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Published By: NEWS COMMUNICATIONS since 1977

Saturday July 26th, 2014

### QUEBEC POLICE TRY TO PREVENT AUCTION OF LAC-MEGANTIC'S 'TRAIN FROM HELL'

Quebec provincial police say they've taken steps to prevent the auction of the locomotive that played a key role in the deadly Lac-Megantic rail disaster.

A spokeswoman for the Surete du Quebec said Wednesday that investigators initiated measures to block a U.S. auction house from selling the locomotive until the end of legal proceedings.

News of the police move surfaced after a report by The Canadian Press on Wednesday revealed that locomotive MMA 5017, the lead engine on the train that smashed into the Quebec town last summer, was due to go to auction in Maine on Aug. 5.

"The only thing I can confirm to you in this file is that Surete (du Quebec) investigators have taken steps to block the sale of the locomotive for the duration of the judicial process," said Sgt. Christine Coulombe, who declined to provide any further details.

The runaway oil train derailed and exploded last July in the heart of



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the community, wiping out dozens of buildings and killing 47 people. Some locals in the community have referred to it as the "train from hell."

Three employees of the now-insolvent Montreal, Maine and Atlantic Railway, the company at the centre of the disaster, have each been charged with 47 counts of criminal

negligence causing death, one for each victim of the crash. The MMA itself is also facing the same charges.

The auctioneer hired to sell the locomotive at a Maine rail yard said Wednesday he has yet to hear from authorities that the unit will be pulled from his auction.

Adam Jokisch said he will proceed

with his plans to sell the locomotive until an official tells him otherwise.

"As of right now, this minute, it is in the auction and it will be sold in the auction," Jokisch said.

"If something happens between now and the auction? Hey, I don't know. But I'm just the auctioneer and it's on our plate to sell. If somebody

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comes and takes it, then we won't."

A spokesman for MMA's secured creditor, the Maine-based Bangor Savings Bank, told The Canadian Press earlier this week that it "double" and "triple" checked to make sure authorities no longer needed the unit and that they had permission to auction it off. He was not immediately available for comment after the Quebec police announcement.

MMA 5017, the lead engine on the train that smashed into Lac-Mégantic, is scheduled to go to auction Aug. 5., a month after the disaster-scarred town marked the first year of the catastrophe.

The opening bid for the locomotive that played a key role in one of Canada's worst-ever rail disasters has been set at \$10,667 (or US\$10,000).

Jokisch said he has yet to receive any specific inquiries about MMA 5017, but he's expecting more spectators than usual when he belts out its name at the Derby Rail Yard in Milo, Maine.

"It is unique and obviously this locomotive's got some history to it," the president of St. Louis-based Adam's Auction & Real Estate Services, Inc. said in an earlier interview.

"It's definitely not a good piece of history, that's for sure. . . I don't think I'd want to be reminded

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about that horrible accident."

MMA 5017 will also have company on the auction block.

In all, the auction will feature 25 locomotives from the fleet of the now-bankrupt MMA, as well as seven units identified as the property of an affiliate of its former parent company, Rail World Inc.

The black-and-green MMA 5017 appears to have avoided any serious damage in the incident. The night of the disaster, the diesel-electric machine continued rolling along the rails as 63 tank cars filled with volatile crude oil careened off the tracks behind it.

But like several of the MMA locomotives that will be sold off, the General Electric C-30-7 is not in running condition, according to the auction-house

blurb that also mentions its connection to the disaster.

"The MMA 5017 unit was the lead locomotive in a derailment and fire incident in Canada," reads the ad on Jokisch's website.

It notes that due to that crash, "the number 4, 5 & 6 power assemblies were removed." The ad also states that MMA 5017 has a "defective piston."

Many of the other MMA locomotives advertised by the auction house come with problems, from graffiti to missing parts. Some units are likely worth little more than scrap value, says the online ad.

