

Bus & Motorcoach NEWS

November 1, 2014

WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE BUS INDUSTRY

Weight issue causes busload of confusion across U.S.

There has long been speculation that overloaded motorcoaches routinely travel the nation's roadways. But, until the past couple of years, it hasn't been an issue that received much attention.

Now, however, with a growing number of states requiring buses to stop at weigh stations, motorcoach operators are finding they need to

be extra vigilant about loading their coaches, as well as the laws and policies concerning vehicle weight in the states they used to travel through unencumbered.

A recent survey by the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance found that at least 18 states now require buses to stop at open weigh stations, just like big rigs.

And, because of a patchwork of state laws concerning vehicle weights, it is possible for a motorcoach to be in compliance with weight regulations in one state but considered overweight in another.

Gold Star Coaches & Charter of Fond du Lac, Wis., found that out the hard way in September when one of its motorcoaches bound for

New York was stopped at a weigh station along Interstate 80 in Pennsylvania, which has been requiring buses to stop at weigh stations for just over a year. (See Sept. 1, 2013, *Bus & Motorcoach News*.)

"The trooper told the driver he was over the axle weight on the second axle," said Jared Jozaitis, president of Gold Star. "He told

him he wouldn't allow the bus to continue with all of its passengers, so we had to hire a bus company to take some of the group the rest of the way."

The driver was cited and the passengers were forced to wait at the weigh station for three and a half hours before the trip resumed.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14 ►

The No. 1 issue with operators is no surprise, or is it?

When the United Motorcoach Association released its *2014 Membership Survey and Industry Assessment* earlier this year, the No. 1 item — that is, the item rated the most important by motorcoach operators — was not driver recruitment and retention, or rising costs, or even onerous regulations.

It was driver training.

Surprised? You shouldn't be.

That's because driver training is an operational issue that affects many other areas of critical importance, according to a sampling of safety directors at motorcoach companies nationwide.

They view driver training as the sweet spot of the bus industry, the place where operators can achieve maximum impact on a range of issues for a given amount of effort. Good driver training can set the foundation for a successful company, and it can circumvent problems before they arise.

"We put a lot of emphasis on the importance of our training

program with the philosophy that if our drivers don't succeed, we don't succeed," said Eric Gregory, operations manager at Certified Transportation Services in Santa Ana, Calif.

Scott Tallman, safety manager at Krapf's Coaches in West Chester, Pa., said he isn't surprised by the focus on driver training.

"I think that in the current climate where it's a heavily regulated industry, with a lot of attention from the press, most owner-operators and companies are very concerned that they're putting safe, road-worthy vehicles on the road, and that their staff is trained properly and that they're maintaining compliance," Tallman said.

"Driver training is first and foremost in all of our minds mainly because this is where we're starting behavior and, potentially, changing behavior," he said.

So, how do safety officers assure their companies' driver training programs are successful?

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12 ►



Driving simulators, such as this MCI model, provide diverse and realistic training experiences.

Congress asked to block action to hike insurance minimums

WASHINGTON — Eight trade groups, including the United Motorcoach and American Bus associations, are urging Congress to step in and halt the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's rush to increase the minimum required liability insurance on passenger coaches and big rigs.

Currently, Section 425 of the U.S. Department of Transportation fiscal 2015 appropriations bill contains a provision that would prohibit the agency from moving forward with increasing the required minimum level of liability insurance.

The groups sent a letter in support of Section 425 to Rep. Tom

Latham, R-Iowa, chairman of the Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development in the House, as well as Ranking Member Ed Pastor, D-Ariz.

Others signing onto the letter — besides UMA and ABA — were the Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association; National School

Transportation Association; National Federation of Independent Businesses; Petroleum Marketers Association of America; American Truck Dealers, and National Ready Mixed Concrete Association.

The FMCSA has fast-tracked what it has deemed a "high priority" rule-making to increase the current mini-

num levels of liability insurance.

Currently, motorcoach operators are required to carry \$5 million, while truckers must carry \$750,000. Hazmat operations must carry \$1 million.

"The department announced in April 2014 that it was moving for-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16 ►

Unbelievable Ride,
Uncompromising
Reliability.

mcicoach.com

MCI
Reliability Driven

Postmaster: Please deliver before or on Nov. 1
PRESORT STD
US POSTAGE PAID
PHOENIX AZ
PERMIT NO 1424

DON'T BE LEFT WITHOUT THE RIGHT PART.

Keep your fleet on the road with one of the largest inventories of motorcoach replacement parts, components, custom kits and accessories in North America.

ALL MAKES AND MODELS
carried in stock*

24-HOUR SHIPPING
on in-stock items*

FREE SHIPPING
for ground orders
over \$100

2% DISCOUNT
with online orders



*Some exclusions may apply

CALL US TODAY!

**877.427.7278/option 4,
or visit www.abc-companies.com/parts.**



© 2014 ABC Companies. All rights reserved.

Horizon units in Florida go to Escot Lines

LARGO, Fla. — Escot Bus Lines has purchased the two remaining Horizon Coach Lines' operations in Florida, increasing the size of Largo-based Escot by more than a third, according to company President Brian Scott.

Escot acquired the assets of the Horizon operation in Orlando and its smaller unit in Largo, part of the Tampa Bay area.

The deal included about 35 transit buses, 6 motorcoaches and 7 passenger vans, bringing Escot's total fleet to more than 100 vehicles.

Along with the equipment, Escot picked up Horizon's contracts for shuttle service to Universal Studios theme park and Allegiant Airlines; assumed its existing charter commitments, and acquired its customer lists.

Escot, a family-owned company founded in 1983, hired about 35 former Horizon employees, including key sales and operational staff members and maintenance personnel, Scott said.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 18 ►

Arrow adds location, gets 7,000th MCI J4500

MESQUITE, Nev. — Arrow Stage Lines announced last month it has purchased a small motorcoach company here, increasing the number of Arrow locations to 12.

At the same time, Motor Coach Industries announced Arrow had purchased the 7,000th J4500 coach produced by MCI since the model was introduced in 2000.

Arrow acquired Mesquite Bus Co. from Ann Casey. Mesquite Bus was founded by her father, Bill Regan, 15 years ago. Its four-bus fleet primarily offered charter service in Nevada and southern Utah, along with shuttle runs to McCarran International Airport in Las Vegas.

Mesquite is a community of 15,000 plus located 80 miles northeast of Las Vegas along Interstate 15. It's just inside the Nevada state line with Arizona and roughly 40 miles from St. George, in extreme southwest Utah.

Mesquite has a growing retiree population, along with a handful of casinos and nine public golf courses.

The Arrow location in Mesquite is being operated by Jeff Howes and Darlene Mullins as co-managers. The two also co-manage the Arrow location in Las

Vegas. Howes is primarily responsible for operations, while Mullins handles sales.

"We are excited about this recent acquisition," said Arrow Stage Lines Chief Operating Officer Luke Busskohl. "This will be a great addition for our western fleet. We will now be better equipped to handle business in Utah, and the growing Las Vegas market."

All Arrow vehicles at the Mesquite location will be compliant with California emissions rules so the company can serve tour and athletic markets while traveling on the West Coast.

"This puts us in a great position to serve various types of clients," added Mullins. "With the addition of the new facility and more equipment, we are extremely excited about our new business opportunities."

Arrow took delivery last month of two new MCI J4500s, including the 7000th model to roll off the E- and J-model assembly line at the MCI plant in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

During the past 10 years, the J4500 has been the most popular motorcoach model sold in North America. Coincidentally, MCI has



One of Arrow Stages Lines' new J4500s on the streets of Omaha.

sold 4,500 J4500s during the decade.

The Js purchased by Arrow — Nos. 7000 and 7001 — are the first to be equipped with a new ZF axle system, with independent front- and tag-axle suspensions,

and a Bendix braking system designed to complement the model's recently added MCI Dynamic Suspension System (MDSS). (See June 1 *Bus & Motorcoach News*.)

MCI says the technology up-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 18 ►

Toyo Tires M144 Now Available Through Motorcoach Tire Sales, LLC.

FEATURING:

- ✓ Direct shipment from distribution center to operator
- ✓ The first U.S. offered 75mph speed rated MOTORCOACH tire with a single load rating of 9,370lbs.
- ✓ 7% more tread than industry standard
- ✓ Utilization of "e-balance" technology
- ✓ "SmartWay Verified" Low-Rolling Resistance
- ✓ "eRating" Qualified
- ✓ Easy purchase terms

M144 MARKET FEEDBACK

"ABC Service Centers have sold hundreds of Toyo tires with very happy repeat customers"

Roman Cornell, ABC Bus, Winter Garden, FL

"We have been very impressed with the ride quality and performance of the Toyo tires"

Mike Dickson, President, Southeastern Stages, Atlanta, GA

"We have been testing the Toyo tires and they have been performing extremely well"

Brian Scott, President, Escot Bus Lines, Largo, FL

"The tires are doing great. Thanks for the good service and product"

Andy Barber, President, Corporate Coach, Ft Lauderdale, FL

"The Toyo tires we are currently running are giving us a superior ride and are showing better wear patterns than we have seen in many years. Customer service is A+, something that a lot of companies have forgotten about"

John Adams, President, Southern Coach, Dothan, AL

"DATTCO has 20 sets running on our Van Hools and while we do not have mileage collected as of yet, the response from the drivers has been very positive concerning handling and ride quality"

Mike Verna, Fleet Manager, DATTCO Bus Lines, New Britain, CT



TOYO TIRES
driven to perform®



For more information contact:
www.motorcoachtiresales.com
or Call: 678-463-4110

TOYO TIRES

THE DOCKET

Texans voting on road \$\$\$ shift

AUSTIN, Texas — Voters in Texas will consider a state constitutional amendment that would authorize sending annual disbursements from the state oil and gas production tax collections to the state highway fund.

The ballot proposition, which legislators approved last year, will be voted on this month.

If approved, an estimated \$1.7

billion would be transferred into the highway fund in the first year.

Supporters of the measure say the amendment would provide a significant step toward meeting the unmet funding needs for transportation projects in Texas.

The first-year amount would be roughly a third of the Texas Department of Transportation's \$5 billion annual highway building

shortfall.

The ballot language for the proposition reads:

"The constitutional amendment providing for the use and dedication of certain money transferred to the state highway fund to assist in the completion of transportation construction, maintenance, and rehabilitation projects, not to include toll roads."

Transportation issues on Florida ballots

Citizens in at least three Florida counties will cast ballots this month on transportation issues.

In Polk County, voters will decide on a sales tax referendum to benefit roads and public transit. Revenue from the proposed 1-cent sales tax increase would be split.

Half of the funds raised would be applied to expansion of the Polk transit system. The rest would be used for road improve-

ments in the county located between Orlando and Tampa along Interstate 4.

It's estimated the penny increase would raise \$64 million annually.

Voters in Alachua County, which includes Gainesville, will choose whether to raise revenue for various transportation projects.

The referendum would in-

crease the local sales tax by one cent for eight years. The revenue would be used to fund about \$30 million a year in road and transit work throughout the county.

In Pinellas County ballots will include a question to increase the county sales tax by 1 cent to expand bus service and build a light-rail system linking St. Petersburg and Clearwater. The tax would take effect January 2016.

Miami tunnel could ease downtown traffic

MIAMI — A billion-dollar underwater tunnel that gives vehicles leaving the port of Miami faster access to highways has opened.

