UMTRI, Con-way Freight Launch Field Testing of a Safety Warning System for Commercial Trucks

ANN ARBOR, Mich. — Feb. 2, 2009 — The University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute (UMTRI) has joined Con-way Freight to begin field operational testing of an integrated crash warning system installed in commercial trucks under the Integrated Vehicle-Based Safety System (IVBSS) program — a cooperative agreement with the U. S. Department of Transportation.

The IVBSS technology fully integrates multiple crash warning features, including forward collision, lane departure and lane change-merge warning systems into the commercial truck platform. IVBSS provides drivers with situational awareness of the vehicle’s surroundings, and warns drivers when they are about to inadvertently leave the roadway, are in danger of colliding with another vehicle while attempting a lane change, or are at risk of colliding with the vehicle ahead.

“We volunteered to participate in this project, since safety is one of Con-way Freight’s core values and we expect this type of technology to figure prominently in future safety initiatives in the transportation industry,” said Bob Petrancosta, vice president of safety for Con-way Freight. “We are committed to the safety of our drivers and the motoring public, and joining UMTRI in this effort is an excellent way to support that.”

Con-way Freight, a less-than-truckload carrier and subsidiary of Con-way Inc. (NYSE: CNW), recently purchased 10 Class-8 tractors equipped with the IVBSS technology. Over the course of the next 10 months, 20 Con-way Freight truck drivers will operate the trucks out of the company’s Detroit service center as part of its normal business operations, logging an estimated 700,000 miles. Data on driver response to IVBSS will be recorded along with extensive data collection on naturalistic use and the driving conditions. Researchers will then use the data to evaluate the potential safety benefits of integrating multiple crash warning systems.

The field testing is part of the second phase of the four-year IVBSS program. Jim Sayer, program director and UMTRI researcher, said “We’re excited to launch the field operational test. After more than two years of research, development and verification testing of the integrated system, it’s gratifying to see the system functioning as part of Con-way Freight’s fleet. We are optimistic that the testing will demonstrate the safety benefits of integrating multiple crash warning systems.”
IVBSS uses information gathered by inertial, video, and radar sensors, plus a global positioning system, to warn drivers of potentially dangerous situations to prevent or lessen the severity of crashes. UMTRI will launch similar testing of systems for passenger cars in April.

Program partners for the IVBSS commercial-truck research include Eaton Corp., TK Holdings, International Truck and Engine Corporation, Con-way Freight and Battelle. The cooperative agreement is with the U.S. Department of Transportation and is administered by National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) with assistance from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). Program funding is provided by the Research and Innovative Technology Administration (RITA) of the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Additional information about the IVBSS program can be found at: http://www.its.dot.gov/ivbss/.

About UMTRI
The Transportation Research Institute at The University of Michigan is committed to interdisciplinary research that will ultimately increase driving safety and further transportation systems knowledge. UMTRI's research significantly impacts highway transportation policy and practice, in the United States and abroad. The institute is currently operating a $22 million per year research program, with funds received from federal and state government agencies, motor vehicle manufacturers and suppliers, and other organizations. For more information, visit http://www.umtri.umich.edu.

About Con-way Freight
Con-way Freight is the industry’s leading less-than-truckload (LTL) freight transportation company, providing guaranteed, day-definite regional and transcontinental service through a single, unified network of more than 300 service centers in the United States, Canada, Mexico and Puerto Rico. Based in Ann Arbor, Mich., Con-way Freight offers LTL freight delivery across North America, as well as delivery in the United States for international less-than-container (LCL) ocean shipments from Asia through its OceanGuaranteed service. Con-way Freight is a certified FAST highway carrier and is ISO 9001- and 14001-, C-TPAT/PIP, ACE- and CSA-certified.

Con-way Freight is a subsidiary of Con-way Inc. (NYSE: CNW), a $5.0 billion diversified freight transportation and logistics services company. For more information, visit www.con-way.com/freight.