

## NATIONAL MUNICIPAL RAIL SAFETY WORKING GROUP

In response to municipal rail safety concerns, highlighted by the train derailment and explosion in Lac-Mégantic, Quebec, and rail bridge collapse and derailment in Calgary, Alberta, FCM President Claude Dauphin established a *National Municipal Rail Safety Working Group* comprised of municipal representatives from across the country. The group's objective is to support and inform FCM's discussions with the federal government on ensuring the safety of Canada's rail networks, and the communities in which they operate.

The working group is co-chaired by Mayor Doug Reycraft (Municipality of Southwest Middlesex), Chair of the Standing Committee on Municipal Infrastructure and Transportation Policy and Mayor Pauline Quinlan (Ville de Bromont), Chair, Quebec Caucus. Other working group members include Mayor Don Atchison (City of Saskatoon), President Bernard Généreux (Fédération québécoise des municipalités), Mayor Bernard Sévigny (Union des municipalités du Québec), President David Marit, (Chair, Rural Forum), Director Susie Gimse (Regional District of Squamish-Lillooet), Councillor Merrill Henderson (City of Moncton) and FCM President Claude Dauphin.

The members of the working group held their first meeting via teleconference on July 29, 2013 and approved the following guiding principles to address national municipal rail safety concerns:

- Ensuring the safety of Canada's rail transportation system must be a national priority and a clear federal responsibility.
- The government must respond to safety recommendations made by the Transportation Safety Board, and address previously identified safety deficiencies.
- Federal-municipal partnership is essential to ensuring rail safety.

Following today's in-person meeting in Montreal, the working group is calling on the federal government to continue working with municipalities to identify and take concrete measures in each of the following areas:

- **Equip and support municipal first responders to rail emergencies:**
  - Municipalities need to know what dangerous goods are being transported through their communities so local services can plan and respond effectively to emergencies.
  - Railways and federal agencies cannot plan for emergencies alone. Local governments and authorities must be involved as partners in emergency planning.
- **Ensure federal and industry policies and regulations address the rail safety concerns of municipalities:**
  - Rail incidents can have significant local, community impacts on public safety, the economy and the environment.
  - Municipal concerns must be included in federal government risk assessment and policy development on rail safety.
- **Prevent downloading of rail safety and emergency response costs to local taxpayers:**
  - Third party liability insurance systems must be strengthened to prevent the downloading of liability costs on taxpayers, even in the event of bankruptcies.