The tunnel is available to all vehicles, but its main goal is to encourage big rigs and other cargo

trucks to go under Biscayne Bay, easing surface traffic in downtown Miami.

The tunnel took four years to construct.

Vehicles can now drive straight to the port from Interstate 95 and

state Road 95, avoiding downtown.

The tunnel is part of a \$2 billion capital-improvement plan at the port, which is preparing for the larger ships that will pass through the Panama Canal after its widening.

Wireless inspection plan getting final test by feds

WASHINGTON — The federal government's testing of wireless roadside inspection technology will enter its third and final phase a little over a year from now.

Beginning in December 2015, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration will — over the course of a year — perform roadside inspections of logbooks, licenses and much more as buses and trucks move at highway speeds.

The FMCSA has been working with engineers and scientists for seven years to develop wireless roadside inspections and turn the idea into reality.

It has contracted Innovative Software Engineering of Coralville, Iowa, to help it conduct next year's field test and to help the agency determine the viability of wireless roadside inspections.

Essentially, the wireless roadside inspection initiative is aimed at using mobile communications technology to transform the way bus and truck inspections are performed, with major implications for the FMCSA Compliance, Safety, Accountability program and motorcoach companies.

Depending on the capabilities

that ultimately are built into the system, or added later, and how widely it is deployed, commercial vehicle enforcement personnel could perform vehicle and driver inspections of virtually any commercial vehicle on the highway at any time.

Right now, 20 inspection sites in the southeastern U.S. are ready for the field testing phase, including locations in Mississippi, Tennessee, Georgia, Kentucky and North Carolina. The number of locations is expected to grow before the December 2015 testing begins.

ISE is working to build an interface for the FMCSA wireless roadside inspection system. It will use the inspection sites to form what are called "geofences."

When a bus or truck crosses a geofence, software will transmit current logbook status and other credentials and vehicle information to the system.

Information transmitted to enforcement personnel will notify them whether the vehicle and driver need to be pulled over for review.

If the driver is in compliance, he or she will be instantly greenlighted — via an in-vehicle notification — to bypass the inspection point. A red-light notification, however, would signal the driver to pull over.

Enforcers can update the fence locations, too, to create new inspection sites daily.

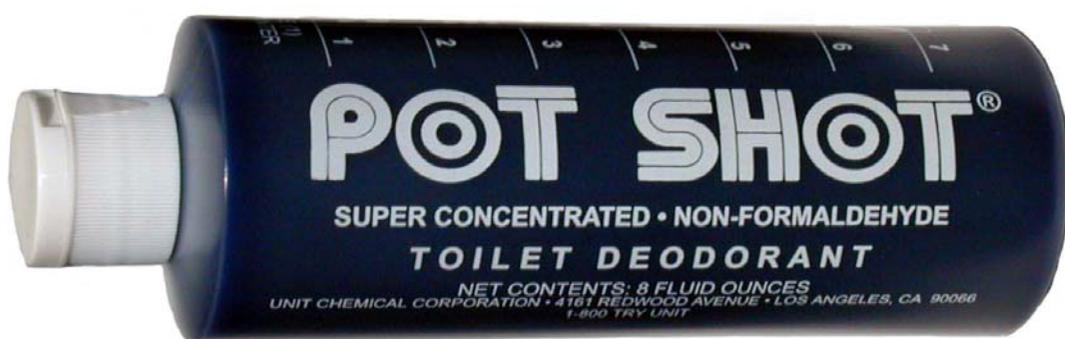
ISE is trying to recruit companies to participate in the final phase test.

Motorcoach operators interested in participating in the field test will have to purchase ISE's eFleetSuite system, which also comes with applications to record electronic logs and electronic driver vehicle inspection reports.

The hardware costs \$625, and the service costs \$22 a month. Once testing begins, however, the \$22 monthly fee will be waived.

Any fleets or operators interested in participating in the wireless roadside inspection program may contact ISE at (888) 316-3533 or info@isefleetservices.com.

A handful of motorcoach companies participated in earlier phases of the program. The FMCSA would like to see upwards of 10 to 15 percent of the companies participating in the final testing be passenger carriers.



WORKS THE BEST - COSTS LESS
FORMULATED RIGHT THE FIRST TIME!!!



WHILE OTHERS ARE CONTINUALLY CHANGING FORMULAS, SUPER STRENGTH POT SHOT'S QUALITY REMAINS UNSURPASSED. THERE'S SIMPLY NO BETTER ODOR CONTROL PRODUCT FOR THE RESTROOM. PLEASE CALL FOR COMPLETE INFORMATION AND YOUR **FREE** SAMPLE.

POT SHOT IS AVAILABLE IN 2 OZ, 8 OZ, GALLONS, PAILS AND DRUMS

(800) 879-8648 - (702) 564-6454 - www.unitchemical.com

60 Years Manufacturing Environmentally Safe Products

**POT SHOT
TRY IT
SPECIAL**

**128
PREMEASURED
SERVICES
\$37.95**

**DELIVERED
ANYWHERE
IN USA AND
TERRITORIES**

**29¢
PER SERVICE**

Tips: Avoiding common vehicle, driver CSA violations

A senior editor for transportation safety at J.J. Keller & Associates has identified six common safety violations — three for drivers and three for vehicles — that should be a focus of commercial vehicle safety compliance efforts.

Daren Hansen, writing for *TruckingInfo.com*, noted that Greek philosopher Plato once observed that “a good decision is based on knowledge and not on numbers.”

“Too bad,” says Hansen, Plato “wasn’t around when the government was coming up with CSA.”

“Now four years old, the safety enforcement program known as Compliance, Safety, Accountability relies on almost nothing but numbers.

“And as numerous studies keep telling us...those numbers are not always reliable,” notes Hansen.

“At the top of the list are your CSA scores, perhaps flawed but visible to the world and used to decide if the USDOT needs to pay you a visit, or at least send you a letter.

“Pull the curtain on those scores and you can find a mass of interesting and (arguably) more reliable data: the raw numbers coming in from enforcement personnel on the front lines.

“Besides giving insight into your CSA scores, the enforcement data can reveal important clues about your drivers and overall safety management.

“It can tell you where to focus your compliance efforts.

“Let’s examine the top three CSA violations for both vehicles and drivers...and discuss practices that can help bring the numbers down,” writes Hansen on the trucking website.

The Vehicle

Violation: Lighting

Ironically, broken lights are among the most “visible” of all violations. Maybe that’s why a whopping 28 percent of all roadside vehicle violations last year, out of 2.4 million inspections, dealt with lights or reflective materials.

“A broken or missing light, reflector, or reflective tape is like an “Inspect Me!” sign and can result in a loss of six severity points in CSA for each violation (Three points for reflective tape).”

Prevention: Drivers and maintenance personnel need to be aware that every light and reflector listed in Sections 393.11 and 571.108, even the license-plate lamp, needs to be operational at all times. The only way to verify compliance is to inspect the vehicle on a regular basis.

By conducting adequate pre-trip and post-trip inspections and reporting what they find, drivers should be able to spot violations — and get them fixed — before an inspector does. Carrying spare fuses is required, and spare bulbs can help too.

Violation: Brakes

One-fourth of all vehicle violations are for brakes, with over 1 million brake violations last year, each with four CSA points.

As with lights, brakes need to be inspected before and after every

trip. Hansen says drivers need to be fully trained and qualified before attempting a brake adjustment.

Prevention: Training is key. Make sure drivers know what to look for and when to get assistance with their brakes. The only way to

find a brake adjustment problem (on a drum brake) is to carefully measure the stroke, and adjusting a brake that has an automatic adjuster may make the problem worse.

Violation: Tires

As with lights, bad tires are a

sure-fire way to be...inspected. The biggest culprit: tread depth. Overall, 11 percent of vehicle violations are for tires (half for tread depth), with a CSA severity of eight points.

Steer tires must have 4/32 inch

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 ▶



Coach Manager

charter & contract booking system



Tour Booking System

tour & day trip reservations



Vehicle Maintenance System

maintenance planning & workshop management

Distinctive Systems is the world’s leading supplier of software to the coach and bus industry. Established for 30 years, over 750 operators rely on one or more of our latest Microsoft SQL Server based systems for the efficient management of their companies.

Since the formation of our US based subsidiary in 2009, we have established a reputation for being the software supplier of choice and a trusted business partner by an ever growing number of operators throughout North America. Call or email us now to find out why.



Sole North American Distributor

Distinctive Systems Inc. 131 1/2 S Washington Street, Binghamton, NY 13903

Telephone: (646) 448-9981 Toll Free: 1-866-929-1077

Email: nasales@distinctive-systems.com Website: www.distinctive-systems.com



Advantage Funding

Transportation Financing & Leasing Specialists



Your Expert Source for Coach Financing and Leasing

Advantage Funding is the largest Independent Commercial Transportation Lender in the U.S. We have the flexibility to provide solutions when banks and others can't.

Use us to your Advantage!

“We had a great experience purchasing our coach bus through Advantage Funding. We received low rates, and the application process was easy with a fast approval. It was a pleasure working with a company who supports and understands our industry.”

Tim S., Stout’s Transportation

Call Us Now

888-876-4728

- ◆ Same Day Turn-Around
- ◆ Skip Payment Options
- ◆ Flexible Finance & Lease Terms to 84 Months
- ◆ Trac Leases

CSA tips

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

of tread depth; other tires must have 2/32 inch.

Prevention: A comprehensive maintenance program that includes regular tire inspections is a must, including pre-trip and post-trip inspections. Drivers need to know how and when to check inflation (with a gauge) and when it's time

for a replacement.

Drivers**Violation: Logs**

So-called "form & manner" and "log not current" violations make up one-fourth of all driver violations, far and above any other violation. A form/manner violation carries just one CSA point, but a log that isn't current is worth five.

These violations are often obvious and easily correctable.

Drivers need to fill out all required information on their logs and keep them current to the last time their duty-status changed.

Prevention: First, make sure your drivers know what's required and what's not required on their logs (see Sec. 395.8), and when it has to be filled in, says Hansen.

When a driver is stopped for an

inspection, the log must be current up to the time at which the driver got behind the wheel.

Make sure your policies reinforce these requirements. Review your CSA data to find the worst offenders and re-educate them on the rules.

Finally, investigate two things that can help eliminate many of these violations: pre-printing of common log entries (address, etc.),

and electronic logs (which will be mandatory soon enough).

Violation: Medical issues

One in eight driver violations is related to medical issues, often a failure to have a valid medical certificate. These carry a low CSA point value of one or two, although driving while physically ill is a 10-point violation.

Prevention: Track the expiration of your drivers' medical cards and make sure they get updated, placed in drivers' files, carried in the vehicle and turned in to the state licensing agency. Make sure drivers know exactly what's required of them, and have consequences in place for those who fail to comply.

Some of these violations may go away now that we have the National Registry of Medical Examiners, and once interstate CDL drivers no longer have to carry their medical cards (in Feb. 2015).

Violation: English ability

This violation has surged in recent years, currently at 9 percent of all driver violations and carrying four CSA points.

Compliance is complicated because there is no yes/no standard. Key for a roadside inspection is being able to fill out paperwork, speak with officers and answer their questions, all in English.

