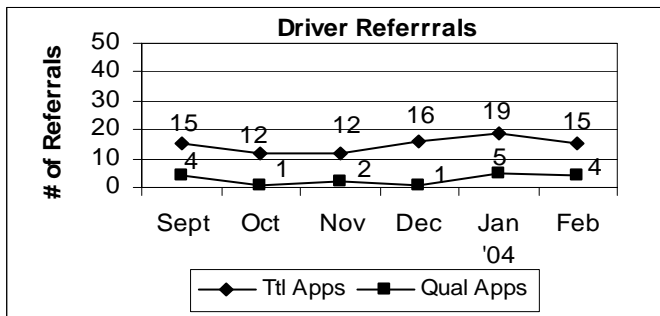
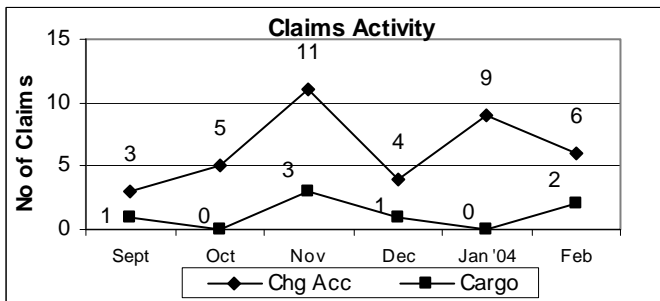
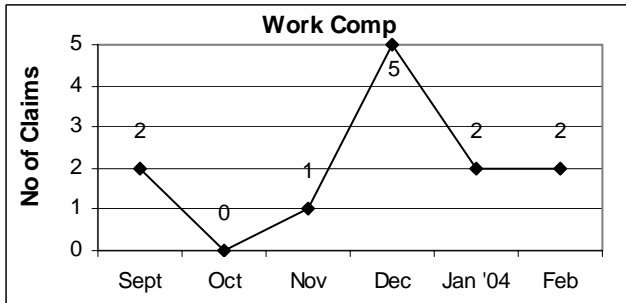




# TANDEM EXPRESS

Your Monthly Update on Matters that Matter

## Monthly Stats



**Driver Referral Payout for FEBRUARY was \$1,530!**  
The year-to-date total is \$4,565!

Operations (for February)			
# Active Drvrs (All)	242	Fuel MPG (Co.)	6.20
No. Loads	4,761	Fuel CPG (Co.)	\$1.54
Miles(x1000-Rand)	2,047	Fuel CPM (Co.)	\$.25

## Tenure Recognition

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

	NAME	YOS	POSITION
1	Walter Bay	33	President, CEO
2	Craig Smith	21	Professional Driver
3	Bueford Lee	16	Professional Driver
4	Roger Davis	16	Professional Driver
5	Jerry Donald	14	Professional Driver
6	Terry Killingbeck	12	VP, Mgmt Info Sys
7	Roberta Heuer	9	Sprvsr, Dvr Rcrtn
8	Teresa Burnham	7	Sprvsr, Driver Payroll
9	David Byard	5	Professional Driver
10	Thomas Buckalew	5	Professional Driver
11	Daniel Culbertson	5	Professional Driver
12	Albert Goyette II	5	Professional Driver
13	Jayne Baker	5	Fleet Cmplnc Coord
14	Randy Wilhite	4	Professional Driver
15	Carl Hunt	4	Professional Driver
16	Dale Bowen	4	Professional Driver
17	Daniel McCaulley	4	Professional Driver
18	Kevin Deyoe	4	Professional Driver
19	Gerald Montry	4	Professional Driver
20	Randolph Smith	3	Professional Driver
21	James Cooper	2	Professional Driver
22	Edward Waldron, Sr.	2	Professional Driver
23	Bill Wise	2	Professional Driver
24	James Sarley	2	Professional Driver
25	Robert Wilson	2	Professional Driver
26	David Sowder	2	Professional Driver
27	Toby Brooks	2	Reg. Traffic Coord.
28	Ronnie Ward	2	Bldg & Grnds Maint.
29	Jeffrey Heilig	1	Professional Driver
30	Timothy Beard	1	Professional Driver
31	Douglas Christensen	1	Professional Driver
32	Frederick White	1	Professional Driver

