

## Canada's Top 100

BY PETER CARTER

**T**he week we were putting the final touches on this list of Canada's 100 biggest for-hire carriers, GM announced a \$38.7 billion loss—the biggest ever for an automaker.

But you don't need to look at the company's annual report to read between the lines. Just go for a ride Highway 401.

It bisects Ontario's Golden Triangle.

Two years ago, the right lane of the 401 was a virtual freight train of tractor trailers heading from Ontario's heartland to the American border.

It's not so busy anymore.

As one driver told *Today's Trucking*, "The bright side is, it's easier to get a decent seat in the truck stops."

At the same time as the automotive giant reeled, the American economy was trying to adjust to the triple whammy of sub-prime lending crisis, a diving dollar and the general uneasiness that precedes an election.

However, as *Today's Trucking* staff compiled the list of top carriers, we got a chance to contact most of the companies on it and as a result develop an informal albeit in-focus snapshot of the industry. When one of our researchers asked "How's business?" one Quebec-based outfit said "Great except for the number of trucks parked against the fence."

Also, as our staff entered the numbers, it became awkwardly apparent that quite a few of the companies had less iron on the road than they did last year. Company after company reported fewer trucks, trailers and owner-operators.

Day&Ross, for instance, checks in with 3,119 total units this year, down from 4,303 this time last year. And Big Orange—Schneider National—is down to 1,970 units, as opposed to 2,454 in 2007.

That less trucking was done in Canada during 2007 than in 2006 became painfully apparent.

According to Statistics Canada, there were 3,482 for-hire trucking companies in Canada with annual revenues of \$1 million or more in Q2 of 2007, down from 3,570

carriers in the same period a year earlier.

And for those companies, operating revenues for the same period totaled \$7 billion, down a full two percent from the same time in 2006.

There is, of course, another side to the story, and that, too became apparent as we assembled the list. Change is afoot.

Companies are realigning their lanes, traffic is flowing more east-west than north-south and intermodal transportation is coming on strong. In fact, several carriers told us about the addition of scores of containers to their fleets but as of this year, we don't count them in our tallies. Yet

why, just because the 401 has empty stretches, there's no reason to mourn the state of Canadian trucking at large.

Glenncoe gives Bison a link to the growing Asian import business and the purchase follows other westward expansion for Bison, including a new terminal in Calgary, a new intermodal division connecting Ontario with the west and finally, the rapid expansion of their turnpike-double operations in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta.

Bison President Don Streuber says it's been a matter of rethinking trucking strategies. "It requires a willingness to step



And look at Schneider.

Its total numbers may be down but as the company's newly appointed general manager for Canada Sandro Caccaro told *Today's Trucking*, truckers have to look beyond their traditional pastures for increased business. Schneider is in the throes of opening a new logistics arm operating out of Toronto, much like its big brother has in the U.S.

Then of course there are the companies that continue to grow, and by doing so eliminate others from the list of top carriers. You won't see Groupe Thibodeau—34th on last year's list—because TransForce purchased them in late '07.

Ditto Glenncoe of Kelowna, B.C., which appeared as the 56th biggest outfit in the land in 2007. It is now part of Winnipeg-based Bison Transport. That purchase, in addition to Bison's natural growth, changes the prairie trucker's standing from 13th to seventh.

The Glenncoe purchase underscores

back and have some good self-examination," he told us. "It takes discipline and you have to be prepared to be analytical and reassess your current circumstances."

While Streuber's not exactly bullish on the coming year—he predicts a neutral-to-slightly negative 2008—he says companies will have their cost-control abilities taxed to the max.

Finally, at the same time as we were finishing up the Top 100, the consultants Deloitte & Touche announced their list of best-managed companies in Canada. Among D&T's criteria are companies' abilities to respond to changing market conditions. And—surprise surprise—a disproportionate number of those finest outfits are also on our list of Carriers.