Prevention: Hiring practices should filter out drivers who simply cannot meet the standard — even if most customers/passengers don't speak English. With marginal English speakers, use training and practice to help drivers know how to respond to typical questions about their logs, their trips, their insurance, registration, license and their vehicle.

"Even if you don't pull the curtain on your CSA scores, a little training on these common violations may go a long way in improving them," says Hansen.

Contact Hansen at transporteditors@jkkeller.com.

CSA alert service upgraded by firm

SAN DIEGO — Data-analytics provider Vigillo announced it has upgraded its daily CSA alert e-mails to provide more detailed updates on a company's performance under the federal Compliance, Safety, Accountability program.

Vigillo said the e-mail alerts now incorporate information generated by its Athena data-mining software.

"It is critical to successful CSA management that safety departments don't manage CSA in 30-day leaps," says CEO Steve Bryan.

Vigillo says its CSA scorecard service is available for motorcoach operators. More information at www.vigillo.com.



*Laissez les bons
temps rouler!*

UMA MOTORCOACH EXPO 2015

at **travel**  **exchange**

January 18-22, 2015 · New Orleans, LA

Good Times.
Good Friends.
GREAT Business.



www.motorcoachexpo.com

855-546-6060
www.DonBrownBus.com



Federal Limo Bus/FC162

FREIGHTLINER - SILVER - custom limo interior with Lavatory - 27 Passengers + Co-Pilot - Altro wood floor - Rear Luggage - Audio/Video Package - Frameless Windows - 130K BTU AC/Heat - Air Suspension

\$159,995.⁰⁰



Newport Freightliner/NC0003

White M2 - 47 Exec Seats + co-pilot, Woodlook Floor, 6 15" TV's, 1 42" TV, Overhead luggage Racks, Rear Luggage, Backup Camera, Outlets at all rows, Frameless Windows, 140K BTU Roof Top AC/Heat

\$164,995.⁰⁰



Grech 650/GM0066

37 Passenger + co-pilot, Amaya Seating, Plug Style Door, Woodlook Floor, Overhead Luggage Racks, Rear Luggage, 8 TV Package, Back-up Camera, Outlets in all rows, Frameless Windows, 140K BTU Roof Top AC/Heat

\$166,995.⁰⁰



Grech 650/GM0070

37 Passenger + co-pilot, Amaya Seating, Plug Style Door, Woodlook Floor, Overhead Luggage Racks, Rear Luggage, 8 TV Package, Back-up Camera, Outlets in all rows, Frameless Windows, 140K BTU Roof Top AC/Heat

\$162,995.⁰⁰



Newport F550/NC0026

27 Exec Seats + co-pilot, Ride-Rite Suspen, Woodlook Floor, 4 15" TV's, 1 42" TV Overhead luggage Racks, Rear Luggage, Backup Camera, Outlets at all rows, Frameless Windows, 110K BTU Roof Top AC/Heat

\$113,995.⁰⁰



Grech 550/GM0057

Black/Skirt Diesel, F550 -27 Exec Seats + co-pilot, Plug Style Entry Door, M/R Suspen, Woodlook Floor, Overhead luggage Racks, Rear Luggage, 6 TV Package, Backup Camera, Frameless Windows, 110K BTU Roof Top AC/Heat

\$125,995.⁰⁰



Grech Freightliner/GM0101

Black/Skirt M2 - 39 Exec Seats + co-pilot, 2 Tables, Plug Style Entry Door, Woodlook Floor, Overhead luggage Racks, Rear Luggage, 8 TV Package, Backup Camera, Outlets at E/O row, Frameless Windows, 140K BTU Roof Top AC/Heat

\$181,295.⁰⁰

Nominations being sought for prestigious UMA awards

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — The United Motorcoach Association is seeking nominations for the most prestigious honors private motorcoach operators can receive, the UMA Vision Awards, which go annually to a large and small coach company.

In the past, UMA has relied on its associate members to nominate operators for the awards and that will continue for the 2015 awards.

But new for the awards to be presented in January, UMA is asking motorcoach operators to nominate peer companies they think are

deserving of the honor.

The 2015 awards will be presented Jan. 20, as part of a much-redesigned awards event during UMA Motorcoach Expo at Travel Exchange in New Orleans.

“The Vision Awards are presented to the best and brightest companies in our industry — those companies that are innovative, exciting and raise the standards and profile of the entire motorcoach industry,” said UMA President and CEO Victor Parra.

The awards recognize motorcoach operators that:

- Engage in sound business practices
- Have an excellent safety record
- Regularly employ innovative marketing, operations and customer service approaches
- Are good corporate citizens in their communities
- Raise the standards for all motorcoach companies
- Are financially sound

After a company’s nomination form has been submitted and reviewed, UMA will reach out to the top-nominated companies to ob-

tain financial information.

This information will be evaluated on a confidential basis by an independent certified public accountant who will assure the nominated company is financially sound.

There are two Vision Awards, one that goes to a large operator (15 coaches or more) and the other for a small operator (fewer than 15 coaches).

To be eligible, a nominated company must:

- Have current operating authority as required by federal, state and local laws.
- Have a USDOT “satisfactory” safety rating and/or comparable rating(s) as provided by applicable state agencies.
- Be a member in good standing of UMA.

The UMA Vision Awards give vendors the opportunity to recognize customers for their excellent work on behalf of the industry. And, now, for 2015, this opportunity also is available to motorcoach operators to recognize their peers for excellence.

The event at which the awards will be presented is being redesigned to add new elements, including exciting entertainment and

fun food. The evening will be exclusively for UMA members and Expo attendees, and the dress will be business casual.

While much about the event will be new, attendees still will have an opportunity to celebrate the brightest professionals in the industry, mingle and network with peers and customers, and conclude the evening with the traditional cigars and cordials.

UMA members — both operator and associate — interested in nominating coach operators for the Vision Awards can go to the Expo website, www.motorcoachexpo.com. A nomination form can be found under the “What’s New” section of the homepage. Or, go directly to www.motorcoachexpo.com/2015vision.pdf. There also is a form inserted in this issue of *Bus & Motorcoach News*.

Or, contact Maggie Vander Eems at UMA by calling (800) 424-8262, or e-mail mvan-dereems@uma.org.

The deadline for nominations is Nov. 19.

UMA Motorcoach Expo at Travel Exchange will be Jan. 18-22. For information or to register, go to www.motorcoachexpo.com.

‘User’s Guide’ aims to help Motorcoach Expo attendees

NEW ORLEANS — To help its operator members navigate their way through the myriad opportunities available to them at the upcoming UMA Motorcoach Expo here in January, the United Motorcoach Association has developed a four-page “User’s Guide.”

A copy of the guide has been inserted into this issue of *Bus & Motorcoach News*.

The visual aide, which is entitled “User’s Guide: Get the most out of your visit to UMA Motorcoach Expo at Travel Exchange,” provides a graphic breakdown of a typical motorcoach operation by department and then provides a concise description of which Expo sessions and activities would be most beneficial for the employees of each department.

For instance, someone in the sales or marketing department could benefit by participating in the new speed networking session with NTA attendees, or someone in the safety and compliance department could benefit from at-

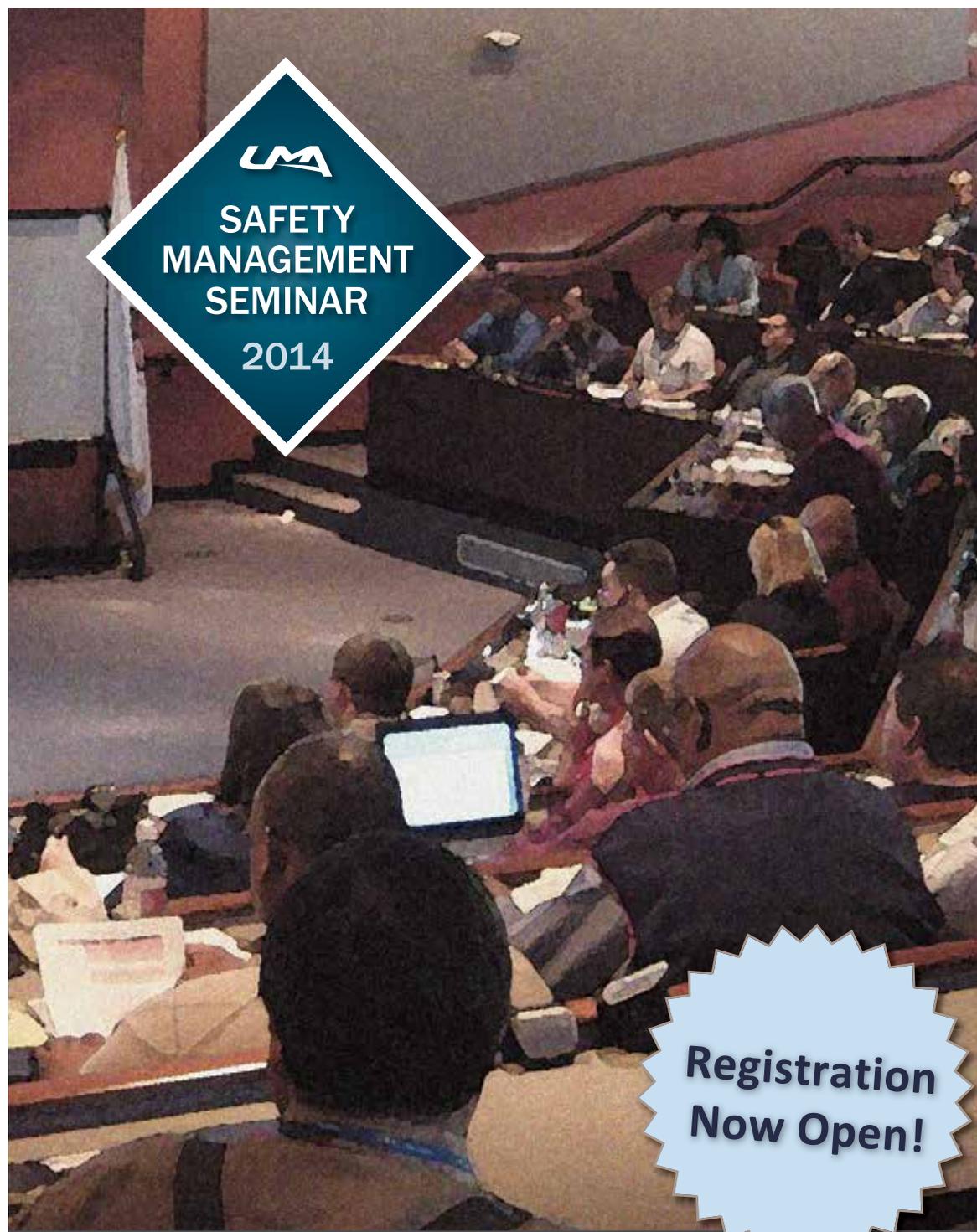
tending UMA’s Legislative and Regulatory Update session.

UMA says the goal is to help operators more easily sort out which sessions to attend to maximize their participation and return on investment in Expo and, therefore, help them grow their business.

“By coming together with NTA at Travel Exchange, there are many more opportunities available for every aspect of a motorcoach business and we find that not everyone is aware of these additional opportunities,” said UMA Marketing and Membership Director Michele L. Nosko.

“They say a picture is worth a thousand words, so we wanted to come up with something that shows — rather than tells — our members that there is something for everyone in their operation at Travel Exchange.”

