

Railway carloadings, September 2012

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The Canadian railway industry carried 27.0 million tonnes of freight in September, down 2.1% from the same month in 2011. The drop was attributable to decreased traffic from both domestic and international rail operations and it marked the first September decline since 2009.

On the domestic front, combined loadings of non-intermodal traffic (in which freight is moved via box cars or loaded in bulk) and intermodal traffic (in which freight is moved via containers and trailers on flat cars) fell 2.1% to 23.8 million tonnes.

Domestic non-intermodal freight loadings declined 2.1% to 21.4 million tonnes. The decrease in freight volume was attributable to reduced loadings in more than half of the commodity groups carried by the railways. Chief among these were potash, coal, and iron and steel—primary or semi-finished.

Despite the drop, a number of commodity groups posted increases in tonnage, with the largest gains seen in wheat and fuel oils and crude petroleum.

Domestic intermodal loadings also declined, falling 1.6% to 2.4 million tonnes. The drop was the result of decreased activity in both containerized cargo shipments and trailers on flat cars.

Within Canada, the Western Division accounted for 59.0%, or 14.0 million tonnes, of the combined non-intermodal and intermodal freight loadings. This marked a 0.7% decline from the same month a year earlier. The remainder of the freight was loaded in the Eastern Division. For statistical purposes, cargo loadings from Thunder Bay, Ontario, to the Pacific Coast are classified to the Western Division while loadings from Armstrong, Ontario, to the Atlantic Coast are classified to the Eastern Division.

Rail traffic received from United States connections fell 2.1% to 3.2 million tonnes. The decline in tonnage was attributable to decreased non-intermodal shipments, as intermodal freight traffic saw an increase.

Available without charge in CANSIM: table 404-0002.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2732.

The September 2012 issue of *Monthly Railway Carloadings*, Vol. 89, no. 9 (52-001-X, free), is now available from the *Key resource* module of our website under *Publications*.

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