

March 27, 2020

**Re: 03.27.2020 - BCMEA Response to COVID-19**

BCMEA continues its commitment to closely monitoring developments related to COVID-19 and its potential impact on BC's waterfront. As this pandemic continues to unfold, the Association continues to prioritize the health and safety of labour, while at the same time ensuring that cargo continues to flow at BC's ports.

Please see our weekly summary of actions taken to ensure business continuity and activity response during this time.

**Dispatch Update:** BCMEA has worked collaboratively with each local to assist in ensuring they can dispatch in a manner that meets the requirements of the Industry Wide Health Direction and meets the needs of the Industry and our Membership to ensure the supply chain remains open.

Each locals' dispatch is unique and the assistance provided was tailored based on the dispatch systems and processes. As this pandemic evolves, we will continue working with each local to ensure they're able to meet their obligations to supply labour.

BCMEA Dispatch (Local 500):

- Implementation of mobile casual dispatch
- Limiting the amount of union members in the hall to meet social distancing standards
- Implementation of additional deep cleans in the hall

Local 502:

- The local implemented a full phone dispatch
- Worked with the local to provide resources to ensure the local can complete dispatch in a timely manner

Local 505:

- Provide additional dispatch support to allow for phone dispatch when required down the boards to limit the amount of casuals in the hall

**Health and Safety Protocols:** At the request of a number of our Board and members, BCMEA is developing industry wide protocols that members will use to insert into their company protocols and SOPs. Protocols for first aid attendants, response to a positive COVID-19 test and cleaning standards are under development with great input from terminal and ship lines members. The final versions will be available imbedded in a larger risk management document early next week.

BCMEA and ILWU are jointly committed to ensuring COVID-19 safety protocols are present at member terminals. This week, John Beckett and Rob Ashton toured several Lower Mainland terminals to see first hand what terminals are doing to protect all employees and share best practices with management, union leadership and safety committee members. John and Rob also took the time to hold impromptu discussions in the lunch rooms and answer questions from both management and labour. Overall both parties found the exercise to be of benefit and John and Rob have committed to do it again in 3 weeks.

**AGM Update:** All BCMEA staff, member committee and board meetings, including this year's AGM, are now being held virtually until further notice. You should have received a calendar invite with Zoom conference details for next week's AGM on April 1, 2020.

**Government Relations:** In consultation with BC's provincial health officer (PHO), the Province has [defined essential services](#) British Columbians rely on in their daily lives in the context of the fight against COVID-19. Please note, as we desired, this is distinct from essential service designations under the Labour Relations Code.

We are satisfied with the broad list of essential services identified in the Transportation, Infrastructure and Manufacturing sectors, including specifically:

- services that facilitate the transportation of essential supplies, personnel and services, including port/waterfront operations, road, air and rail operations;
- supply chain services needed to supply goods for societal functioning, including cooling, storing, packaging, transportation, warehousing and distribution;
- workers who support the maintenance and operation of cargo transportation services, including crews, maintenance, operations and other facilities workers; and
- manufacturers and distributors (to include service centres and related operations) of packaging materials, pallets, crates, containers and other supplies needed to support manufacturing, packaging staging and distribution operations.

The full essential services list can be found in the government's backgrounder [here](#). Those services identified as essential should and are encouraged to remain open. However, they must continue to follow the orders and guidance provided by the PHO to ensure safe operations and reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19.

In advance of the announcement, we were in direct daily contact with the provincial government (Premier's Office, Ministry of Health, Office of the Public Health Officer, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure) and also activated our stakeholder networks to ensure alignment towards the announcement yesterday. Subsequent to the Province's announcement, we had a productive call with BC Minister of Labour and reinforced our shared objective of enhancing the health and safety of the waterfront workforce, while ensuring the continued operations of BC ports in the fight against COVID-19.

The Province also announced it's establishing a new Provincial Supply Chain Coordination Unit to co-ordinate goods and services distribution; taking a more active role in co-ordinating essential goods and services movement by land, air, marine and rail; and suspending any bylaws that restrict goods delivery at any time of day. We have reached-out to government to offer our support and participation in this effort if appropriate.

Moving forward, we will continue to be in direct daily contact with our provincial and federal contacts.

**Communications:** Business in Vancouver published a statement from Mike Leonard regarding COVID-19 and cargo volumes. Link: <https://biv.com/article/2020/03/bcs-container-terminal-operators-brace-virus-impact>

**IT:** The IT department continues to support and monitor the Casual remote plugin for Local 500 and work from home staff. IT will continue to work with the Dispatch team on system modifications to facilitate next steps in regards to Union side Dispatch. Lastly, the team is leading the technical support at BCMEA's first virtual AGM in history on April 1, 2020.

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