores IPO

Schneider National, one of North America's largest fleets, is exploring whether to take its stock public in 2018.

The intent to pursue an Initial Public

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Offering was floated by officials of the Green Bay, Wisconsin-based company, which stated the move would “facilitate continuity of controlling ownership of Schneider by the future generations of the Schneider family, while continuing forward with its long-standing, independent, and professional, corporate governance structure.”

Founded in 1935, and specializing in intermodal, bulk, and logistics operations, Schneider National had approximately US \$4 billion in total revenue for 2015. If it does go public, it would be the largest trucking IPO since Swift Transportation went public in 2010 in a US \$806 million offering.

Quebec investing in electric tech

Quebec is contributing \$8.6 million from the province’s Green Fund to five companies working on the electrification of heavy vehicles.

Autobus Lion, TM4, AddEnergie Technologies, Solution Adetel and Alcoa are expected to build four prototypes over the next three years, including two buses and two load-hauling trucks. To create lightweight vehicles, special attention will be given to the use of aluminum, officials said.

“By focusing on the electrification of transport, we want to become a forerunner in sustainable mobility and a leader in the use of means of transport powered by electricity,” said Laurent Lessard, Quebec’s transport minister. “By focusing on the electrification of transport, we want to become a forerunner in sustainable mobility and a leader in the use of means of transport powered by electricity.”

The Green Fund uses revenue from Quebec’s carbon cap and trade program. The total project is expected cost more than \$17 million.

Continental breaks ground on plant

Continental is investing more than \$1.4 billion in a new truck tire manufacturing plant in Hinds County, Mississippi, and is expected to employ about 2,500 people in the next decade.

Construction begins in 2018, after 18 months are spent clearing and preparing the 1,000 acres.

“Building this new facility in Mississippi is a critical part of our growth strategy for Continental Tire, known as Vision 2025,” said Nikolai Setzer, member of Continental’s Executive Board and head of Continental’s global tire business

worldwide. “This is the first new plant, globally, for the truck tire business in more than ten years. We are convinced that the state of Mississippi provides the best options for Continental to grow our tire business.”

Continental says growth in its commercial vehicle tire business has consistently exceeded market trends over the last five years.





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Fuel-saving tech embraced

What does it take to reach 6.5 miles per gallon (36 liters per 100 kilometers)? A survey by the American Transportation Research Institute, University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute, and sponsors at ExxonMobil

offers some insights into what fleets did to reach this median target.

Nearly 100 fleet managers were asked to offer their views on trends in fuel-saving technologies as well as alternative fuels. Collectively, they operate more than 114,500 tractors and 350,000 trailers.

Aluminum wheels, speed limiters

and Low Rolling Resistance tires were the most common technologies used on tractors, while trailers were most likely to be equipped with Low Rolling Resistance tires, aluminum wheels, and weight-saving options.

Biodiesel blends were the most common alternative fuel used by the groups.

The Survey of Fuel Economy and Fuel Usage by Heavy-Duty Truck Fleets can be found at www.atr-online.org.

Heico acquires Ancra Systems BV

Heico Companies – with holdings including Ancra International, Kinedyne, S-Line and Wistra – has now acquired Ancra Systems BV, which supplies Automatic Truck Loading Systems (ATLS).

“This acquisition will bring advanced loading system technology to the North American trucking and material handling sectors and extend the advantages of automation throughout the warehouse, to the docks and into the trailers,” said Steve Frediani, president and CEO of Heico’s Ancra. “The addition of Ancra Systems positions Heico as a global player in the automated cargo management, loading, control and unloading space.”

Ancra Systems can reportedly unload a 53-foot trailer with palletized cargo in as little as three minutes. The process normally takes a forklift 30-45 minutes, the company adds.

Valley Equipment opens in Salisbury

Valley Equipment has opened a new full-service Utility Trailer dealer in Salisbury, New Brunswick, replacing a Moncton facility.

The new site at 29 Silver Fox Drive employs four people and will soon add six more. There is a 3,000-square-foot parts warehouse, 5,000-square-foot office, and 12,500-square-foot service department. When fully operational it will have eight service bays and will open for two shifts when needed.



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Dawn of the Dead Dispatcher?

Just in time for Halloween, or maybe the latest season of the Walking Dead, **Omnitracs** launched the **Zombie Dispatch** game to illustrate ways fleets can become more efficient.

The video game is set in the aftermath of a zombie outbreak, when players have to make their way through debris and damaged vehicles while delivering a cure to the hospital.

"We created Zombie Dispatch as a way to have a little fun around Halloween, and to help make drivers and fleet operators aware of some of the many products and solutions available to them," said Jim Gardner, vice president - marketing. "While Zombies aren't real, the critical challenges



facing the trucking industry are downright scary. We recognize that trucking and truck drivers are the lynchpin of the economy."

Frost and Sullivan research suggests that connecting trucks can save 30 minutes a day in labor costs, reduce fuel costs by 25%, and boost vehicle utilization up to 20%. But one question remained: can they help to

protect us from a Zombie Apocalypse?

Omnitracs software supports more than 50,000 private and for-hire fleet customers in more than 70 countries.

Zombie Dispatch can be found at www.playzombiedispatch.com, and is optimized for desktops and mobile devices.

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HERE ARE A FEW EXAMPLES OF TWEETS FROM AROUND THE INDUSTRY THIS MONTH

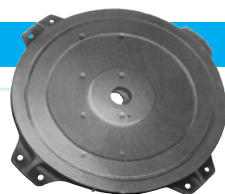


Sask Trucking Assoc @sasktrucking
STA/@VolvoTrucksNA Driver of the Year awarded to Darrin Wood of @Drive4Bison

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Volvo predicts Class 8 drop

Volvo Trucks North America is expecting a further drop in Class 8 truck sales next year, adjusting its North American forecast down to 215,000 units for 2017. That compares to a 2016 forecast of 240,000 trucks.

"We believe it's going to continue to decline a bit going into next year," said Magnus Koeck, vice president – marketing and brand management, during a recent briefing.

When the market came to a sudden halt last summer, manufacturers continued to build, loading trucks into dealership yards, Koeck said. "We are seeing that [inventory] coming down, but they will be out there for at least this year and maybe a little bit next year."

Much of the drop can be traced to the long-haul market. That business has dropped 35 to 40% year over year, while regional-hauling business is down 32%. As of August, year-to-date sales to long-haul buyers accounted for 46% of the business, while regional haulers accounted for 27.7%, he said. Last year the long-haul market accounted for 50.4%, with regional haulers taking on 29%.



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- Maintenance & Repair

Canada – September 2016

CLASS 5	SALES		MARKET SHARES	
	Sept.	YTD	Sept. %	YTD %
Freightliner	1	95	0	2
Mitsubishi Fuso	0	10	0	0
Dodge/Ram	153	1,614	36	32
Ford	133	1,844	32	37
Hino	98	907	23	18
International	5	41	1	1
Isuzu	31	497	7	10
Kenworth	0	0	0	0
Peterbilt	0	0	0	0
Total	421	5,008	100	100
CLASS 6	SALES		MARKET SHARES	
	Sept.	YTD	Sept. %	YTD %
Freightliner	27	191	25	23
Ford	6	51	6	6
Hino	56	402	53	48
International	16	133	15	16
Kenworth	0	2	0	0
Peterbilt	1	67	1	8
Total	106	846	100	100
CLASS 7	SALES		MARKET SHARES	
	Sept.	YTD	Sept. %	YTD %
Freightliner	45	524	7	15
Ford	13	80	2	2
Hino	71	657	11	19
International	494	1,713	73	49
Kenworth	33	306	5	9
Peterbilt	17	244	3	7
Total	673	3,524	100	100
CLASS 8	SALES		MARKET SHARES	
	Sept.	YTD	Sept. %	YTD %
Freightliner	669	5,885	31.5	34.1
Western Star	230	1,843	10.8	10.7
International	328	2,125	15.4	12.3
Kenworth	322	2,258	15.2	13.1
Peterbilt	180	1,722	8.5	10
Mack	133	1,338	6.3	7.8
Volvo Truck	262	2,077	12.3	12
Other	0	0	0	0
Total	2,124	17,248	100	100

U.S. – September 2016

CLASS 5	SALES		MARKET SHARES	
	Sept.	YTD	Sept. %	YTD %
Freightliner	270	2,071	4.4	3.8
Mitsubishi Fuso	7	55	0.1	0.1
Dodge/Ram	1,075	11,926	17.6	22.1
Ford	4,111	33,800	67.2	62.7
Hino	183	1,395	3	2.6
International	43	599	0.7	1.1
Isuzu	425	4,019	6.9	7.5
Kenworth	3	26	0.05	0
Peterbilt	0	7	0	0
Total	6,117	53,898	100	100
CLASS 6	SALES		MARKET SHARES	
	Sept.	YTD	Sept. %	YTD %
Freightliner	1,411	14,345	31	30.9
Ford	1,569	15,595	34.5	33.5
Hino	499	5,234	11	11.3
International	851	9,654	18.7	20.8
Kenworth	196	1,532	4.3	3.3
Peterbilt	21	129	0.5	0.3
Total	4,547	46,489	100	100
CLASS 7	SALES		MARKET SHARES	
	Sept.	YTD	Sept. %	YTD %
Freightliner	2,338	21,786	40.9	47.5
Ford	112	2,142	2	4.7
Hino	152	1,178	2.7	2.6
International	2,231	13,028	39	28.4
Kenworth	369	3,425	6.4	7.5
Peterbilt	519	4,346	9.1	9.5
Total	5,721	45,905	100	100
CLASS 8	SALES		MARKET SHARES	
	Sept.	YTD	Sept. %	YTD %
Freightliner	5,131	58,229	34.3	39
Western Star	333	3,702	2.2	2.5
International	1,608	16,497	10.7	11
Kenworth	2,791	22,322	18.6	14.9
Peterbilt	2,152	20,280	14.4	13.6
Mack	1,372	13,012	9.2	8.7
Volvo Truck	1,557	15,324	10.4	10.3
Other	24	107	0.2	0.1
Total	14,968	149,473	100	100

