



CIFFA Committee Meetings – March 2024

CIFFA's national committees meet several times a year to discuss relevant issues or developments that may affect member companies. Following is a look at what committee members discussed and decided at their most-recent meetings.

Airfreight Committee – Chair Bill Gottlieb

- The committee researched **penalties in other jurisdictions related to non-compliance** with pre-arrival filing requirements. Canadian freight forwarders, as well as airlines, are being assessed significant penalties for infractions in this area. In Germany and the UK, penalties have not been assessed. In Australia, there are penalties, but they're rarely applied. In the U.S., penalties for non-compliance are hefty (\$5,000 for first offence, \$10,000 for subsequent offences), but there is a mitigation process through which fines can be reduced by up to 90%. (In Canada, there is no process to reduce penalties; after review, they either stand or are waived.)
- CIFFA has been pushing Transport Canada and the CBSA to share information to allow for **single filing for imports through PACT and eManifest**. Data elements required from filers are the same for the two programs. The Secretariat intends to emphasize that Canada has signed on to the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement – which says: "Members shall ... minimize the documentation required for the release of expedited shipments in accordance with paragraph 1 of Article 10 and, to the extent possible, provide for release based on a single submission of information on certain shipments." – and press for a single window to be in place by the time PACT is implemented, expected in November.
- CBSA recently issued a **communiqué to foreign freight forwarders** reminding them of pre-arrival requirements.
- The committee sees the development of **digital cargo community systems** at airports across the country as key to increased digitalization in the industry and enhanced effectiveness for such programs as eManifest.
- At the most recent meeting of IATA's **Canadian Air Cargo Program Joint Council**, IATA agreed to discontinue its annual fees for intermediary branches in Canada. The meeting agenda included discussions about training requirements for IATA agents and intermediaries and a global cargo agency agreement.

Customs Committee – Chair Paul Courtney

- A draft document on **consolidated flying trucks** has been circulated by CBSA. The final version has not yet been published.
- CIFFA recently **met with the Shipping Federation and several marine carriers**. The carriers noted that they have not received a 'Do Not Load' message from CBSA prior to departure in about five years. This is a serious matter that CIFFA and ShipFed will communicate to CBSA. CIFFA will question why, in this case, filing while cargo is en route is not sufficient to meet CBSA requirements.
- Numerous industry associations have shared their concerns about **CARM readiness** with the federal government. Many issues have yet to be resolved. After the cutover period (April 26 to May 13), there is expected to be an enormous surge of submissions to the new system, which is likely to have been implemented with unresolved problems, including calculation errors.
- Through a recent change, **the CBSA will allow importers that have not registered for CARM to have their shipments released**, then register within five days. This change came about after government was informed that, after CARM implementation as set out, the border would quickly be congested with cargo that could not be released. Brokers will be able to clear goods through their bonds for importers that are not registered for a 12-month period.

- Through CARM, all **AMPS and compliance information will be accessible in a single place**. However, brokers will not be able to see the information for clients, even if they have been delegated authority.
- New **MSRs for the Trusted Trader program** have been delayed until after CARM R2.

Customs Regulatory Committee – Chair Kim Campbell

- To enhance **advocacy efforts with the federal government**, the committee agreed that industry alignment is critical. Knowing what related associations are saying, and working together to find a single message will help the industry in those efforts.
- The committee has chosen to **narrow its focus to look at specific challenges** in areas where CIFFA can have a positive impact. Part of its work will be coming up with potential solutions to those challenges that can be shared with the CBSA.

Drayage Committee – Chair Chris Ford

- Since November, **congestion at the Port of Vancouver** has steadily escalated. Dwell has been consistently over seven days for some time, except at Centerm, where the situation improved in March. A shortage of railcars appears to be part of the problem.
- **Wait times for truck drivers at Vaughan terminal** are still often unacceptably long, at times five hours or more.
- In Calgary, **drayage companies are frustrated** as the railways have recently been communicating revised train arrival times on short notice, creating issues with RVs and wait times.
- **CN's performance at Toronto-area terminals** has improved and wait times for drivers are down.
- In Montreal, a **new reservation system at Termont** went live at the beginning of March. It continues to operate with glitches and blocked reservation times; carriers aren't able to book appointments sometimes even when the terminal is relatively empty. Further, a reservation takes multiple steps, including assigning a driver. If the driver is then unable to make the pickup/drop-off, the reservation cannot be changed; it has to be cancelled and a new reservation opened. A reservation app for drivers was not available at the time of the committee meeting, but was expected in early April.
- Engineers at both CN and CPKC will be in a **legal position to strike as of May 22**. If there's a strike, both railways will be affected. This is expected to push the government to act more quickly, if necessary.
- A federal court blocked approval of **CN's Milton logistics hub**, citing potential health risks from air pollution. The project had previously passed a stringent environmental assessment, after CN satisfied the 325 conditions identified by the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada. A further assessment is now required.

Freight Brokers Committee – Chair Joel MacKay

- CIFFA recently **revised its standard trading conditions (STCs)**, which now provide protection for freight brokers, as well as freight forwarders.
- In development, on the advice of the committee: a **broker-shipper contract**. A broker-carrier contract is already available.

Seafreight Committee – Chair Martin Schultz

- Cargo volume is already down about 25% at the Port of Montreal, as shippers plan for a **potential strike by port workers**.

- If CN and/or CPKC engineers are on strike at the same time as the Montreal port workers, it will create a mess of **congestion across the country**. CN and CPKC made a joint application to the Canada Industrial Relations Board regarding one of the union contracts that they are individually negotiating, saying that the union is not negotiating in good faith. No labour disruptions will occur until at least mid-May because of the 81-day process the application set off.
- **Volumes have been up at the Port of Vancouver** due to the Chinese Lunar New Year and the rerouting of some shipments to the West Coast to avoid the Red Sea. On-dock footage was up in February, but is now starting to drop. Due to their locations, Centerm and Vanterm both have ongoing issues with rail. The track into the inner harbour terminals is operated by CN; CPKC railcars have to be switched in by CN, causing some delays. It's also a busy area of the city, so rail movement is limited to ensure local traffic isn't overly affected. Commuter trains also use the line in the mornings and evenings. Construction at Centerm has not alleviated the problems.
- A current **industry shortage of containers** due to the Red Sea-related diversions is pushing the carriers to return empties to Asia as quickly as possible.
- Construction on the Port of Vancouver **Roberts Bank terminal 2** probably won't start until 2032 or so.

Sustainability Committee – Chair Christina Fisker

- The committee is **developing the second report in its sustainability blueprint series**.

Technology Committee – Chair Marc Bibeau

- The committee is **writing a white paper for members focused on AI**.

If you are interested in joining any of the national committees, please send your request to either admin@ciffa.com or the Regional Chair for your area, whose contact details can be found in the [National Board of Directors listing](#) on the CIFFA website.