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Leaky Locks May Further Delay \$5.3 Billion Panama Canal Widening



The Cocoli lockgates are tested during the Panama Canal expansion on July 3, 2015. Photographer: Ed Grimaldo/AFP via Getty Images

[Michael D McDonald](#) October 30, 2015

The April opening of Panama's \$5.3 billion expanded canal, originally set for 2014, could be delayed further depending on repairs to leaks discovered in the new locks during testing as the waterway ends a year of record shipments, administrator Jorge Quijano said.

The contractor building the new locks is expected to file a report within the next three weeks on the repair time line and any delay in the opening "shouldn't be much if there is one," Quijano said in a phone interview on Thursday. Shipments through the canal could rise to 360 million tons in 2017, the first full year of the expanded canal's operation, after reaching a record 340.8 million tons in the fiscal year ending Sept. 30, he said.

"Even though there is talk that China isn't very strong, with 6 percent growth, it's a large exporter and the United States continues to be a large importer," Quijano said.

LNG Shipments

The expansion, which has spurred a series of port and infrastructure upgrades throughout the Caribbean and the U.S. eastern seaboard, will make room for vessels with the capacity to carry as many as 12,600 containers, almost three times what the existing locks permit. The expansion will also facilitate tankers carrying shipments of liquefied natural gas.

The canal project, approved by voters in a 2006 referendum, has helped Panama's \$46 billion economy achieve some of the highest growth rates in the world in recent years. Gross domestic product will expand 6 percent this year, compared to a contraction of 0.3 percent for Latin

product will expand 3 percent this year, compared to a contraction of 0.6 percent for Latin America and the Caribbean as a whole, according to the International Monetary Fund. Total transits through the canal fell 3.1 percent in September from a year earlier, the first year-on-year decline since January.

Nearly \$3 billion in cost overruns claimed by contractors are likely to be reduced once the claims process is complete, Quijano said. The group building the expansion won a \$234 million ruling last year after claiming \$463 million last year after for delays in execution of the contract.

The Canal Authority sold \$450 million in global bonds last month to fund a new bridge spanning the Atlantic Ocean side of the waterway, a project expected to be finished in mid-2017.

[Click here to read more at Bloomberg](#)

Carriers, shippers team up to prepare for new container weight rules

JOC Staff | Nov 02, 2015

Container lines, U.S. shippers and logistics providers are coming together to figure out the best way to prepare for the July 1 start of new global regulations requiring the weighing of containers before they are allowed to be loaded onto a ship.

The Agriculture Transportation Coalition and the Transpacific Stabilization Agreement have created a working committee to create best practices and respond to concerns regarding the new amendments of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea. The working committee consists of executives from 25 shippers and trucking companies who are AgTc members, eight container lines and three software providers.

"The goal is to keep cargo moving through our U.S. ports, without causing further delays or congestion," AgTC Executive Director Peter Friedmann said in a statement. ""We have much to do in a very tight time frame."

A subcommittee focusing on how the refrigerated shipping industry will approach the International Maritime Organization's rules will be chaired by Perry Bourne, director of international transportation and rail operations at Tyson Fresh Meats.

Although the two acceptable methods of container weighing are known, there are plenty of details not clear, such as how electronic data will be handled. Even more worrying is the fact there is no standard procedure for carriers to implement the new rules, said Donna Lemm, vice president global sales at Mallory Alexander International Logistics and chair of the working committee.

"Each carrier will implement their own protocol independently of one another, but the committee provides an exceptional forum to hear from U.S. shippers before the rule goes into effect," said Brian Conrad, executive administrator of the Transpacific Stabilization Agreement, a discussion forum representing 15 of the largest shipping lines that carry U.S. containerized imports from Asia.

The group has no enforcement powers and its guidelines are voluntary.

[Read more at Journal of Commerce](#)

Results of Local 502 Elections

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At \$10.25/hr BC's minimum wage is one of the lowest in Canada. As the cost of living continues to go up, workers earning minimum wage cannot make ends meet.

BC's minimum wage leaves full-time workers living below the poverty line.

The BC Federation of Labour believes that work should lift you out of poverty. It's time for the BC government to increase the minimum wage so that nobody is left behind.

Help us fight for \$15/hr. It's only fair!

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FIGHT FOR 15

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LAST
WEEK



THIS MORNING WITH JOHN HORGAN



Christy Clark's deceit-and-delete scandal continued to grow last week. We learned that the premier herself, and four of her closest advisors have been caught destroying public records. The premier, the premier's chief of staff, deputy chief of staff, executive director of communications and her deputy minister - each of them was making sure there is no paper trail on their work for the media or the public to follow on important issue. We're seeing a sick picture of the provincial government - a culture of deception, deceit and delete.

Also last week I was very proud to stand up in the house with Harry Bains and ask tough questions about why this government is not standing up for British Columbians faced with racism. The BC Human Rights Tribunal has ruled that the College of Veterinarians of BC systemically discriminated against South Asian veterinarians. The legal battle - and the discrimination - dragged for ten years in part because the Liberal government gave the college taxpayer-funded legal backup. We called on the attorney general to answer for this failure, and to act on the tribunal's finding immediately and end this discrimination.

I was honoured to meet with several extraordinary people last week. Judy Darcy introduced me to Mohamed Fahmy, the Canadian journalist recently released from prison in Egypt, who visited the legislature with his wife Marwa. After enduring more than a year behind bars under appalling conditions, Mr. Fahmy is settling in the Lower Mainland to teach at the UBC School of Journalism. I am inspired by Mohamed's and Marwa's courage and their commitment to freedom of the press.

[Click here to read the full report.](#)

Waterfront News

Reminder

The Waterfront News is the newsletter produced by ILWU Canada and mailed to members several times per year. The Dispatcher is the newsletter produced by our International Union and is also mailed to members several times per year. ILWU Canada keeps an address database for both of these, but we only receive addresses from the Locals or the Members directly.



[Copies of past editions of the Waterfront News are available here:](#)

[Copies of past editions of the Dispatcher are available here:](#)

If you are a Member of the ILWU in Canada, or on the A or B boards in any of the Longshore Locals you are entitled to receive one or both of these. If you are not receiving it now you should contact your Local to make sure they have your current address.

You can also send us an e-mail at communicate@ilwu.ca or phone us at 604-254-8141 to update us.



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