

Study: Fuel Saving /Emissions Reducing Technologies and Incentives: Use and Preferences among Diesel Truck Owners in the Baltimore Region

Consultant: American Transportation Research Institute

Purpose: The purpose of this survey was to help identify owners of heavy duty diesel truck fleets in the Baltimore region that are interested in installing emission reduction measures or fuel economy improvement measures on their trucks. We also wanted to determine how to encourage the fleet owners to install these technologies. Reducing emissions from heavy duty diesel truck fleets operating in the Baltimore region will contribute to local emission reductions measures, and will help the region reach attainment of the 8-hour ozone and PM2.5 standards.

Method: A survey of diesel truck fleet owners in the Baltimore region was performed in spring 2007. The survey questionnaire and survey distribution list were developed by ATRI and BMC staff, along with assistance from MDOT, MDE, and the Maryland Motor Truck Association. The distribution list included over 700 recipients. Notices of the survey were also included in a number of trade association newsletters. Over 60 usable surveys were obtained.

Results: The study found that several factors appear to influence a carrier's current and planned use of these technologies. They include:

- The carrier's knowledge of the U.S. EPA SmartWay Transport Partnership;
- Total annual revenues;
- Type of business; and,
- Number of trucks operated.

Also, when carriers were presented with the possibility of incentives being available to reduce the cost of these technologies, interest more than tripled. Tax credits were identified as the most helpful financial tool followed closely by grants.

Consultant Recommendations: (reworded for brevity)

- 1) BMC should work with Baltimore area trade associations to provide education about these technologies to truck fleets, especially the smaller fleets. BMC could also educate local businesses that attract truck trips.
- 2) If BMC creates an incentive program for fleets to install these technologies, they recommend BMC partner with other agencies or jurisdictions outside the region, to expand the scope.
- 3) BMC should identify the local taxes or fees businesses operating diesel trucks may pay and explore whether some percentage of the technology purchases should be allowed to generate a credit against

these taxes or fees. BMC should explore the potential role of state and/or federal tax credits.

- 4) BMC should explore potential funding sources which could be used to establish a grant program for these technologies.
- 5) BMC should explore a low-interest loan program or a lease-to-own program as an alternative. Popularity of this would depend greatly on the interest rate offered.