

Long Distance Truck Drivers— Their Joys and Frustrations

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ABSTRACT

One of the most serious challenges facing the trucking industry is the future shortage of drivers. Although the driver shortage is less problematic now because of the current economic recession, it will again become a pressing problem because of changing demographics and trucking industry growth. Research shows that between 2005 and 2015, the industry will need to hire over 500,000 drivers. The problem of too few drivers is exacerbated by the fact that the trucking industry also faces driver turnover rates that in recent years have exceeded 100 percent. This study was designed to empirically investigate factors related to those two problems and to provide managers with further insights regarding those problems. One hundred four long-distance truck drivers were interviewed and asked a series of questions designed to uncover job aspects that drivers liked and disliked. Included are numerous verbatim driver statements which provide meaningful insights into their job satisfaction. Results showed that independence, the opportunity to see the country, good income, and the pleasure of driving were job features that drivers liked most. Drivers most disliked being away from home, high fuel prices, the lack of “4 wheeler” driving skills, government regulations, and loading/unloading issues. Comparisons of independent owner/operator and company drivers are presented and managerial implications of the findings are included.

BEHAVIORAL SAFETY PROGRAMS: ARE YOU GETTING WHAT YOU THOUGHT?

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ABSTRACT

The largest aviation fleet operator in the world, the U.S. military, has implemented safety programs that moved away from an emphasis on compliance with “rules” toward an emphasis on “judgment” (decision making of individual vehicle operators). The purpose of this research was to assess the effect of this implementation on fleet safety. Analysis was conducted on mishap rates and individual mishap data using discontinuous piecewise linear regression and chi-square goodness of fit testing. Results showed that the implementation of the judgment based programs did not effectively reduce aviation mishap rates; the rates increased immediately after program implementation.

HOMELAND SECURITY VS. CABOTAGE: ISSUES OF TERRORISM OR PLOYS

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ABSTRACT

In the name of Homeland Security, many different policies, regulations and laws are being proposed, adopted, and implemented. There have also been attempts to change existing laws, such as those applying to air cabotage, but the argument for denial of change has been "Homeland Security." In terms of air cabotage, a question that must be addressed is "Does cabotage actually provide improved or stronger national security?" Was the purpose of Air cabotage to protect America's security, or was it to provide economic protection of the then struggling airline industry? To address these questions one must understand the concept of cabotage, the history of the development of air line regulations, terrorism and terrorist actions, and the consequences of overreacting to the latter; the focus of this article.

INVESTIGATING PRIVATE RAILROAD OPERATIONS AND THE LOCOMOTIVE ISSUE

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ABSTRACT

Changes in the railroad industry in North America, and around the world, have forced shippers to reconsider how they move rail shipments, particularly in and around large industrial facilities. Current costing and operational strategies of many rail carriers are encouraging shippers to operate private, in-house rail operations. Limitations of this industrial practice include the lack of operational management skills and the availability of required railroad locomotive equipment. This exploratory research attempts to answer several basic questions, including 1) to what extent do private rail operations exist 2) what are the basic reasons that private rail operations exist, and 3) what are the locomotive powering options for private rail operations. Findings indicate that there are a large number of private rail operations in existence in the United States and Canada, often using contract operators, and that there are significant issues in managing these operations and in obtaining locomotives for the practice.

FEASIBILITY OF JP-8 TO JET A FUEL CONVERSION AT U.S. MILITARY FACILITIES

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ABSTRACT

Using Lean concepts, we address the technical feasibility and opportunity for cost avoidance of a conversion from JP-8 to Jet A fuel at six Northwestern United States military installations. We map the supply chain for West Coast JP-8 distribution and analyze jet fuel commodity pricing. The results of this research are counterintuitive in that a customized product turned out to be less expensive. We found it critical that all actual costs relating to the acquisition of a product be closely examined. Our results show no technical barriers to a complete conversion, but there is no opportunity for cost avoidance.