

ATA Conferences

Decades of Dedication to Trucking's Business Side

It's a natural result. For 75 years, ATA has been the voice of the trucking industry, and for 75 years the trucking industry has touched every aspect of our economic life ... so, ATA has naturally represented not only the industry as a whole but also the business and operational needs of distinct industry segments. This work has been carried on by the ATA Conferences, groups of member motor carriers and suppliers in a specific line of business. From 1935 till federal deregulation in 1980, conference activities were largely driven by developments at the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC). Today, equipment used and markets served can still call for specialized representation. Here are snapshots of the three current ATA Conferences:

Intermodal Motor Carrier Conference (IMCC). Long before truck driver Malcom McLean developed the first safe, reliable, and cost-effective approach to transporting containerized cargo that transformed the century's old shipping industry and led to today's intermodal drayage industry, ATA recognized the fundamental importance of dray transport in its 1933 certificate of incorporation. Specifically, the ATA mission was defined as "... education and representation in the industry of transporting property by means of motor vehicles, teams and drays ... "

Over the years, ATA intermodal members have been organized in councils, conferences and policy committees. Recognizing the massive growth in global trade and intermodalism, ATA in 2004 formally re-established today's Intermodal Motor Carriers Conference (IMCC) as an affiliated conference. IMCC's mission is to provide a unifying and effective voice for the intermodal motor carrier sector before both government and private entities on key issues, including roadability, economic and operational fairness and infrastructure efficiencies. Unique to IMCC, those governmental entities include the Federal Maritime

Commission and various port authorities, while IMCC deals daily with private entities such as the railroads and multi-modal associations. Today, IMCC is on the cutting edge of trucking industry efforts to prevent government economic reregulation, as the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach seek to dictate motor carrier business decisions in the name of clean air.

Automobile Carriers Conference (ACC). Taking into account predecessor organizations, the ACC is actually the oldest conference in ATA. Beginning as the National Contract Haulers in 1931, the auto transporters, led by Walter Carey, came out of the Depression as the National Automobile Transporters Association in 1933 in response to the National Recovery Act. NATA quickly tackled issues later familiar to all of trucking: nonuniform truck size and weight laws, labor negotiations, tariff publication, truck safety and competition with the railroads. When World War II shut down car production, NATA converted equipment to moving defense materials and obtained waivers for the purchase of fuel to move government vehicles. After the war, the railroads continued



to block advances in truck productivity in key “barrier” states, so NATA members circumvented the blockade by using barges to move new cars! The 1940s saw NATA begin truck driving championships — then dubbed “rodeos.” The emergence of railroad piggyback service in the 1950s spurred a new autotransporter effort to increase combination lengths at the state and federal levels, a process that lasted through the 1990s and continues today in fully implementing the autotransporter provisions of the 2005 SAFETA-LU highway bill.



The year 2005 also marked the time when NATA, long affiliated with ATA, formally became the ACC, an ATA Conference. But the autotransporter industry already had provided ATA three chairmen (Walter Carey, Guy Rutland, Jr. and Guy Rutland III); had groomed key ATA staff (Bill Bresnahan and Bennett Whitlock); and

had led or partnered with ATA on industry issues that still resonate today.

Agricultural & Food Transporters Conference (AFTC).

How does a conference grow from 12 founding California members in 1995 to nearly 500 commercial entities nationwide by 2008? Follow the lead of the AFTC: identify a need

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and independent contractors
congratulate the American
Trucking Association on its 75
years of service to the
transportation industry.**





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personnel? We need them, sure, but what's so critical that we require a Council for them?

Well, turn the clock back to 1935, when the Interstate



Commerce Commission began economic regulation of the trucking industry. Among the functions the ICC performed was reviewing motor carrier rate

cases. Under economic regulation, shippers were required to pay ICC-established minimum rates. So, changes in those rates — rate cases — became major battlegrounds between carriers and shippers. But in its first 10 years, the ICC used an system of accounts which did not readily fit the trucking industry and failed to produce information useful to the agency or to carrier management. In 1947, under the direction of O.L. Doud of Silver Fleet Motor Express, Louisville, the ATA National Accounting Committee — the forerunner of NAFC — rebuilt the ICC Chartered System of Accounts, properly allocating unique trucking expenses, like pickup and delivery and circuitous mileage, ensuring fair treatment by the ICC and management controls for carriers.

Federal deregulation in 1980 spelled the end for motor carrier rate cases. But by then the growth of multistate operations, spurred by the Interstate Highway System, had generated a new tax and accounting challenge — every state wanted a piece of the interstate trucking industry. NAFC, working hand-in-hand with the ATA Taxation & Reciproci-

ty Committee, and with key action by the ATA Litigation Center, justified and expanded the concept of apportioned taxation, which to this day protects interstate carriers from overreaching state taxes.

As NAFC looks forward from 60 years ago, it sees continued challenges ahead for trucking: carbon and emissions accounting, tax treatment of owner/operators, tax incentives for new technologies. Just as in 1947, NAFC will be there, making sure the numbers add up for a profitable trucking industry.

The ATA Councils respond to ever-changing roles among trucking professionals. With the new national focus on security, the **ATA Security Council** in 2006 left its roots with S&LPMC to address the needs of trucking security personnel.



And a fifth ATA council was added in 2007, as the **Information Technology & Logistics Council (ITLC)** was formed to serve the growing demands of industry IT and logistics personnel and the expanding utilization of off-board technologies in trucking. ■



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and provide a solution.

The need for AFTC was apparent to Joel "Bud" Wallace of Wallace Transport and to leaders from Inland Fruit Company; Kings County Truck Lines; Lester Coggins Trucking Company; Ed Rocha Livestock Transportation, Inc.; Rodriguez Trucking Transportation, Inc.; Cherokee Freight Lines; Sward Trucking, Inc.; J.C. Trucking, Inc.; Teresi Trucking, Inc.; Walpole, Inc; and VY Truck Line. The federal government would soon reopen the hours-of-service regulations and the Agricultural Transporters Conference in the California Trucking Association needed a Washington, D.C., voice to preserve HOS exemptions for harvesting and planting. AFTC was successful in protecting ag carrier interests and, in SAFETEA-LU, codifying the results.

AFTC built on its good relations with the U.S. Department of Agriculture to obtain approval for the first voluntary security guidelines in trucking and USDA funding of two well-respected security publications. Today that working relationship is critical as ag transporters face growing threats from animal activists and from concerns over

food-borne illnesses.

Just like the auto transporter industry, agricultural carriers have provided key leaders to ATA. Shorty Whittington, current ATA first vice chairman, headed AFTC in 1998, as did Greg Owen, ATA TruckPAC chairman, in 2006.

When reauthorization in 2009 brings new industry challenges to HOS, truck productivity, and many other fronts, the ATA conferences will once more play key roles in advancing the interests of us all. ■

For additional copies of this ATA 75th Anniversary insert, please contact Stormie Janzen at 703-838-8810.