The ongoing driver shortage plaguing the U.S. trucking industry is expected to continue in 2019. This bulletin will reaffirm the reasons for the trucking shortage, outline the steps Hunter Panels continues to take to secure additional trucking capacity, and offer tips to help customers ensure their requested delivery dates are met.

While our transportation staff continues to work diligently to minimize the impact on customers, everyone will be forced to deal with the inconveniences caused by this shortage. As such, communication and flexibility are of the utmost importance.

In the summer of 2018, the number of loads per available flatbed reached an unheard-of 111, nearly three times 2017 levels. Unfortunately, these capacity constraints are expected to continue for the foreseeable future, there are no quick solutions to the current driver shortage.

**Reasons for the current trucking shortage**

- **High demand** – In the summer of 2018 the trucking industry saw the highest-ever ratio of loads per flatbed, with 111 loads per available flatbed.
- **A strong economy and increased e-commerce both contribute to overall demand.**
- **Not enough drivers** – An aging workforce, high turnover, low unemployment, the looming prospect of driverless trucks, and a 21-year age minimum all contribute to the shortage of over-the-road drivers.
- **New regulations** – Regulations implemented in December 2017 mandating the use of electronic logging devices (ELDs) have resulted in a 5%-10% productivity loss.
- **Strict enforcement** – As of April 1, 2018, the mandate on ELDs has been rigorously enforced.

Hunter Panels continues to take aggressive measures to secure additional trucking capacity, now and in the future. Some of these efforts are:

- Increasing the rates paid to freight providers.
- Adding dedicated fleets at plants to secure guaranteed capacity
- Finding and adding new carriers not previously employed by Hunter.