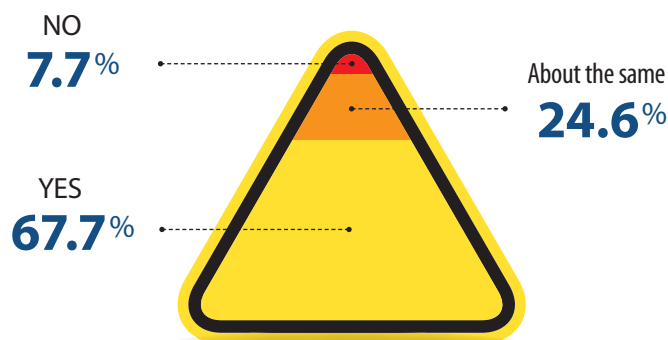
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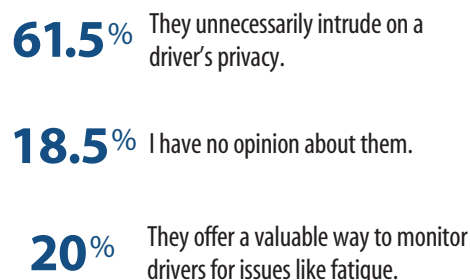
Safety Features

Truck safety features continue to evolve. Anti-lock Braking Systems (ABS) laid the foundation for stability controls. Views through windows can be supplemented by mirrors, cameras and radar. Collision Mitigation Systems will even apply the brakes before your foot might reach for the pedal. This month, we're asking you to offer your thoughts about safety features.

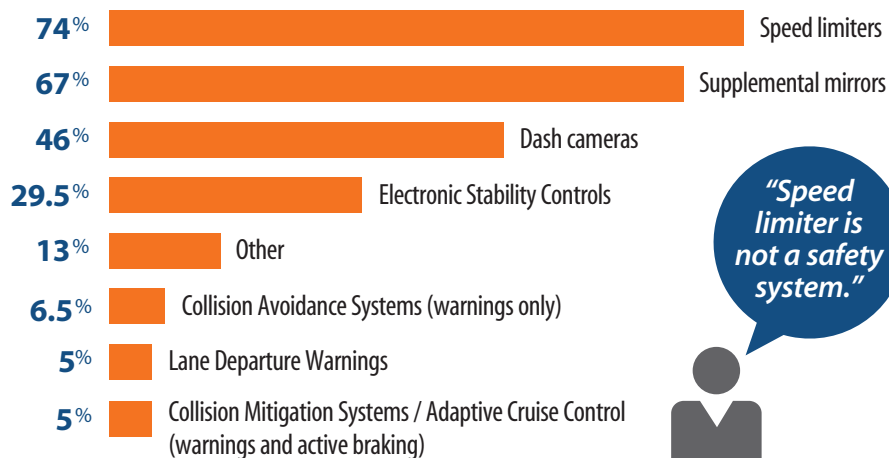
Do you believe today's trucks are safer than models introduced 10 years ago?



Which of the following best describes your opinion about driver-facing cameras?



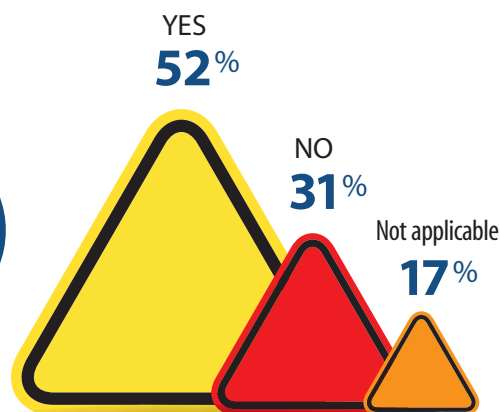
Which of the following safety systems can be found on your company's trucks?



"Speed limiter is not a safety system."



Does your fleet regularly review data on driver actions such as hard braking or speeding?



Results are rounded to the nearest percent.

Next month:
FUEL ECONOMY

Today's Trucking Pulse surveys are conducted once per month, covering a variety of industry issues. To share your voice in future surveys, email johnng@newcom.ca.

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EXPECT **2%** **ECONOMIC** **BUMP,** BUT ELD STRUGGLES

Canada's economy should grow 2% in 2017 – pushing beyond the sluggish 1.2% experienced this year, according to financial experts at Newcom Business Media's recent Surface Transportation Summit.

Carlos Gomes, Scotiabank senior economist, sees a closing gap between supply and demand in the oil and gas sector, which faced particular struggles in 2015.

U.S. households also have disposable income that they haven't enjoyed since the economic crisis of 2007-08, he added. Still, business investment is lagging, up 1.5% globally compared to typical annual growth of 4%.

That all affects freight volumes and rates.

Rates in the trucking industry's spot market have dropped as much as 20%, said John Larkin, Stifel Financial's managing director – research. "Some of the smaller carriers participating in the spot market are really getting hammered, and even having trouble making their truck payments."

Expect other struggles to come, particularly with the pending 2017 U.S. mandate for Electronic Logging Devices (ELDs). One-day delivery operations that serve a radius of 950 to 1,200 kilometers will likely see productivity drop 6-10% because of the unwavering focus on Hours of Service, he said.

Overall, he predicts 3-5% of trucks will disappear from the road as smaller fleets "hang up their cleats" as they struggle to operate under the new rules.

16,000 VOLVOS

Volvo Trucks North America has completed the recall of 16,000 trucks, addressing a related steering defect on 2016-17 VNL, VNX and VNM trucks. The models may have been manufactured without a roll pin on the steering shaft, which could allow the lower steering shaft to disconnect from the junction block. Early dealer alerts estimated that 2,800 of the affected trucks were in Canada.



\$60,000 IN TELEMATICS FUNDING

Ontario's FleetRover has secured \$60,000 from the Ontario Centers of Excellence SmartStart Seed Fund to advance its telematics research in the form of a "dispatcher dashboard" that draws data from several sources. The company says the funding will help establish a software system that bridges the needs of truck drivers, fleet managers, brokers, and freight customers.

\$10.1 **BILLION** IN INFRASTRUCTURE

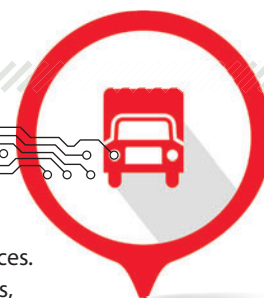


The federal government's fall economic statement includes billions of dollars for new infrastructure, and creates a Canada Infrastructure Bank that will look to maximize investments in "growth-oriented" projects. About \$10.1 billion is pledged to help bring Canadian goods to global markets over the next 12 years. "Priority investments would include those that address congestion and bottlenecks along vital corridors and around transportation hubs and ports providing access to world markets," according to the economic statement itself. In particular, investments are promised for marine and rail safety, including additional inspection capacity.



\$50,000 FOR SCHOOL

Ryder System is granting \$50,000 to Ontario-based Mohawk College over the next five years, supporting a major redevelopment at the school. The Stoney Creek, Ontario campus – which has about 4,000 students – named a classroom after Ryder in recognition of the support. "It's important at Ryder that we continue to invest in the best talent in the industry, and that includes creating a pipeline of talent to fill skilled positions in the future," said Jerry Brown, Ryder Canada vice president – operations.



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Truck of the Month

Mackie the Mover

The American Truck Historical Society recently honored the **Mackie Group** and its founders as living pioneers, and there's no question that the family tree is deeply rooted in the business of trucking. Five generations of the Mackie family have been involved in some way or another, since Charlie Mackie took the wheel of the first truck in 1928.

Company chairman Ross Mackie was searching for antique cars in the 1970s when he came across this abandoned **1950 Kenworth** in a North Dakota junk yard. "See that crusher?" he was told when asking about the truck's fate. "It won't be there tomorrow."

Ross bought it for \$3,500. Cummins and Eaton helped with the year-long restoration, and the cab was matched up to a 1955 Freuhauf trailer. There were only a few modifications including a higher ratio to ensure it would cruise along at 105 kilometers per hour.

But one of the prized features has always been the sound. During a visit to one truck show in Chicago, fellow truck enthusiasts asked him to drive by a nearby bridge over and over again, just to hear it. "It's got a neat bark on it," Ross says. "I can't tell you how proud it makes me feel to have those vehicles." **TT**

THE SPEC'S

1950 Kenworth

200 hp Cummins

10-speed Roadranger transmission

23,000-pound Eaton rear

Do you have an unusual, antique, or long-service truck to be profiled?

Send your *Truck of the Month* ideas or photos to johnng@newcom.ca, or mail *Today's Trucking Magazine*, 451 Attwell Drive, Toronto, ON, M9W 5C4

Heard *on the* Street



Cross named top HR Leader

Four Canadian fleets collected trophies at the inaugural **Trucking HR Canada Top Fleet Employers** awards gala, with **Ken Cross** of **SLH Transport** named the first-ever HR Leader of the Year. The program, now in its third year, recognizes all fleets known to follow best practices in such things as health and wellness programs, diversity initiatives, effective communication and respect, and flexible work arrangements, among other proven Human Resources initiatives. But this was the first year that the honors actually included awards at the top of each category. The top large fleet was Westcan Bulk Transport, with Linamar recognized as the top medium fleet, Triton Transport as top small fleet, and Home Hardware Stores as the top private fleet.

Saoud president of Bridgestone truck business

Joseph Saoud, a 25-year sales and marketing veteran, has been named president of **Bridgestone Americas'** commercial truck and bus tire business. He will be responsible for commercial tire sales in Canada and the U.S., including Bandag retreads. Most recently he was president – global construction, agriculture and military for Commercial Vehicle Group, a supplier of cabs and other vehicle products. Prior to that he was president of Cummins' filtration business unit.