"Sometimes they're worn out, sometimes they're real good," Jokisch said about locomotives he's auctioned off in the past.

"(We've sold used) locomotives anywhere from \$25,000 to \$300,000 before . . . It depends on the make and model number and condition, of course."

The cash generated by the auction will help pay back the US\$3.7 million owed to the Bangor Savings Bank.

Yellow Light Breen, an executive vice-president with the bank, said any extra money from the sale of the 25 MMA engines and three of the seven units owned by Rail World Locomotive Leasing will pay off the insolvent railway's other debts. Breen said the bank also expects to recoup some money from MMA through an upcoming real-estate sale.

Breen declined to estimate how much the machines would generate at the auction, but said the bank hopes the sale brings in several million dollars.

When it comes to MMA 5017, he was asked about whether the bank would consider donating it to a museum or even destroying it.

"Certainly, it has some unfortunate, tragic historic significance. . . But I can't speculate as to what that might mean as far as disposing of it," Breen said in an interview.

"Obviously, we're a federally insured financial institution, so we have a duty both to our depositors and to our insurers to collect the funds that we've lent the best we can. . .

"If there are interested parties who see a civic or historical significance they should probably be in touch with the auctioneer about that."

MMA 5017's fate will likely be of particular interest, considering

the locomotive played a central role in the series of events that led to a crash that made global headlines and incinerated part of Lac-Megantic's downtown core.

On July 5, 2013, at 11 p.m., engineer Thomas Harding parked the locomotive and its train of 72 tankers for the night about 12 kilometres up a steep grade from Lac-Megantic. It was left unattended with its engine running to ensure its air brakes remained enabled.

Harding was picked up that night by his regular taxi driver Andre Turcotte, who later told The Canadian Press that the idling locomotive was burping so much thick smoke that oil droplets from its exhaust splattered onto his car.

Less than an hour later, the local fire department responded to a call that the locomotive had caught fire. The engine was shut down and the blaze was extinguished.

With the engine still turned off, the train was left unattended once again after an MMA track employee allegedly gave the green light to do so.

Shortly before 1 a.m., the train began to roll away and picked up speed as it raced downhill toward Lac-Megantic.

Witnesses have recalled watching the unmanned, unlit train roar through the darkness -- with only the sparks on the tracks illuminating its path.

The 1:14 a.m. crash set off massive explosions and destroyed about 40 buildings in Lac-Megantic.

MMA 5017, however, rolled safely away from the disaster zone, unscathed by the inferno. It led a

string of five locomotives at the front of the train, a group that decoupled from the convoy of tankers, the Transportation Safety Board has said.

They came to a stop 800 metres beyond the crash site, far enough to avoid the towering fireballs.

The train disaster left widespread physical and emotional scars in a community whose history was shaped by the century-old railroad.

Today, the majority of locals want the tracks re-routed outside of their shattered downtown, to ensure that trains filled with

hazardous substances never pass by their homes again.

This resentment was spelled out last summer in black upper-case letters scrawled on a handmade sign posted at the railroad's edge, not far from where the tank cars rumbled off the tracks.

"You, train from hell," read the sign. "Don't come back here. You are no longer welcome."

Fortress Investment Group, which recently bought MMA and renamed it Central Maine and Quebec Railway,

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has pledged to stop shipping hazardous materials through town until at least Jan. 1, 2016.

Company spokesman Daniel Matte has said CMO hopes to ease concerns of locals by repairing its Canadian stretch of tracks and by buying new locomotives.

As for MMA5017, it's unclear whether it will operate on a railroad ever again.

Officials at the rail yard in Milo, about 250 kilometres east of Lac-Mégantic, declined a request by The Canadian Press to see the locomotives.

Jokisch has posted maintenance reports for the units online and potential buyers will be invited to inspect the machines up close in the days preceding the auction. Bidders and spectators will also be able to follow the auction live online.

He believes MMA 5017 could eventually pull trains again, as long as someone wants to invest in it.

