

Railway carloadings, May 2013

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Freight carried by Canadian railways rose 12.9% to 29.3 million tonnes in May as the industry saw a strong increase in domestic freight traffic over May 2012 levels. Domestic shipments more than offset a decline in traffic received from United States connections.

Within Canada, combined loadings of non-intermodal freight (that is, cargo moved via box cars or loaded in bulk) and intermodal freight (that is, cargo moved via containers and trailers on flat cars) rose 15.5% to 26.0 million tonnes. The volume of domestic tonnage loaded marks the highest amount for the month of May since 1999.

Non-intermodal loadings rose 15.9% to 23.3 million tonnes. The gains were widespread as higher loadings were reported in 45 of the 64 commodity groups. Leading the way were commodity loadings of iron ores and concentrates (up 562 000 tonnes), fuel oils and crude petroleum (up 468 000 tonnes), potash (up 385 000 tonnes), and coal (up 367 000 tonnes). Shipments related to fuel oils and crude petroleum and potash represent record haulages for the month of May.

Intermodal loadings rose 12.3% to 2.7 million tonnes. The increase was tied to gains in both containerized cargo shipments and trailers loaded onto flat cars.

From a geographic perspective, both the Western and Eastern railway divisions in Canada saw increased loadings in May. The Western Division, which accounted for 58.5% of the domestic freight loadings, rose 17.9% from the same month in 2012 to 15.2 million tonnes. The Eastern Division accounted for the remainder of the loadings and increased 12.2% to 10.8 million tonnes. 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 3.9% to 3.3 million tonnes. The decrease in traffic was spurred by a drop in non-intermodal loadings.

Available in CANSIM: table 404-0002.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2732.

The May 2013 issue of *Monthly Railway Carloadings*, Vol. 90, no. 5 (52-001-X), is now available from the *Browse by key resource* module of our website under *Publications*.

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