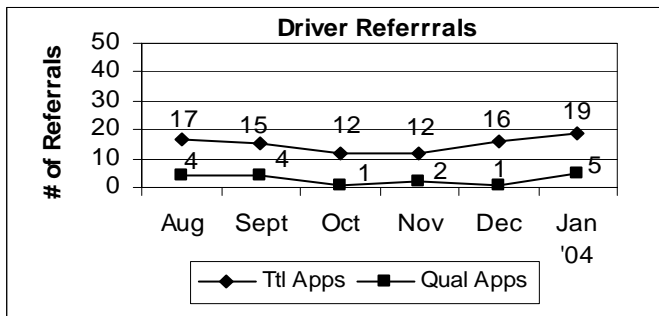
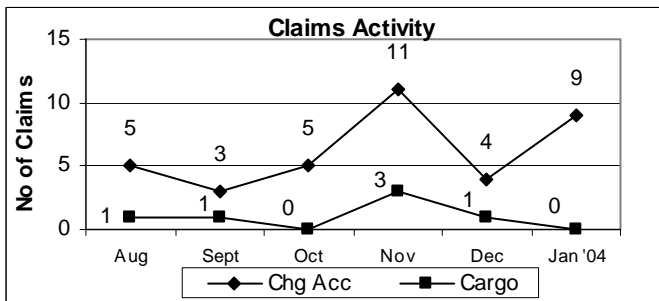
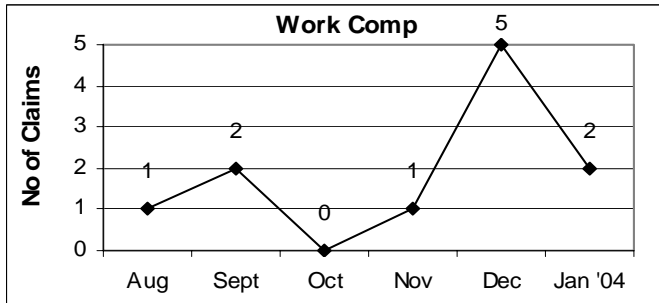




# TANDEM EXPRESS

Your Monthly Update on Matters that Matter

## Monthly Stats



**Driver Referral Payout for JANUARY was \$2,535!**  
The year-to-date total is \$2,535!

| <b>Operations (for January)</b> |       |                |        |
|---------------------------------|-------|----------------|--------|
| # Active Drvrs (All)            | 248   | Fuel MPG (Co.) | 5.96   |
| No. Loads                       | 4,738 | Fuel CPG (Co.) | \$1.52 |
| Miles(x1000-Rand)               | 2,101 | Fuel CPM (Co.) | \$0.26 |

## Tenure Recognition

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

|    | NAME                | YOS | POSITION              |
|----|---------------------|-----|-----------------------|
| 1  | Ivy Schmidt         | 15  | Fleet Coordinator     |
| 2  | Terry Camp          | 13  | Professional Driver   |
| 3  | James Miller        | 12  | Professional Driver   |
| 4  | Ronald Boyle        | 11  | Professional Driver   |
| 5  | Russell Babcock     | 9   | Professional Driver   |
| 6  | Doug Greenwood      | 8   | Mgr., Driver Training |
| 7  | William Leemon      | 7   | Professional Driver   |
| 8  | Robert Hickey       | 7   | Professional Driver   |
| 9  | Patrick Magee       | 5   | Professional Driver   |
| 10 | Louis Vargo         | 4   | Professional Driver   |
| 11 | Carl Martin, Sr.    | 2   | Professional Driver   |
| 12 | Jeffery Parks       | 2   | Professional Driver   |
| 13 | William Pigg        | 1   | Professional Driver   |
| 14 | Douglas Wright      | 1   | Professional Driver   |
| 15 | Lawrence Buckner    | 1   | Professional Driver   |
| 16 | Christopher Frazier | 1   | Professional Driver   |
| 17 | Anthony Barcelona   | 1   | Professional Driver   |
| 18 | Jessica Bebow       | 1   | Part-Time Assistant   |
| 19 | Marilyn Laurenz     | 1   | Admin. Billing/Rating |
| 20 | Krystal Galamback   | 1   | Part-Time Assistant   |

A special note of thanks goes to Ivy Schmidt for 15 years of dedicated service! This is a milestone year and Ivy is our second most senior member of the MC dispatch team. Thank you, Ivy, for your continued support of Tandem.

**Congratulations and thank you all for your support!**

## Safety Update

We made it through February with (9) "preventable" minor accidents, no major accidents or cargo claims, and (2) WC claims.

