Delayed decision hasn’t cooled container terminal fight

By Tyler Orton, September 15, 2021

For the past six months, a container ship that has terminal in question has been waiting to dock at the port of Vancouver, but the decision on where to build the new terminal remains uncertain. “We’ve been waiting for regulatory approval in June,” said Nelson Bennett, vice president of operations at GCT Global Terminals, the operator of the Deltaport container terminal at Roberts Bank. “The ship is ready to dock, but we don’t know where it’s going to dock.”

While the port authority is adamant that the new terminal is crucial to meet increased container capacity demand on the West Coast, opponents are equally adamant that there are more cost-effective and environmentally sustainable ways to do so. “It’s not just us saying that,” said Emsley. “It’s independent experts and the positive outlook for container trade recovery post-COVID-19, that this generational project is needed to facilitate the movement of goods to and from the province.”

Despite this, Emsley said he remains optimistic the federal government will reject Terminal 2, because of public pressure over leveraging private sector investment instead of putting public funds towards the project. “We expect the government to reject Terminal 2, because of public pressure over leveraging private sector investment,” said Emsley. “We’ve had a strong campaign to ensure a fair process of assessing DP4’s merits when compared to Terminal 2. The VFPA has said the port would benefit from a different project. The VFPA is the operator of the GCT Deltaport container terminal at Roberts Bank.”

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