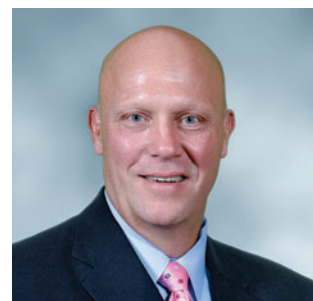
Navistar adds three to board

Navistar International has named **José Maria Alapont**, **Stephen R. D'Arcy**, and **Dennis A. Suskind** to its board of directors, increasing the total number of seats to 12. Alapont – a retired president and Chief Executive Officer with Federal-Mogul, and former Chief Executive Officer and director of Fiat Iveco – has been appointed as a member of the board's finance committee. D'Arcy was appointed as a member of the audit committee. He is a partner in the Quantum Group investment and consulting firm, and previously worked for PricewaterhouseCoopers, spending eight years as its global automotive leader. Suskind, meanwhile, becomes a member of the board's compensation committee. He was a general partner with Goldman Sachs, and was vice chairman of NYMEX.



Groshong to lead Wabash tank business

Gordon Groshong has been named senior product manager – aluminum at **Wabash National Corporation's** tank trailer business. The operation designs and manufactures Walker, Brenner, Beall and Bulk branded tank trailers. He spent 33 years in the tank trailer industry, most recently as director – operations for Wabash National's Portland operations, where Beall trailers are made.



Baer named president at Vipar

Chris Baer has been named the new president of **Vipar Heavy Duty**, the company announced during its annual business conference. Baer joined Vipar in January 2002 as director – program management, and in November 2003 was named vice president and a corporate officer. He was promoted to executive vice president in November 2014. The network of independent aftermarket truck parts distributors has more than 630 locations across Canada, the U.S., Puerto Rico, and Mexico.



Charitable giving pays dividends

By Mike McCarron

In trucking, charity used to entail giving customers a jug of Crown Royal and a box of stogies the week before Santa arrives.

Not anymore. Truckers across the country are making a real difference in their local communities. Their charitable efforts not only help those in need, but pay dividends in employee loyalty and the company brand.

Angela Splinter, CEO of Trucking HR Canada, told me that all the recognized fleets in her highly touted Top Fleet Employers program are involved in some form of charitable giving. Splinter added that “fleets are better connecting their charitable activities with their employees as they see benefits in morale, team building, and recruitment.”

Ironically, at the awards gala Trucking HR Canada hosted to recognize these top fleets, I had the pleasure to tip a few with industry charitable-giving guru Pete Dalmazzi.

“Rexdale Petey” is the founder of the Trucks for Change network, which arranges donated truck capacity so charities can save the transportation costs of distributing food and materials. Drawing on our industry’s community consciousness and deep family roots, he has helped charitable organizations save hundreds of thousands of

dollars. He’ll be the first to tell you that involving employees in volunteering and community giving is great for business.

If you’re looking to harness the power of charity at your fleet, here are some things to consider before you head to the liquor and cigar stores.

Empower your people

Sending a cheque to the local Red Cross is admirable (and needed) but there’s a better approach.

New research by Great Place to Work indicates that when employees are involved in charitable efforts at the office, they feel a deeper commitment and connection to their employer.

In a service business like trucking, I’m not sure there’s a more powerful tool for growing your business than loyal staffers who love working for your fleet and respect your role in the community.

I bet their enthusiasm will also generate a bigger cheque for their charity.

Your own backyard

There’s nothing wrong with raising money to fight poverty in Africa, but I’m a firm believer that charitable giving is most powerful in your own backyard. There are people sleeping on the streets and going hungry in every Canadian community. Helping folks closer to home may be more gratifying for



you and your employees. And local charities can work with you personally to provide ideas and support.

Experteeering

Most people have more time to give than money. Look for volunteer programs that take advantage of your employees’ professional expertise. If you’re a lawyer it’s called pro bono work. If you’re a trucker or logistics pro, it’s called “experteeering”.

Think of the difference your Chief Financial Officer could make by helping the local hospice do its annual budget, or what your logistics manager could accomplish by working with a food bank to find refrigerated warehouse space.

Millennial magic

Charitable giving is especially important to the 18-to-35-year-old set that our industry

is so desperate to attract. A survey of more than 2,000 individuals found that millennials are far more likely to work for a company where a commitment to charity is part of its brand.

Speaking of brand, leaders like Pete and Angela – combined with the charity of truckers from coast to coast – are helping to change the negative perception of our industry, which has driven me nuts for years. If you want to help, start with Trucks for Change (trucksforchange.org).

Please help someone in need this holiday season, because charity pays. **TT**

Mike McCarron is the president of *Left Lane Associates*, a firm specializing in growth strategies, both organic and through mergers and acquisitions. A 30-year industry veteran, Mike founded MSM Transportation, which he sold in 2012. He can be reached at mmccarron@leftlaneassociates.ca, 416-931-7212, or @AceMcC on Twitter.



The 2018 “new” Cascadia is worthy of the name and will, I think, be widely embraced by drivers.

FREIGHTLINER'S **NEW** **CASCADIA**

Daimler's newest truck is packed with technology and offers an environment drivers will love.

By Jim Park

I have driven a number of Cascadia tractors over the years and found them all to be more than satisfactory. The first was a pre-release model I took out for a two-day, 657-kilometer drive in 2007 – three weeks after the official unveiling. It had a Caterpillar C15 ACERT engine since that was prior to the launch of the DD15 engine. I drove the DD15 for the first time in October of the same year, a month before it was officially unveiled, and in a Cascadia.

I have driven Cascadias in many configurations since then – from daycabs to natural gas units, and even the Evolution model. I've witnessed the launch of several powertrain components and various bits of technology from the left seat of a Cascadia. I've also driven a few older units with more than 800,000 kilometers on them. I can say that, even in middle age, they were still pretty solid trucks.

Ten model years will have passed between the time Cascadia first appeared and when the initial production run starts rolling off dealer lots this January as 2018 Model Year trucks. Many evolutionary changes took place along the way, but the basic hood and cab appearance have hardly changed from the first Cascadia to the current model. Some additional aero freshened up the face of the Evolution, but the cab remained much the same inside and out, at least to the eye.

The new Cascadia retains nearly the same cab and sleeper structure, with only a few small external changes, like the aero sculpting on the doors. The hood and the front profile of the new truck, however, are quite different. Almost everything inside the cab has changed, and there's even more going on deep down that you'll never see but will certainly notice – including the latest electronic uptime and safety features, on-board diagnostics, and more.

The truck we tested came with the mid-range aerodynamic offering, called the Aero Package. Over and above the standard package, it had 20-inch cab side extenders, drive wheel covers, and full chassis fairings. Designed into the new Cascadia as the standard aero package are a new hood and grille, a bumper with an integrated air deflector, an upper door seal to improve air flow over the cab, and integrated radio and CB antennae.

The fancier Cascadia with the full AeroX package and the deluxe interior were on static display at the American Trucking Associations' Management Conference and Exposition, held at the same time as the test drives were scheduled.

During the truck's unveiling in September, Daimler Trucks North America president and CEO Martin Daum said the new Cascadia was 19% more fuel efficient than the current base model, and 8% better than the current Evolution. Some of those gains could be attributed to the refined aerodynamic elements, the balance from a more-efficient driveline, and latest version of what Daimler calls Integrated Powertrain Management 4 (IPM4).

IPM4 includes 100 lb-ft more torque than you'd expect from a 400-horsepower engine, intended to help keep in top gear at highway cruise, and GPS-based predictive cruise control to anticipate upcoming terrain, which helps the engine determine a fueling strategy appropriate for conditions. During a discussion with Daimler Trucks North America technical sales manager Mike Stricker, after the test drive, I learned there are several such strategies invisible to the driver.

Mechanically, the transmission and rear axles contribute to overall driveline efficiency with reduced friction losses thanks to a new manufacturing process that finely polishes the gear faces. This helps reduce friction between the gear teeth and allows for the use of low-viscosity lube oil. An optional Axle Lubrication Management (ALM) system actively regulates oil levels at the ring gear and pinion bearings to reduce churning losses.

Inside the cab

Drivers like or dislike trucks for all sorts of reasons, but if the truck isn't functional, comfortable, quiet and roomy, chances are your drivers might be on the lookout for something better. With recruiting and retention front of mind, Freightliner has created a driving environment that will be in high demand come 2017. The company says the interior of the new Cascadia received more design attention than any previous Freightliner.

Gone are the "trucky" looking gauges on the dashboard's A-panel, replaced by a decidedly more automotive-looking arrangement. Between the tach and the speedometer is a five-inch LCD display where driver can get all sorts of trip and operational information, including fuel economy trends, real-time fuel economy readouts, and more. Also displayed here are the various warnings from the onboard safety systems such as Detroit Assurance collision mitigation, Active Brake Assist, Lane Departure Warnings, and more. It's a compact and unobtrusive display (except when it needs to be, such as when the bright yellow alerts appear), with many layers of information that drivers can scroll through.

Controls found on the main section of the B-panel are mostly lighting, along with traction control and an engine shutdown over-ride. Three more switches on the lower right are for the fifth-wheel slider, suspension air pressure dump, and the

THE SPEC'S

2018 CASCADIA

- 72-inch raised roof sleeper
- 126-inch BBC

Chassis

ENGINE: Detroit DD15 400 horsepower, 1,750 lb-ft

TRANSMISSION: Detroit DT12 direct drive
Automated Manual Transmission

Front End

- 12,500-pound Detroit steer axle with monoleaf suspension
- Bendix disc brakes
- Michelin X-line Energy Z 275 80R 22.5 tires

Rear End

- Detroit 40,000-pound 6x4 drive axles, 2.28:1 ratio
- 40,000-pound Freightliner Airliner suspension
- Bendix disc brakes
- Michelin XDA Energy dual 275 80R 22.5 tires

Aero Package

- 20-inch cab side extenders
- Wheel covers



Safety Features

- Detroit Assurance
- Active Brake Assist 4.0
- Lane Departure Warning
- Enhanced Stability Control

Uptime Features

- eVault ECU access
- Bendix Tire Pressure Monitoring System
- Exterior bulb trip inspection system

Interior Features

- Slate Gray with Oregon Ash woodgrain trim
- Elite seats with cloth, ventilation
- Elite cockpit package
- Factory installed refrigerator, 1500-watt Xantrex inverter
- 40-inch-wide liftable lower bunk
- Upper cargo shelf
- ParkSmart HVAC system with optimized idle
- Flat-screen TV mount (up to 26 inches)
- Premium insulation (3M Thinsulate)
- Dimmable LED ambient lighting

Freightliner's 2018 Cascadia

differential lock (6x4 only). They are within easy reach, but will seldom be used. The more prominent feature on the B-panel is a port for a tablet, presumably for an Electronic Logging Device. There's an AM/FM/CD radio tucked up near the top of the panel, which looks rather quaint in its modern setting, but I like it. I don't think a driver should have to be scrolling through a bunch of menus to change the radio station while driving.