"Sometimes it comes down to a dollar amount -- whether it's worth it. . . I think just about most any locomotive can be refurbished and put back on the tracks," Jokisch said.

"They gotta make it safe again, that's for sure, if somebody's going to use it."

**AER SAYS MORE SPILL SAFEGUARDS NEEDED BEFORE PRIMROSE RETURNS TO NORMAL**

The Alberta Energy Regulator says Canadian Natural Resources Ltd.'s Primrose oilsands project in northeastern Alberta won't be returning to normal full

operations any time soon. Jim Ellis, who heads up the provincial energy watchdog, says it won't allow a return to business as usual until all of the risks have been addressed and the right safeguards are in place to prevent bitumen from oozing to the surface.

An emulsion of bitumen and water was found to be leaking from four sites more than a year ago, affecting 20.7 hectares.

The AER says 1.2 million litres of the mixture has been recovered and that the spill has been contained.

The AER has taken a look at a "causation review" completed by Canadian Natural last month, as well as an independent technical review of the company's findings.

The independent review suggests the way in which Canadian Natural injected steam underground was a "fundamental cause" behind the incidents.

**AGREEMENTS IN PLACE WITH CUSTOMERS FOR GUYSBOROUGH LNG PLANT**

Nova Scotia's energy minister says he welcomes news that Indian company H-Energy has signed memorandums of understanding with customers for half of the planned output from a proposed liquefied natural gas plant and export terminal in Guysborough County.

Andrew Younger says the agreements with companies in India, the Middle East and Europe increase the prospect of bringing more

natural gas through Nova Scotia. Younger says the memorandums of understanding help advance the proposed facility in Melford, N.S., which the company is aiming to have operational in 2020.

He says the \$3-billion development could produce 13.5 million tonnes of LNG per year.

The provincial government says H-Energy has yet to secure environmental approvals but plans to do so.

**CANADA BARELY OUT OF ICE AGE IN HARNESSING ARCTIC GROWTH**

The Arctic may be a hot commodity, with remarkable resource and tourism opportunities, but a conference has heard that Canada and the United States are barely out of the ice age when it comes to harnessing its growth.

Business and political leaders from both countries heard Wednesday that while Russia is building more than a dozen icebreakers to transport liquefied natural gas to Asia, jurisdictions in Alaska, the Yukon and Northwest Territories are still trying to organize business meetings.

"Despite the very good practical relations between Canada and Alaska and the territories, we still have two kinds of solitudes in respect of each one reporting to their federal governments far away," said Canadian Arctic expert John Higginbotham.

"What we need is high-level political

and high-level business attention to the Arctic development in that region if we are ever going to keep up with the very rapid developments that Russia and Norway and Sweden and other countries are investing in."

The Russians are developing a northern sea route through which atomic-powered icebreakers will move oil, gas and LNG to Asian customers, said Higginbotham who heads the Arctic program at the think-tank known as the Centre for International Governance Innovation.

"There's great interest. They (the Russians) realize what the melting Arctic is going to mean over the next 20, 30, 40 years for commerce, for economic development," he said. "(For us) the penny has yet to fully drop, but the consciousness is increasing."

Delegates attending the annual Pacific Northwest Economic Region Summit in Whistler, B.C., heard that Arctic development in Alaska and Canada's northern territories is ripe with potential, but cross-border co-operation is required.

Higginbotham said he's encouraged that an organization like PNWER, which represents 10 states, provinces and territories, has focused on strengthening northern ties.

"There's going to have to be a breakthrough in terms of co-operation and investment," he said. "The responsibility falls on both the federal governments, the regional governments and particularly on business communities. It's up to North America to get

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its act together in the Arctic." University of Victoria public administration Prof. Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly said Russia pulls 37 per cent of its gross domestic product from the Arctic while Canada earns less than 10 per cent.

He said the Russian economy has tapped into the Arctic in a massive way, while North America is barely touching its potential.