More information about 2015 UMA Motorcoach Expo at Travel Exchange can be found at www.motorcoachexpo.com. Expo will be Jan. 18-22.



UMA Safety Management Seminar

December 3-4, 2014

NTSB Training Center | Ashburn, Virginia

www.uma.org

ARE YOU MOVING? RETURN TO SENDER UNABLE TO FORWARD NOT SOLICITABLE AT ADDRESS

Don't miss a single issue!
Call 866-930-8421 or email changes to: ebalm@busandmotorcoachnews.com



No country for unproven motors and pumps.



Whether your coach is running tours through the Badlands or passengers between cities, choosing brushless motors and pumps on price alone could cost you way more than the dollars you saved on the initial buy. That's why

ROTRON's brushless products are always the best value, providing the lowest overall

ROTRON®

cost-of-ownership. Lasting two to three times longer than bargain brushless products, ROTRON motors and pumps — featuring our 60,000-hour signature pump design—let you spend more time on the road, less in the shop.

ROTRON reliability is also unsurpassed, with products backed by a warranty of up to five years and product support to quickly respond to any of your concerns. It all adds up to ROTRON products and people so proven, they're priceless.

AMETEK®
PRECISION MOTION CONTROL

www.ametektip.com | info@ametektip.com | 330-673-3452



dunkermotoren™
advanced motion solutions

Haydon kerk™
Motion Solutions

PITTMAN®

Windjammer®
BRUSHLESS BLOWERS

Nautilair ROTRON®

Greyhound, too FirstGroup results show gains

ABERDEEN, Scotland — Financial results for the first half of fiscal 2015 were generally higher at FirstGroup plc, corporate parent of Greyhound Lines and the largest passenger carrier company in North America and the United Kingdom, a preliminary report issued last month shows.

FirstGroup management said trading for the six months ended Sept. 30 was “in line with expectations” and the company continues “to make progress with our bus transformation plans.”

Full half-year numbers will be announced Nov. 5. For its U.S. operations, FirstGroup announced these preliminary results:

- Greyhound revenue growth continued “despite the ongoing economic challenges faced by our core customers.”

- First Student had “encouraging results” stemming from its contract portfolio pricing strategy during the 2014/15 bid season.

- First Transit delivered “good financial performance with modest capital requirements.”

Despite headlines indicating continued modest expansion of the U.S. economy, “Greyhound’s core customers are still not seeing that improvement reflected in their disposable incomes.

“As a consequence, Greyhound’s expected like-for-like U.S. dollar revenue growth of 2.7 percent for the first half was at the low end of our range of expectations,” said FirstGroup.

“We continue to flex our cost base to respond to demand trends, and we expect some margin improvement year on year. In the pe-

riod, we made further progress with our program to improve Greyhound’s tools for stimulating demand and managing yields, which will reduce its dependence on the economic cycle and increase margins toward our 12 percent target over the medium term,” FirstGroup noted.

“Greyhound Express continued both to grow volumes on existing routes and to develop new routes profitably, with like-for-like revenue growth (excluding new routes) of 5.8 percent expected for the first half.”

At First Student, the largest school bus contractor in the U.S., FirstGroup said that during the fall bid season “we progressed our plans to achieve an appropriate level of return on capital on our contract portfolio, achieving average price increases of approximately 4.5 percent on the business up for bid this year (approximately one third of the division’s overall bus portfolio).

“Our retention rate of 90 percent on contracts up for bid was at the upper end of our expectations, and this — together with new business outsourced for the first time, share shift from our competitors, a small bolt-on acquisition, and modest organic growth on existing contracts — means we are confident that revenues for the 2014/15 financial year will be around the top end of our planning range.”

Still, for the first half of fiscal 2015, FirstGroup expects revenue to be 1.6 percent lower than a year ago because there are fewer operating days in the first half of the current fiscal year than last year

due to the timing of the Easter school vacation.

FirstGroup expects First Student to achieve an operating margin in excess of 7.5 percent for the year.

At First Transit, FirstGroup expects U.S. dollar revenue to increase by 9 percent for the first half of fiscal 2015, reflecting a number of contract start-ups with major awards in Palm Beach County, Fla.; Austin, Texas, and Denver.

Growth is expected to moderate during the second half of the fiscal year “with fewer start-ups and a number of larger contracts rolling off.

“For the year as a whole, we expect to achieve margins in line with our medium-term target of around 7 percent and revenue growth of approximately 4 percent.

For FirstGroup’s other units, the company reported that revenue growth and margin improvement were on track at UK Bus, “underpinned by our actions to increase passenger volumes,” and that its UK Rail division had “robust passenger revenue growth and a strong operating performance.”

However, on the same day FirstGroup announced its preliminary results for the first half of fiscal 2015, the British financial press reported the company “surprised investors” with news it had lost its ScotRail franchise, which it has operated since 2004, to the Dutch firm Abellio.

FirstGroup didn’t specify the financial impact of losing the ScotRail contract, except to say

KPS Capital completes recapitalization of MCI

NEW YORK CITY — A recapitalization of Motor Coach Industries, the No. 1 supplier of new motorcoaches in North America, has been completed by its owners, KPS Capital Partners.

KPS announced it had arranged a \$130 million term loan in conjunction with an amendment and extension of MCI’s existing \$115 million asset-based revolving credit facility.

Proceeds of the recapitalization, according to KPS, are being used to refinance outstanding debt — at better interest rates, to fund a \$120 million cash distribution to investors, and to support the company’s continued growth.

“This successful recapitalization validates the incredible transformation MCI has made under KPS ownership and we are pleased to return capital to our stockholders,” said MCI CEO Rick Heller.

“Our conservative capital structure and the financial support of our stockholders provide us with the resources to support our customers and important growth initiatives. We thank our customers, suppliers and employees for their contributions to our remarkable success,” Heller added.

Not unremarkably, KPS viewed the refinancing similarly: “Following the recapitalization, MCI remains conservatively capitalized with the continued support

that the loss “does not alter the group’s stated medium-term targets.”

There was speculation that losing the franchise would result in a short-term loss of earnings. One analyst projected that losing the revenue generated by 86 million

of its controlling shareholder, KPS, a private equity firm with more than \$6.1 billion of assets under management.”

KPS, Daimler North America Corp. and MCI management continue to own 100 percent of MCI following the recapitalization.

The revamped asset-based revolving credit facility was provided by a syndicate of banks with Wells Fargo Capital Finance acting as the loan arranger, and the term-loan financing was provided by TCW Direct Lending Group.

In an interview with a Winnipeg, Manitoba, newspaper, Heller noted that under KPS ownership, MCI has “probably spent about \$20 million in the last few years (on capital improvements) and maybe about \$1 million per year in training.”

KPS, a private equity fund, has owned MCI since the end of 2010, taking control of the company as part of a multi-stakeholder recapitalization of MCII Holdings, the corporate parent of MCI.

The ownership change occurred roughly 17 months after MCI emerged from bankruptcy reorganization in early 2009.

Two years ago, MCI concluded a deal with Daimler Buses to become the exclusive North American distributor of Setra coaches.

That deal gave Daimler a minority ownership stake in MCI.

passengers could shave around \$21 million from FirstGroup operating profits next year.

UK Rail accounted for 43 percent of FirstGroup’s overall sales, and 20 percent of its operating profits in fiscal 2014, according to one report.

How to contact us

To submit or report news, Letters to the Editor, articles, news releases or to report corrections:

E-mail: bsankey@busandmotorcoachnews.com

Fax: (405) 942-6201

Mail: 3108 NW 54th Street
Oklahoma City, OK 73112

Call: (866) 930-8421

To subscribe or inquire about your subscription:

E-mail: ebalm@busandmotorcoachnews.com

Fax: (405) 942-6201

Mail: 3108 NW 54th Street
Oklahoma City, OK 73112

Call: (866) 930-8421

To advertise: Interested in placing an ad, and new to Bus & Motorcoach News?

Call: Jamie Williams at (352) 333-3393

E-mail: JWilliams@naylor.com

Existing advertisers, or to submit advertising materials:

Call: Johnny Steger at (866) 930-8426

E-mail:

jsteger@busandmotorcoachnews.com

Mail: 2200 N. Yarbrough, Suite B

Box No. 336, El Paso, TX 79925

To contact the United Motorcoach Association:

Call: (800) 424-8262

Online: www.uma.org

Bus & Motorcoach NEWS

A PUBLICATION OF THE UNITED MOTORCOACH ASSOCIATION

ISSUE NO. 272

Staff

Editor & Publisher: Victor Parra

Senior Editor: Bruce Sankey

Sales Director: Johnny Steger

Industry Editor: Ken Presley

Associate Editor: Ellen Balm

Art Director: Mary E. McCarty

Editorial Assistant: Michele Nosko

Editorial Assistant: Maggie Vander Eems

Editorial Assistant: Greg Lange

Accountant: Ted Williford

Advisory Board

William Allen
Amador Trailways
Sacramento, Calif.

Brian Annett
Annett Bus Lines
Sebring, Fla.

James Brown Sr.
Magic Carpet Tours
Richmond, Va.

Dave Dickson
Elite Coach
Ephrata, Pa.

Gladys Gillis
Starline Luxury Coaches
Seattle

Bob Greene
Amaya-Astron Seating
Omaha, Neb.

Callen Hotard
Calco Travel
Geismar, La.

Larry Hundt
Great Canadian Trailways
Kitchener, Ontario

Dale Krapf
Krapf Coaches
West Chester, Pa.

Godfrey Lebron
Paradise Travel
Hicksville, N.Y.

Joan Libby
Cavalier Coach Trailways
Boston, Mass.

Marcia Milton
First Priority Trailways
District Heights, Md.

David Moody
Holiday Tours
Randleman, N.C.

Michael Neustadt
Coach Tours
Brookfield, Conn.

Jeff Polzien
Red Carpet Charters
Oklahoma City

Tom Ready
Ready Bus Lines
LaCrescent, Minn.

Brian Scott
Escot Bus Lines
Largo, Fla.

Dennis Strief
Vandalia Bus Lines
Caseyville, Ill.

Alan Thrasher
Thrasher Brothers Trailways
Birmingham, Ala.

Tim Wayland
ABC Companies
Faribault, Minn.

T. Ralph Young
Young Transportation
Asheville, N.C.

Like a baby, a new motorcoach must get the right bottle

By Dave Millhouser

“Iced tea” is what my wife ordered at the restaurant. I heard her distinctly.

Within minutes of getting her drink, she became giddy.

There are many words to describe Susan — smart, charming, beautiful (she does read this column sometimes), but giddy is NOT one of them.

The last time she was giddy was years ago as we were sitting with her former landlady, toasting our recent marriage with champagne. Ruth, at age 87, drank us both under the table. Didn’t take much.

Remembering that occasion, I took a sip of her drink and concluded the server had provided Long Island Iced Tea. It tastes a lot like sweet tea but is about 1,000 percent alcohol.

Liquids are tricky and understanding what you have, and how it’s supposed to act, is just as important in bus maintenance as it is in dining out.

As motorcoaches grow more sophisticated, new fluids are being added to the repertoire and existing ones are becoming more specialized.

A recent addition is DEF (die-

sel exhaust fluid). By most accounts it’s working OK (does that matter, since it’s mandated for new coaches?), but there are some amusing anecdotes circulating about what happens when you pour it in the wrong opening.