This Cascadia gets top marks for driving ergonomics, as have past models. The driving position, access to the controls and the sense of being a part of the truck are all very good. I found the placement of the brake and throttle pedal to be quite to my taste, but didn't like the throttle pedal itself. First, the amount of pedal travel between idle and full seemed to be less than other brands. I also found the throttle pedal a little too close to vertical. I like to drive up close to the wheel, and wasn't able to rest my heel comfortably on the floor while using the pedal. That's one way to encourage drivers to use cruise control more often.

Our sleeper was the single bunk version called the Driver's Lounge with a 40-inch lower bunk. There was a larger-than-usual microwave compartment and a swing mount for up to a 26-inch flat screen TV. There was a fridge and desk as well as a nice assortment of cupboards and closet space. The interior lighting is all LED, but it's a nice warm light and dimmable, which adds a little ambience to the sleeper. I didn't have the time to spend a night, but I found the environment warm, inviting and quite functional.

Out on the road

Daimler said it had designed a truck that drivers would really want to drive and the new Cascadia lives up the billing. First, it's very quiet inside. Since drivers no longer have to hear the engine to time their shifts, Daimler made the noise go away. A new cab insulation material, 3M's Thinsulate, is at least partially responsible for the absence of noise. Contributing to the improvement are new engine mounts, door seals, and the overall aerodynamic shape of the front of the cab. Wind noise is all but eliminated.

The steering is positive at highway speed, and nice and firm, but not so firm that it requires some effort at manoeuvring speed. It still feels like you're driving a tractor-trailer without the constant reminders.

While Daimler claims the windshield wiper coverage is 12% better compared to the current model, I found the right-hand side mirror placement awkward. From where I sat, the sightlines put the mirror and the A-pillar side-by-side, which created a significant blind spot while looking at traffic approaching at right angles to the truck.

And the cruise control system (IPM4) had me flummoxed. When you press the set button on the steering wheel, there are certain things that you don't expect to happen, like the truck



dropping out of gear (eCoast) and not re-engaging at or below a certain speed.

The system is available with a closed architecture, where a fleet can define parameters such as the droop around the speed at which the engine brake comes on, or at which it enters eCoast. These settings would be invisible to drivers of such trucks. The customer-programmable options, however, allow owner-operators to set their own speed as well. Once these options were set, the truck would behave in a more predictable manner.

I learned during my conversation with Stricker that there are three major "cruise control" modes that the truck itself will choose depending on the circumstances. The display doesn't show what the truck is doing or which mode it's in. This gives rise to the potentially unexpected behavior.

For example, as part of the fuel-saving strategy, the truck will alternately switch into eCoast on some slight downgrades, but will remain in gear on others. Swicker told me that eCoast requires some fuel input to keep the engine idling, whereas staying in gear allows the Electronic Control Unit to almost completely cut off the fuel flow to the engine, saving that much more fuel.

I think this rather complex level of control afforded to the engine/transmission Electronic Control Units will, counterintuitively, require a higher degree of driver training so drivers will have some idea of what the truck is doing. I found the behavior disconcerting, but I had no training on it prior to the test drive. That begs the question – why should drivers need training to operate cruise control? Maybe I'm overthinking it.

My final word on the new Cascadia is "wow". It's a terrific-driving truck for ride and handling and the work and leisure environments are as good as they come. I like the new interior styling even if it's a bit less trucky than its predecessor. There are several maintenance items on the new truck that I didn't touch on here that will save fleets some downtime and make drivers' lives a little easier, too. Overall, one has to wonder where Daimler will take the next version of the truck, but that's a question I asked myself last time, too. It's all about innovation, and the new Cascadia offers no shortage of that. **TT**

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These trucks are closer to plow horses than the thoroughbreds we see in the on-highway market.

By Jim Park

Drivers of severe-service vocational trucks will likely look back on 2016 as a year that made their jobs much easier. It wasn't a banner year for growth in many industry segments, but truck makers still managed to produce some attention-grabbing upgrades to existing product lines. This year saw the introduction of a new lightweight 11-liter engine for the vocational side that offers a very nice power-to-weight ratio with ratings ideal for the market. And we even got a couple of brand new models to cheer about: the MBT 40 off-road severe-service chassis from Western Star and Navistar's HX line.

Introduced in February, the HX series will replace the PayStar lineup as of January 2017. The HX is the first new truck introduced by Navistar since 2010. PayStar production will end this month.

"We are looking at the HX series to rejuvenate the market," said Chad Semler, director of product marketing for severe-service trucks. "We will offer four base models – two with short hoods in set-forward and set-back axle configurations for our N13 engines, along with two long-hood versions, again set-forward and set-back, for the Cummins X15 engines."

The WorkStar series will live on, giving the lighter side of the market a host of options and configurations. The HX is the top-of-the line chassis for the heavy side of the business, seemingly custom-designed for Canadian service.

"Just under 50% of the orders from the first round of HX production went to Canada," Semler said. "Pent-up demand for this extreme-duty platform was very high and our Canadian dealers were really excited about the truck. It's proving to be very popular in Canada."

In May, Western Star disrupted the severe off-road market, introducing its Extreme Duty (XD) Off-road package and

the new the MBT-40 Transformer lineup, both built on the 6900 Model chassis. The Multi-Body Transformer can quickly change from one fully functional in-cab controlled body application to another, like switching from a water tank to a dump body.

The Western Star product launched at a time when the market was reeling from the collapse in oil prices, and a glut of underutilized equipment was being sold off at auction. Still, Western Star reports a few new developments to the product since May, including a new hydraulic control system that adds even more plug-and-play options for a variety of applications, and an 85-metric-ton configuration that uses a new Link suspension. There's also a lighter version in the works, the

out a body, and in Western Canada, where you don't use water trucks in the winter, a truck can sit for three to four months. We can make that switch in less than 30 minutes, keeping that asset working year-round with a fraction of the transition cost and downtime."

Freightliner's 122SD model, like its big Western Star brother, has felt the impact of the downturn in oil and construction markets, but the evolution continues. JP Davis, market segment manager for Freightliner Trucks, says they have recently added a 23,000-pound steer axle option for tractor is in the heavy-haul environment.

"Canada is a large part of the market for this truck, and we're anxiously waiting for the oil field and construction markets to get back on their feet," Davis said.

WORK HORSES



Canada's generous weight allowances make our vocational trucks far more productive than their lightweight American cousins.

MBT 25, that offers the same quick-change flexibility in a smaller package. That truck will make its first appearance at the spring construction shows in Las Vegas.

"These trucks will revolutionize the market," said John Tomlinson, Western Star's XD and vocational sales manager. "It used to be a two-week process to swap

Kenworth recently expanded its T880 lineup, adding a set-forward axle option. The T880S makes available front axle ratings from 14,600 to 22,800 pounds. Single, tandem, or tridem drive axles and a variety of factory-installed lift axles are among a range of options available.

The T880 and T880S come standard with

the recently uprated 12.9-liter PACCAR MX-13 engine, which now cranks out up to 510 horsepower and 1,850 lb-ft of torque. For weight-sensitive applications, the 10.8-liter PACCAR MX-11 engine, introduced last fall and put into production early this year, is 400 pounds lighter than the MX-13. The MX-11 offers up to 430 horsepower and 1,550 lb-ft of torque and is well suited for many on- and off-road applications such as ready-mix trucks.

Peterbilt now offers the Hendrickson HMX Suspension weight-bias spring package for its Model 567.



"This load spring option is intended to help adjust for vehicle lean conditions that may be induced by a side-to-side weight bias from certain bodies and mounted equipment, such as those used in refuse, concrete mixer, and well driller applications," said Charles Cook, marketing manager for vocational products.

DOWNSPPEEDING IN THE GRAVEL PIT

Everyone is concerned about fuel economy, but vocational truck operators often have other priorities when it comes to their drivetrain, notably gradeability and startability. Tall gears are good for keeping engine revs down while on the highway, but they aren't much use for pulling 50,000 kilograms up a 10% incline, or creeping along at less than 1 kilometer per hour when pouring a curb or laying asphalt.

Traditional 8-, 9- and 10-speed transmissions simply don't have enough gears to cover the ratios needed for those extremes in operation. The 13-, 15- and 18-speed transmissions can manage it because there are more cogs in the box to cover the spread between a 16:1 or 18:1 starting gear and a 0.73:1 overdrive final ratio.

Mack and Volvo recently added a set of gears to their respective mDrive and I-Shift automated transmissions, giving operators a whopping 32:1 overall drive ratio, and they use a 3.21:1 rear axle (rather than a 3.73, 4.10 or higher axle ratio). This gives operators the fuel-saving benefits of downspeeding when in top gear without forfeiting gradeability and startability in lower gears.

To pull this off, engineers added an extra set of reduction gears located behind the clutch housing, consisting of two extra gear wheels – one on the input shaft and one on the counter shaft. The extra reduction gears provide a ratio that is almost twice as large as a standard I-Shift. To make room for the extra gear set, the transmission has been made 12 centimeters longer than a standard mDrive or I-Shift.

