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Hotline

Researchers identify most congested corridors

The nation's 328 most-congested highway corridors account for only 6% of the nation's total freeway lane-miles and 10% of the traffic volume, but account for 36% of urban freeway congestion, 8% of the national truck traffic and 33% of urban freeway truck delay.

Those are among the findings of the 2011 Congested Corridors Report, a nationwide effort to identify reliability problems at specific stretches of highway responsible for significant traffic congestion at different times and different days.

The report was published by the Texas Transportation Institute of Texas A&M University. Congestion data and analytics were provided by Inrix, a provider of traffic information.

Inrix originated the corridor approach to congestion analysis, using 10 hours of congestion per week to define a starting point for a congested corridor. To be considered a "corridor," according to the standard adopted for this report, congestion should affect a freeway segment at least 3 miles long.

"Until now, we've been able to

"Until now, we've been able to measure average congestion levels, but congestion isn't an 'average' problem."

measure average congestion levels," noted TTI Research Engineer Bill Eisele, "but congestion isn't an 'average' problem. Commuters and truckers are understandably frustrated when they can't count on a predictable trip time from day to day."

The report describes congestion problems in 328 seriously congested corridors over a variety of times – all day, morn-

ing and evening peaks, midday and weekends. Much of our national congestion problem exists in a relatively small amount of our freeway system, the report shows.

Among the report's key findings:

- Travel time reliability is more of a problem around bridges, tunnels and toll facilities, both because there are few alternate routes available in such circumstances and because a small incident can have a huge effect on corridor travel times;

- When travel time variability increases, trips become less predictable. Every occurrence of an unpredicted travel disruption creates slower speeds than normal and contributes to an increase in reliability measures.

Among the conclusions presented in the report, researchers suggest there is no one single best solution

Worst corridors for overall congestion

1. Los Angeles: Harbor Fwy. / CA Hwy. 110 NB from I-10/Santa Monica Fwy. and Stadium Way at Exit 24C.
2. Los Angeles: Harbor Fwy./I-110 NB between 111th Pl. and I-110/I-10/Santa Monica Fwy.
3. Los Angeles: San Diego Fwy./I-405 NB between I-105/Imperial Hwy. and Getty Center Dr.
4. New York: Van Wyck Expy./I-678 NB between Belt Pkwy./Exit 1 Main St./Exit 8.
5. Los Angeles: San Gabriel River Fwy./I-605 SB between Beverly Blvd. and Florence Ave.
6. Los Angeles: Santa Monica Fwy./I-10 EB between CA Hwy. 1/Lincoln Blvd./Exit 1B and Alameda St.
7. Los Angeles: Santa Monica Fwy./I-10 WB between I-5/Golden State Fwy. and National Blvd.
8. San Francisco: I-80 EB (James Lick Fwy./Bay Bridge) between US-101 and Treasure Island Rd.
9. San Francisco: Grove Shafter Fwy./CA Hwy. 24 WB between Saint Stephens Dr. and the Caldecott Tunnel.
10. Los Angeles: I-110 SB between W. Vernon Ave. and 51st St.

to congestion. Rather, they say the best approach is to examine a variety of solutions that would each contribute to an overall reduction in congestion.

Options include:

- Traditional road building and new or expanded transit facilities;
- Traffic management strategies such as aggressive crash removal;
- Demand management strategies such as improving commuter information and employer-based ideas such as telecommuting and flexible work hours; and
- Denser development patterns with a mix of jobs, shops and homes so people can walk, bike or take transit to more destinations.

Read the full report at <http://mobility.tamu.edu/corridors>

Two major fleets invest in temperature-controlled team operations

Two major truckload fleets known for team operations are upping the ante when it comes to cross-country refrigerated operations.

CRST

International, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, is offering a new expedited transcontinental Temperature

Controlled Team Service. U.S. Xpress, Chattanooga, Tenn., expanded its coast-to-coast temperature-controlled expedited team service and plans to more than double its refrigerated fleet by end of 2012.

CRST officials say they will provide transcontinental transportation of perishable products in less than 60 hours at a price that is competitive with single drivers. Typical single-driver perishable deliveries, they say, take about five and a half days. U.S. Xpress says it can provide transconti-



CRST says it can decrease capacity based on peak seasons or individual customer needs, through the cross utilization of CRST Expedited's fleet of approximately 2,000 team tractors.

ental delivery in three days, or roughly 60-70 hours depending on the origin and destination.

Not only do team drivers allow the load to get there faster, but they also mean added security, because at least one driver is always with the tractor.

CRST's service will operate as a division of CRST Expedited. Initial service already has begun.