One story involves a gentleman driving a new bus when the low-coolant light illuminated. He rummaged around the storage bays, but couldn’t find any antifreeze...when suddenly a jug of DEF mischievously presented itself.

What could go wrong?

Everything.

Evidently DEF holds some sort of grudge against most metals and devours them.

In this case it turned all the copper coolant lines and heat exchangers into something akin to lawn sprinklers — a situation NOT covered by warranty. A coach has LOTS of these pipes, most of them hiding in the bus’s tummy.

Better education for this driver could have saved tens of thousands of dollars in repairs, and the EPA gets greatly irritated by puddles of ethylene glycol.

Storing spare fluids on coaches, particularly ones traveling far from home is a good idea — IF the

containers are carefully marked and the drivers understand exactly what they’re for and where they go. Not only does this save money, it reduces (but, doesn’t eliminate) opportunities for mischief.

When drivers MUST buy stuff on the road, they have to know what the “right stuff” is, based on either education or a call to the office. Reading the labels is often a plus.

There are potential problems when coolant, diesel fuel, transmission and power-steering fluids, engine lubricant, gear oil and the malevolent DEF are used incorrectly. There also could be issues with wrongly injected diesel fuel additives and treatments, airbrake antifreeze, windshield washer liquid, and brake fluid for some cut-aways. Hope I didn’t miss any.

Dropping a quart of transmission fluid in the power-steering reservoir isn’t a show stopper, but a similar snafu of adding coolant to the engine oil will quickly and permanently squelch its dedication to rotation.

Not only do you need to add things to the right reservoir but, in some cases, one size doesn’t fit all, with component vendors prescribing very specific diets for their

products. Many are color coded (a semi-useless exercise since colors may vary from one supplier to another).

This all boils down to education — drivers (and technicians) understanding what each fluid does, and what bussy dangers it represents.

Even something as basic as coolant may have a number of variants, and choosing the wrong one can cause damage.

Human bodies come with a variety of blood types...so why can’t motorcoaches be picky? Abusing this metaphor a bit farther: O-negative is a “universal donor” blood type for humans, but there isn’t a comparable coolant. In modern engines, even water won’t always do.

With newer coaches, it is absolutely critical to put the correct liquid in the right reservoir — every time. If you goof, or cheat, the Bus Fairy will GET you.

The only defense is thoroughly educating everyone in your organization who might have reason to transfuse a coach. (Sure beat THAT metaphor to death.)

Years ago, my friend Leroy was driving a VW from Colorado Springs to Buena Vista, Colo., 90

miles away. It was winter, he was exhausted after working 16 hours on buses, and didn’t have enough gasoline to make the trip.

There were no filling stations along the way, but he DID have five gallons of diesel fuel in a jerrycan.

With the engine idling, he poured the diesel into the gas tank...and headed over the mountains towards home.

He was SMOKIN’...not smokin’ fast...smokin’ smokin’. The bug chugged into the garage and he shut ‘er down. There used to be engines designed to run on both gas and diesel; this was not one of them. Thus endeth the VW engine.

It’s easy for me to second guess his choice of fluids, I wasn’t the one facing a cold lonely night in the high country.

Fortunately, there was a happy ending. The car was borrowed.

Dave Millhouser is a bus industry marketing consultant and freelance writer. Contact him by email at Davemillhouser@gmail.com.



Dave Millhouser

SOLVING TOMORROW'S SANITATION PROBLEMS TODAY!



#1 GREEN CHOICE
REVOLUTIONARY NEW
DYNA-BACT

Liquefies waste & tissue
Cleans tank system
Unmatched proven performance
Dramatic savings on dumping fees
Convenient toss in pack
ODOR CONTROL GUARANTEED!

BUS WASH

For Variety of Road-Related Soils & Stains
Attacks Dust, Mud, Diesel Exhaust
Pleasant Citrus Scent
Safe for automated systems

M5000

Toilet Deodorizer
High Traffic, High Heat
Superior Odor Control
Increased Color, Fragrance & Actives
Formaldehyde Free
Super Concentrate Formula



TOP MOP

Concentrated Floor
/Surface Cleaner
Economical
Superior Fragrance
Industrial Strength
GUARANTEED PERFORMANCE!



Experience the Monochem difference today call us 512-267-5190
or visit us at www.worldwidemonochem.com

Driver wages are racing ahead in the trucking industry

To the extent motorcoach companies have to compete with trucking outfits for drivers, the battle has gotten a lot tougher.

Long accustomed to driver shortages, U.S. trucking companies now find themselves having to fatten up paychecks to retain employees and handle surging freight demand.

U.S. Xpress Enterprises Inc. announced a 13 percent average boost in August, more than four times the industrywide increase last year.

It became the shot heard

around the trucking business, outpacing Con-way Inc., Celadon Group Inc. and other competitors that have also raised pay to keep their trucks rolling.

"You have the early stages of what could be a wage war," reports John Larkin, a Stifel Financial Corp. analyst in Baltimore. "It's hard for others to stand pat and not take pay up."

Take driver Tommy Walters, for example. He drives for U.S. Xpress and is feeling flush these days after the biggest raise of his 17-year trucking career.

Under the new pay scale, he's looking at probably making over \$60,000 a year, the 40-year-old Walters told a leading trucking publication.

That's a big step up from his usual \$48,000 to \$55,000, and he's not alone.

Average truck driver wages may rise as much as 6 percent in 2014, according to Kenny Vieth, president of Columbus, Ind.-based Americas Commercial Transportation Research Co. That would be the second-biggest jump since consulting company National

Transportation Institute began an annual driver wage survey in 1994, behind 2005's 7 percent.

Long-haul trucks account for about 38 percent of the \$840 billion U.S. freight market, making drivers a crucial link in that economic chain. The driver shortfall now exceeds 214,000, according to FTR Associates data compiled by Bloomberg.

The total eclipsed 200,000 in last year's fourth quarter for the first time since 2004, the data show.

Rising cargo volumes heighten

the urgency to fill those vacancies. Freight tonnage rose in six of 2014's first eight months, according to a seasonally adjusted index from the American Trucking Associations, and is at the highest since the group began tracking the data in 1973.

Closely held U.S. Xpress would add 800 trucks to a 7,000-strong fleet if it could find people to drive them, according to its Chief Operating Officer Eric Fuller.

"We're seeing anywhere from

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13 ►

Driver training

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

What qualities do they look for when they screen job candidates?

How many hours of training do they give their drivers?

What are their best practices when it comes to driver training?

Here's what they say:

Making a good driver

"I think we can train most people to drive a bus," said Tallman. "The drivers who set themselves apart are the ones who are going above and beyond for our customers. They're the target. We want to have outstanding customer service, a high level of professionalism, certainly, knowledge of compliance issues. That's what would set a driver apart from the field."

"I'd say what we look for is the driver who wants to drive people. If you want to drive a concrete truck and have an isolated trip, you're probably not a candidate for us. Certainly there's a position for them in that field, but we need people people."

Dave Cosenze of Cyr Bus Lines in Old Town, Maine, agrees.

"A true driver, they love doing what they're doing, and they get along with people 99 percent of the time," said Cosenze. "They can talk and they have a better rapport with passengers. They just have a personality that can blend in with them. They have the air of confidence."

Assessing candidates

Pat O'Brian of Excursions Trailways in Ft. Wayne, Ind., said his company evaluates job candidates using hiring and performance assessment tools developed by Scheig Associates, a Washington-based company.

"It tells us if a potential candidate has a mindset, whether it's for the legalities, customer service or other aspects of what the job entails," O'Brian said.

"It's not going to test on knowl-

edge of those fields. It's testing more on interest towards that, or their ability to be able to work in those areas."

In addition, he said, "I explain to potential candidates, if anywhere along the process, you don't feel it's right for you, tell us. I want them to be matched up to it, too. I think it's just as important I show them everything right from the start to make sure that they're really interested in the career choice."

All of the safety and driver training executives interviewed said their companies have trained both experienced commercial drivers and less-experienced drivers with success. Some said the ratio of driver candidates is about 50-50; Gregory, in Southern California, said the portion is much higher.

"We train non-experienced drivers much more than we train experienced drivers. We hire one experienced driver to 10 drivers who have maybe only seen a bus going down the road or ridden in one as a school kid," he said.

He cited a couple of reasons: "No. 1, it's hard to find people who have experience who are good drivers. If a driver is a good driver, generally the people they work for are going to try to retain the driver. We find if we train a driver from the ground up, we can get them to drive to our expectations. An experienced driver may have bad habits."

Classroom, road training

The amount of time drivers spend in classroom and behind-the-wheel training varies from company to company.

At Krapf's Coaches, initial driver training is typically conducted over a 30-day period.

"We maintain a one-to-one ratio, so we have one instructor and one trainee," Tallman said. "They're closely monitored and observed. We teach them to drive every vehicle on our lot, and they're checked off on every vehi-

cle on our lot before they're eligible to actually have customers with them."

Gregory, at Certified Transportation, said drivers can generally expect to undergo 30 hours of classroom training and 50 to 60 hours behind-the-wheel instruction to meet California's School Pupil Activity Buses requirements, as well as company standards.

The training starts from square one.

"We treat it like they've never seen a bus before," he said, noting the company program covers everything from U.S. Department of Transportation rules and regulations to defensive driving, emergency procedures and community and public relations.

"We explain to them that even if you don't believe you are in public relations, the minute you get behind the wheel of that vehicle, you are representing your industry and your company," he said. "You've got the name in huge letters on the side of the bus, and trust me, they will call if you have an issue."

The behind-the-wheel training concludes with an appraisal from a different instructor than the original trainer.

"It gives a second, outside, objective view of how the student's doing," Gregory said. "An instructor is going to say, 'my students are perfect.' The next instructor is going to say, 'you need review on this, this and this.'"

Training regimen

Glenn Godshall of Hagey Coach & Tours in Souderton, Pa., said his company's motorcoach trainees undergo a minimum of 40 hours of coach-specific training, and an additional classroom defensive driving course.

He said that a good portion of the company's motorcoach trainees have previously worked in its school bus charter division, where they have already received 40 to

50 hours of commercial licensing preparation and other training in the classroom and behind the wheel.

He also noted that the company's primary trainer is a veteran motorcoach driver with more than 30 years of experience behind the wheel, which "ensures the trainee hears what they need to know and builds a better skill set right from the start."

At Excursions Trailways, once a driver has received classroom and on-the-road observational trips with a trainer, he or she participates in several ride-along trips.

"That's the real customer service aspect," O'Brian said. "We can preach the customer service and tell them what we expect, but if customer service is one of our defining differences as a motorcoach company, now you have to see it in action with a driver." So they'll do a ride-along to witness that motorcoach customer service."

Then, he said, "when they are finally on a bus by themselves with passengers, it's in a group of buses, whether it's in a two-bus move, or a three-bus move, or a four-bus move. They're the second bus. They're behind the lead bus, and obviously the lead driver is well chosen, one that's going to nurture. In other words, not turn the corner and ditch him."

O'Brian said those trips can be invaluable for new drivers.

"When they're in a group like that, and the customers are off the bus and it's time to catch something to eat, there's a lot of collaborative conversation from driver to driver that takes place," he said.

