Daimler’s position on Navistar’s Criticisms

Below you will find an article in Transport Topics, and attached is an ad that Daimler ran in the same magazine. Both strongly state Daimler’s position on Navistar's Criticisms. Feel free to share as you see fit.

DTNA’s Daum Defends SCR, Rebuts Navistar’s Criticisms

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Transport Topics

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The top Daimler Trucks executive in North America last week defended use of selective catalytic reduction to meet federal emissions requirements, rebutting claims by Navistar Inc. that SCR engines do not meet environmental standards because their emissions controls can be overridden by using plain water in place of a urea-water solution.

Martin Daum, chief executive officer of Daimler Trucks North America, said Navistar’s evidence for its claim was based on illegal tampering and fraud that are inconsistent with real world operations.

Daum spoke with Transport Topics reporters and editors on July 28.

He said DTNA is enjoying market-share growth in the heavy-duty truck market this year because the manufacturer has been “first to market” with engines that comply with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s 2010 emissions rules. Daum said DTNA’s brands have delivered 4,000 heavy-duty trucks with 2010-compliant engines and have a backlog of 12,000 to be built.

In contrast, he said, Navistar “did the wrong step” in choosing exhaust gas recirculation technology to meet EPA’s standards for diesel engines in its International trucks, and that Navistar is trying “to gain time until it can catch up.” Daimler and the other major U.S. original equipment manufacturers chose SCR over EGR.

Daum’s conference call interview marked his nearly 14 months as CEO of the company that builds Freightliner, Sterling and Western Star trucks, and Detroit Diesel engines.

It was his first meeting with the press since Navistar screened a 15-minute video at a workshop sponsored by state and federal environmental regulators in El Monte, Calif. (click here for previous story).

In Navistar’s video, a driver said he drove a Freightliner Cascadia tractor with a DDC engine 12,000 miles, using water in place of diesel exhaust fluid, the urea-water solution necessary for SCR to work properly.

“You have to tamper with a truck and act fraudulently to do what they did. I haven’t seen a single customer do what they’ve done,” Daum said,
describing the disincentives a driver would have to endure to operate a truck in such a way.

Without DEF, he said, sensors in the exhaust system key beeping alarms and blinking lights on the dashboard and limit truck speed to 55 miles per hour. For people who truly hate vehicle laws, he said, it is also theoretically possible to remove diesel particulate filters and seat belts, but such steps would be extremely improbable and irrational.

“You can do all sorts of things to break laws, but that is not our intention or our customers’, ” he said.

Daum also said Daimler’s Detroit Diesel engines are similar to Cummins Inc. power plants in having two types of sensors. A fluid level sensor in the DEF tank measures gallons but not what the fluid is. The second sensor system monitors nitrogen oxide levels in the exhaust before and after it passes through the SCR converter.

If there is not enough reduction in NOx, those sensors begin a de-rating of the engine, causing it to lose substantial amounts of power, Daum said.

Despite the allegations of fraud and tampering, Daum did concede that the de-rating procedure could be accelerated in 2011 trucks. The purpose of the El Monte workshop, regulators said, was to see if SCR engines turn themselves off quickly enough, but safely, if they are not operating properly.

Daum said his vehicles are “the cleanest trucks out there and the most fuel-efficient” and that they meet the new federal standards without using emission credits. He chided Navistar for still not having shipped any 2010-compliant engines yet — even though the company will be using federal emission credits allowing the generation of higher NOx levels.

“We have been unable to get our hands on an EPA ‘10-compliant truck from Navistar for testing. . . . We have a Peterbilt, a Kenworth and a Volvo for tests, but the Navistar truck is missing. At this point, I would pay more than list price to get one,” he said.

DTNA and Navistar are the two market-share leaders in heavy-duty U.S. trucks. For the first half of this year, Daimler’s three brands — Freightliner, Western Star and Sterling — had 33.9% of the market, while Navistar’s International brand had 28.9%, according to WardsAuto.com.
To The Trucking Industry,

With more than a decade to prepare to meet 2010 emissions standards, all but one heavy-duty trucking manufacturer invested the necessary time, money and brainpower to develop the best technology possible to meet stringent new requirements. All but one manufacturer, Navistar, came to the same solution that would best serve you, our trucking industry customers of North America. Navistar chose instead to spend more time blowing smoke across the industry than developing the technology to clear the air.

**Enough is enough.** Though we’re all competitors, the rest of us understood the importance of the larger cause. We worked together to overcome the challenges of adapting to stricter emissions requirements to do our part to improve air quality for the safety and enjoyment of future generations. We watched patiently as Navistar muddied the waters and intentionally confused customers with fear-mongering, deception and distraction. From our standpoint, it begs a question...how can this competitor claim it’s concerned about the environment while their proposed 2010 product spews two and a half times the 2010 NOx standard into the air we breathe every day? We expected more from a legitimate competitor – like an attempt to improve our industry’s performance in the eyes of you, our trucking industry customers.

Instead, Navistar has chosen to do the exact opposite. They’ve painted a picture of our industry, our customers and their operators as a group that will intentionally break the law and circumvent the EPA’s emission control regulations. We know this couldn’t be further from the truth and feel this is an insult to the hardworking people in the transportation industry who have put in long hours and a lot of work to help put this economy back on track.

Manufacturers, suppliers, government agencies and associations across the trucking industry invested time and resources to develop ideas and innovations to achieve the emissions goal in spite of economic challenges and rising operating costs because we all understand that it is the right thing to do.

Navistar has responded by selling thousands of pre-2010 engines, while the rest of the industry has been actively selling EPA 2010-certified products. They apparently have no EPA-compliant emissions technology for 2010 and beyond, at least nothing that does not use credits to achieve compliance. Without a long-term solution once they run out of emissions credits, they’ll probably resort to some other stall tactic. What will it be then?

Today, the only way Navistar can make its point is by hiring a third party to break the law while allegedly operating an SCR-equipped truck. Running an SCR-equipped truck out of EPA compliance on public highways is **against the law**. Period. Professional truckers are trained to, and want to, obey the law. Navistar should comply with the law, too – even when filming a misleading promotional video.

We should demand that Navistar quit wasting everybody’s time with their worthless claims and scare tactics. If they’re so convinced they have the right product, why can’t anyone get their hands on a true EPA 2010-compliant non-prototype truck to verify their claims? It seems as if real desperation is building in their camp.

**Don’t trucking industry customers of North America deserve better?**

We, for one, believe you do. We put our money where our mouth is. And as an industry which prides itself on professionalism, integrity and honesty, we have every reason to demand the same of Navistar.

Respectfully,

Daimler Trucks North America LLC

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