National Idling Reduction Planning Conference **May 17, 2004**

Industry Perspectives Panel - Mike Swiger, Swigers Trucking - driver

I want to address the costs of idle reduction technologies. I will be talking with the mindset of a small fleet or owner operator (1 to 10 power units). I am going to list the most obvious costs first.

- Initial purchase price
- Installation cost
- Maintenance costs
- 12% F E T if purchased on a new power unit
- Lost revenue due to lost capacity after adding five hundred to one thousand pounds to the weight of the tractor.

Additional costs and obstacles include the following:

The fact that government agencies cannot get on the same page at the same time drives up these costs. A couple of examples:

- Gen sets would seem to be the answer to most of the problem. Because we have no national law or policy, some communities consider a gen set to be an idling diesel engine and it is illegal to use. Now I must augment my gen set with battery packs and I have exceeded the five hundred pound weight limit we are trying to get an exemption for.

- The second example involves the new hours of service [HOS]. I have been asked, "What is a reasonable amount of time to allow a sleeper truck to idle?"
    - Based on weather conditions I may need the ability to run the truck for the entire ten hours required by the new HOS regulations.

Regulatory people tell me this is not good enough. If that's the case, then DOT and EPA need to get together to resolve regulation, technology and safety conflicts. I need to be able to comply with all agency laws and get the rest I need to do my job as safely as possible.

Financing

- Financing IR products can be a problem because we do not know how well they hold their value. This may cause us to pay a premium price for money to finance the initial purchase price of these devices.

Maintenance Infrastructure

- Because there is no infrastructure in place to service these devices, now I have to train myself or my drivers to maintain and perform minor repairs to this equipment. The other option is to return to the original point of sale,

which can be as much as two thousand miles of deadhead [non-revenue miles].

In closing I would like give my views on how to solve the problem of unnecessary idling.

- A campaign to train drivers.
- Get all the government agencies in agreement - one plan nationwide.
- Get rid of the FET as applied to these devices and equipment.
- We need to remove weight penalties incurred by adding on this equipment.
- Supply low cost, guaranteed loans and other innovative financial solutions.
- Develop a certification or rating system to assure buyers of system reliability and performance ‘as advertised’.

Thank you,
Mike Swiger