"That's how I learned a lot of things on the motorcoach, sitting in a parking lot and one of the more experienced drivers says, 'let's take time and kick the tires and go through every nook and cranny of the bus.' It may have been shown to you, but now that you're driving it'll come back to the forefront of your brain and click."

When new drivers are assigned

trips on their own, he pays special attention to the route and other particulars. "I wouldn't throw them into Chicago. I would put them on a college sports team trip where you get to the campus, and there you are, or some easy trip so that their comfort level with people on the bus builds."

Refresher training

For safety managers, training is an ongoing proposition.

At Hagey Coach & Tours, the lead trainer conducts refresher training for new drivers after four weeks on the job to assess "driving behaviors, techniques, and to make sure things haven't changed," Godshall said.

"This session allows for an open discussion with the trainer and the new employee, and makes sure we have a comfortable, confident new employee ready to build his expertise. Remedial training is always a possibility at any time based upon performance," he said.

He noted that on-board camera systems can help determine if a driver can benefit from more coaching sessions.

Trainer retraining

O'Brian said his company used a consultant a couple years ago to evaluate its program and meet with trainers: "He helped us refine it, even as far as parking lot maneuvers and backing up and going through serpentine backing the bus up, things that I didn't necessarily take into account. Now we have those in there."

He said the importance of updating a driver training program cannot be underestimated, "especially now with the changes coming with the (federal Compliance, Safety, Accountability program) and everything else."

"Whether it's a motorcoach business or a tech business, everybody is requiring more and more, more documentation, training, everything. It's getting more and more complicated for the good."

Finding good drivers: As tough as ever and getting tougher

Before you can train drivers, you've got to find 'em.

And it's as tough as ever to recruit good candidates and solid, qualified motorcoach drivers.

That's according to a sampling of safety managers and other executives at motorcoach companies from coast to coast.

They cite a range of factors: competition from the trucking industry, an uptick in the economy, demands of the job, and unattractive pay levels.

"It's extremely difficult to find experienced drivers. Extremely," said Craig Osborne, safety manager at Northfield (Minn.) Lines.

"People ask me why do you have such a hard time finding commercial drivers? I say, just go out on the highway and count the amount of commercial traffic that's running up and down the freeway system. It's staggering," he said. "It's a field that is just eating up CDL drivers."

Eric Gregory, operations manager at Certified Transportation Services in Santa Ana, Calif.,

called the difficulty in finding good drivers "challenging but not insurmountable."

"It is cyclical with the economy. When the economy is bad, everybody is looking for a job, and they're willing to do anything. When the economy is good, they don't want to be drivers because drivers don't get the pay levels that many other employees get, and they face certain hassles," he said.

In other jobs, he said, "You don't have the DOT on your back, you don't face random drug testing, and long hours and traffic."

Like others, Pat O'Brian of Excursion Trailways in Ft. Wayne, Ind., attributed the shortage of motorcoach drivers in part to the growth of the trucking industry.

"A lot of potential drivers who might have considered driving a motorcoach, they have the opportunities with trucks. I think more positions are opening that require the CDL licensing, but there's only so many people who can do the work," he said.

"We're spreading ourselves

Trucker wages

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

5,000 to 8,000 orders a week that we're turning down that our current customers are actually offering us," Fuller told *Transport Topics*. "We're turning those down because we don't have capacity."

"It's not a driver shortage," said Vieth, the Indiana-based researcher. "It's a driver-pay shortage."

Pay is the biggest consideration in choosing a job, according to a driver survey by North Bergen, New Jersey-based logistics company National Retail Systems Inc. More home time ranked second, and benefits finished third.

Truckers can't afford soaring labor expenses, according to the ATA. Operating margins averaged 6.4 percent in the nine-company Bloomberg News U.S. Truckload Trucking Index, trailing the 14 percent average for companies in the Standard & Poor's 500 Index.

Companies also say higher salaries aren't the best way to expand the ranks of potential drivers.

"Pay is important, but I don't think it's the driving force in the driver shortage," said Kevin Burch, an ATA vice chairman who is also president of Dayton, Ohio-based Jet Express Inc., where a lack of employees leaves some trucks sitting idle. "We're competing for an existing pool of drivers."

Many drivers who left trucking during the 2007-09 recession haven't returned as a U.S. oil and

gas boom creates high-paying jobs and the construction industry rebounds.

"The exodus that we're getting doesn't compare at all to what we're bringing into the industry," Burch said. "It's hard to get people into it to fill the seats."

The ATA is trying to improve the industry's reputation with a promotional campaign that includes the showcasing of driving as a career option. Besides internal steps such as training dispatchers to be nicer to the drivers they direct, companies are asking shippers for flexibility in pickups and deliveries.

The idea is to cut any wasted time after a driver arrives and then has to wait to complete a job, Burch said.

Employers also need to reach younger workers, putting them behind the wheel before they pick another path, Burch said.

Faster U.S. economic growth could exacerbate the driver shortage, and add to the pressure to increase wages, Stifel's Larkin said. The U.S. economy is forecast to expand 2.1 percent this year and then accelerate to 3 percent in 2015, according to the median of 79 economists' estimates compiled by Bloomberg.

The shortage "is as bad as it has been and has the potential to be a lot worse," said Larkin. "There's not a single person who says, 'I got this figured out and it's easy.'"

thin, both in the trucking and bus industries. I still keep hearing from the trucking industry that they're going to be short drivers as people retire out or can't drive anymore. They're really looking at a shortage, too."

O'Brian said changes within both industries may be discouraging younger people from entering the field.

"Years ago you could get in a bus, and whatever the company offered as training, as long as you had your passenger license, you were hired," said O'Brian, a 25-

year driving veteran.

"Whereas now, you've got to meet this criteria, you've got to meet all these different steps along the way, before you're a driver. I think a lot of people are looking at it as too much work."

Others may see it as requiring too much of their time.

"The nature of being involved in a business that has the customer requesting transportation 24/7 means that staffing will always be a challenge," noted Glenn Godshall, corporate manager at Hagey Coach & Tours in Souderton, Pa.

"Often, a person who has retired early from their first career, has a right personality to relate to customers, and wants to work weekdays or weekends with fluctuating hours becomes our best candidate," he said.

Safety officers say their work is far from over once they find and train good drivers.

"If a driver is any good, the company is going to work to keep that driver," Gregory said. "If you have a good manager, you're going to try to make that driver happy to retain that driver."



Changing the Sound of Transit with help from:

















See why transit fleets are making the switch to ZEPS Electric Buses

completecoach.com/the-switch

FOR A FREE ROUTE ANALYSIS CALL 1(800) 300-3751 — COMPLETECOACH.COM/ZEPS

Introducing the world's first & only all-electric remanufactured transit bus that is sure to deliver clean & environmentally friendly transportation to your community while priced at a fraction of the cost of a new bus.



Academy's revamped driver training courses available

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — The Bus & Motorcoach Academy Prevost Preparatory School for Professional Motorcoach Drivers winds up its updated and expanded driver education program for 2014 with a trio of courses that begin this month.

Immediate sign-up and registration is available at www.uma.org/academy. Deadline is Nov. 6.

Earlier this year, UMA and Prevost announced a major expansion and revamping of the Bus & Motorcoach Academy driver education program with the creation of the Prevost Preparatory School for Professional Motorcoach Drivers, known as Prevost Prep.

The initiative, which is de-

signed specifically to meet the driver training needs of the motorcoach industry, was made possible by a generous donation from Prevost.

“Prevost recognizes that motorcoach operators are greatly challenged in recruiting, training and retaining qualified drivers and has partnered with UMA to create courses relevant for experienced and new drivers alike,” says UMA President and CEO Victor Parra.

The seven-year-old Bus and Motorcoach Academy is the on-line professional development school operated by UMA.

The three driver courses that begin this fall are:

Engaging Enforcement Officials. This course covers the basic

responsibilities of the driver when engaging federal, state and local law enforcement officials, and passenger care during inspections. It also focuses on the North American Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance inspection and out-of-service criteria. Additionally, the course highlights the driver's priorities after a crash, including responsibilities for securing passengers, seeking assistance, cooperating with enforcement officials and taking notes and photographs.

Motorcoach in Motion. This course highlights the critical pre-trip inspection and assessment of the condition of the bus and/or motorcoach, basic parts identification, fuse location, fluid levels,

climate control, and fire extinguisher. Also highlighted are tire inspection, condition, and tire-pressure monitoring.

Navigation and Weather. This course covers the appropriate places to obtain advance weather reports and road conditions, coordinating with company dispatch along with group leaders. The course also focuses on the use of chains, tire pressure, effects of altitude, allowing ample time, and general systems checks.

Four other driver courses are offered through the Academy. Next spring and summer these courses will be available:

- Managing Passengers
- Security

- Motorcoach Driver Profession
- Safe Driving

The Bus & Motorcoach Academy courses are offered entirely on-line, using the College of Southern Maryland's extensive on-line course modules, which are geared for individuals with busy and time-conflicted schedules.

Complete course information, including detailed descriptions, is available at www.uma.org/academy.

The Academy also offers professional and business development courses for motorcoach owners, managers and supervisors through the Clarence Cornell School of Business. Information for these courses also can be found on the academy website.

Weighty issue

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Cause for confusion

There were two separate weight issues at play in the Gold Star incident that highlight the confusion many motorcoach operators are experiencing.

First, the Pennsylvania trooper told the driver his axle weight was 23,000 pounds, which is above the federal limit of 20,000 pounds for vehicles traveling on interstate highways.

However, there is a federal exemption for over-the-road and public-transit buses that raises the single-axle weight threshold to 24,000 pounds, meaning the bus was not in violation of the weight limit for interstates.

“The bus should never have been stopped,” Jozaitis said. “It should have been just waived through. But apparently the trooper wasn't aware of the exemption.”

If the bus had been traveling on a Pennsylvania state highway, the federal exemption would not have applied because the state axle-weight limit is 20,000 pounds, which may have led to the confusion, he added.

Confusing issue No. 2

The second issue at play in the incident was the total gross weight of the bus, including passengers and cargo.

The vehicle manufacturer tag listed its gross weight at 44,000 pounds, but its actual weight — on the weigh station scales — was 47,000 pounds.

Jozaitis said the problem resulted from him relying on the formula used in Wisconsin to calculate gross weight. He said weight is determined by multiplying the number of passengers by 150 pounds, then adding that amount

to the weight of the empty bus. In this case, the formula underestimated the overall weight of the motorcoach and its load.

“I've never had an issue with this before,” Jozaitis said. “It's never been a problem.”

Similar incidents reportedly have been occurring because of the different ways weight is calculated state by state.

Some states register buses based on their empty weight, while others use the number of passengers, not their weight. Errors by state agencies that register buses also have been blamed for weight discrepancies, including listing the empty bus weight instead of the laden weight.

Sorting it out

Confusion over bus weight is what led the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance to survey states about whether they require buses to stop at weigh stations.

The alliance is an international organization comprised of local, state, provincial, territorial and federal motor carrier safety officials and industry representatives from the U.S., Canada and Mexico.

William Schaefer, director of vehicle programs at CVSA, con-

ducted the weigh station survey “to communicate the information to carriers and to help inform them that they have to pull into weigh stations in these states if they are open.”

The current interest in bus weight and requiring motorcoaches to stop at state weigh stations stems, in large measure, from a 2012 weight-limit warning issued by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. (See Sept. 15, 2012, *Bus & Motorcoach News*.)