TCTS will cater to cold chain retailers and producers looking for high-quality service to deliver products such as fruits and vegetables,

dairy, meats, fish and shellfish, confections, ice cream, pharmaceuticals, wine, beer and health and beauty aids.

U.S. Xpress' recent expansion of similar services brings the total of U.S. Xpress reefer trucks in service to 100. The company

expects to expand the fleet to 250 by the end of 2012.

U.S. Xpress entered the reefer market approximately six months ago, based on customer requests and market demand for expedited coast-to-coast service.

The primary lanes of service are from California to the Northeast, Mid-Atlantic and Southeast and back to California. U.S. Xpress also is expanding volumes in a lane of service from California to the upper Midwest.

Used truck registrations hit record levels

Used commercial vehicle registrations (Class 3-8) in the U.S. during the first three quarters of 2011 reached record levels at 649,900 units, surpassing the previous record for the first nine months of a calendar year by 23.9%, according to industry data analysts at Polk.

This level of activity represents more than 66% of the commercial vehicle transactions during the nine-month period. Together with 333,200 new registrations of Class 3 to 8 vehicles over the same time period, total commercial vehicle transactions during the nine-month period reached nearly 1 million vehicles.

"This strong demand for used commercial vehicles is a positive sign that businesses feel comfortable enough with their future prospects to update their older equipment," said Gary Meteer, account director for commercial vehicle solutions with Polk.

The shortage of good clean Class 8 vehicles in the market has been confirmed by Polk. Class 8 used vehicle transactions during the first nine months of this year were level with the transactions reported during the first nine months of 2010. However, Class 8 used-vehicle transactions have accounted for just 38.8% of total used transactions through September this year, versus 47.6% during the same timeframe in 2010. New commercial registrations of Class 8 vehicles represented 35.2% of total new commercial registrations through September.

Polk's analysis is based on a stringent definition of a used transaction. Both the business name and the address of the business on the vehicle registration must have changed from the previous owner.

In addition to the Class 8 analysis, Polk found used registrations for Class 3 vehicles were up 58% in 2011 over 2010 transaction volumes through September, and accounted

for 28.4% of all used transactions compared to 22.3% during the same period last year. Used Class 3 vehicles represented 66.3% of total Class 3

vehicle transactions during the nine-month period of 2011 versus 57.4% during the same period in 2010.



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Capstone Turbine, Paccar working on microturbine hybrids

Capstone Turbine Corp. is working with Kenworth and Peterbilt to demonstrate Class 7 and Class 8 microturbine range-extended series hybrid trucks.

Capstone said it is working with both Kenworth and Peterbilt to demonstrate the effectiveness and efficiency of Capstone's CARB-certified C65 microturbines as an on-board power source for extending the range of series hybrid electric trucks. The Capstone MicroTurbine serves as an onboard battery charger, enhancing range, providing added power for air conditioning and consistent acceleration, Capstone says.

The need for daytime battery charging or swapping is eliminated. At night, hybrid-electric vehicles can plug into the local grid, recharging when electric rates are at their lowest. Maintenance costs are reduced because the microturbine is air-cooled and uses no oil.

Both vehicles are concept trucks intended to quantify the performance and economic benefits of a microturbine-based series hybrid solution. The Kenworth truck is operational and is currently running on the company's test track in Washington state. The Peterbilt truck is being assembled.

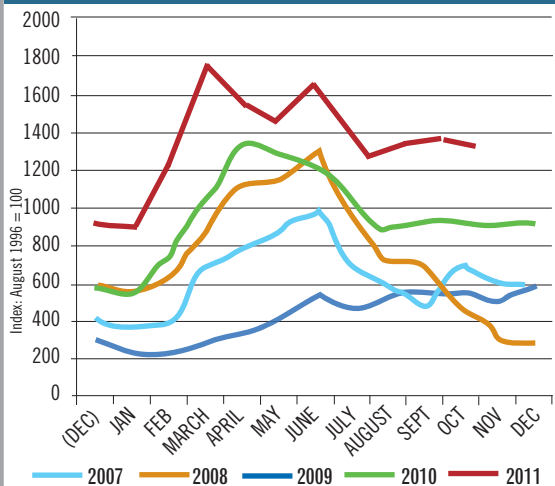
Capstone claims to be a leading producer of low-emission, commercially viable microturbine products, and has shipped more than 6,000 systems to customers worldwide.