As well as Bison (number seven on our list), the all-star team includes TransX (four), Challenger (five), QuikX (23), H&R (26), M-O (32), Yanke (35), Consolidated Fastfrate (48), and MacKinnon (75). That's gotta say something. ▲

Our annual survey of Canada's largest for-hire fleets

# Today's Trucking

# 2008

CANADA'S TOP 100

Rank (2007)	Company Name, City, Province	Total	Trucks	Tractors	Trailers	O/O's	Employees
1 (1)	<b>TransForce Income Fund</b> , Saint-Laurent, PQ	<b>20340</b>	0	7490	12850	2200	14683
2 (2)	<b>Vitran Corporation Inc.</b> , Toronto, ON	<b>10344</b>	55	2346	7943	488	4649
3 (3)	<b>Mullen Group Inc.</b> , Aldersyde, AB	<b>7902</b>	453	1405	6044	996	3500
4 (4)	<b>TransX</b> , Winnipeg, MB	<b>5737</b>	65	1545	4127	890	2350
5 (5)	<b>Challenger Motor Freight Inc.</b> , Cambridge, ON	<b>5010</b>	10	1500	3500	298	1700
6 (7)	<b>Groupe Robert</b> , Boucherville, PQ	<b>4578</b>	8	904	3666	315	2580
7 (13)	<b>Bison Transport Inc.</b> , Winnipeg, MB	<b>4315</b>	10	1077	3228	339	1745
8 (6)	<b>SLH Transport</b> , Kingston, ON	<b>4047</b>	0	305	3742	370	707
9 (11)	<b>Canada Cartage Diversified Income Fund</b> , Mississauga, ON	<b>3800</b>	400	1200	2200	500	3000
10 (10)	<b>Contrans Income Fund</b> , Woodstock, ON	<b>3775</b>	0	1391	2384	795	1981
11 (12)	<b>Armour Transportation Systems</b> , Moncton, NB	<b>3585</b>	150	810	2625	75	1650
12 (8) <sup>1</sup>	<b>Day &amp; Ross Transportation Group</b> , Hartland, NB	<b>3119</b>	321	75	2723	2707	2080
13 (14)	<b>Trimac Transportation Services LP</b> , Calgary, AB	<b>2818</b>	0	463	2355	527	1313
14 (nr)	<b>Siemens Transportation Group</b> , Saskatoon, SK	<b>2790</b>	45	720	2025	121	1675
15 (nr) <sup>4</sup>	<b>UPS Canada</b> , Mississauga, ON	<b>2521</b>	2521	0	0	0	8750
16 (17)	<b>Manitoulin Transport Group</b> , Gore Bay, ON	<b>2468</b>	126	736	1606	133	na
17 (18)	<b>Calyx Transportation Group Inc.</b> , Concord, ON	<b>2292</b>	26	306	1960	274	935
18 (16)	<b>Transfreight</b> , Cambridge, ON	<b>2274</b>	0	263	2011	0	1400
19 (9)	<b>Paul's Hauling Group</b> , Winnipeg, MB	<b>2270</b>	71	530	1669	140	1142
20 (19)	<b>Reimer Express Lines</b> , Winnipeg, MB	<b>2003</b>	27	539	1437	203	1378
21 (15)	<b>Schneider National Carriers Canadian Division</b> , Aberfoyle, ON	<b>1970</b>	0	520	1450	50	700
22 (30)	<b>SGT 2000</b> , St-Germain-de-Grantham, PQ	<b>1890</b>	0	410	1480	82	520
23 (22)	<b>QuikX Group of Companies</b> , Mississauga, ON	<b>1855</b>	65	540	1250	180	1100
24 (39)	<b>Rosedale Group</b> , Mississauga, ON	<b>1845</b>	41	525	1279	120	769
25 (27)	<b>Gibson Energy Ltd.</b> , Calgary, AB	<b>1840</b>	72	636	1132	450	205
26 (24)	<b>H&amp;R Transport Limited</b> , Lethbridge, AB	<b>1773</b>	0	478	1295	133	930
27 (25)	<b>Erb Group of Companies</b> , New Hamburg, ON	<b>1705</b>	150	580	975	150	1075
28 (20)	<b>Bruce R. Smith Limited</b> , Simcoe, ON	<b>1695</b>	0	395	1300	92	571
29 (23)	<b>Gibson Transport</b> , Alliston, ON	<b>1693</b>	0	293	1400	59	475
30 (26)	<b>Wilson's Truck Lines</b> , Etobicoke, ON	<b>1684</b>	0	450	1234	265	400
31 (33)	<b>Allied Systems Canada</b> , Burlington, ON	<b>1624</b>	0	802	822	91	1154
32 (32)	<b>M-O Freightworks</b> , Brampton, ON	<b>1622</b>	138	364	1120	384	327
33 (35)	<b>Groupe Guilbault</b> , Ste-Foy, PQ	<b>1621</b>	3	324	1294	81	746
34 (37)	<b>Kriska Transportation</b> , Prescott, ON	<b>1573</b>	0	293	1280	98	525
35 (21)	<b>Yanke Group of Companies</b> , Saskatoon, SK	<b>1554</b>	7	306	1241	157	649
36 (36)	<b>Purolator</b> , Mississauga, ON	<b>1546</b>	122	440	984	400	12500
37 (28)	<b>XTL Group of Companies</b> , Etobicoke, ON	<b>1480</b>	0	230	1250	170	150
38 (38)	<b>Meyers Transport</b> , Peterborough, ON	<b>1440</b>	16	342	1082	65	592
39 (46)	<b>Vedder Transportation Group</b> , Abbotsford, BC	<b>1372</b>	0	392	980	85	504

