

Management's Discussion and Analysis

Business risks

In the normal course of business, the Company is exposed to various business risks and uncertainties that can have an effect on the Company's results of operations, financial position, or liquidity. While some exposures may be reduced by the Company's risk management strategies, many risks are driven by external factors beyond the Company's control or are of a nature which cannot be eliminated.

Reference is made to the section entitled Business risks of the Company's 2014 Annual MD&A, for a detailed description of such key areas of business risks and uncertainties with respect to: Competition, Environmental matters, Personal injury and other claims, Labor negotiations, Regulation, Security, Transportation of hazardous materials, Economic conditions, Pension funding volatility, Trade restrictions, Terrorism and international conflicts, Customer credit risk, Liquidity, Supplier concentration, Availability of qualified personnel, Fuel costs, Foreign exchange, Interest rate, Reliance on technology, Transportation network disruptions, and Weather and climate change, which is incorporated herein by reference. Additional risks and uncertainties not currently known to management or that may currently be considered immaterial by management, could also have an adverse effect on the Company's business.

There have been no material changes to the risks described in the Company's 2014 Annual MD&A. The following is an update on labor negotiations and regulatory matters.

Labor negotiations

Canadian workforce

On February 25, 2015, the tentative agreement reached between CN and the Teamsters Canada Rail Conference (TCRC) governing rail traffic controllers was ratified. The new collective agreement expires on December 31, 2018.

On March 13, 2015, the tentative agreements reached between CN and Unifor, governing clerical, intermodal employees and owner-operator truck drivers were ratified. The new collective agreements expire on March 31, 2019.

On March 17, 2015, the tentative agreement reached between CN and Unifor governing shopcraft employees was ratified. The new collective agreement expires on December 31, 2018.

On April 16, 2015, the tentative agreements reached between CN and the TCRC governing locomotive engineers were ratified. The new collective agreements expire on December 31, 2017.

The Company's collective agreements remain in effect until the bargaining process outlined under the *Canada Labour Code* has been exhausted for the respective bargaining units.

U.S. workforce

On March 19, 2015 the tentative agreement reached with the United Transportation Union (a division of the International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail, and Transportation Workers - SMART) governing conductors on the Grand Trunk Western was ratified. The moratorium period for the revised agreement ends on July 31, 2016.

Where negotiations are ongoing, the terms and conditions of existing agreements generally continue to apply until new agreements are reached or the processes of the *Railway Labor Act* have been exhausted.

Disputes relating to the renewal of collective agreements could potentially result in strikes, work stoppages, slowdowns and loss of business. Future labor agreements or renegotiated agreements could increase labor and fringe benefits expenses. There can be no assurance that the Company will be able to renew and have its collective agreements ratified without any strikes or lockouts or that the resolution of these collective bargaining negotiations will not have a material adverse effect on the Company's results of operations or financial position.

Regulation

Economic regulation – Canada

On March 28, 2015, Transport Canada announced that the Government of Canada would not renew the requirement for CN and Canadian Pacific Railway Company to transport minimum volumes of grain by rail after the Order in Council expired on March 28, 2015.

On June 18, 2015, Bill C-52, which was introduced by the Government of Canada on February 20, 2015, received Royal Assent and came into force. The bill requires railway companies to maintain minimum liability insurance coverage; and establishes a strict liability regime on railway companies up to their minimum insurance levels in respect of losses incurred as a result of a railway accident involving crude oil. Bill C-52 creates a fund capitalized through levies payable by the crude oil shipper to compensate for losses exceeding the railway company's minimum insurance level. Currently, the Company's liability insurance coverage exceeds the minimum required. The provisions relating to insurance requirements and the fund are expected to come into force in June 2016.

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Economic regulation – U.S.

On July 2, 2013, in a case brought by the freight railroad industry, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit determined that Congress' delegation to Amtrak in the *Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008* of joint legislative authority with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to promulgate certain performance standards for Amtrak passenger trains to be unconstitutional. On March 9, 2015, the Supreme Court vacated that decision and returned the case to the D.C. Circuit for review of constitutional claims not previously ruled upon. As a result, the joint FRA/Amtrak performance standards became applicable again on April 10, 2015, pending the D.C. Circuit's review.