"This is the first time we've ever had a chance to talk about fuel efficiency with a vocational product," said John Moore, Volvo's product marketing manager – powertrain. "If you've got 50 dump trucks and you're able to save 3%, it goes a long way."

"A lot of people want the driveability and performance of an [Automated Manual Transmission], they want their people to drive it, but up until now they've really not had an option to do it without using expensive alternatives with auxiliary transmissions," he said.

And, new to a market segment we seldom cover here, is Peterbilt's Model 520, a Low-Cab-Forward dual-control chassis for refuse collection and concrete pumper applications.

"The Model 520 features two nearly identical work environments so drivers can seamlessly and safely operate from the left- or right-hand side, including dual controls for the parking brakes, HVAC system and stereo," said Cook.

New offerings from Mack this year include the latest version of the 11-litre MP 7 engine with the updated wave piston design and a common-rail fuel injection system to reduce emissions and improve efficiency. It's also about 50 pounds lighter than the previous version. Mack also rolled out the uprated mDrive HD 14-speed Automated Manual Transmission with two crawler gears that will really help folks that pour concrete curbs and sidewalks.

"The integration with the Mack mDrive HD 14-speed allows for seamless communication among components so that the vehicle is always in the right gear without the driver having to manually shift, reducing driver fatigue and increasing safety. It also provides a deep ratio of 32:1 in the lowest creep gear to facilitate low-speed functionality such a curb pouring when needed," said Tim Winkle, Mack construction product manager.

"Vocational trucks, particularly these severe service models, are interesting and challenging to work on," said John Felder, product marketing manager at Volvo. "The Canadian market is completely different from Edmonton to Quebec City. Every time we build something special and send it out into the field, particularly when we have a good partnership with the body builder and the owner, it's like sending one of your kids off to school for the first time." **TT**



In Gear

- 42 Tools that work**
- 45 Volvo safety features**
- 46 SAF-Holland CBX40 AeroBeam**
- 49 Lockwood's products**

EQUIPMENT NEWS, REVIEWS, AND MAINTENANCE TIPS

International LT



In for the Longhaul

First impressions of the new International LT

By Steve Bouchard

Navistar's new highway tractor – known officially as the LT (for Longhaul Tractor) – was unveiled during the recent annual meeting of the American Trucking Associations. And according to Jeff Sass, senior vice president – sales and marketing, the response from drivers and customers alike has been “spectacular”. Drivers, after all, played an instrumental role in the LT's design. Hundreds of them offered feedback in

what they wanted to see in the truck in the first place.

Less than two weeks after that launch, Navistar assembled a dozen journalists to put the truck through its paces on a five-kilometer track at the New Carlisle Test Center in Indiana.

Visually, the LT is somewhat similar to its predecessor, the ProStar. That's no accident. Mark Stassel, vice president – product development, said the

manufacturer has opted for a “progressive rather than aggressive” approach in evolving the exterior design.

The subtle changes make a difference. Enhanced aerodynamics boost fuel economy 3%, thanks to features including a new hood, longer aerodynamic fairings, reshaped wheel openings and side skirts, and a three-piece bumper.

But the most extensive changes, when compared to a ProStar, are experienced inside.

The Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning system has been overhauled, and controls on the dashboard are completely reorganized. The air brake controls have been moved to the right so there's no danger of knees pushing them in. Visibility through side windows has increased, and controls on the steering wheel are now laser-etched so they won't fade over time.

Stassel showed me how the distance between the driver's seat and cup holder console has been increased by 1.5 inches, leaving more room for the driver to move into the sleeper compartment, which has been borrowed from the ProStar itself.

The combined Cummins X15 engine and 18-speed Eaton transmission worked seamlessly together – admittedly after I missed the first gear because of a long absence from manual transmissions. Inside the soundproofed cab, noise was also low enough that we could talk in a normal tone of voice.

Visibility up front and to the side of the tractor was quite good. In fact, the forward visibility is exceptional.

Dennis Mooney, Navistar's vice president – global engineering, said the main feature of the LT is its energy efficiency, which is 7% higher than a ProStar 2017 with a Cummins ISX15. With a background in the automotive sector, he also stressed the importance of designing a reliable and productive tractor.

The goal is to build a truck that is as reliable as a car, he said.



A SuperTruck on the track

It wasn't the only super truck on the Navistar track that day. The LT also shared space with the company's SuperTruck, called Catalist, developed through funding from the U.S. Department of Energy with the goal of boosting freight efficiency by 50% when compared to a 2009 baseline model.

The Navistar team was quick to note that the final product actually boosted freight efficiency by 104%, reaching an impressive 13 miles per gallon (18 liters per 100 kilometers).

Carbon fiber body panels have lightened the truck, and aerodynamic fairings direct air around any available space, but some of the most dramatic gains in the name of aerodynamics and fuel efficiency were made at the front end. When the SuperTruck reaches 80 kilometers per hour, the front axle actually drops two inches, while the trailer axles lower three inches, creating an airfoil.

Cameras have replaced the mirrors, to reduce aerodynamic drag, while the adjustable rear suspension is made of alloys and composite materials to further lighten the load.

The Catalist uses pre-installed GPS maps and updated data about approved truck routes to automatically adjust the cruise speed, too. Unlike other systems on the market, there is no need to have traveled the route before, either.

When spinning around the track, I did a double take when noticing the engine reached just 1,000 rpm at 100 kilometers per hour. This is made possible through downspeeding, a

1.90 axle ratio, and a powertrain that includes a Navistar N13 engine which relies on proprietary electronics and enhanced combustion.

There's also an electric hybrid system supporting the combustion engine. Its electric motor is powered by the energy produced during braking, and supported by a pneumatic motor. Solar panels on the roof of the trailer add energy of their own.

Peloton follows

Then it was time for a platooning demonstration in the name of fuel savings.

Navistar demonstrated the possibilities by virtually connecting two autonomous vehicles on the test track, as the lead vehicle guided the truck behind it. The driver of the trailing vehicle lifted his hands off the steering wheel to prove the point.

Navistar and Texas A & M Transportation Institute collaborated to develop and test the system. Following distances can be altered, and during the test were reduced to 15 meters. As the lead truck changed lanes, its partner to the rear followed suit.

The underlying Peloton system is not a reality yet, but it holds the promise of boosting fuel savings 12%, and helping to keep traffic moving seamlessly in the process.

Several other partners participated in the program including RW, Denso, Bendix, GreatDane Trailer LytX and Argonne National Laboratory.

Together, they offer some insights into the future. **TT**

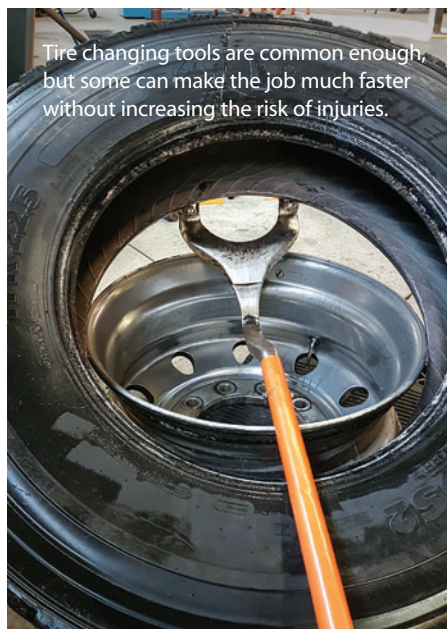
Diesel Price Watch

CITY	Price cents per litre	(+/-) Previous Day	Excl. Taxes
WHITEHORSE	119.9	0.0	103.0
VANCOUVER *	117.9	0.1	74.6
VICTORIA	111.3	-0.6	75.9
PRINCE GEORGE	105.6	0.1	73.9
KAMLOOPS	106.5	0.0	74.7
KELOWNA	107.2	0.0	75.4
FORT ST. JOHN	109.5	0.0	77.6
ABBOTSFORD	105.6	0.0	73.9
YELLOWKNIFE	112.9	-0.5	94.4
CALGARY *	95.2	-0.8	73.7
RED DEER	93.1	0.9	71.7
EDMONTON	92.6	-0.5	71.2
LETHBRIDGE	97.9	1.3	76.2
LYNDEN	94.4	0.2	72.9
GRANDE PRAIRIE	94.9	0.4	73.4
REGINA *	98.3	1.0	74.6
SASKATOON	98.3	-0.3	74.6
PRINCE ALBERT	97.5	1.3	73.9
MOOSE JAW	96.9	-1.2	73.3
WINNIPEG *	100.6	-0.1	77.8
BRANDON	98.9	0.0	76.2
TORONTO *	99.0	0.2	69.3
OTTAWA	97.7	0.0	68.2
KINGSTON	97.8	0.0	68.3
PETERBOROUGH	95.7	0.1	66.4
WINDSOR	95.9	0.2	66.6
LONDON	96.8	-0.4	67.3
SUDBURY	98.9	0.0	69.2
SAULT STE MARIE	103.2	0.5	73.0
THUNDER BAY	103.8	-0.4	73.6
NORTH BAY	98.5	1.4	68.9
TIMMINS	102.8	0.0	72.7
HAMILTON	97.3	0.1	67.8
ST. CATHARINES	94.7	0.0	65.5
BARRIE	97.3	0.1	67.8
BRANTFORD	97.9	0.0	68.3
GUELPH	98.9	0.0	69.2
KITCHENER	99.9	0.7	70.1
OSHAWA	96.6	-0.1	67.2
MONTREAL *	110.7	-0.2	72.1
QUEBEC	111.5	0.0	72.8
SHERBROOKE	110.3	0.0	71.7
GASPE	109.2	0.0	74.5
CHICOUTIMI	105.5	0.0	71.4
RIMOUSKI	109.9	0.0	73.3
TROIS RIVIERES	109.8	0.0	71.3
DRUMMONDVILLE	111.3	-0.2	72.6
VAL D'OR	108.8	0.3	74.2
GATINEAU	107.5	-0.1	69.3
SAINT JOHN *	109.5	1.1	69.7
FREDERICTON	109.7	-1.5	69.9
MONCTON	110.1	0.0	70.2
BATHURST	109.5	-0.6	69.7
EDMUNDSTON	110.4	0.0	70.5
MIRAMICHI	110.5	0.0	70.6
CAMPBELLTON	111.3	0.0	71.3
SUSSEX	109.4	0.0	69.7
WOODSTOCK	111.6	-1.6	71.6
HALIFAX *	99.1	-3.1	66.8
SYDNEY	103.2	-2.9	70.3
YARMOUTH	101.1	-3.0	68.5
TRURO	100.2	-3.0	67.7
KENTVILLE	99.6	-3.0	67.2
NEW GLASGOW	101.7	-1.5	69.0
CHARLOTTETOWN *	115.5	0.0	76.2
ST. JOHN'S *	117.1	0.0	76.3
GANDER	117.7	0.0	76.8
LABRADOR CITY	124.2	0.0	82.5
CORNER BROOK	117.9	0.0	77.0
GRAND FALLS	119.7	0.0	78.6
CANADA AVERAGE (V)	103.5	-0.1	72.0