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40 (41)	HBC Logistics, Etobicoke, ON	1366	0	208	1158	0	275
41 (40)	Northern Industrial Carriers, Edmonton, AB	1365	0	265	1100	5	200
42 (42)	Celadon Canada, Kitchener, ON	1345	0	385	960	230	200
43 (44)	Penner International, Steinbach, MB	1284	0	384	900	384	134
44 (43)	Shadow Lines Transportation Group, Langley, BC	1259	0	275	984	275	85
45 (29)	C.A.T./Canadian American Trans., Coteau du Lac, PQ	1254	0	114	1140	460	300
46 (45) <sup>3</sup>	Clarke Inc., Etobicoke, ON	1198	43	120	1035	230	530
47 (31)	Verspeeten Cartage, Ingersoll, ON	1173	0	154	1019	276	241
48 (47)	Consolidated FastFrate, Woodbridge, ON	1110	38	277	795	125	1600
49 (50)	Cooney Group, Belleville, ON	1022	0	222	800	7	300
50 (53)	Rosenau Transport, Edmonton, AB	1000	52	198	750	71	350
51 (48)	Arnold Bros. Transport Ltd., Winnipeg, MB	998	2	296	700	149	332
52 (55)	Arrow Transportation Systems Inc., Richmond, BC	960	80	330	550	250	240
53 (60)	B&R Eckel's Transport, Bonnyville, AB	959	30	185	744	15	325
54 (59)	Transport Morneau, Saint-Arsene, PQ	938	21	216	701	42	551
55 (58)	Thomson Terminals, Etobicoke, ON	935	3	232	700	12	na
56 (54) <sup>2</sup>	DCT Chambers Trucking, Vernon, BC	934	40	286	608	110	201
57 (52)	Team-Transport Services Ltd., Richmond, BC	933	0	138	795	118	31
58 (62)	Groupe Boutin, Plessisville, PQ	891	6	238	647	23	447
59 (51)	Travelers Transportation Services, Brampton, ON	887	2	245	640	14	304
60 (61) <sup>2</sup>	Musket Melburne, Mississauga, ON	885	0	225	660	115	320
61 (63)	Sokil Transportation Group, Edmonton, AB	877	132	145	600	0	270
62 (64)	RAM Contract Carriers, Cottam, ON	838	1	195	642	189	48
63 (68)	International Truckload Services, Belleville, ON	837	2	225	610	160	320
64 (66) <sup>2</sup>	L.E.Walker Transport Ltd., St. Thomas, ON	820	0	145	675	85	330
65 (57)	Simard Transport, Lachine, PQ	810	35	125	650	142	550
66 (67)	Wolverine Freight System, Windsor, ON	748	3	200	545	85	332
67 (70)	Speedy Transport Group, Brampton, ON	744	2	10	732	366	400
68 (68)	Normandin Transit Inc., Napierville, PQ	715	2	220	493	25	338
69 (71)	Williams Moving & Storage, Coquitlam, BC	699	195	138	366	79	400
70 (49)	BLM Group, Kitchener, ON	697	1	186	510	65	330
71 (73)	Hyndman Transport, Wroxeter, ON	695	0	197	498	21	232
72 (83)	Andlauer Transportation Services, Etobicoke, ON	675	281	78	316	161	680
73 (74)	Big Horn Transport, Calgary, AB	654	17	112	525	0	160
75 (65)	Mackinnon Transport Inc., Guelph, ON	619	0	101	518	152	192
76 (80)	Totalline Transport Inc., Vaughan, ON	616	52	221	343	67	273
77 (76)	System 55 Transport, Oakville, ON	614	4	134	476	53	98
78 (77) <sup>2</sup>	ProNorth Transportation, North Bay, ON	590	0	160	430	15	215
79 (72)	Mackie Moving Systems, Oshawa, ON	570	30	90	450	125	250
80 (82)	Groupe Goyette, Saint-Hyacinthe, PQ	562	1	75	486	64	278
81 (87)	Transport Bourret Inc., Drummondville, PQ	557	12	149	396	17	400
82 (79)	Transport Herve Lemieux, Saint-Laurent, PQ	554	41	210	303	35	325
83 (84)	Muskoka Transport, Bracebridge, ON	544	4	155	385	40	190
84 (85)	Groupe Jules Savard, Jonquiere, PQ	540	0	160	380	2	250
85 (89)	Transport Bourassa Inc., St-Jean-sur-Richelieu, PQ	538	2	135	401	6	250

