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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services

### FACILITATOR APPOINTED IN PORT DISPUTE

SURREY – The provincial and federal governments have appointed a facilitator to lead talks aimed at resolving the dispute involving container truck drivers serving the Port of Vancouver, Labour Minister Michael de Jong and Federal Labour Minister Joe Fontana announced today.

Veteran mediator Vince Ready will convene talks immediately to discuss compensation for truck drivers who move containerized freight in and out of the port.

As well, the federal government will launch an inquiry under the Canada Labour Code to look into traffic issues at the port and recommend ways to resolve problems facing the truck drivers.

“Over the last few days my senior officials have been in intense discussions with their federal counterparts around the best way to bring an end to this dispute,” de Jong said. “We have also had a request from the parties to intervene.

“There are two distinct elements in play here. The first is the adequacy of trucking rates in light of increasing fuel costs. We’ve asked Mr. Ready to sit down as quickly as possible with the drivers and the trucking companies and work out a reasonable and practical plan to deal with compensation.

“There is also an issue here with respect to other industrial relations problems affecting truck drivers serving the Port of Vancouver. I’m very encouraged that Minister Fontana is going to appoint an inquiry to address these concerns.”

“I will be releasing the details of the inquiry next week after my officials have consulted with the various parties involved in the dispute,” said Fontana. “In the meantime I join Minister de Jong in encouraging the parties to work with the facilitator to resolve this dispute quickly.”

De Jong added that, as a sign of good faith, he hoped the parties would agree to stand down job action while the facilitator does his work and the federal inquiry is under way.

De Jong also expressed thanks to B.C.’s Transportation Minister, Kevin Falcon. “Every day since this dispute began, Kevin has been out there reminding everyone how important it is that the parties sit down and constructively negotiate a solution. Keeping this issue front and centre has been a big factor in moving everyone forward towards a resolution.”

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