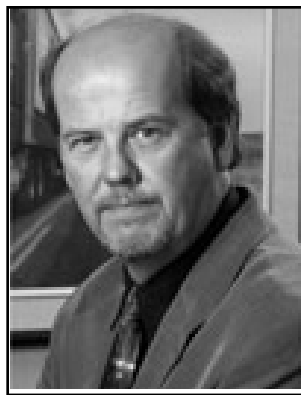


I remember when...bureaucratic obstacles

When I think of the title of this paper it makes me think of the nostalgic talk that resonates in many drivers rooms across North America, inevitably you will run into drivers who will talk about the good old days. They will tell new drivers how great things were back in the day and that trucking just isn't as much fun as it used to be. You know what there is some truth to their point of view as their usually is, so here we go, back in the day when I drove which was approximately from 1974 through to 1984, I had to come up with these dates with a calculator, old man old!

Back in those days things were definitely different when I drove I started with long haul London Ontario to Waco Texas and it was not for a major truck line it was for a small four truck leasing company and a drivers pool which were ran by Mom and Dad. Back in the pre-deregulation days if you didn't have tens of thousand's of dollars and years to spend in court assembling lanes through the Ministry of Transportation or the Department of Transportation in the U.S. you had a leasing company and a drivers employment pool. The rules back then stated that the same person could not own these two companies. So in most cases the person owning a small



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fleet and the person running the drivers pool were married and claimed to be totally separate businesses. This situation existed in every province and state throughout North America and believe me everyone set up this way would pray that the Truck Cops didn't come a knocking at their door and see through the charade that was in place and put you out of business. Now of course anyone with some patience and a couple hundred dollars has an authority to go anywhere.

The next problem needing to be dealt with on a daily basis as a driver was the issue of fuel permits and single state authorities, you see back in the day each state and province had their own process for dealing with fuel tax registration. As an example when I left Ontario I was covered in Michigan because we had a

Michigan and Ontario base plate on the trucks, when we got to Ohio it was fairly easy because an Ohio fuel tax sticker was easy to get and was good for one year. When we entered Kentucky we had to use Western Union to have the permit sent to a truck stop in Kentucky to be picked up and they were good for 10 days, it took 24 hours usually for this process to take place. Seeing Kentucky was a seven to eight hour drive from London you hoped you had enough time to get that permit. If you didn't you had to run the Blue Grass Parkway which was a Toll Road with no scales and hope there was no DOT patrolling the route who might pull you over looking for a valid permit. Tennessee wasn't to bad because you could buy a ten-day permit right at the scale house. Your only problem with that was that you better make sure your log book looked perfect because you had to go into the lions den to get the permit. You were always a little concerned at this point because if they don't like the way you looked that day or momma burnt their toast that morning you could go through some interrogation before you got your permit. Arkansas wasn't to bad either when you entered the state you walked in and gave the DOT man you entering mileage and he gave you a piece of paper

that you had to keep with you. Then when you left the state you had to produce that same piece of paper along with proof of a fuel purchase from Arkansas large enough to run the miles needed to be in the state? If you didn't buy enough fuel you had to pay the man cash for the fuel tax you owed for the miles you had run. By the way not enough cash on you, tough nuts, you sat there until it got wired to you and then you moved on, no credit cards taken. Now if you got a decent DOT officer they might let you drop your trailer at the scale and drive to the nearest truck stop to get an advance on your credit card to pay them. If they wouldn't let you drop your trailer you had to hitch a ride each way with a sympathetic driver to get your cash to pay the man. Texas had no permanent scales and was an easy drive their fuel was cheaper than everyone else's so they didn't worry about how much you bought, because it made sense to buy it there. That along with the fact that people in Texas actually seemed to like truckers and especially Canadian truckers for some reason, I always liked Texas.

So you get to your delivery get the load off and find out where you're going from there, now you start the whole process again. If you happen to be headed to Western Canada, for

instance the first thing you did was get your truckers atlas out and start researching how and if you could get the permits you needed to drive through the states you had to drive through to get to your new destination. Of course if you couldn't get what you needed in the time frame needed you got on the radio to see if you could run around the scales, if not you drove around that state, which could in some instance be very expensive. You didn't dare get caught in some of these places without having you act together or you will be standing in front of a judge before you know it, bin there done that.

Today of course we have the IFTA (International Fuel Tax Agreement) one decal registered properly and drive driver drive.

These are just two examples I didn't even get into the bingo card deal that was part of the process. 72,380lbs max and the length issue in different states and provinces always needed to be watched. Throw into this also that I was hauling produce as a backhaul that maxed your weight out and which always seemed to have a delivery dates that never matched to my available hours on the logbook.

So when I look in the rearview mirror at trucking from a drivers perspective here's what I see. Back in the day the traffic was much

lighter and it was easier to get around, no doubt. The code of the road and camaraderie was definitely a high point; we watched each other back as drivers. But the rest of it was a royal pain.

Is their still bureaucratic obstacles today, sure there are but as a new driver in the 2000's it is much easier to get around not having the rules and prohibitive regulations we had back then, driving by the seat of your pants isn't an issue today. So you fellows who like telling new folks how rosy this industry was back in the day check to see if you might not just be looking through rose colored glasses, because it wasn't all sugar folks.

Yours truly,
Rjh

Ray Haight CMILT, was an O/O for 10 years and the President and COO of one of Canada's 50 best managed companies for 15 years, Currently he is Chairman of PTDI . (Professional Truck Driving Institute), he is an Officer and the Treasurer of the TCA (Truckload Carriers Association), the Industry Chairman for Apprenticeships for Tractor trailer Commercial Driver in Ontario and CEO of The Alliance Canada.

Accident Register Information

Accident Register Information Requested by FMCSA

FMCSA is inviting public comment on its intent to request approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to revise the information collection (IC) entitled, "A c c i d e n t R e c o r d k e e p i n g Requirements". This information collection is necessary for FMCSA to assess the effectiveness of the safety management controls of motor carriers.

Title 49 CFR 390.15(b), requires motor carriers to make all records and information pertaining to crashes (accidents) available to an authorized representative or special agent of the FMCSA upon request, or as part of an inquiry. Interstate motor carriers are required to maintain an "accident register" consisting of a list of all accidents (both interstate and intrastate) involving their commercial motor vehicles (CMVs) (49 CFR 390.15(b)). The information for each accident

must include, at a minimum, the following elements:

- Date of accident;
- City or town in which or most near where the accident occurred;
- The state in which the accident occurred;
- Driver name;
- Number of injuries;
- Number of fatalities;

Whether hazardous materials, other than fuel spilled from the fuel tanks of motor vehicles involved in the accident, were released.

In addition, the register must contain copies of all

accident reports required by state or other governmental entities or insurers. Motor carriers must maintain the required information about CMV accidents in their accident registers for three years after the date of the accident, instead of the former one year. This information collection supports the DOT strategic goal of safety by requiring motor carriers to gather and record information on crashes involving their CMVs. Likewise, the FMCSA is strengthening its ability to assess motor carriers'

safety performance and to use that information to help motor carriers to prevent crashes and to reduce their severity.

FMCSA uses this data to enable it to direct its enforcement resources to the motor carriers with the weakest safety records.

You are asked to comment on any aspect of this information collection, including:

- (1) Whether the proposed collection is necessary for the FMCSA's performance;
- (2) the accuracy of the estimated burden;

(3) ways for the FMCSA to enhance the quality, usefulness, and clarity of the collected information;

(4) ways that the burden could be minimized without reducing the quality of the collected information.

The agency will summarize or include your comments in the request for OMB's clearance of this information collection.