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“GREEN” GROUPS SEEK TO INCLUDE TRAILERS IN TRUCK GHG/FUEL RULES



GPS Web Tracking assists fleet owners with chassis management and intermodal fleet dispatching.

As comments begin to roll in concerning new federal greenhouse gas (GHG)/fuel economy standards unveiled last month for commercial trucks and buses, a coalition of “green” groups, including labor unions and environmental organizations, is calling for the inclusion of trailers – specifically 53-ft dry vans - to be covered by the rules.

GPS Web Tracking is dedicated to helping its customers navigate the demands of the current economic climate by delivering powerful efficiency tools which directly affect the bottom line.

The ICT is the latest in that effort delivering industry leading functionality while placing an emphasis on portability.

Its ability to track in real-time while being maintenance free, allows fleet owners to cost effectively manage their entire intermodal chassis pool by eliminating permanent installation on every chassis.

“To really get the maximum fuel savings from these standards, you need to look at the entire vehicle,” said Don Anair, senior engineer with the Union of Concerned Scientists, during a telephone news conference today.

“Trailers are really a critical piece to reduced fuel consumption by tractor-trailers; more than a quarter to a third of the fuel-efficiency targets proposed by the new rules could be met with changes to the trailer alone,” he explained.

Anair said the new GHG/fuel economy rules – crafted jointly by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and National Highway Transportation Safety Agency (NHTSA) – will broadly cover heavy-duty pickups up through commercial tractor-trailers. The rules will implement 7% to 22% fuel consumption reduction targets that will be phased in over the 2014 to 2018 model years, depending on truck application.

However, tractor-trailers represent almost 50% of all the fuel consumed by the vehicle types covered under the proposed set of rules from EPA and NHTSA. That is why the Union of Concerned Scientists believes trailers need to be included along with the tractors that pull them.

“Trailers represent one of the biggest opportunities for fuel savings, with aerodynamic devices and new tire [designs] offering fuel consumption reductions of 10% or more,” Anair said. “It’s even more critical because often times the owner of the truck does not own the trailer. So while they can control the investment in new truck technology to reduce fuel consumption, they cannot for trailers.”

Therese Langer, transportation program director for the American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy (ACEEE), added that the proposed GHG/fuel efficiency rules are necessary because of significant barriers to the adoption of fuel-saving technologies in the trucking market.

“There’s no question that truck users want to save fuel for that is a major cost to them,” she said. “Nonetheless, there remain major obstacles to bringing new fuel -saving technology to market. One is that trucks are often sold after a few years. That makes many buyers less inclined to invest in fuel-efficient technology that they cannot enjoy the full benefits of.”

The ongoing volatility of fuel prices is another factor, as well as the lack of standardized methods for measuring fuel savings across a wide range of trucking operations.