



TEAMSTERS LOCAL UNION No. 31

AFFILIATED WITH TEAMSTERS CANADA AND THE INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF TEAMSTERS
#1 GROSVENOR SQUARE, DELTA, BC V3M 5S1

Vancouver Teamsters Rally Support for Off-Dock Truckers Amid Regulatory Challenges

December 4, 2023

In Greater Vancouver, a contentious standoff between the Office of the British Columbia Container Trucking Commissioner (BCCTC) and unionized trucking companies has sparked heated debates and concerns over the future of off-dock trucking rights.

At the heart of this problem lies the BCCTC's new policy, which applies port rates to non-port work, a move that exceeds their jurisdictional powers. The BCCTC's authority pertains specifically to TLS-licensed trucking companies. Companies not conducting business at the port are not mandated to possess these licences, thereby not bound by the associated rates and regulations. However, this presents a dire economic imbalance for companies operating within the TLS-licences regulated port sector, which has expanded into the unregulated realm of off-dock businesses. It places TLS-licensed companies at a financial disadvantage against non-regulated counterparts, resulting in job losses for union drivers and a loss of clientele for these companies. This disparity threatens the livelihoods of unionized workers and the stability of affiliated businesses in the broader commercial landscape.

A gathering in Surrey witnessed an assembly of over 100 truckers to listen to Teamsters Local 31 President Stan Hennessy, Business Agent Amrik Dhillon, and Surrey-Newton MP Sukh Dhaliwal. Their unified stance advocated fervently for

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the protection of off-dock trucking rights, maintaining equal and fair commercial commerce and the preservation of unionized jobs.

The essence of contention arises from the significance of port TLS tags, which are mandatory in picking up and delivering port shipping containers, however, it is not required for companies who perform non-port work. This move threatens to displace unionized jobs, as non-tagged trucking companies not paying port rates can swoop in and undercut the unionized competition.

Given the highly regulated nature of work at the Port of Vancouver, which operates on federally owned land, the government has historically upheld policies to maintain fair rules, regulations, and pay rates across all registered port trucking companies. However, the scenario outside the BCCTC's jurisdiction presents a starkly contrasting landscape where trucking companies operate freely in the open market.

The impending policy change by the BCCTC Commissioner holds detrimental implications for off-dock truckers represented by the Teamsters. Their predicament is compounded by the absence of any threat to non-TLS licensed companies, leaving Teamster-affiliated companies in a double bind. Compliance with the port rate in the private sector risks massive undercutting and loss of work, while non-compliance risks the revocation of port tags, hindering operations at the port, and further jeopardizing union members and their companies.

An upcoming court case in February 2024, initiated by Simard Westlink, seeks to challenge the Commissioner's decision, with affected Teamster TLS Tagged

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companies at the forefront. Amrik Dhillon, Business Agent for Local 31, emphasized the need for fair industry practices.

The aftermath of the Commissioner's decision has been swift, leading to the layoffs of approximately 30 owner-operators at a single company. President Stan Hennessy, in a pointed letter to the Port Commissioner, holds them accountable for these layoffs and has initiated the formation of a committee aimed at presenting a unified voice to address the off-dock trucking issue.

Hennessy further underscored the Union's commitment to resolve the issue, highlighting the involvement of key stakeholders, legal experts, and the pooling of resources to challenge the Commissioner's decision. The Union's recent interaction with the Port Commissioner yielded little progress, prompting the Union to reach out to unify other parties involved in the off-dock drayage sector.

Surrey-Newton MP Sukh Dhaliwal aligned firmly with the Teamsters Union, lending unequivocal support to all off-dock truckers affected by the ongoing predicament.

As the conflict simmers on, the fate of unionized off-dock truckers hangs in the balance, awaiting a resolution that could redefine the landscape of trucking regulations in Greater Vancouver.

Teamsters Local Union No. 31 proudly represents more than 8,600 hard-working members in British Columbia and the Yukon Territory, including general truck drivers, courier, public sector, warehouse and grocery workers, transit, coach, school bus drivers and monitors, lumber, pulp and paper workers and limousine chauffeurs, since 1936.

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