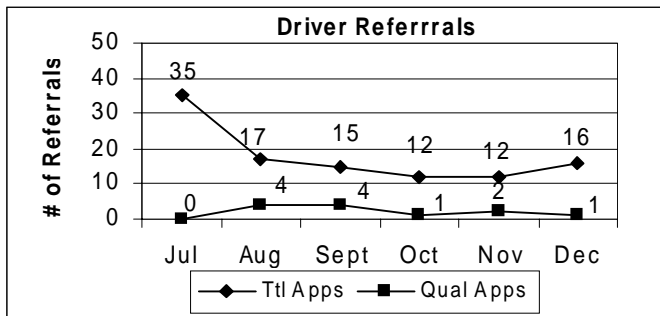
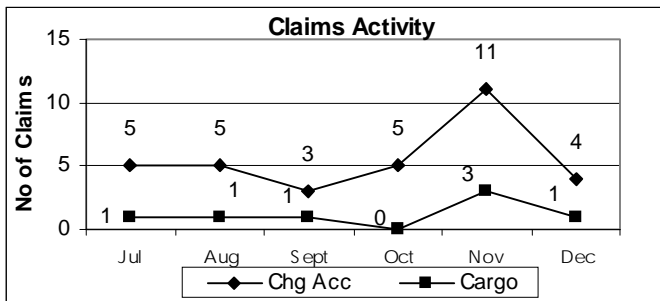
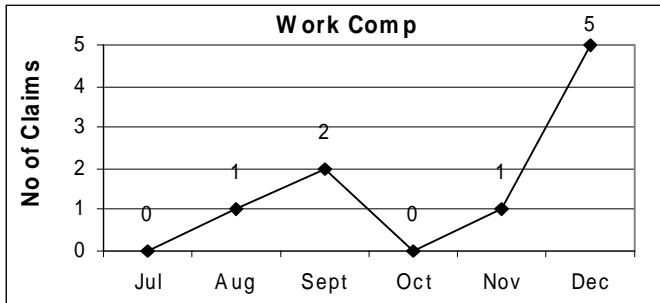




TANDEM EXPRESS

Your Monthly Update on Matters that Matter

Monthly Stats



Driver Referral Payout for DECEMBER was \$3,480!
The year-to-date total is \$30,175!

Operations (for December)

# Active Drvrs (All)	247	Fuel MPG (Co.)	6.25
No. Loads		Fuel CPG (Co.)	\$1.45
Miles(x1000-Rand)		Fuel CPM (Co.)	\$0.23

Tenure Recognition

The following loyal and dedicated employees have reached another year of service in **January 2004**.

	NAME	YOS	POSITION
1	Barry Kiernan	25	Director of Traffic
2	Robert Aube	16	Professional Driver
3	Daniel Bottomley	9	Professional Driver
4	Orrie Kossen	7	Professional Driver
5	Teresa Webster	7	Driver Payroll
6	Harold Stansbarger	4	Professional Driver
7	John Chicola, Jr.	2	Professional Driver
8	Donald Rosser	2	Professional Driver
9	John Dohse	2	Professional Driver
10	James Tigner	2	Professional Driver
11	Eddie Higgins	2	Professional Driver
12	Caryn Brown	2	Admin. Drvr. Rsrcs.
13	Meghan Bebow	2	Office Assistant
14	William Anglin	1	Professional Driver
15	Raymond Godin	1	Professional Driver
16	James Butcher	1	Professional Driver
17	Harmon Castro	1	Professional Driver
18	Lucinda Schroeder	1	Admin. Recruiting

A special note of thanks goes to our dear Finbarr Kiernan. Twenty-five years of dedicated service to Tandem and he is still standing! Thank you Barry for making a home with Tandem.

Congratulations and thank you all for your support!

Safety Update

Winter weather is here and so are the chances of accidents and personal injuries. **December was disastrous in the number of injuries in a single month.** Five of our drivers incurred loss time injuries from leg, elbow, back and wrists. All of these happened before the holiday season, so it was especially hard on those families. Paying better attention and working "smart" could have saved much pain and economic loss. Remember, "Safety has a reward for everyone". Reward yourself and your family, by working smart!! don't get hurt.

The new hours of service regs are now upon us. So far, we have not experienced many changes or problems, but if you have questions, be sure to call Jerry, Jayne or Doug.

