

Cooperative chassis pools folding in three US cities amid loss of business



Consolidated Chassis Management once had interoperable chassis pools in most of the inland US, but has since folded in the Midwest, Gulf and now Mid-South. Photo credit: Consolidated Chassis Management.

Ari Ashe, Senior Editor | Apr 29, 2024, 3:50 PM EDT

Interoperable chassis pools in Kansas City, Memphis and St. Louis will no longer provide marine chassis to truckers moving ocean containers effective May 1, winding down operations after losing much of their business in the last year.

Consolidated Chassis Management (CCM) operated what it termed “cooperative” or “gray” chassis pools in those cities, in which other chassis owners such as DCLI, Flexi-Van Leasing, TRAC Intermodal and others contributed to a joint pool open to truckers. If an ocean carrier had a deal with CCM, then a trucker could use any unit in the pool, regardless of the name stenciled on the chassis.

In Kansas City, Memphis and St. Louis, however, ocean carriers have gravitated toward other pools. In Memphis, specifically, the CCM pool was dealt a death blow when the North American Chassis Pool Cooperative (NACPC) launched its own pool last summer with brand new chassis.

“As the ocean carriers pulled out of the pool, and our market share was going down, it really made no sense to continue the pool because there was no role for us,” Jeff Lawrence, managing director of United Intermodal Enterprises, told the *Journal of Commerce*. “That is precisely what has led to the end of Memphis consolidated chassis pool, but also the two so-called Midwest chassis pools, which is St. Louis and Kansas City.”

United Intermodal is a subsidiary of the Ocean Carriers Equipment Management Association (OCEMA) of 10 ocean carriers. OCEMA owned CCM until last October when it was sold to Oaktree Capital Management. CCM still administers pools for OCEMA, but as a third-party subcontractor rather than a wholly-owned subsidiary.

Moves follow 2019 pool closures

This isn't the first time a CCM-administered pool has folded.

In 2019, CCM closed its pools in Chicago, the Ohio Valley and the Gulf Coast after chassis providers yanked their units out of the joint pool.

The major criticism has been the quality of chassis in CCM pools. CCM never owned chassis in Kansas City, Memphis or St. Louis, it simply managed a pool of aggregated DCLI, Flexi-Van, NACPC, TRAC and other chassis.

Several chassis providers, though, were reluctant to put their highest-quality units in the CCM pools, preferring instead to reserve the best equipment for direct-to-customer relationships through their private equipment pools.

“The pool wind down process will take some months to get all the units that are out at distribution centers, but as of May 1, we will no longer be giving out chassis,” Lawrence said.

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