

# MD Alignment

## **Are Alignments on Trucks and Buses a GREEN procedure or a Money Drain (Part 12)**

Last bits on inflation: Maintaining and monitoring inflation. Frequent checks of the tire inflation by someone with a calibrated tire inflation gauge, NOT a tire thumper, is the obvious first line of defense in this regard. However, as one fleet manager pointed out to me, his trailers leave their yard and may not be back to the yard for 90 to 120 days and they cannot depend on the drivers to conscientiously check tire inflation. As a result they purchased trailers with an automated inflation system. This, they felt solved their tire inflation issues.

I was in this fleet location as a consultant to a tire manufacturer because of irregular tire wear complaints. When we disconnected the automatic inflation system and manually checked the tire pressures, tires in dual wheel positions had different inflations by as much as 30 PSI but commonly 10 to 15 PSI. This difference in inflation caused significant tire wear issues.

The assumption that the automatic system will relieve you of manual checks ignores the fact that ALL mechanical systems eventually break. The question is, how soon will this happen.

A second option is a Tire Pressure Monitoring System (TPMS). In the US, cars are commonly fitted with these at the factory, in fact they may be mandatory now. I'm not sure since I don't work in that market. More and more trucks are starting to show up with these systems either from the factory brand new or as after market purchases. This seems to be a much less expensive and simpler solution to the inflation monitoring problem. Lots of details need to be resolved for the trucking market due to switching trailers and syncing the sensors to the display in the cab but I am sure it will eventually be settled. There are also questions about internal sensors or external ones and the durability of each.

Perhaps a combination of the automatic inflation system and a TPMS would be the solution.



However you decide to maintain and monitor the inflation in your tires just keep in mind that if you don't do anything the tires will fail.