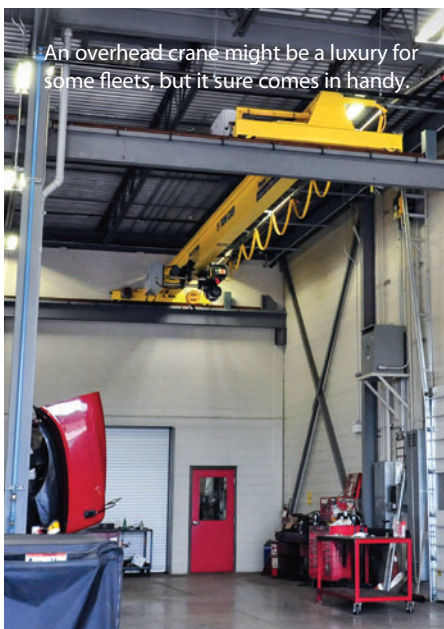
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Tire changing tools are common enough, but some can make the job much faster without increasing the risk of injuries.



An overhead crane might be a luxury for some fleets, but it sure comes in handy.



The humble torque wrench, possibly the most important tool in the shop. Are yours used regularly?

Tools that Work

A shop is only as effective as its tools. Do you have the right ones?

By Jim Park

Most shop supervisors or maintenance managers have at least one secret weapon in their tool crib. It could be a proven time or labor saver, or maybe a tool designed for lifting heavy stuff like tires and wheels. Tools that aid in precision work, such as installing wheel bearings, can prove their worth many times over by reducing irregular tire wear and minimizing the possibility of a wheel-off.

Since there are literally thousands of tools or devices promising cost savings, ease of operation or increased productivity, we called some Canadian fleet maintenance specialists to find out which tools they just couldn't live without. Not surprisingly, we received several tips on tire service products, which suggests tire maintenance is still a significant source of grief.

One tool we came across was a tire demounting tool offered by AME, called Golden Buddy. It's a lever-action tool that pries the tire free of the wheel in a single motion.

"This tool is headache-free and allows us to remove a tire in under 10 seconds," says Adrian Cimadamore, shop foreman at Premier Bulk Systems in Gormley, Ontario.

Tools for heavy lifting are popular, especially for wheel service. It's not that wheels are excruciatingly heavy (although wide-singles sure are), but when you service 10 or 20 wheels a day the cumulative effect can generate pretty high worker turnover in that department.

Chris Iveson, director of maintenance at Challenger Motor Freight, uses portable wheel pullers to wrangle wheels that can become seized to the hub. The size and weight of the wheel can make this a dangerous task to do manually.

"These wheel pullers are lifesavers," he says. "Especially with wide-single tires."

Still with wheels and wheel ends, a tool that has been around awhile, called Dr. Preload, has recently been acquired by Meritor. It allows technicians to set measureable and consistent bearing preload in about a minute per wheel end, without torque wrenches and dial indicators. It does require the proprietary Temper-brand nut and lock ring, but the system supports any wheel hub currently available.

"We've done some testing, trying to achieve preload with torque wrench procedures, and we concluded it can't be done reliably or repeatedly," says Ray Piascik, vice president of marketing and sales at Temper Axle Products (now called Meritor Wheel Bearing Adjustment System). "Just a slight slip of the wrench and you can go very high on preload. That's

really bad for bearings."

Hub and bearing installation is an exacting exercise, and it can be complex. Bearing installation and adjustment



Work platforms are much safer than ladders, and more efficient because techs can keep all their tools close at hand while working at heights.

procedures for non-preset bearing sets – described in The Technology and Maintenance Council's (TMC) *Recommended Practice RP 618* – include nine steps, requiring some diligence on the technician's part. A slight degree of endplay is acceptable even though bearing manufacturers will tell you a slight preload condition provides optimal bearing life. The problem with preload is that it's very difficult to measure, except in the case of this system.

Meanwhile, a unique tool for maintaining air systems is offered by Quebec-based Commercial Fleet Tech Support Group. Its Inject-Air Pneumatic Circuit Foggers inject a fog of lubricant throughout the air system, rather than pouring the lubricant in a liquid form.

"The finely atomized liquid, as a fog, will reach into the furthest parts of the air system rather than settling into the air reservoir," says Claude Drouin, founder and senior technical consultant. "Each 150-milliliter dose contains a mixture of alcohol for water dispersion, and a lubricant to prevent the non-metallic parts in the brake valves – O-rings and seals – from drying out and becoming brittle, thus ensuring longer life and proper function of the valves."

Valuable tools are not limited to those that can be stored in a tool crib. Overhead crane and work platforms have certainly proven their worth to a few carriers. Erb Transport in New Hamburg, Ontario uses both. Gerry Spachman, the company's trailer maintenance chief, says the overhead crane is one of his greatest assets.

"We use it to lift the trailer bodies to remove the bogie for repairs," he says. "We also use it to move old worn-out suspensions around our shop and then to bring the freshly rebuilt or new suspension back into position to get reinstalled into the trailer. We don't use it every day, but when we need it the crane sure makes life easier."

Erb and Challenger have also designed platforms for high-level work. As provinces continue to introduce or enforce worker fall protection regulations, platforms such as these are bound to become more common.

And our final must-have tool for any truck shop is the humble torque wrench. You surely have one, maybe a couple, but are they used regularly when remounting wheels? There are regulations in place in some provinces requiring wheels be torqued to specifications during re-installation, and then retorqued after certain intervals.

It's easier and more convenient to use an impact wrench to tighten wheel nuts, but that's not the proper procedure. A calibrated torque wrench is the only approved method of tightening wheel nuts.

Whether it's an overhead crane, a Genie Lift or a tire bar of some sort, the right tool is always a good investment for its intended application. **TT**

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Safety First (and Foremost)

Volvo demonstrates advances in safety tools

By John G. Smith

Today's trucks are undeniably safer than the models that came before them. Cabs are tougher. Stability controls keep wheels firmly on the ground during tight turns. Cameras and radar-based systems can even provide virtual eyes for the road ahead.

Each system plays a role in an ongoing evolution in the name of safety, and Volvo Trucks North America wanted customers to see just how far its trucks have come.

The manufacturer hosted a safety symposium at the Michelin Proving Grounds in Laurens, South Carolina, demonstrating the difference that can be realized with some of its latest enhancements – particularly in the form of the recently unveiled Volvo Active Driver Assist collision mitigation system, and the Enhanced Stability Controls which help to prevent rollovers.

Active Driver Assist builds on a foundation of the Bendix Wingman Fusion system, using a windshield-mounted camera and bumper-mounted radar to monitor surroundings. The radar itself scans for vehicles 500 feet ahead of the truck, across a 22-degree angle, while the camera looks across a 42-degree angle. Alarms begin to sound at speeds above 24 kilometers per hour if following distances close to within 3.5 seconds. Brakes automatically apply if the equipment determines a collision is imminent. An integrated Lane Departure Warning sounds a tone when the truck drifts across lane markings, too.

It isn't the only integrated feature. Volvo also feeds Active Driver Assist readings directly into its driver information center, next to the speedometer. No extra screens have to be mounted on the dash. The speeds of vehicles ahead of the truck are

shown using a series of lights around the speedometer, and a ring of red lights appears when the active controls are applied.

Such events don't have to go unnoticed by fleets, either. The camera captures video images both 10 seconds before and 10 seconds after an event, and the system will store up to 40 of these clips. Using telematics, the data can even be fed to fleet managers through emails or a centralized portal.

Drivers still maintain control, though. When warnings are sounded, those who sit behind the wheel can back off

Meanwhile, a tanker equipped with outriggers demonstrated how easily a rollover can begin, and how seamlessly the same situations are avoided when stability controls are working. Without the controls, outriggers skipped off the pavement to keep the trailer from tipping on its side. When activated, wheels remained on the ground, even when heading into the same turns at higher rates of speed.

Equipment enhancements have certainly made a difference to McKenzie Tank Lines, a 275-truck fleet with terminals across North America. It recorded 11 rollovers and almost 50 rear-end collisions between 2003 and 2007. Last year there was only a single rear-end collision and no rollovers. This year there haven't been either.

McKenzie has long been an early adopter of safety equipment, such as Automatic Slack Adjusters (1984), LED lights (1997), antilock brakes (1998) and traction controls (2000). The latest updates that include Active Driver Assist allow managers to review videos of close



Trailers can tip all too easily when stability controls are not engaged, as this demonstration showed.
(Photo by John G. Smith)

the throttle or apply brakes on their own. Steering can be corrected if Lane Departure Warnings sound. There is even the option of silencing the latter warnings when traveling through heavily-marked areas like construction zones. And another push of the same stock-mounted button can capture about 1-1/2 minutes of video if a driver wants further proof of the situation they encountered.