"That's why the discussion on the Arctic here at PNWER shows that even the business community in the northern part of North America is still at the level where they are organizing themselves," said Brunet-Jailly. "The Russians have done this a quarter century ago. They are ahead of the deal."

But Alaska State Rep. Bob Herron said recent increased U.S. State Department attention and Canada's consistent focus on Arctic development has him confident the region is on track to realize its potential.

"Arctic awareness is going to have to be treated just like a campaign," he said. "Just like a company trying to sell a product. Arctic awareness is important not only to the United States, not only to Canada, but to the world. It's just that that education process has begun but sometimes that education takes a long time."

**GREENPEACE, INUIT JOIN TO FIGHT ARCTIC SEISMIC TESTING FOR OIL AND GAS**

Greenpeace and the Inuit are joining

forces to protest Arctic seismic testing, warning Ottawa that its plans to gauge oil and gas reserves with high-intensity sound waves pose grave dangers to marine life.

Inuit activists are staging a protest Wednesday in Nunavut's Clyde River, a tiny Baffin Island hamlet just above the Arctic Circle, a week after Greenpeace took their cause to the United Nations.

Environment Minister Leona Aglukkaq took aim at Greenpeace this week, challenging the environmental group's opposition to the seal hunt and alleging it's using the Inuit to advance its own causes.

But an Inuit environmentalist is turning the tables on Aglukkaq, a Nunavut MP, accusing the Conservative government of "cultural genocide" for its efforts to open up the Arctic to oil and gas exploration.

Niore Iqalukjuak says the Inuit depend on the Arctic waterways for food and that Inuit lives depend on them.

Greenpeace railed against the commercial seal hunt in the 1980s, but recently apologized for the detrimental impact that campaign had on the Inuit.

**WATSON ISLAND SAGA CONTINUES**

The soap-opera that is Watson Island took another turn last week, with the introduction of a new player as the epic saga enters its eighth year.

First it was Sun Wave Forest Products back in 2006, a relationship that ended in a lengthy court battle, followed by the suitors of WatCo

in 2012, which once again ended in the two sides on opposing sides of the courtroom. Now we have Watson Island LNG (WILNG), council's latest hope to return the former pulp mill to an economic generator for the city coffers.

Council will have to forgive residents if they don't break out the confetti and party hats to celebrate this latest agreement – aside from the two failed sales, there seems to be a lot of questions about the capability of WILNG to create a meaningful industrial entity on the North Coast.

First and foremost, WILNG appears to be a small fish in a big pond. With LNG competitors including state-owned energy companies like Petronas, international energy giants like ExxonMobile, Chevron and the BG Group and Canadian energy giants like Shell Canada, the incorporated-in-April WILNG could be likened putting a guppy in a shark tank. Given that none of these companies with nearly

limitless resources have made a final investment decision, one would be excused if they didn't hold their breath.

Then there's the cost of remediation of the site, pegged at more than \$50 million. Facing an infrastructure deficit nearing \$200 million, the city certainly doesn't have the money to pay for that cleanup and the province is MIA. It's going to take a lot of money to clean the site, which is a huge hurdle to any startup company.

And then there is the ongoing court challenge from WatCo. While Mayor Jack Mussallem believes oral contracts aren't enforceable, a quick Google search indicates otherwise. And, given the length of the last court battle over Watson Island, the likelihood this case is settled before the exclusivity agreement with WILNG runs out at the end of the year seem extremely slim.

Many hope WILNG succeeds, but there are many obstacles to be overcome.

**LOST WILL & TESTAMENT**

My father has passed away and am unable to locate his last will & testament as I do not have the name or contact information of his legal representatives.



Name: Kurt R. Ziemann  
Date of Birth: 23 Sept 1929  
Date of Death: 26 Jan 2014  
Place of Birth: Ossowo, krs. Preussche Stargard, Prussia (Germany)

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