Canadian Teamsters file 4 separate legal challenges to Appeals Board

Union officials say they are confident the law is on their side

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Teamsters say Federal Labour Minister Steven MacKinnon abused his power by establishing a system where he alone can unilaterally end job action in the federally regulated private sector. (Photo: Teamsters Canada)

Canadian Teamsters have filed four separate challenges on Thursday in the Canadian Federal Court of Appeal challenging the Labor Minister's order for binding arbitration and the Canada Industrial Relations Board decision to stop the lockout and work stoppage. There are two challenges for each railroad.

This latest legal maneuver comes after the labor union vowed to challenge the ruling.

The CIRB originally ordered the railroads and labor to appear Thursday for a scheduled meeting on the arbitration process but due to a scheduling issue with one of the attorneys, the CIRB agreed to reschedule the first meeting.

CIRB tells American Shipper, "No date has been determined yet. We are awaiting confirmation of the parties' availability."

Union officials tell American Shipper they are confident the law is on their side and the appellate court will allow the unions to bargain with the railroads in a traditional manner versus arbitration.

The union is arguing their constitutional charter rights were violated and are asking for a ruling to be made in an expedited manner.

"The government's interference has prolonged the negotiation process," said Christopher Monette, director of public affairs for Teamsters Canada. "This only adds more uncertainty to the supply chain."