Demonstrations at Michelin's proving grounds – a 3,300-acre outdoor laboratory of test tracks – offered the setting to show customers exactly how quickly the systems can react.

calls along with data tracking everything from speeds to pedal positions and following distances. Pre-defined thresholds even help to flag drivers who have too few miles between individual events.

There is an important thing to note about the rollovers and rear-end collisions that did occur in recent years, adds Jim Kennedy, the fleet's vice president – maintenance. "Every single one of those vehicles did not have on it the technology that affected that particular type of event."

It's why the fleet continues to evolve in the name of safety. **TT**

“There are more things that are coming”

SAF-Holland adding suspension and more

By John G. Smith



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SAF-Holland has added a new on-highway sliding tandem axle air suspension and an electronic fifth wheel lock indicator to its expanding product line – and there's already the promise of more to come.

“Next year is going to be an exciting year for us,” says Jeff Peterson, marketing manager – Americas. The company plans as many as six product launches in 2017, and that follows a year of four major introductions.

The new CBX40 AeroBeam sliding tandem axle air suspension for 53-foot van trailers weighs in at 1,267 pounds, 85 pounds lighter than the CBX40 that went before it. Company officials say it's also 27 pounds lighter than competitive offerings, with a weight that even compares to spring-based systems.



The chance to shed weight is particularly important in the context of pending Greenhouse Gas limits. “There is an additional 400-500 pounds of equipment that will burden the trailer,” explains Roger Jansen, product manager – trailer axles and suspensions, referring to 2021 fuel-efficiency targets. Underskirts alone can weigh 250 pounds.

But trailer running gear tends to account for about 20% of a trailer's overall weight. That opens the door to opportunities.

The CBX40 AeroBeam also includes upgrades in the name of strength. Its steel subframe includes four full-height cross-members, and 5.75-inch-by-9-millimeter friction-welded axles that are said to be 12% thicker than competing models, to minimize deflection. There

are also 16 reinforcements to help resist damage from situations like curb strikes, repositioned sliders, and dragged trailers.

The center cavity has certainly been streamlined. Relocated shock absorbers offer more room on the subframe for air tanks, brake valves, tire inflation equipment, and ABS modules. And the relocated components leave more room for a cooling supply of air that can otherwise be sacrificed when using side skirts.

It can all be further customized with manual or air-assisted slide pin releases, dockwalk systems, auto load-sensing axles, disc or drum brakes, and spindle configurations. The Auto Lift and Deploy Solution, integrated with the Meritor/WABCO InfoLink system, will be available as well, offering the promise of a 1% boost in fuel economy.



ELI-te fifth wheel uses high-intensity LEDs to show drivers if there are sound connections between tractors and trailers.

Versions for other applications are expected to be unveiled as early as next year.

Meanwhile, a new ELI-te fifth wheel coupling assistant uses high-intensity LEDs to show drivers if there are sound connections between tractors and trailers.

Available on FW35 fifth wheels, the system shines a series of four white lights around the king pin to show everything is seated in place. If there's a problem, a flashing red light appears on each side of the fifth wheel.

"The amount of light that's under a fifth wheel is actually pretty inconsistent," says Bryan Redeker, product manager – fifth wheels, referring to the challenge of today's inspections. "If you can't see the locks, you're not going to be confident in the connection."

It is not the first time that SAF-Holland has looked to use technology to address the issue. The first generation of the Electronic Lock Indicator was introduced in 2000, but warnings were integrated through the dash. Few of those were sold.

The latest design is self-contained, drawing on a single connector for a supply of 12-volt power. The steel-enclosed

Electronic Control Module is mounted on the fifth wheel's deck plate. One sensor detects the kingpin, while another monitors the yoke that keeps the lock itself from spreading open.

It could also open the opportunity for other products to come. "This is a foundational product for future development," Redeker says. "There are more things that are coming in the future." **TT**

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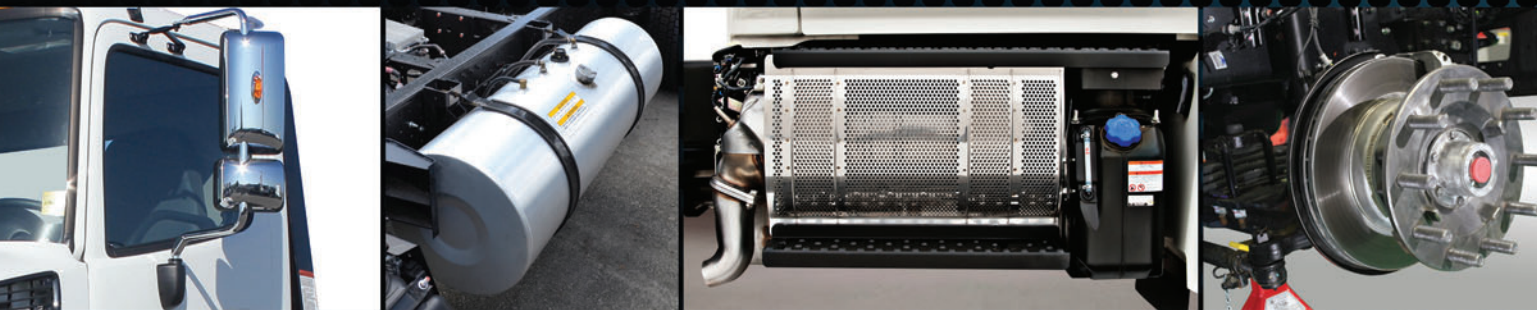


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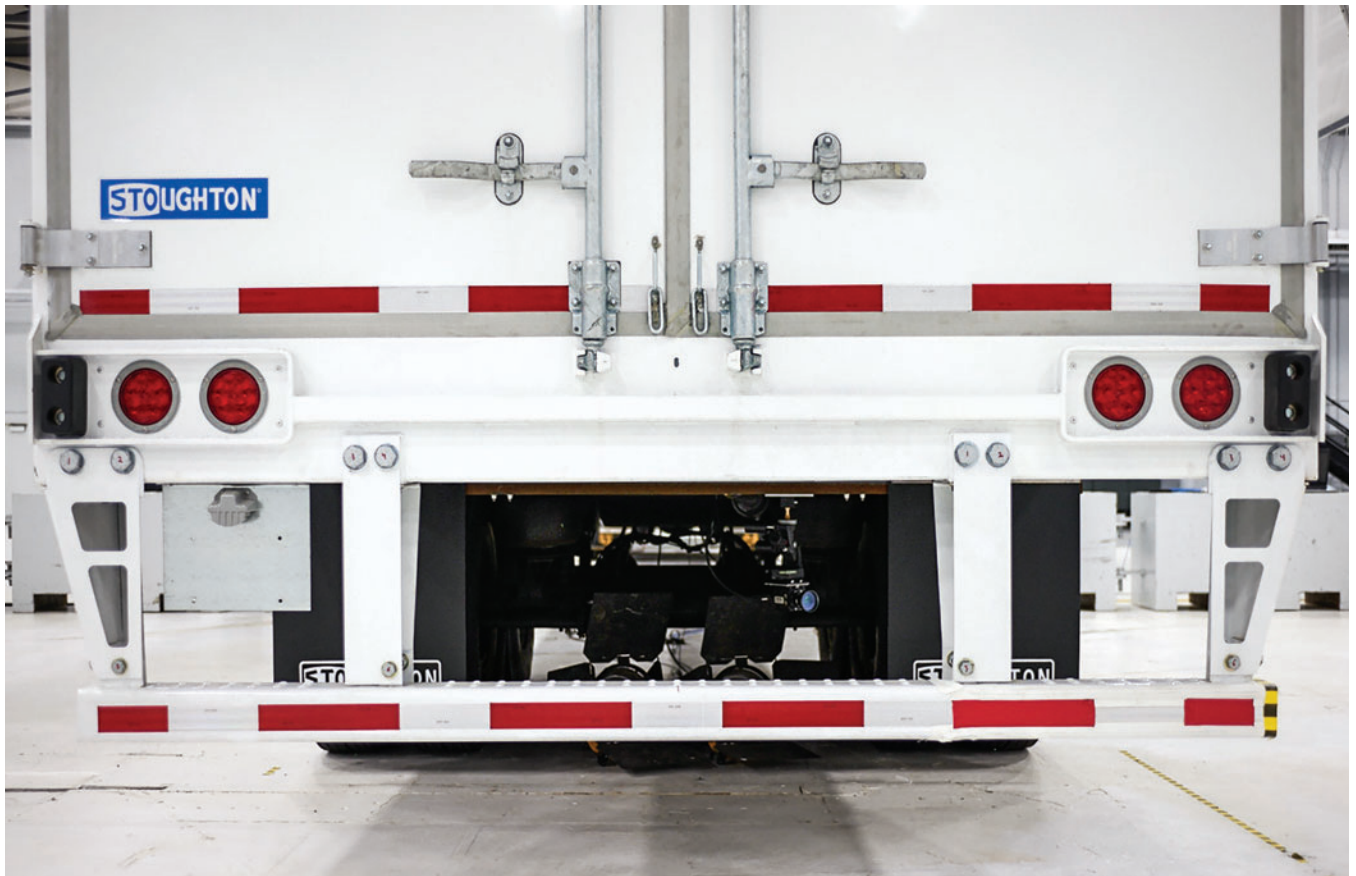
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PRODUCT WATCH

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Under-ride guard is standard

Stoughton Trailers offers rear under-ride guard as a standard feature

Stoughton Trailers has developed a new rear under-ride guard, in production just now, making it a standard feature at no additional cost.

Its design is based on the recommendations of the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) without adding weight, without negatively affecting aerodynamics, and without reducing the robustness of the

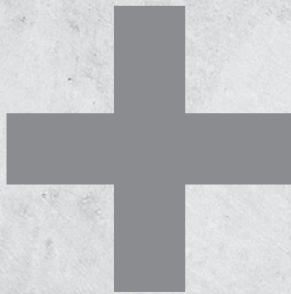
undercarriage and rear structure. The guard is one of only three on the market to pass the 30-degree offset crash test.