FLEET WATCH

- UPS launched UPS Freight Pickup Notifications for LTL, which lets customers know when a pickup is scheduled, when the UPS Freight driver is en-route to the pickup location and when the pickup is made.
- Comtrak Logistics, a subsidiary of Hub Group, has acquired certain assets of Challenge Transportation, an intermodal drayage carrier in Newark, N.J.
- Hornady Transportation, Monroeville, Ala., is expanding its current operations, including the purchase of 40 new International Prostar tractors equipped with fuel-saving auxiliary power units and new lightweight 53-foot aluminum flatbed trailers.
- Holland announced an improved Service Alert process to inform customers about situations that may impact their supply chain, such as weather or natural disasters.

Spot Freight Index

(Information provided by TransCore's DAT services)



Spot Freight: TransCore's North American Freight Index climbed 39% compared to October 2010. This was the highest same-month volume since the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina that drove spot market demand to record levels in 2005. Compared to September, spot market freight volume slipped 3.7%, reflecting normal seasonality.

I-Shift turns 10

Volvo's I-Shift may be a relative newcomer to the North American market, but in Europe the automated mechanical transmission is celebrating its 10th anniversary.

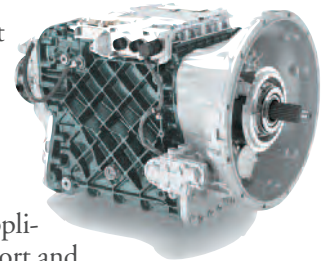
Today about 80% of Volvo's FH cab-over-engine trucks and tractors are equipped with I-Shift.

The current third-generation I-Shift was launched in 2009. It featured a number of hardware improvements, together with new software that made the transmission suitable for additional and more demanding assignments. I-Shift now has applications for most types of transport and engines with high torque.

The basic transmission has been further refined and a new front splitter gear has been added, together with a new clutch system. The rear range gearbox also has been redesigned and shortened, making the entire transmission lighter and more compact. I-Shift therefore now functions with all axle configurations with the exception of all-wheel drive.

Countries selling the most trucks with I-Shift in 2010 were Brazil, Germany, France, the UK and Sweden.

— Sven-Erik Lindstrand, European Editor



INTERMODAL WATCH



- Led by strong demand for agricultural products in Asia, U.S. containerized exports expanded 6.7% in the third quarter, putting export volume from the United States up 8.3% through the first nine months of 2011.

- Domestic container volume posted its strongest growth of the year in the third quarter, with shipments posting a 9% year-over-year gain during the quarter. That was slightly above the 8.8% and 8.6% upticks recorded in the first and second quarters of 2011. It was the seventh consecutive quarter of year-over-year gains.

Ceridian-UCLA Pulse of Commerce Index

Ceridian Index (seasonally- and workday-adjusted) 2002=100



The Ceridian-UCLA Pulse of Commerce Index rose 1.1% in October after three consecutive months of negative numbers. On a year-over-year basis, the PCI was up 1.3% in October. This index represents real-time diesel fuel consumption data tracked by Ceridian.

OCTOBER 2011

U.S. RETAIL TRUCK SALES REPORT

MANUFACTURER	CLASS 8 33,001 LBS. & OVER			CLASS 7 26,001-33,000 LBS.			CLASS 6 19,501-26,000 LBS.		
	OCTOBER SALES	YTD SALES	YTD SHARE	OCTOBER SALES	YTD SALES	YTD SHARE	OCTOBER SALES	YTD SALES	YTD SHARE
Chevrolet						0.00%			0.00%
Ford				187	2,986	8.68%	129	4,722	13.38%
Freightliner	5,692	41,943	31.44%	1,166	12,392	36.03%	1,284	11,596	32.86%
GMC					1	0.00%		7	0.02%
Hino				93	861	2.50%	275	3,250	9.21%
International	4,259	28,918	21.68%	1,530	13,588	39.51%	1,624	14,560	41.26%
Isuzu					7	0.02%			0.00%
Kenworth	1,990	17,148	12.85%	240	1,967	5.72%	49	658	1.86%
Mack	1,097	9,938	7.45%						
Mitsubishi Fuso				2	17	0.05%	4	129	0.37%
Nissan UD Trucks				27	201	0.58%	28	248	0.70%
Peterbilt	2,354	18,654	13.98%	300	2,372	6.90%	15	115	0.33%
Sterling		1	0.00%		3	0.01%			0.00%
Volvo	1,849	15,140	11.35%						
Western Star	181	1,641	1.23%						
Other	2	16	0.01%						
Totals	17,424	133,399	100.00%	3,545	34,395	100.00%	3,408	35,285	100.00%

Compiled by Heavy Duty Trucking Magazine. Source: Ward's Communications

CORRECTION: In our September issue, the year-to-date total for International trucks was incorrect. A corrected version of the July sales chart is available at www.truckinginfo.com/hdt/trucksalesjuly2011.pdf. We apologize for the error.