

# THRC C-suite pulse check reveals sector's top concerns amid Permacrisis

**OTTAWA, ON** (January 28, 2025) — On January 22, Trucking HR Canada (THRC) hosted an exclusive noon-hour executive briefing to reveal the findings of a recent opinion survey conducted in partnership with Abacus Data. This national pulse check captured the sentiments of 95 senior executives from for-hire and private trucking fleets, spanning mid-size and large carriers, and was conducted between Dec 2024 and Jan 2025. With issues ranging from Trump's influence and tariffs to ongoing operational hurdles, the survey paints a vivid picture of an industry navigating uncharted waters.

Abacus CEO David Coletto provided in-depth analysis of the survey results while framing the broader political and economic climate influencing our sector. His term for the current landscape? "Permacrisis": an extended period of instability and insecurity. The term aptly describes the environment facing Canada's trucking and logistics sector in recent years.

## The Broader Context: Scarcity and Upheaval

Coletto began by exploring how the current economic and political climate affects Canadians and, by extension, the trucking industry. He pointed to a widespread feeling of scarcity—a sense that people lack what they need, from housing to groceries—leading to zero-sum thinking. This mindset, he said, contributes to broader societal discontent, as seen in other Abacus studies:

- **40% of young Canadians** believe owning a second home should be illegal.
- **66%** think corporate profits often come at the expense of consumers and workers.

Globally, political upheaval and armed conflicts compound this instability. Rising costs of living and the looming uncertainty about Trump's second presidency have only heightened economic concerns for Canada and its trucking sector.

## Key Findings: Industry Sentiments and Challenges

The THRC/Abacus survey of trucking executives revealed these among other insights:

- **79%** believe Canada is on the wrong track.
- **67%** are somewhat or very pessimistic about the future.



While political and global issues dominate concerns, the sector is also grappling with rapid technological advancements:

- **54%** of executives either use or plan to use AI for fleet optimization within the next five years.
- **41%** believe self-driving vehicles are more than a decade away, while **43%** expect them within 5-10 years.
- Only **14%** plan to add zero-emission vehicles to their fleets, primarily battery-electric models.

### **Top Concerns for Trucking Leaders**

The survey identified the key issues keeping trucking executives up at night:

1. **Unethical business practices (i.e. Driver Inc.)** – 30%
2. **Rising costs and economic viability** – 21%
3. **Labour shortages and poor working conditions** – 15%
4. **Training, safety, and regulatory challenges** – 13%
5. **Rapid technology adoption** – 5%

The sector's perennial driver shortage remains a dominant concern:

- **84%** believe driver shortages will persist as a critical issue.
- **95%** see a growing need for workers with technology and AI expertise.

### **Employee Concerns Mirror Sector Instability**

The briefing also highlighted rising fears among employees, driven by unstable business conditions, wage pressures, and job security concerns. Employers are increasingly aware of this anxiety and its potential impact on workforce morale and retention.

### **Coletto's Closing Thoughts**

In his conclusion, Coletto emphasized three key takeaways:

1. The scarcity mindset is shaping economic and political decisions.
2. These forces are directly impacting Canada's trucking sector.
3. While political change appears imminent, deeply transformative technological shifts in the industry are not yet on the horizon.



## THRC: Driving Solutions Amid Uncertainty

As the trucking and logistics sector faces these complex challenges, Trucking HR Canada remains committed to providing actionable insights and resources. By tracking industry trends and engaging with leaders, THRC continues to support employers in navigating the evolving landscape.

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