The FMCSA warning came after the fatal crash of a megabus.com coach in Illinois. The crash investigation pointed to a front-tire failure as the likely cause of the incident that killed one person and injured 47 others.

The FMCSA bulletin urged motorcoach companies to take steps to prevent tire failures by properly loading passengers and cargo, and increasing pressure in tires on the rear axles to the maximum marked on the tires when buses are carrying heavy loads.

In its bulletin, which went to state motor carrier enforcement agencies across the U.S., the FMCSA noted that fully loaded double-deck coaches could be susceptible to overloading. There was

widespread speculation at the time that a fully loaded single-level coach also could easily exceed weight limits.

States take the cue

While the warning was meant to raise awareness of the issue within the industry and to encourage companies to take action to prevent potential safety risks, it also prompted many state motor carrier safety units to begin weighing coaches.

And that trend appears likely to continue.

The CVSA, whose members include state transportation department officials and highway patrol officers, supports giving states the authority to require that passenger-carrying commercial vehicles “report to an open weigh station while en route, specifically for weight enforcement purposes.”

CVSA Executive Director Stephen Keppler said there is growing concern within the law enforcement community about overweight buses.

CVSA has been pushing Congress for years to remove federal restrictions on roadside inspections of buses, including weighing them.

Federal law currently only allows — what are commonly referred to as — destination inspections, when the vehicle is at a stop and unloaded, and at the beginning and end of trips. It prohibits troopers from pulling them over along the highway for inspections unless a safety issue is observed.

Safety first

The reason for the federal prohibition, which is strongly supported by the industry, is that a roadside inspection easily could compromise passenger safety.

The industry also opposes them because of the potential for badly disrupting schedules and causing passengers to miss flights, ship sailings or other deadlines.

States can conduct roadside inspections but only if safe facilities for off-loading and accommodating passengers are at hand. At least 18 states require coaches to pull into their weigh stations, but it is unknown how many states are routinely conducting comprehensive safety inspections, beyond checking weight and other readily observable issues, at their weigh stations.

Keppler said some bus operators take advantage of the prohibition on roadside inspections by ignoring weight and other safety issues. He said it has become more of an issue with the growth of curbside and low-budget operators.

“Those that want to skirt the law can present problems for our folks in the field,” he said. “We focus on safety implications and support putting in place programs, rules and regulations that mitigate problems.”

And, of course, more programs, rules and regulations create more work and greater job security for enforcement officers.

Buses must stop at busy Southern Calif. weigh station

OCEANSIDE, Calif. — The California Highway Patrol has announced that starting Nov. 1, motorcoaches must stop at one of the busiest weigh stations in Southern California.

Not only must motorcoaches pull into the San Onofre Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Facility, which is north of Oceanside and just south of San Clemente on busy Interstate 5, also “shuttle vans” and tour buses must also stop.

Until now, it has been the prac-

tice of buses and motorcoaches to by-pass the inspection process at the San Onofre weigh station by simply driving behind the scale facility. No more.

“The CHP realizes this is a change and will allow a 30-day conditioning period before enforcement action is taken against drivers who fail to follow the directions of the posted signs and electronic message boards,” the highway patrol said in its announcement.

“While an officer may make a

traffic stop on any bus failing to follow directions into the facility, we will withhold citing drivers specifically for this until after Jan. 1.

“The CHP realizes these vehicles will often be occupied by multiple passengers, some who have severe time constraints on their travels. It is our objective to conduct inspections in as timely a manner as possible, balancing the need to ensure public safety with the personal needs of the passengers,” the CHP announcement noted.



Game On.

JENSEN® 15" LCD Bus Monitor



For more information contact:

www.BusElectronics.com • Toll-free: 877.378.2267 • Tim@RVCams.com

Real-Time Integration Across All Departments.

One integrated software solution to manage all aspects of your business. Customize your Infinity™ Business Management Software to include:

- Integrated CRM
- Sales Management / F&I
- Inventory Management
- Manager's Dashboard
- Parts & Service
- Rental
- Accounting
- Payroll
- Advanced Reporting
- Mobile Apps
- Cloud or Onsite Hosting



How We Can Help You Today?

407-358-2000

www.sys2k.com/bms/uma



COACH GLASS

It's NOT JUST OUR NAME
It's WHAT WE DO



- ABC
- BCI
- DINA
- GILLIG
- GLAVAL
- IRIZAR
- MCI
- NABI
- NEOPLAN
- NEW FLYER
- NOVA
- ORION
- PREVOST
- SETRA
- STALLION
- TEMSA
- VAN HOOL
- VOLVO

Featuring

The Industry's Deepest Inventory
Quick Delivery & Shipping
Great Pricing, Exceptional Service

Warehouse Locations

Oregon, Indiana, Florida & Arizona

(800) 714-7171

www.CoachGlass.com

(541) 684-7868

Bus@CoachGlass.com

cpacex®
solutions

POWRPOUCH!
Portable Storage
& Stays Fresher

POWRPAK™



PORTION CONTROL DEODORIZER • HOLDING TANK & WASTE TREATMENT PACKS
MANUFACTURED IN U.S.A.

- Less than 20¢ Per Charge
- Extra Strength Odor Control
- Dissolves Rapidly - Self Dispensing
- High-Performance Fragrance
- Deep Blue, Non-Staining Dye
- Formaldehyde-Free
- Available in 3 Sizes

NEW!

Reformulated for
Portable Toilets
Buses - Boats
& More!



1-800-974-7383

www.cpacex.com

Slew of truckers sue Cat over emissions system

NEWARK, N.J. — A truckload of trucking companies that purchased or leased big rigs powered by Caterpillar diesel engines — that they say turned out defective — have filed a consolidated class-action lawsuit against Cat in federal court here.

The 22 trucking firms are located in 18 states.

They charge that engine exhaust emission system defects resulted in power loss and shut-downs that prevented operation of or impeded their vehicles.

The involved Caterpillar C-13 and C-15 power plants, collectively known as MY2007 Cat engines, were sold from 2007 through 2010.

The same issues also are being

litigated on behalf of a dozen motorcoach companies that operated defective C-13 Caterpillar bus engines that were equipped with the same emissions-reduction technology.

The bus litigation is pending in the same New Jersey federal court. (See Dec. 15, 2012; April 1, 2013; June 1, 2014, and Aug. 15, 2014,

issues of *Bus & Motorcoach News*.)

According to one attorney, the truckers incurred significant operational losses, diminished vehicle values, and engine replacement costs.

For more information about the Cat C13 and C15 engine litigation, go to www.cohenmilstein.com/news.php?NewsID=718.

NW coach assn. elects directors

SPOKANE, Wash. — Officers and directors of the Northwest Motorcoach Association were elected during the group's 15th annual Convention and Road-ee here last month.

Becoming president for 2014-15 was Bob Giles of Alpha Omega Tours and Charters in Medical Lake, Wash., and picked as vice president was Gary Miller of GLM Charters in Sumner, Wash. Both also are association directors.

Other directors for 2014-15 are Tom Casazza of Starline Luxury Coaches in Seattle, representing large operators; Steve Abegg of Journey Lines in Lynnwood, Wash., representing medium-size operators, and Michael Rogers of Beeline Tours in Seattle, representing small operators.

Gary Hahn of Gary Hahn & Associates in Portland, Ore., was chosen associate director, and past president Bob Pirnke of Chinook Charters in Mill Creek, Wash., remains on the board.

Winners of the annual driver competition were:

First place, Dick Turner of Northwestern Stage Lines in Spokane; second place, Joni Long of MTR Western in Seattle, and third place, Barry Coe of Northwestern Stage Lines.

Insurance

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ward with the development of regulations to increase minimum financial responsibility requirements for truck and bus companies. This is despite the fact that the department's own data shows that less than 0.2 percent of truck-involved accidents result in damages that exceed the current requirements," the groups wrote in their letter.

"What is especially troubling about this rulemaking is that the department cannot show any connection between higher minimum insurance requirements and improved safety performance by a truck or bus company."

In spite of this, an advanced notice of proposed rulemaking is currently under review at the White House Office of Management and Budget.

"This rulemaking action, described as 'high priority,' has been taken up by the department without direction from Congress, and is moving forward while other actions with a direct impact on motor carrier safety languish with little to no action by the department," the letter states.

"At the very least, the department should halt this action until the issue can be fully examined by Congress through hearings and legislative direction, as occurred when the current minimum financial responsibility requirements were enacted into law."

Take YOUR
Business
to the
Next Level

The *Bus & Motorcoach Academy's Clarence Cornell School of Business* will help increase your business and operational knowledge...*helping you take YOUR business to the next level.*

Registration for the Fall Semester is open until November 6th!



With the support of ABC Companies

Visit www.uma.org/academy for more information!

South Carolina operator settles age discrimination suit

SPARTANBURG, S.C. — Atchison Transportation Services, one of the largest passenger carriers in South Carolina, has agreed to pay \$85,000 and take other steps to settle an age discrimination lawsuit brought by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

The EEOC had charged the company with discriminating against two motorcoach drivers when it fired them because of their ages, 75 and 76.

According to the suit filed against the company by the EEOC, around Dec. 21, 2011, William Thomas, who was a coach driver for Atchison, was told by the company operations manager that he was being terminated.

The operations manager told Thomas he had thought Thomas was “only 70,” but because Thomas was actually 75, the company had to let him go.

The EEOC complaint also alleged the operations manager told Thomas that the company insurance policy had a clause that did not allow drivers to drive after they reached the age of 75.

The EEOC suit made similar charges concerning Norris Locke, who also worked as a motorcoach driver for the company.

The same operations manager had previously discharged Locke, who was 76 at the time, around April 30, 2009.

According to the EEOC filing, the operations manager said Locke was fired because the company’s insurance carrier would no longer insure Locke.

The EEOC asserted in its suit that the company insurance policy

had no age restriction for coverage.

Discrimination against persons age 40 and over based on age violates the federal Age Discrimination in Employment Act.

The EEOC said it sued Atchison in the U.S. District Court for the District of South Carolina after first attempting to reach a pre-litigation settlement through its conciliation process.

In addition to monetary damages, the two-year consent decree resolving the litigation requires Atchison Transportation to develop and implement a policy that prohibits discrimination based on age.

The decree further requires the company to conduct preventive annual training on requirements of the Age Discrimination in Employment Act for employees, su-

pervisors and managers.

Finally, the company will report to the EEOC each time it discharges an employee who is over age of 40 and will post a notice about the lawsuit in its Spartanburg facility.

“Employers commonly make assumptions about how long persons should work before retirement, including assumptions about their ability to work based solely

on age,” said EEOC Regional Attorney Lynette A. Barnes of the agency’s Charlotte district.

“Employers must be careful as making such assumptions, and then acting on them, can result in a violation of federal law.”

Atchison Transportation is a 60-year-old, diversified passenger carrier, with a fleet of limousines, sedans, cutaways and motorcoaches.



For Professional Motorcoach Drivers

Introducing the *Bus & Motorcoach Academy's Prevost Preparatory School for Professional Motorcoach Drivers.*

Developed to help new drivers prepare for their CDL, *Prevost Prep* also gives experienced drivers an opportunity to keep current on the unique skills and responsibilities of a professional motorcoach driver.

Registration for the Fall Semester is open until November 6th!

Visit www.uma.org/academy for more information!

