

By MALCOLM SCULLY
Staff Reporter

Not all trucks are equipped with citizen's band radios or general radio service radios as they are officially called in Canada, nor are they likely to be.

Max Haggarty, president of Belleville-based Lafferty-Smith Express Lines and president of the Ontario Truckers' Association says the CB radio craze is just starting in Canada and he predicted the craze will really catch on in the next four or five years.

But he said Lafferty-Smith trucks do not and will not carry CB radios.

Mr. Haggarty added his company has its own radio system for communicating with trucks and CB radios are not needed.

Company dispatcher Roy Phillip explained that CB radios have a limited range of about 15 miles and channels are open for all to hear. "With

our system we can call a specific truck," he said. more

Mr. Haggarty said it is a "house policy" not to allow drivers to install CB radios in their trucks in case they are assigned to a different truck.

"Generally," he said, "CB radios have saved lives

because drivers are able to call police if they see a traffic accident. CB radios also allow families to contact husband-drivers on the road for personal messages."

"But," said Mr. Haggarty, "many drivers just chatter over the CB airways jamming the frequencies."

He said another problem

with CB radios is that they "foster carelessness for law". Too often, he said, CB radios are used to warn drivers of radar speed-traps. Speeding drivers, he said, slow down when they approach a spotted police car and speed up again after they pass.

Brian MacKay, vice-president and general

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manager of Smith Toronto said in an interview from Toronto his company does not use CB radios but the policy is being reconsidered.

Last winter, he said, was "particularly tough" and the company is considering using CB radios for runs in Northern Ontario to report road conditions.

Mr. MacKay suggested that before Ontario truckers invest heavily in CB radio equipment, they need "a lot more experience" with its use.

He said independent truckers are at this stage, the main users of CB radios.

A spokesman for the department of communications in Kingston said there has been an increase in the volume of applications for general radio service licences. Although he had no total figures, he said the department receives an average of 100 applications a week.