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86 (98)	<b>McKevitt Trucking</b> , Thunder Bay, ON	<b>537</b>	2	165	370	25	205
87 (81)	<b>Fluke Transport</b> , Hamilton, ON	<b>535</b>	20	135	380	65	120
88 (86)	<b>Transport LFL</b> , Vallée-Jonction, PQ	<b>527</b>	21	146	360	6	280
89 (94)	<b>Ayr Motor Express Inc.</b> , Woodstock,, NB	<b>525</b>	0	125	400	45	305
90 (91)	<b>Transport V.A. Inc.</b> , Laurier-Station, PQ	<b>503</b>	8	105	390	1	400
91 (90)	<b>Gosselin Express</b> , Thetford Mines, PQ	<b>500</b>	25	80	395	20	165
92 (93)	<b>Transport Couture &amp; Fils Itee</b> , Saint-Ephrem, PQ	<b>492</b>	0	121	371	19	237
93 (nr)	<b>Caravan Logistics Inc.</b> , Oakville, ON	<b>484</b>	2	132	350	38	173
94 (88)	<b>Payne Transportation L.P.</b> , Winnipeg, MB	<b>479</b>	4	175	300	160	100
95 (100)	<b>Les services logistiques Trans West Inc.</b> , Lachine, PQ	<b>465</b>	0	190	275	90	380
96 (96)	<b>Samuel Son and Company Ltd.</b> , Mississauga, ON	<b>456</b>	6	170	280	135	na
97 (92)	<b>J.D. Smith &amp; Sons</b> , Concord, ON	<b>454</b>	54	88	312	0	305
98 (97)	<b>Con-way Freight - Canada</b> , Mississauga, ON	<b>428</b>	2	168	258	0	284
99 (99)	<b>Empire Transportation</b> , Grimsby, ON	<b>426</b>	1	75	350	11	100
100 (nr)	<b>Chester Cartage</b> , Toronto, ON	<b>425</b>	60	65	300	0	na

FOOTNOTES: 1) Day & Ross figures do not include McCain Transport, a wholly owned reefer fleet based in Maine. 2) Estimates. The company was on last year's Top 100 list, but their numbers were not updated in time for this year's deadline. 3) Clarke Inc.'s listing of number of trucks includes tractors, flatbeds and vans. nr = not previously ranked. na = information not available. 4) UPS provided numbers but not a breakdown on vehicle types.

#### HOW WE DID IT

1. Companies are ranked based on total vehicle counts, including power units and trailers owned by owner-operators, as reported in January, 2007. Only trucks of class 6 or above are enumerated unless otherwise noted. Vehicles and employees based in the United States are included provided they are administered from a Canadian head office.
2. Most of the statistics were entered into the Today's Trucking data base by representatives of the companies themselves. The remaining companies and additions were gathered by Today's Trucking editors via phone, email or fax. While we strive to present accurate figures, the statistics have not been independently verified.
3. Several large fleets do not respond to our requests for information. These include Irving Transportation Services (comprising Midland Transport, Sunbury Transport and RST Industries based in New Brunswick), and RTL Robinson of Yellowknife. As well, the Canadian operation of Federal Express is not on the list.
4. If you have any enquiries or if you think your company should be on next year's list, please contact Peter Carter at 416-614-5828 or peter@todaystrucking.com



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