Calendar

OCTOBER 2014

26-28 Bus Association of New York Annual Meeting and Marketplace, Gideon Putnam Hotel and Conference Center, Saratoga Springs, N.Y. Info: www.banybus.org.

26-28 41st Annual California Bus Association Convention and Trade Show, DoubleTree by Hilton Sonoma Wine Country, Rohnert Park, Calif. Info: www.cbabus.com.

NOVEMBER 2014

2-4 Chauffeur Driven Trade Show & Conference, Trump Taj Mahal, Atlantic City, N.J. Info: www.chauffeurdrivenshow.com.

18 CUTA Trans-Expo, Scotiabank Convention Centre, Niagara Falls, Ontario. Info: www.cutaactu.ca.

COMPASS COACH GARAGE SALE!



2009 VanHool, T2145 LIFT. 58 passenger, Cummins, B500. 470,500 TCM. Aluminum Wheels. Working ADA lift. **One owner since new. \$315,000**



2012 Stallion 29 passenger mid-size. Full size bathroom, underbelly storage, REI video system. Nice little coach for small groups. Freightliner Chassis, Cummins 6.7L ISB/Allison 2000 series. 104,000 TCM. **Owned since new: \$150,000 - GREAT DEAL**



2003 Prevost H3045 LIFT. 56 passenger, DD60, B500. 677,775 TCM. Aluminum Wheels, Working ADA lift. **Just USDOT inspected: \$139,900**



BEAUTIFUL 1998 VanHool T-2145. Factory rebuilt DD60, B500 both with only 75,000 miles. Upgraded two piece windshield and headlights. Newer interior, Flat screen REI system. **One owner since new; \$65,000**

We have photos/videos of ALL listed coaches:

- **2007 VanHool T-2145 Unit #42547:** 400,000 TCM, Cummins, B500 combo. 58 Seats, Aluminum Wheels, Beautiful white coach. **\$215,000**
- **2000 VanHool T-2145 Unit #61194:** 850,000 estimated miles, Cummins, B500. Updated two piece windshield. **Ready to roll \$90,000**
- **2006 VanHool T-2145 Unit #12575:** 381,400 TCM. Cummins, B500 combo. Aluminum Wheels, 58 Seats. **\$185,000**
- **Package Deal:** (2) 1999 T945's Presently in service and a 1994 T840 for parts (Good Glass all way around)...**All 3 for \$70,000**
- **Package Deal:** (3) 2000 NABI Transit coaches. 40' long. Excellent transit coaches. **All 3 for \$55,000 or \$22,000 each**
- **2009 MCI J4500.** Engine fire. Thousands of dollars in parts. Own your own rolling parts bus. **\$20,000 (heck of a deal!!)**

**Call Trenton
at 616-696-0022
or email:
compass@wmis.net**

*All coaches are located
in Grand Rapids, MI*

Trans-Bridge Lines, a private Motorcoach company, conducting charter, scheduled service and contract transit service in the Lehigh Valley region of Pennsylvania and central New Jersey, is seeking candidates for the following position:



Director of Operations

A senior-level position, which oversees all aspects of the company operations, including but not limited to:

- Direction of workforce
- Compliance of all Federal rules and regulations
- Safety and security
- Terminal management
- Fleet refurbishing and replacement schedules
- Insurance claims' management
- Schedule route development and oversight

✓ **Candidate must have a minimum of 10 years management experience.**

✓ **Candidate must have experience working with Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) regulations.**

TRANS-BRIDGE LINES

Please include salary requirement with resume.
Send resume to: Jsmith@transbridgelines.com



**3 - MCI 102D3
models starting at
\$30,000 each**



**4 - Prevost H3-41
models starting at
\$60,000 each**

All with entertainment systems, all recently refurbished interiors, all with National Seats, includes tires, all Super clean and ready for operation.

EYRE
BUS, TOUR & TRAVEL

Let Us Take You There

Contact Brad Eyre at 410-442-1330 ext. 3208
or brade@eyre.com

Or for more details on these coaches and others,
visit our website: www.eyre.com/forsale

Arrow Stage

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

grades give the J4500 "car-like braking," a smoother ride, and a significantly tighter turning radius of 40 feet, 11 inches, compared to the previous 47 feet.

Arrow's newest J4500s also are equipped with Detroit engines, offering improved fuel economy, and such standard safety features as electronic stability control, tire-pressure monitoring, and Amerex fire suppression.

Inside the cabin there are passenger seats with three-point belts, power outlets at each seat and Wi-Fi connectivity.

"We are very excited to take delivery of the new MCI J4500 with the ZF and Bendix systems," said Busskohl. "The J coach has always been a very good motorcoach for our company. However, now with the new ZF suspension it takes the J to a whole new level."

In addition to its latest J4500 coaches, Arrow added two Setra S 417 models purchased through MCI, bringing its total MCI-associated fleet to 61 J4500s, 16 other MCI models, and 59 Setra coaches.

"We appreciate Arrow's loyalty to both the MCI and Setra brands," said Patricia Ziska, MCI vice president of new coach sales.

Founded in 1928, Arrow continues to grow as a major U.S. charter company. According to the latest *Metro* magazine ranking of the Top 50 North American motorcoach fleets, Arrow ranked No. 13.

Besides its Omaha, Las Vegas and new Mesquite locations, it also has terminals in Kansas City, Denver and Phoenix, plus three more in Nebraska, two in Kansas and one in Iowa.

To learn more, go to www.arrowstagelines.com.

Escot Lines

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

"Ideally, when you look to purchase another company, you're looking at three things: You want their personnel resources, their assets, or their market share. In this case, we got a little bit of all three," he said.

The purchase comes nine months after Academy Express, the large New Jersey-based motorcoach operator, swallowed up Horizon's other Florida units along the Interstate 95 corridor in Jacksonville, Miami and West Palm Beach.

The Horizon operations included the former Coach America/American Coach Lines units that Transportation Management Service's owner Frank Sherman had purchased out of bankruptcy in 2012.

Transportation Management Services is the parent company of Horizon.

REPOS FOR SALE
• "Bank Repos" across the US • Priced to Sell
• Variety of Makes & Models
1-877-737-2221 x30716
www.Bus-Buys.com — View "Repo Inventory"

2009 MCI E4500 * VERY LOW MILEAGE * ONE OWNER
Excellent Condition—none nicer!
Cummins • B500 • 58 pax w/lav
170K TCM Michelin Tires
Alcoa Rims • Cordless Mics
CD/DVD • Lots more options
Partial Financing O.A.C.
\$305,000
Trade for MCI D or DL3 Considered • More available
Call / Email today for photos and more info!
sales@royalstarhawaii.com / 808.832.6261



**To place a Classified Ad,
call 866-930-8426**



VOLVO PERFORMANCE BACKED BY UNPARALLELED SERVICE. TALK ABOUT A WINNING COMBINATION.

When you pair unbeatable operational efficiency with the highest standard for service in the industry, you have one powerful machine on your hands. The Volvo 9700 uniquely combines the proven performance and fuel efficiency of the Volvo D13 engine with the exceptional and experienced network of Prevest professional service. But it doesn't stop there. This workhorse ups the ante on fuel economy with integrated features, like the I-Shift transmission, which ensures that the engine runs at the ideal speed for maximum fuel savings. Advanced safety features and passenger comfort round out the list of features that make the Volvo 9700 the best investment your business can make.

Get a Close Look at a Reliable MCI Pre-Owned Coach.

Call our Coach Concierge at **1-877-428-9624**



One-year limited warranty*, and 60 days/30,000 miles scheduled maintenance!** **Certified++**

60-day limited warranty, plus 60 days/30,000 miles scheduled maintenance!** **Select+**

Low prices on all makes and models. These are some of our most amazing deals! **Deal**

Best bargains, lowest prices, everything goes! **Outlet**



2007 VAN HOOL C2045
CAT, ZF. Price Reduced, WLC, West Coast/Southern Unit, 49 Passengers, Steel Wheels. VIN #47376. **Only \$165,000!**



2007 VAN HOOL C2045
CAT, ZF-10 Speed Manual. Price Reduced, WLC, West Coast/Southern Unit, 49 Passengers, Steel Wheels. VIN #47227. **Only \$165,000!**



2004 SETRA S 417
DD S60, B-500R. Silver Exterior, 56 Passenger, Aluminum Wheels, 6 Monitor Video System. VIN #00042. **Only \$132,000!**



2004 SETRA S 417
DD S60, B-500R. Low Mileage, Light Blue Interior, 56 Passenger, Aluminum Wheels, 4 Monitor Video. VIN #00061. **Only \$132,000!**



2004 SETRA S 417
DD S60, B-500R. New White Paint Exterior, 56 Passenger, Aluminum Wheels, 6 Monitor Video System. VIN #00107. **Only \$132,000!**



2003 VAN HOOL C2045
DD S60, B-500. WLC, 55 Passenger, Steel Wheels, 4 Monitor Video System. VIN #45792. **Only \$90,000!**



1999 MCI 102 EL3
DD S60, B-500. Newly Available, 56 Passenger, 4 Monitor Video System. VIN #60790. **Only \$45,000!**



2000 MCI 102 DL3
DD S60, B-500. Recently Reduced, 49 Passenger Plus Bunk, Steel Wheels, 5 Monitor Video System. VIN #52999. **Only \$30,000!**



1999 MCI 102 DL3
DD S60, Allison. Recently Reduced, Sold As Is, 55 Passenger. VIN #52035. **Only \$13,500!**

MCI SALES & SERVICE CENTERS

CALIFORNIA
800.777.4101

NEW JERSEY
800.262.1287

ILLINOIS
800.428.7626

FLORIDA
800.390.0287

TEXAS
800.248.4942

CANADA
800.663.3328

*See www.mcicoach.com/preowned for complete POC limited warranty details. Warranty effective on purchases beginning 6/1/13

**Scheduled preventative maintenance inspections and recommended fluid and filter changes at an MCI service center included for 60 Days/30,000 Miles, whichever comes first, as determined by the maintenance manual applicable to the coach. Service intervals assume mileage is zero at date of pre-owned coach delivery.

Price quoted is in U.S. dollars and does not include any applicable sales or excise tax, title, license, documentation or environmental fees or handling charges. All coaches are available for, and subject to, immediate sale to the first qualified buyer.

Driving Pre-Owned Back to New



RE Energize your fleet

MCI's Re-Energized Program provides options to significantly update your, or one of our, pre-owned coaches to OEM standards and with OEM warranty on D, J and E model coaches.

✓**RePower** with an OE remanufactured engine and transmission.

✓**RePair** critical items based on MCI's 210+ inspection.

✓**ReUpholster** seating with newer fabrics, and upgrade flooring to match.

✓**ReNew** for a like-new coach with MCI's and OE powertrain warranties.

Plus, pick your components from these three main categories:

Safety and Compliance. Add Amaya/A2Ten/Torino G+seats or National 4210 with three-point passenger seatbelts, tire pressure monitoring, fire suppression systems and more

Mechanical and Operational. Create an entirely new interior from the entryway to reflooring and switch to a brushless evaporator and condenser motors

Appearance and Amenities. Upgrade to LED lighting and Wi-Fi

For a complete listing, go to mcicoach.com/reenergize/210inspection or call **877-428-9624**



Reliability Driven™

Find our latest news and offers:   

©MCI Sales and Service, Inc. 2014, All Rights Reserved