

Don't forget the mistake.  
Don't let them have your  
Johnny Cash

# **Safety Lane** SPRING 2020

Transportation **S**afety and **C**ompliance **S**olutions

## **Mike's Take Away**

**This article is all about what I have learned in my 48 years in the trucking industry and how I got to where I am today.**

**On March 13, 1972 I was hired as a driver at Al's Cartage Ltd in Kitchener. I cannot recall if I had a resume or not and if I did it would have been very brief as I was just out of school and worked about 6 months in 2 factory jobs that I hated. I had no experience driving as a commercial driver.**

**I loved working at Al's and for many years I felt that this was going to be the only job that I would ever have and retire there. I did manage to climb to #5 on the company seniority list.**

**In 1989 I moved into a role in Safety & Compliance and in 1994 I became the driver trainer and safety manager. I remained in that position until August of 2005. At that point I knew it was time to move on. I set my goal to look for a larger international trucking company that had a safety program and required a person to maintain that program. My second option was to go to a fleet that needed a person to implement a safety program for them and to maintain it as they grew.**

**I made the decision to go big. I went to MacKinnon Transport in Guelph. After 33 & a half years at the same company that was a huge culture shock to me. My answer to this not so good decision that I made was "bigger is not always better". After a few months at MacKinnon I moved onto the smaller fleet which was McBurney Transport. I went into McBurney made my goal and a plan of how it was going to come together. That goal was achieved in 14 months and again it was time to move on. These last two jobs in the trucking industry only lasted for a short time but in the same token the experience was very valuable to my business future.**

**At that time, I did some investigation and research. After 35 years working as a fleet employee, I took my experience and transportation knowledge and Transportation Safety & Compliance Solutions was born in June of 2008.**

***TS&CS is your  
formula for safety  
519+748+4420***

Don't forget the  
mistake.  
But don't dwell  
on them.  
Don't let them  
have your energy,  
time or space.  
Johnny Cash

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*Check out our website  
[www.transportationsafetycs.ca](http://www.transportationsafetycs.ca)  
for past issues on the  
Safety Lane as well as  
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articles.*

If you have an industry article to  
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[mike@transportationsafetycs.ca](mailto:mike@transportationsafetycs.ca)

**I got into a program for small business opportunities and in a few months, I was up and running.**

**Starting a new business is a struggle, so to keep the bill collectors off my back I took on a part time driving job.**

**I was out most days knocking on doors and in the night, hours pounding the pavement in an 18-wheeler. For me this was very positive as it took me back to my roots and reacquainted me with a better understanding of the challenges that a driver is faced with every day.**

**My years operating TS&CS have been very rewarding as I have met some very interesting people. From the different fleets that I have worked with I have learned some very interesting best practises and shared with my customers some ideas that have worked for my customers. In some cases, those ideas required some tweaking to suit the operation needs.**

**In my years in the truck transportation industry I had the networking opportunity to be part of some industry organizations and committee's. I was the chairperson of the Fleet Safety Council Central Chapter for 3 terms.**

**I was on the Ontario Trucking Associations Safety Council for a number of years and one year as the Chairperson representing Ontario trucking fleets.**

**The Central Ontario Truck Driving Championship was a long-term project that I enjoyed for 23 years. In my years in the transportation industry I was on the planning committee for 30 competitions as well as volunteered as a judge. Currently I am on the Special Olympic Brant County Truck Convoy planning committee going into the 6<sup>th</sup> year. In 2016 I received the Fleet Safety Council Safety Professional of the year award.**

**In all my 48 years I have seen some big changes in the trucking industry including:**

- **Better trucks**
- **More regulations**
- **Load Securement regulations**
- **Manual to Automatic Transmissions**
- **More fleet safety**
- **Driver Entry Level Training Program**

- **Driver shortage**
- **Changes (improvements) to the driver's vehicle inspection.**
- **Changes to the Hours of Service Regulations (Canadian & US)**
- **Speed Limiters**
- **Wheel off incidents and fatalities**
- **Truck safety stats improve and decline**
- **Electronic Logging Devices**
- **Annual Vehicle Safety Inspections**
- **Air Brake (Z) Endorsement**
  
- **Going from a chauffer's drivers license to the Class A in Ontario for the tractor trailer combination.**
  
- **Long Combination vehicles (LCV)**
- **Speed Limiters in Trucks**
- **Better designed trucks for driver comfort.**
- **Changes in customs and border procedures**
- **Satellite communications, GPS and other technology.**

**When I was a young driver I would laugh when a long-time truck spoke about going from Kitchener to Montreal on Highway 2. I thought the 401 was always there. They would talk about a bench seat in the cab and the 2x60MPH climate control system.**

**I often think to myself if I was 18 years old again in the year 2020 would I get into the trucking industry as my career? Maybe I did not really learn anything in my 48 years in this industry but YES, I would be a truck driver all over again. Now in saying that there are a few things that I would do a little differently in my life/career.**

**Now when asked what my plans are for this next stage of my life. To be honest my wife has not told me yet. We do plan to spend more time with our 2 sons their spouses and our 6 young grand kids. We are hopping to continue to see more of the world. A few day trips are always good to do. A full tank of gas and 2 lawn chairs in the trunk, stop whenever and just watch everyone else go to work.**

**Thank You everyone for your support over the years!**

**Mike Kroetsch**

**Retired March 24, 2020**



Transportation Safety & Compliance Solutions  
Hours of Operation  
Semi-Retired  
Off Duty Monday's and Friday Off Duty Cold & Snowy Days  
On Duty  
Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday 11a.m. to 2 p.m.  
By Appointment Only