Securement, however, has become a concern and several issues are still in question. Tandem will continue working for a definitive answer from the DOT. **Until then, keep your straps on the INSIDE of the rub rail. Hook your straps to the TOP of the rub rail, with the strap on the inside and we shouldn't have any problems.** If an inspector challenges you, politely ask the inspector how he/she would like you to change it. If you receive a citation or warning, send it to Jerry ASAP! Be sure you have the correct number of straps or chains on each load you haul.

Tandem had 4 chargeable property damage accidents in December. Backing and right turns hit the top of the list. **Watch your mirrors throughout the turn to assure proper distance. When backing, use the G.O.A.L. (GET OUT AND LOOK) system!**

Insurance – A Volcano of Eruptions

Several months ago, we advised everyone that over a nine-month period our insurance costs increased 42%. Unfortunately, this steep increase has not abated and it is time for some changes.

Dennis will be providing more detail in our newsletter Tandem – Today and Tomorrow. This will be issued in a few weeks. **However, in summary, Tandem bears a very large portion of each employee's medical expense.** This is often overlooked if you only have to pay \$10 for a Doctor visit or only a fraction of a large hospitalization bill. In reality, Tandem currently pays about 80% of the average medical bill. **This equates to nearly \$2,000 more PER employee from last year and over \$3,000 more from 2001.** As a percentage of revenue, Tandem's contribution increased from an already high of 2.1% in 2001 to nearly 4% in 2003.

WEYCO, our new agent of record, is working with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan to determine where our major expenses are generated from (e.g., hospitalization, doctor visits, prescription) and what recommendations they have. We hope to have the results completed and studied by February end. Based on these findings we will notify every one of the necessary adjustments.

Driver Reps in Action – Meeting Highlights

Our last January Driver Rep meeting had a strong turnout of 16 Reps even though it was the dead of winter and just after the Holidays. Here are a few items of note.

A couple of Driver Reps who have pulled the 10 newest trailers have indicated a concern with the side lighting. These trailers have 3 lights on each side as opposed to our older trailers with 5 on each side. **Tom Buckalew has one of the new trailers and commented that he felt the lighting was poor on the passenger side making it more difficult to maneuver at night.** Al Beekman discussed the matter with East Manufacturing and they indicated their new plans will be to have a minimum of 4 lights, and possibly 5 lights, spec'd on the

new equipment. Thank you Tom for your comments. It looks like East "saw the light".

Jeff Parks suggested that Tandem provide tarp repair material for the drivers who can fix minor tears on the road. This has been a sensitive subject, as we do not want tarps with a lot of "patchwork". Rather, the defective units need to be brought into Michigan City and repaired properly. However, there are occasions when a minor repair can make a driver feel more secure about his or her load. **Consequently, Tandem has issued special tarp repair material to select Driver Reps for study.** If we determine the material is useful and we are able to repair the tarps without much difficulty, we will consider developing a program to issue this material to the fleet.

Jeff Parks also commented that "detention" continues to be a concern among drivers especially in light of the new HOS regulations. However, most mileage drivers are not providing us with accurate detention information. Because we include detention pay in the mileage formula, many drivers feel it unnecessary to notify us when they are detained. Jeff Gross, our VP Marketing and Logistics, said we are working with customers to address detention and increase our charges. But we need to determine the extent of the problem before action can be taken. **Therefore, Sales and Dispatch will be working on ways to better determine how much time we are losing to detention and what accommodations or increased compensation we can obtain from customers.**

Also, keep in mind that a complete set of notes is available to anyone interested. You may request them from Caryn in MC (Ext. 116).

Lastly, **new ballots for the 2004 election will be issued shortly.** So be thinking of drivers you want to represent you for the next 2 years.

Maintenance Update

We need to remind everyone to keep using Pilot. We saw a slight increase from last month – up 2% to 75%. **But we are still 5% below our goal of 80% usage.** We are pushing Pilot for more credits, but we need more usage to make this happen.

When you bring your unit in for service, please remember to keep your tarps off the battery box. The shop is working to improve unit performance with certain checks at each service. One of these is cleaning and charging the batteries. However, when drivers leave their tarps on top of the batteries, this service is delayed, and sometimes unable to be performed.

Thought for the Month

*A friend is someone who allows you distance
but is never far away.*

Noah Benshea, Writer/Speaker