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

## Safety Update

February saw 2 work comp claims, 6 chargeable accidents and 2 cargo claims. We need to target "0" claims if we are to reduce the continually increasing cost

of insurance. Our experience ratio improved over the last two years, but since November of last year has been very poor. Keep your eyes open for opportunities and let Jerry know any suggestions to reduce injuries and claims.

#### **The transition to the new HOS continues to go well.**

There are some drivers who are still in violation of the HOS rules. However, we continue to retrain and should have most of the issues resolved shortly.

**As for securement regs, this too continues to be under review. 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.

**We continue to advise drivers that 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.**

#### **Driver Reps in Action**

Our March 10<sup>th</sup> Rep meeting had 15 Reps present.

An update on the **Driver Hardship Fund** shows that as of January 31<sup>st</sup> there is a balance of \$4,480. Presently, payroll contributions are at \$263 per week with 74 contributors. There are currently no 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 know of someone that would be eligible for support, please contact the MC office or any of the Reps.**

**All the ballots are in for the newly elected Driver Reps for the 2004 – 2005 term.** Tabulations are completed and the new list of Reps will be issued shortly. We plan to have 35 Reps in the program (up from the original 25).

Several issues discussed at the meeting were increasing driver pay based on productivity, continuing the Train-the-Trainer program, safety awareness, delivery of new trucks, testing of new tire pressure gauges, feasibility of on-the-road tarp repair material, and review of on-board mobile communication systems.

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

#### **Review of Onboard Mobile Communications**

Tandem is **CONSIDERING** the feasibility of onboard mobile communications. Many companies have or are moving in this direction. Due to cost and coverage

limitations, Tandem has not found any system to be effective. However, with the developments in mobile communications and certain key accounts asking for this service, we are re-evaluating the benefits of onboard mobile communications.

Tandem is reviewing three major vendors - Aether (terrestrial/satellite), Qualcomm (satellite only), and Global-2-Way (FM band). We held a meeting with the sales rep from Aether earlier this month and will follow up with presentations from Qualcomm and Global-2-Way before we proceed. **We have NOT decided to install onboard systems, but are seriously looking at its benefits.**

**There are basically four reasons that we are looking into this again, but our overall goal is improved performance.** First, the cost has come down significantly both on the hardware side and more importantly on the monthly recurring costs. Second, it has been difficult to get coverage in MI – our most active state. That is no longer the case. Third, we have not always been ready to utilize the new technology. However, our current software (McLeod Systems' Loadmaster transportation software) has been designed to work with all of the three companies we are reviewing. Also, many of the current built-in features were previously additional modules and simply added to the cost and were not necessarily fully functional. Being able to better monitor dwell time and more effective communication with the driver have always been features of the system. However, now we can get trip reports and diagnostic downloads as part of the base package. This will eliminate the need for manually recorded trip reports. The diagnostic download will also allow for troubleshooting on the road and reduce the time it takes to solve breakdowns. Lastly, some customers are strongly requesting that we develop a plan to implement mobile communications and become more automated in our dispatch and billing process.

#### **New Columbia's are Here (and Sorry for the Delays)**

Tandem will be receiving a total of 40 new Freightliner Columbia's. We have already received 18 and will be preparing for another 22. This has caused additional work for the maintenance department and we apologize for any delay in services. The new trucks and trades will soon be completed causing less delays in normal services. Thank you all for your patience.

#### **Thought for the Month**

Patience is never more important than when you are at the edge of losing it.

*(O.A. Batista, Scientist and Writer)*