



TEAMSTERS CANADA RAIL CONFERENCE DIVISION 320



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Subject: TCRC/CN contract talks continue (update 2)

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Sent to you for your information. Also here is a link to our Brothers & Sisters across the river on the CN, Division 945's new website. <http://tcrc945.ca/>

We continue to wish our Brothers & Sisters on the CN well in their negotiations.

In Solidarity,

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S&C Officer
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WINNIPEG -(Dow Jones)-

Talks between officials with Canadian National Railway Co. (CNI) and the Teamsters Canada Rail Conference Union, which is representing roughly 1,700 locomotive engineers, have adjourned and will resume Monday in hopes of reaching a new collective agreement.

Meetings between the two sides, including two federal government mediators, began Sept. 23 and carried through to Sept. 27 before adjourning for a short break. The talks resumed during the week of Oct. 5 and continued through to Monday's Canadian Thanksgiving holiday.

"CN remains optimistic that it can reach a settlement with the TCRC on a new collective agreement without any kind of labor disruption," said Mark Hallman, CN's director of communications and public affairs.

Daniel J. Shewchuk, president of the TCRC, said he was also optimistic that an agreement can be reached.

However, in the event of a worst-case scenario and the talks break down, Shewchuk said the union members in a mail in ballot have given the union negotiators a strike mandate if required.

The votes, which were to have been post-dated before Oct. 2, were 89.8% in favor of strike action," Shewchuk said. "Right now a strike is the furthest thing from our minds," he said, adding that the strike vote was only taken amid rumours CN had been planning a lockout of the workers.

Meanwhile, on Oct. 9, the Canadian Industrial Relations Board granted the TCRC's request to withdraw its application for a determination as to whether any of CN's services should be deemed essential and be maintained by TCRC-represented employees in the event of a disruption, Hallman said.

"CN and the union have agreed to continue bargaining, and we remain optimistic that we can reach a settlement with the TCRC without disruption," Hallman said.

Details of the negotiations weren't disclosed by either Hallman or Shewchuk.

A rail labor dispute would come at a critical time, as the harvest in Canada is winding down and the need to meet export commitments at Canada's export facilities is the heaviest.