On March 18, 2015, in the current session of the U.S. Congress, Surface Transportation Board (STB) re-authorization legislation was introduced in the Senate (S. 808). In addition to addressing arbitration and the Board's investigatory authority, the current bill would, among other things, further streamline the STB's rate-case review process, and extend current STB membership from three Commissioners to five. Numerous shipper organizations have registered their support for Bill (S. 808), while the freight railroads have decided to not oppose the bill in its current form. On March 25, 2015, Bill (S. 808) was approved by the Senate Commerce Committee and awaits further action by the full Senate.

On March 24, 2015, legislation was introduced in the Senate (S. 853) which would (among a number of other provisions) allow for reciprocal switching for junctions within 100 miles.

No assurance can be given that these or any other current or future regulatory or legislative initiatives by the Canadian and U.S. federal governments will not materially adversely affect the Company's results of operations or its competitive and financial position.

Safety regulation – Canada

On January 1, 2015, Transport Canada's new regulations governing railway operating certificates specifying the safety and operating requirements that must be met by railway companies in order to obtain an operating certificate came into effect. Railway companies have until September 1, 2016 to apply for a certificate.

On March 11, 2015 the Federal Minister of Transport announced that Transport Canada would be issuing new requirements for tank cars. The new standard, called TC-117, will include a large number of upgraded requirements. The Minister also announced a phase out schedule for the DOT-111 and CPC-1232 tank cars.

On April 1, 2015, the following Transport Canada regulations came into effect: (1) regulations setting out the administrative monetary penalties that could be issued for violation of the *Railway Safety Act* and its associated regulations; (2) regulations for highway-railway crossings which establish specific standards for new crossings and require that existing crossings be upgraded to basic safety standards within seven years, and specify safety related data that must be provided by railway companies on an annual basis; and (3) regulations modifying the requirements for safety management systems for both federally-regulated railway companies as well as local carriers operating on railway lines of federally-regulated carriers.

On June 18, 2015, Bill C-52 came into force, amending certain provisions in the *Railway Safety Act* and giving the Canadian Transportation Agency jurisdiction to order railway companies to compensate municipalities for the costs incurred in responding to fires caused by railway operations. Additional amendments increase the power of the Minister or its inspectors respecting threats to safe railway operations and the associated corrective measures.

Safety regulation – U.S.

On March 25, 2015, new legislation was introduced in the U.S. Senate (S. 859) which would, if approved by Congress and passed, among a number of other provisions, immediately ban the transport of crude in DOT-111 and unjacketed CPC-1232 tank cars. The bill also proposes to establish measures on volatility of crude level and increase the number of track inspections.

On May 8, 2015, the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) issued a final rule containing new requirements for tank cars moving in high-hazard flammable trains (HHFTs) and related speed restrictions, as well as other requirements, including the use of electronically controlled pneumatic (ECP) brakes. To be used in an HHFT, new tank cars constructed after October 1, 2015 will have to meet enhanced DOT Specification 117 design or performance criteria, while existing tank cars will have to be retrofitted based on a DOT-prescribed schedule. On June 12, 2015, the Association of American Railroads filed an administrative appeal with PHMSA challenging, among other matters, the agency's requirement for railroads to install ECP brakes on certain HHFTs.

No assurance can be given that these or any other current or future regulatory or legislative initiatives by the Canadian and U.S. federal governments will not materially adversely affect the Company's results of operations or its competitive and financial position.

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Positive train control – U.S.

On October 16, 2008, the U.S. Congress enacted the *Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008*, (H.R. 2095) which mandates the installation of an interoperable Positive Train Control system by December 31, 2015. Despite significant efforts, the Company, along with most of the industry, will not be able to meet this deadline. It remains uncertain whether Congress will extend the implementation deadline.

The Federal Railroad Administration has discretion under the law to impose fines and take other enforcement actions for moving traffic over non-compliant PTC-designated routes after the deadline. While it is too early to estimate the probability or the amount of total potential fines, the amount could be material if CN's implementation is delayed for a long period of time. In addition, any operation over non-compliant PTC-designated routes after the deadline could expose the Company to increased, and potentially material, liability. As a result, if the deadline is not extended, the Company may be forced to curtail certain operations over non-compliant PTC-designated routes until implementation has been completed or an extension has been legislated. A prolonged suspension of shipments of certain freight on these routes could have a material adverse effect on the Company's financial condition, results of operations or liquidity.

No assurance can be given that this or any other current or future regulatory or legislative initiative by the U.S. federal government will not materially adversely affect the Company's results of operations or its competitive and financial position.