

Adding Fuel to the Fire: Trucking Market Update

by Danielle Leonard - Monday, January 29, 2018



The trucking industry has been experiencing a consistent capacity crunch that has continued into 2018. As the demand for shipping is expected to rise, it doesn't look like the tight market will let up anytime soon. So, what's contributing to this current trend?

Driver Shortage

The Bureau of Labor Statistics [estimates](#) that the average age of a truck driver in the U.S. is 55 years old. As these truckers reach retirement and there are less new truckers taking their place, the industry is struggling with a snowballing [driver shortage](#). Not to mention the recent implementation of Electronic Logging Devices (ELDs)—which automatically record driving time—taking some drivers out of the equation.

Electronic Logging Devices

With paper logs, some carriers were able to skirt around the Hours of Service (HOS) regulations, but with ELDs this isn't possible and forces truckers to drive less hours. Driving less means it takes longer to get shipments to their final destination, thus decreasing productivity. ELDs limit a trucker's flexibility, including "extended wait times at shippers and receivers, traffic delays, and long searches for available truck parking" before their 11 hours of driving are up, [Trucks.com](#) points out.

There's been talk of drivers [leaving the industry](#) in the wake of ELDs. However, the biggest impact will be once enforcement officers start pulling truckers off the roads that refuse to comply by April 1. Which will just add fuel to the driver-shortage-fire.

Economy

As the economy gets better, capacity is going to get worse, according to [Logistics Management](#). The JOC [mentions](#) that shippers will see a higher demand of raw goods, which is a positive for the economy, but adds to the already tight trucking capacity.

Carrying Over to LTL

The full truckload (FTL) capacity crunch is starting to affect less than truckload (LTL) carriers. In an effort to keep shipments moving, FTL shippers are now breaking down their freight into LTL shipments. The JOC [states](#) that "LTL trucking companies are picking up more and heavier spillover freight from truckload carriers." The need for capacity, wherever you can get it, is changing the trucking industry and it's tough to say what it will look like in the future. As of now, it's high demand and tight supply.

Fortunately, Mohawk partners with thousands of carriers across North America and has representatives standing by to assist in procuring capacity for all your needs. Learn what routing options are best for your shipments, contact us at DomesticSales@mohawkglobal.com.



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