



FROM THE FRONTLINES:

TruckSCR.com brings you a series of interviews with top industry professionals exploring the impact of SCR technology on their companies, the freight industry, the infrastructure and the general public.

An interview with Steve Williams, Chairman and CEO of Maverick USA

From the one room office in Texarkana, AR, to the first-class corporate office in Little Rock, AR, Steve Williams and Maverick USA have earned a solid reputation that has led to the industry leadership they enjoy today. The Maverick name defines the goal that Williams set of becoming a different breed of trucking company – an individual in a crowd of carriers - and has become a core strength of its operations.

Williams' accomplishments include service to the industry as past chairman of the American Trucking Association (2004-2005). Family members take an active role in the company's operations and culture, including Williams' daughter who is vice president of corporate development and sustainability.

Today, Maverick USA Companies include: Maverick Transportation LLC, Maverick Logistics LLC, and Maverick Truck & Trailer Sales.

"If I'm different and right, it's a competitive advantage." Steve Williams, 2008

Q: Mr. Williams, what role does environmental policy/practice play at Maverick?

A: Environmental sustainability is a hallmark of our organization and part of our business profile. We were an early adopter of EPA emissions mandates and new technologies in 2003 and 2007, and we have an executive in charge of sustainability policies and practices. We voluntarily embrace the practices and see a definite correlation between environmental sustainability and economic sustainability.

"Environmental sustainability is a hallmark of our (Maverick USA) organization. Working with ATA gave me a unique perspective – if we do the right thing for the right reasons, its amazing what can be done."

Q. Did your role as ATA chairman impact your decision to embrace new emissions technologies like SCR?

A. We must understand the challenge and implications of moving more freight in a much more congested environment. There is no doubt that congestion impacts air quality. Taking new steps to relieve congestion is as much a matter of driver health and safety as public health. By using SCR in 2010, it also offers economic benefits.

"People across the industry are starting to understand the importance and need for change – we have change all around us. For Maverick, we see embracing change as a competitive advantage and core strength of our operation."

Q. You recently visited freight companies in Germany that were using Daimler SCR technology to control emissions. What struck you the most about the diesel exhaust fluid infrastructure and use of the SCR technology?

A. While Daimler has done a good job reassuring me that SCR is the best solution, it was great to see what has been accomplished with SCR in Europe and that Daimler has the answers.

"SCR is really going to work in its entirety. Seeing the technology in action assures me that SCR will be a welcomed change – not problematic, an improvement in fuel economy and a reduction in pollutants."

Q. Based on what you saw, how easy will it be for North American drivers to adapt to using diesel exhaust fluid?

A. Like any new technology, once drivers understand what's expected and that SCR is reliable and reasonably functional, it will not be an issue. It will be just another thing to monitor and top off, like checking to make sure they're using proper oil, proper coolant and proper tire pressure. Between driver training and on-board fluid level and warning devices, driver issues will be a "non-event."

"Like any new technology, once drivers understand what's expected and that the equipment is reasonably functional, SCR will not be an issue."

Q. What future trends or technologies do you see on the horizon?

A. I see our original challenge was to dramatically reduce exhaust pollutants from the fuels we consume in our operations. Now that we have virtually eliminated NOx and PM through SCR in 2010, we'll need to turn our sights to burning less fuel per ton mile which will reduce our carbon emissions and further reduce our dependence on foreign oil. The only way left to move volume while reducing fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions will require regulatory changes that allow for increased size and weight to improve productivity per ton mile. Under this scenario, reduced fuel consumption can lead to reduced CO2 by as much as 17-35 percent.

Regulatory changes would require the use of more productive vehicles, reduced road speeds and more stringent driver qualifications. These changes will increase highway safety while improving our global competitiveness.

Overall, the days of being able to operate when and the way you want are over. However, the 2010 SCR solution brings more information and control to the truck operator and system. While these changes may lead to additional barriers because of the complexity, they will also lead to greater control, safer practices and better jobs. Drivers needed to operate these new trucks will be better trained, better paid and more disciplined.