

Cape in pier smash

A K Line chartered capesize bulker has destroyed a coal conveyor at North America's largest coal exporting port.



The incident took place early on Friday as the 180,310-dwt **Cape Apricot** (built 2004) arrived at Westshore Terminals near Vancouver in Canada.

The ship went right through a trestle taking out a road, the coal-carrying conveyor belt, and electric and water lines.

The incident has put the berth out of service for an indefinite period of time, affected the port's ability to export coal and disrupted customer deliveries.

The loss of the berth, which handles ships with a cargo capacity up to 260,000t, is a significant blow to Westshore, which has one other berth which can handle capesize ships.

A spokesman for the port said staff are assessing damage to the berth and would have a better idea by Monday. He added that there was little damage to the **Cape Apricot**.

The cause of the collision remains unknown but Canada's Transportation Safety Board is investigating. The ship had a pilot on board.

The terminal is the main shipping point for metallurgical coal from Teck Resources in British Columbia and for thermal coal from mines in the US Midwest.

Teck Resources said it would continue to use Westshore's remaining berth, but will be shifting capacity to Neptune Terminals in North Vancouver to maintain export volumes.

It also said it will be exploring options for moving additional tonnage to Pacific Coast Terminals in Port Moody and Ridley Terminals in Prince Rupert.

"Our preliminary assessment is that we will meet or exceed our sales guidance of 6.2mt for the fourth quarter," Teck Resources said.

"As there is inventory space available at Westshore, we do not expect this incident to have a material impact on coal production for the fourth quarter."

The incident is being viewed by critics as ammunition in their fight against the growing volume of coal exports through Port Metro Vancouver.

Environmentalists said the accident reinforces their arguments that a proposed expansion of coal export capacity needs a full public review.

The port is considering applications by Fraser Surrey Docks and Neptune Terminals in North Vancouver to expand coal exports, but is not planning on holding a public review.

Westshore, which is around 32km south of Vancouver and right on the US border, handled a record 27.3mt of coal and loaded 277 ships in 2011.

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