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Ocean Updates

France Faces More Port Strikes to Protest Lack of Action on Pension Reforms

The long-running dispute between the French government and the powerful trade unions over proposed pension reforms is again prompting threats of port strikes across the country. The government has been pushing for pension reforms and changes to France's work rules since 2023.

The CGT Federation of Ports and Docks filed notice last week that it plans to renew its strikes and work slowdowns to demonstrate its frustration at the lack of movement by the government. According to the union, talks took place between January and July 2023 and again in 2024. The union staged a 24-hour strike in June 2024, blocking the container, bulk and ro-ro terminals in Le Havre while an estimated 600 dockworkers blocked the main entrance to Marseille-Fos in the south.

The union suspended the protests last summer after the French government collapsed. President Emmanuel Macron dissolved parliament and called special elections, which were inconclusive. Macron has vowed to continue through his current term, which is due to end in 2027 despite the collapse of two governments and continued instability.

According to the union, there had been talks in December and an indication by the government of a willingness to resolve the dispute. However, the union contends the offer was withdrawn in January.

Read more in an [article from The Maritime Executive](#).

Customs Regulatory

Compliance Fears as Indian Customs Introduces Revised Manifest Rules

Indian Customs has implemented a long-awaited rule revision to tighten export/import cargo manifests.

The Sea Cargo Manifest and Transshipment Regulations (SCMTR) were announced in 2018, but industry has taken years to prepare and pave the way for a countrywide launch.

SCMTR, which is objectively akin to the U.S. advanced manifest or 24-hour rule, went live across Indian ports on January 16, after authorities had ironed-out industry concerns in stages.

The updated regulations aim to speed up customs clearance and make the process more transparent and predictable. They require ocean carriers to complete their advanced manifest submissions ahead of the vessel arrival or departure at Indian ports.

SCMTR says: "The authorized sea carrier/authorized sea agent shall submit an arrival manifest electronically, prior to departure from the last port of call to the Indian port of call. And submit a departure manifest electronically before departure from the Indian port of call."

The container lines serving Indian trades have told customers to comply with the stricter customs requirements to avoid potential cargo flow disruption and penalties.

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

Canadian Business/Government

Seven Amazon Sites to Close in Quebec: "An Opportunity for Logistics"

In a way, Amazon is returning to the model it had before 2020.

How does it work? When an Internet user makes a purchase from the American multinational, the order is immediately transmitted to the warehouse closest to the delivery address that has the product in stock.

The distance to be traveled and the level of delivery service chosen by the buyer then determine the type of delivery. In Quebec, it is sometimes independent delivery people, sometimes trucks in the colours of Amazon, UPS or FedEx, and sometimes Canada Post, who make the final delivery.

For several years, Amazon has been delivering more from its A to Z distribution, sorting and delivery centres. But the announcement of their closure last week means that work will have to be taken over by other companies, such as those already supplying the American giant.

"Ultimately, it's going to be an opportunity for logistics in Quebec," says the president of a 3PL in Saint-Hubert.

Read more in an [article from La Presse](#) (translated from French).

International Business/Government

Canada, Mexico Steelmakers Refuse New U.S. Orders

Some steelmakers in Canada and Mexico are telling customers that they are refusing new orders to the U.S. on concerns that President Donald Trump soon will reimpose duties.

Canada's Stelco has been telling U.S.-based customers it is pausing sales quotes, according to a person familiar with the matter. Mexico-based steel suppliers also stopped taking orders for material last week as they await potential action from Trump, according to Flack Global Metals, a large buyer.

Trump has signaled plans to impose previously threatened tariffs of as much as 25% on Mexico and Canada by February 1. While the two countries are exempt from a sweeping 25% steel tariff the U.S. imposed during the first Trump administration, there's increasing concern in the industry that the metal won't receive a carve-out.

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