
Truck News

MATS Report: Navistar comes out swinging about "truly nutty" SCR alternative

LOUISVILLE, Ky -- Navistar has added yet a few more logs to the firestorm of controversy over what's the best approach to take to meet the 2010 engine emissions mandate.

Speaking before customers, dealers and the media at an exclusive night event at the Mid America Trucking Show, the Canadian market share leader in Class 8 truck sales not only defended its decision to be the only truck maker staying the course in meeting the 2010 emissions with EGR technology, it came out swinging.

Dee Kapur, president, Navistar Truck Group, has been a vocal critic of SCR and he didn't hold back, calling it "the truly nutty" alternative that asks truck buyers to deal with the "toxic agent" of urea.

Jack Allen, president of Navistar's North American Truck Group, outlined the reasoning behind International's approach, which it calls advanced EGR.

Allen said advanced EGR makes it easier for customers. He said SCR technology adds weight and five new components to gain compliance with emissions standards. He added that Navistar's approach, which relies in part on credits gained earlier when International engine designs exceeded government standards, as the better way to go.

"When our competitors complain about those credits, it's really just sour grapes," he said.

Allen also questioned the environmental and operational impact of having to use urea with the SCR alternative. He said urea is going to prove expensive, using a figure of \$35 a gallon.

"Even in Europe (which has greater experience with urea) it's \$12 a gallon," he said. "Some of our competitors will tell you no way will urea cost that much...Ask them for the proof."

He also repeated claims that urea breaks down at temperature extremes and "turns into a toxic ammonia gas."

"It begs the question, do you really want to deal with this stuff?" he said.

He added that availability of urea may also be a problem, arguing that even if 500 locations initially offer urea across the US, that's a small portion of the 35,000 diesel locations across the US.

Allen characterized International's decision to stick with EGR rather than switch to SCR technology as forward thinking.

"When we look to the future, we are pretty sure it won't be urea based," he said. "What's going to happen do you think to the resale value of all the SCR-equipped trucks?"

Truck News, 3/19/2009

By Lou Smyrlis