For the most part, the transition to the new HOS has gone well. There are however, some drivers who are in violation of the HOS rules. These drivers will be brought to Michigan City for re-training. Tandem was pro-active in the log training, but a few drivers may not have made the sessions or forgot what we instructed. All too many times, drivers have listened to the "truck stop" lawyers or the CB radio for their information. Both of those sources

are wrong. If you don't understand the new rules (and you must know them as well or better than the inspectors) call Jerry Hutchin or stop by the terminal and get assistance.

As for securement regs, the DOT does not have an interpretation for all the rules yet. Several states have said one thing and others have said something different. Jerry has written letters to IN, IL, KY, PA and Washington DC, asking for interpretations. We have been told not to expect anything for 18 months. Until then we must do whatever it takes to get through inspections. **If questioned, do whatever the inspector says to comply, and call Jerry right away.** Please send the inspection in the mail the next day, so Tandem can respond to the state with a letter.

**Tandem's preferred way of securing with straps is to drop the strap down on the INSIDE of the rub rail, then put the buckle on the top of the rail. The second best way is to drop the strap down, again on the INSIDE, then hooking the buckle at the bottom of the rail. These two systems have been the most successful in going through inspections. Also, please be certain that you have enough straps on the load to prevent being pulled over.** Inspectors are instructed to count the straps on the loads. Consequently, loads with fewer straps showing are the ones pulled over. If you have questions on HOS or securement, talk to Jerry or Doug. Do not rely on the CB or the truck stop lawyers for your information.

### Driver Reps in Action

Our last Rep meeting (February 11) had 19 Reps present - another very good turnout. A special thanks to all the Reps for keeping this program alive and well.

An update on the Driver Hardship Fund shows that as of January 31<sup>st</sup> there is a balance of \$3,551. Presently, payroll contributions are at an all time high of \$271 per week with 76 contributors (64 drivers and 12 staff/mechanics). We are assisting one (1) driver, but do not have any pending requests. To-date, the DHF has assisted 10 drivers and distributed a total support of just under \$10,000! Thank you to everyone for their contribution to this worthwhile cause. If you would like participate with a payroll deduction, please contact Teresa in St. Louis and she will forward you a form.

The Driver Reps are also working on a fundraiser and will be raffling off a beautiful handmade decorative table crafted by Bill McKellar and his wife. It is on display at MC in the Personnel office. It will be raffled off at the Tandem picnic that will be held sometime in June (date to be determined). Tickets will be available soon.

There appears to be numerous opinions on the best type and length of wiper blades. Some drivers recommend "winter blades" with wiper huggies. Others have found these to be problematic with ice build ups. Al and Karl are looking into an alternative wiper blade recommended by Jeff Van Bonn.

We also discussed the issue of storage space. Some drivers have opted to purchase an extra storage box for their trailer. Some drivers feel an extra storage box should be standard. The Maintenance Department will be looking into the storage space issue to determine how drivers should properly store their accessorial equipment. It is difficult to please everyone, but we can advise what the standard is.

The deadline for the new Driver Rep ballots has been extended to March 1<sup>st</sup>. Therefore, tabulations will not be completed for another week. We hope to have the new Reps finalized and inaugurated by the April meeting.

For full details of the Rep meetings, please contact Caryn Brown in MC (Ext. 116) for a copy of the minutes.

### Monitoring Loading/Unloading Arrival and Departure Times

With the new HOS regulations, Tandem will be monitoring the time it takes to load and unload shipments. **Dispatch will be asking drivers for their shipper arrival and departure times AND consignee arrival and departure times on every load. This information will be entered into the computer for analysis.** Since we only have two fields for loading times, we have to define what "arrival" time is and what "departure" time is so that everyone is entering consistent data. **Arrival time** will be when you reach the customer and are ready to load or unload (after they open or on/after your appointment time). We are NOT including tarping time. **Departure time** will be when you are finished loading and ready to tarp at the shipper and when you are empty at the consignee. Our goal is to identify the length of loading time at all our shippers and consignees to determine which, if any, are excessive.

### Health Insurance Update

**We are still reviewing the information from WEYCO but are targeting an updated health benefits program effective June 1<sup>st</sup>.** WEYCO is our new agent of record and is providing consulting services. As stated before, we are not changing our insurance carrier and will continue to use Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan. Employees will experience little, if any, change in paperwork.

We hope to have detailed information by April so that employees can prepare for the changes. We are considering several options such as a moderate increase in weekly contributions along with possible changes to co-pay, deductible and stop-loss. We also hope to provide a greater choice of packages to help keep costs in line with your financial and coverage needs.

### Thought for the Month

*When you forgive, you gain peace. When you don't forgive, you gain high blood pressure.*

Tschanna Harris