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From: Leanne Carter-James

Sent: Wednesday, 18 July 2007 8:50 AM

Subject: FW: BROADCAST :OCEANFREIGHT : LOS ANGELES EXPORT : Potential for strike at the port of LA / Long Beach

[Update : Wednesday 17th July 2007](#)

Negotiation between parties has not reached a resolution at this point. Further talks are scheduled for Wednesday US time.

Specific Freight will continue to keep you apprised of this situation.

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LONG BEACH, July 17, 2007 - After long hours at the bargaining table aimed at avoiding a strike at the nation's largest port complex,

negotiators for a clerical workers union and their employers went home having yet to agree on the terms of a new contract.

Talks were postponed until Wednesday because the employers' lead negotiator needed to attend to a family medical issue,

representatives for both sides said late Monday.

Union employees will continue to work at the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach while negotiations were considered ongoing. No new strike deadline has been set.

The parties have been holed-up at an event centre in Long Beach trading contract proposals since Sunday afternoon. A first strike deadline set by the union passed just after midnight Sunday, but both sides agreed to continue discussions.

A work stoppage could effectively shut down loading and unloading operations at the neighbouring ports if longshoremen honour picket lines, as they've indicated they would.

The port complex accounts for 40 percent of all cargo container traffic coming into the United States.

The more than 750 clerks at the harbour work for 14 terminal operators and other firms and handle bookings for the export of cargo and other transport documents.

The office clerical unit, Local 63, of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union, submitted its latest proposal Monday evening, and by the time the talks broke off, their employers were considering it.

John Fageaux Jr., the local's president, declined to provide specifics of the shop's latest proposal, saying there were sticking points on wages, job security and health and

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pension benefits.

Steve Berry, lead negotiator for the companies, said one counterproposal was given to the union Monday evening.

"We're working hard. We just keep going," said Berry, who had to attend to the family medical issue.

Under their most recent contract, full-time, port clerical workers earned about \$37.50 an hour, or \$78,000 a year. They also receive a pension, health care benefits free of premiums, and 20 paid holidays a year.

Berry said the employers' latest offer included raises that over the life of a three-year contract would bump the employees' hourly pay to \$39.50; the union is seeking increases that would equal \$53 per hour by the last year of the contract.

If the parties can't come to agreement, the union has vowed to strike.

"We will not leave this facility without an agreement - or we're on strike," Fageaux said.

A strike could create ripple effects throughout many industries that depend on timely movement of cargo. It also would come as the ports enter their busy pre-holiday season, when shippers depend on the facilities to handle imports.

In 2002, longshore workers across the West Coast were locked out for 10 days over a contract dispute. The shutdown cost the nation's economy an estimated \$1 billion to \$2 billion a day.

Thanks and best regards  
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-----Original Message-----

**From:** Leanne Carter-James

**Sent:** Tuesday, 17 July 2007 10:56 AM

**Subject:** BROADCAST : OCEANFREIGHT : LOS ANGELES EXPORT : Potential for strike at the port of LA / Long Beach

Below is an article from the LA Times. The article strikes a positive tone and we have reason to believe imminent resolution between parties will see strike threats withdrawn.

We are monitoring this situation with our colleagues on the ground in Long Beach and shall keep you posted on progress.

Should you wish to discuss a particular shipment please call our office direct.

### Potential Work Stoppage at the Los Angeles and Long Beach Ports

Ronald D. White of LA Times, reported:  
4:39 AM PDT, July 16, 2007

The prospect of a work stoppage at the Los Angeles and Long Beach ports faded at least temporarily late Sunday as union negotiators studied an eleventh-hour proposal from shipping lines and terminal operators.

The 930-member ILWU office clerical union (OCU - Local 63) of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union had vowed to strike just after midnight Monday morning if no agreement had been reached.

But representatives of the world's largest shipping lines and terminal operators sweetened their offer on salary and pension benefits up from 13% over the last contract to more than 14%. The union then asked for time to study the proposal, and they were still analyzing it as of 4:25 a.m. Monday.

"The early-morning shift of workers at the port has already begun," said Stephen Berry, an attorney negotiating for the companies. "That's a good sign. The longer we talk, the better."

The union participants didn't discuss the new proposal but said they felt a little progress had been made. Whether it would be enough to avert a strike, however, remains unclear.

The local is small but has powerful allies at the port. The entire 15,000-member ILWU has said it will honor picket lines if a strike or lockout occurs.

There hasn't been a shutdown of the ports since a West Coast-wide labor dispute in the fall of 2002

Update - Post Script

The Union is evaluating the current offer and discussions will resume at 5:00 PM (PST).

Thanks and best regards  
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