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‘Impasse’ in Port of Montreal labor dispute as negotiations break down

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- by Shipping Telegraph

The Port of Montreal will be the site of a one-day strike by longshore workers on Sunday and Monday as contract talks continue to lag. But unlike previous work stoppages, the walkout on Sunday and Monday is expected to “affect all Port of Montreal container and dry bulk terminals, including the Contrecoeur terminal,” according to port of Montreal statement.

This 24-hour general strike will start on Sunday October 27 at 7 a.m. and finish today Monday, October 28 at 6:59 a.m.

The Maritime Employers Association (MEA) said that it received the strike notice from the Port of Montréal Longshoremen’s Union, CUPE Local 375, which consists in a complete stoppage of work on Port of Montréal territory, including the Contrecoeur terminal, for 24-hours.

After 35 mediation meetings over 15 months the parties are still at square one, MEA said, and at an impasse.

MEA says the pressure tactics are hurting operations, and this uncertainty creates major repercussions, particularly the significant loss of cargo.

It says it hopes that the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) will find a path to success in the face of the impasse.

On the other hand, the Montreal Port Authority in its statement said last week that the “teams are actively working to minimize the impact of disruptions.”

The Minister of Labour and Seniors, the Honourable Steven MacKinnon, made a proposal on October 15 to the Maritime Employers Association (MEA) and the Montréal Longshoremen’s union, CUPE Local 375.

The proposal suggested appointing a special mediator so that the parties could resume negotiations without any pressure tactics from either side, over a 90-day period.

As the Minister stated, there was no agreement on the appointment of a special mediator and he withdrew his offer.

MacKinnon confirmed last week that the two parties remained unable to agree and hoped they would be able to reach a negotiated settlement “as quickly as possible.”