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Air Updates

WestJet Encore Pilots Vote for Strike Mandate, Adding to Airline's Turbulence

WestJet Encore pilots could go on strike as soon as April 17 after they approved a strike mandate Tuesday, increasing the prospect of headwinds after a bumpy year for the airline's owner.

Aviators at WestJet's regional carrier voted 97 percent in favour of strike authorization after contract talks around pay, schedules and career progression came to a "near standstill," the Air Line Pilots Association said.

The 355 pilots it represents can walk off the tarmac 72 hours after union leadership files a strike notice. The potential job action or lockout can take place only after a 21-day cooling-off period that started when federal conciliation between the two sides wrapped up last week.

Read more in an [article from CBC News](#).

Ocean Updates

Hong Kong Becomes First Major Victim of Global Liner Network Redesigns

The world's most rapidly declining major container port is braced for further huge throughput drops in the coming couple of years.

Hong Kong, which 20 years ago was the largest container port in the world, is increasingly being shunned by global liners.

The major alliances, Gemini Cooperation, THE Alliance and Ocean Alliance, have all unveiled their network changes for this year and next with Hong Kong deselected for many routes. For Gemini – the new alliance between Maersk and Hapag-Lloyd – the southern Chinese city does not feature as a direct port at all.

“This does not bode well for the Port of Hong Kong, but should also be seen as a sign that an element of network consolidation is afoot, especially related to transshipment hubs,” stated a new report from Danish consultancy Sea-Intelligence.

Analysis of network design and network efficiency shows that fewer, but larger, hubs are economically more efficient, according to Sea-Intelligence.

Read more in an [article from Splash](#).

Rail and Truck Updates

Teamsters Canada Calls for Strike Authorization Vote by CN and CPKC Train Crews

The union representing Canadian National and Canadian Pacific Kansas City engineers and conductors in Canada has authorized a strike vote, as labour and management remain far apart on new contracts.

Leaders of the Teamsters Canada Rail Conference told their members on March 28 that a strike vote will be held from April 8 to May 1. If the rank and file vote to authorize a strike, the earliest a walkout or lockout could occur is May 22.

After being unable to reach agreements during negotiations that began last fall, labour and management since March 1 have been negotiating with the help of federal conciliators. Also still negotiating: CPKC rail traffic controllers, who are represented by TCRC in Canada.

More talks are scheduled this month.

Read more in an [article from Trains](#).

CPKC Fastpass Service Interruption

CPKC notified customers on Tuesday at 4:00 pm ET that it was experiencing an issue with its Fastpass gate system. The issue was impacting its ingates, outgates and problem-area computers.

Gate transactions were being processed manually, and drivers were instructed to call in from the problem area to CPKC's Remote Operating Centre (ROC) to complete their activities. Delays were occurring at terminals; CPKC had assigned additional staff to assist.

For storage issues: Drivers were expected to contact the ROC team through the problem-area phone; they would then be manually processed out the gate, at which time storage charges would be captured by the ROC team.

Customers were asked to ensure that drivers were advised of the outage and the manual gate requirements.

Montreal Gateway Terminal Notice for April 8

The announced total solar eclipse on April 8 has prompted MGT to review safety measures for all workers and partners and apply the appropriate actions to ensure a safe work environment for all.

While operations will continue to operate during the day, all terminal operation, including truck service, will be suspended for a 20-minute period between 3:20 and 3:40 pm ET.