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## Canadian rail strike set for Thursday

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Canadian Pacific

Canada looks set to be hit by industrial action at its two main freight rail companies from this Thursday as employers and employees made their positions clear over the weekend with no deals in sight over labour agreements.

Canadian National Railway formally notified the Teamsters union in Canada on Sunday that it would start locking out union workers early on Thursday.

“Unless there is an immediate and definite resolution to the labour conflict, CN will have no choice but to continue the phased and progressive shutdown of its network which would culminate in a lockout,” it said in a statement.

“Despite negotiations over the weekend, no meaningful progress has occurred, and the parties remain very far apart.”

Canada's other main rail operator, Canadian Pacific Kansas City, has already told the Teamsters union it will start locking out members early on Thursday.

The Teamsters also issued a 72-hour strike notice to CPKC late on Sunday.

"Unless parties reach last-minute agreements, a work stoppage will occur at 00:01 on Thursday, August 22," it said in a statement.

From tomorrow, CPKC has said it will stop all shipments that start in Canada and all shipments originating in the US that are headed for Canada, the railroad said.

CN, meanwhile, has barred container imports from US partner railroads.

Both rail companies' labour agreements expired at the end of 2023 and talks have been ongoing since.

Both companies have said that their trains running in the US will continue to work.

Under article 107 of the federal labour code, labour minister Steven MacKinnon can order the sides to enter binding arbitration, something his predecessor did last year to end a dockworkers strike in British Columbia. However, in that case, unlike the current rail dispute, the sides had largely agreed on the outlines of a deal.

The likely strike is the first of what could be a problematic couple of months for North American supply chains with the real threat of industrial action come October 1 by dockworkers across the US east and Gulf coasts.