The patent-pending new under-ride guard underwent extensive development, including crash testing performed at an IIHS facility in Virginia. It complies with all applicable U.S. and Canadian regulations.

The guard includes two additional bolt-on vertical supports on the outer ends of the horizontal bar. All four supports are integrated into the bar and fastened to a robust undercarriage to strengthen the guard. The new guard will be available in painted carbon steel, galvanized steel, or stainless steel options.

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NANOPRO AIR FILTERS

WIX FILTERS LAUNCHES EFFICIENT AIR FILTER LINE WITH NANOPRO TECHNOLOGY



Wix Filters has introduced new NanoPro technology, initially featured in 33 heavy-duty air filter part numbers. This brings higher initial efficiency and a final efficiency of up to 99.99%, the company claims.

The NanoPro filters come with metal or poly end caps and the media features

a unique fiber coating. They're suited for on and off-road applications, mines, construction sites, and agricultural environments.

Additional advancements will be rolled out in the coming months, says Wix.

See www.wixfilters.com

UNIROYAL ADDS DRIVE TIRE

THE LD10 COMPLETES SMARTWAY-VERIFIED LONG-HAUL LINEUP

Michelin North America has launched a new **Uniroyal**-brand drive tire, the LD10, SmartWay-verified in long-haul use. It's available in two sizes, 275/80R22.5 with load range G and 11R22.5 with load range H.

The new tire joins Uniroyal's LS24 steer tire and LT40 trailer, both SmartWay-approved. They provide affordable options for every commercial truck tire position and application, from long-haul to regional to on/off-road, including dry van, flatbed, construction,

and Pickup-and-Delivery vocations. There are now seven tread designs in the brand's offering.

The LD10 tire has what the maker calls "an enhanced fuel-efficient compound designed for long, even wear." The tires are backed by a four-year limited warranty.

See www.uniroyaltrucktires.com/en_CA/



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LD10

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Product Watch

YOKOHAMA EXPANDS TIRE LINE

NEW SIZES ADDED TO THE 104ZR ALL-POSITION/STEER TIRE LINE

Yokohama Tire has added four new sizes to its 104ZR urban/regional all-position/steer tire line-up: 225/70R19.5, 245/70R19.5, 265/70R19.5 and 285/70R19.5.



The company says benefits of the 104ZR include a five-rib, full-depth tread pattern that delivers a smooth and quiet ride. The tire also employs 'Zenvironment' technology, said to accurately predict casing growth while also helping with longer casing

life and better retreadability. Improved fuel economy is also claimed.

The 104ZR is also still available in its original sizes: 295/80R22.5,

9R22.5, 10R22.5, 11R22.5 12R22.5 and 315/80R22.5.

See www.yokohamatruck.com

SMARTADVANTAGE POWERTRAIN

EATON AND CUMMINS OFFERINGS EXPAND

Eaton and **Cummins** have expanded their SmartAdvantage powertrain portfolio with a new transmission offering up to 1,850 lb-ft of torque, supporting linehaul applications with Gross Combination Vehicle Weight Ratings of up to 80,000 pounds.

The powertrain will be offered as a multi-torque model compatible with Cummins SmartTorque2 functionality in ISX15 SA and X15 SA engines rated up to 500 horsepower and 1,550/1,850 lb-ft of torque. As with other SmartAdvantage powertrains, no transmission cooler is required.

It promises to offer better performance when heading up grades or gaining speeds at on ramps, the companies say.

See www.smartadvantagepowertrain.com

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YOU CAN'T GET THERE FROM HERE

Two months of tough mystery locations has left readers stumped. As of **Today's Trucking's** press deadline, not one reader correctly identified our November entry dedicated to Parry Sound, Ontario's statue of First World War scout and sniper Francis Pegahmagabow – Canada's most-decorated Indigenous soldier. For our December mystery location, we're trying to keep the difficulty level moderate. So, what do you think? Can you identify the image pictured to the right? Hint: It's west of Ontario. If the answer is yes, please send your guess to johng@newcom.ca. If you're one of the first 10 readers to guess correctly, then guess what? You win a hat!



November Answer:

Parry Sound, Ontario's statue of First World War scout and sniper Francis Pegahmagabow



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P.S. If you call your answer in, don't forget to leave your contact details!



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<i>www.westernstar.com/engines</i>		Isaac Instruments	19	<i>www.TruckForceService.com</i>	
Detroit Diesel Engines	21	<i>www.isaac.ca</i>		Trucks for Change	51 (split ad)
<i>www.demanddetroit.com</i>		Isuzu Truck	15	<i>www.trucksforchange.org</i>	
Eaton	18	<i>www.isuzutruck.ca</i>		UFA	51 (split ad)
<i>www.ultrashiftplus.com</i>		Kenworth	insert	<i>www.ufa.com</i>	
Eberspaecher	47	<i>www.kenworth.com</i>		Vipar	43
<i>www.eberspaecher-na.com</i>		Mack Trucks	55	<i>www.vipar.com</i>	
ExpoCam	36-37	<i>www.macktrucks.com</i>		Volvo Trucks North America	10
<i>www.expocam.ca</i>		Peterbilt	back cover	<i>www.volvotruckscanada.com</i>	
Freightliner	2-3	<i>www.peterbilt.com</i>		Watson Suspensions	50
<i>www.freightlinertrucks.com</i>		Petro Canada	8	<i>www.watsonsuspensions.ca</i>	
Hendrickson	14	<i>www.duronthetougherthebetter.com</i>		Western Star	16
<i>www.hendrickson-intl.com</i>		SAF Holland	6	<i>www.westernstar.com</i>	
Hino	48	<i>www.safholland.ca</i>		Wix Filters	44
<i>www.hinocanada.com</i>				<i>www.wixfilters.com</i>	

COMPANIES IN THE NEWS

A	
AME	42
AddEnergie Technologies	19
Alcoa	19
Ancra International	20
Ancra Systems BV	20
Autobus Lion	19
B	
Bendix	41, 45
Bridgestone Americas	30
C	
Challenger Motor Freight	42
Commercial Fleet Tech Support Group ..	43
Con-way	18
Cummins	52
D	
Daimler Trucks North America	11, 33
Delphi Group	20
Denso	41
E	
Eaton	52
Edmundson Transport	54
Erb Transport	43
Express Mondor	18
ExxonMobil	20

F	
FleetRover	27
Freightliner Trucks	38
G	
GG Metro	12
Great Dane Trailer	41
H	
Heico Companies	20
Hendrickson	38
M	
Mack Trucks	38
Mackie Group	30
Meritor	42
Michelin North America	51
N	
Navistar International	30, 38, 40
Nokia	11
O	
Omnitracs	23
P	
Peterbilt	38
PIT Group	15
PMG Research	15
Premier Bulk Systems	42
R	
Ryder System	27
S	
SAF-Holland	46

Schneider National	18
Scotiabank	27
Sisu	11
SLH Transport	30
S-Line	20
Solution Adetel	19
Stifel Financial	27
Stoughton Trailers	49
T	
TM4	19
TransForce	18
Trucks for Change	31
U	
Utility Trailer	20
V	
Valley Equipment	20
Vipar Heavy Duty	30
Volvo Trucks	11, 24, 27, 38, 45
W	
Wabash National Corporation	30
Western Star	38
Wistra	20
Wix Filters	51
X	
XPO Logistics	18
Y	
Yokohama	52



A word of advice for anyone struggling with customer support, says Andrew Edmundson. "Log everything."

Feeling Disconnected

What happens when Bell Canada loses your fleet's phone number? Ask Andrew Edmundson.

To Edmundson Transport, the telephone is a lifeline. The Mississauga, Ontario flatbed hauler has seven trucks and 20 trailers moving structural steel across Southern Ontario. When the landline rings, it's usually a third-party logistics supplier that has a load to move.

Then the phone went dead. Not because of an unpaid bill, but because Andrew Edmundson had ordered an *upgraded* service to support the expanding fleet.

Feeding all the calls through a single line made sense when he first took over the business following the sudden death of his father, but with seven employees and two managers it was

time for dedicated extensions. Bell's Total Connect service appeared to offer everything he needed. Besides that, Bell had been serving the company since it was founded in 1977.

A technician came and went, and business went on as usual. His cell phone continued to ring. Texts arrived, and emails came through as well. Then a customer reached out to tell him that the landline was dead. Every call was answered with a recording that the number was not in service. And that was a big problem. "All the 3PL customers, they use our land line," Edmundson explains.

It was only the beginning of the challenge. Seven technicians came and went.

Connections were replaced between his office and the street. The fleet's operations manager logged almost 70 hours on the phone to technical support, usually routed to call centers overseas. "It's a First World problem," he admits. "You end up explaining the problem over, and over, and over again. The file gets longer and longer." The internet connection was cutting in and out, too, often requiring him to work from home.

It took more than three weeks to restore the number. Bell teams were apparently trying to resolve a hardware challenge when, in fact, a setting was to blame. But the restored service was the one that he had to begin with. Everything was back to running through a single line.

Since CBC reported on the issue in Toronto, he has been fielding regular calls from fellow businesspeople with customer service stories of their own. Edmundson doesn't think the issue is unique to Bell, but that it has more to do with the trend toward offshore support and customer service teams who fail to communicate with one another.

What would he recommend to anyone else in a similar situation? "I'd log everything," he says, referring to the need to ask technicians and call centers to explain the work that they do. "The problem is, you think the first guy is going to fix it and you're going to take it at face value."

Bell ultimately waived hundreds of dollars in charges for the service that was never installed. Edmundson also stresses that a Bell manager was truly sincere in their apology after his story was published. Discounts were offered on the DSL service that delivers internet, too.

"But it doesn't make up for the potential lost business," he says. Who knows how many opportunities passed the fleet by.

Edmundson won't miss any new calls, though. The landline is working now.

The fleet has switched to Rogers Unison phone lines. **TT**



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