

Federal investigators probing workplace death in Johnstown, Ont.



The Port of Johnstown on Tuesday, Jan. 31, 2023. (Nate Vandermeer/CTV News Ottawa)

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Federal regulators are investigating a workplace death that happened last week at the Port of Johnstown, Ont.

Steven Lennon, 53, died on the job just before 2 p.m. last Tuesday, according to police. Lennon was an employee of Logistec, a marine cargo handling company. He was pronounced dead at the scene.

Logistec is the parent company of Rideau Bulk Terminals, where the death happened.

The Labour Program, a federal institution that is part of Employment and Social Development Canada, is investigating the fatal incident because port services that cross provincial or international borders are federally regulated.

"The Government of Canada extends its deepest condolences to the families, friends, and coworkers of the victim of the fatal incident that occurred at Johnstown Port on January 24, 2023," an ESDC spokesperson said in a statement.

Lennon was from St-Bruno-de-Montarville, an eastern suburb of Montreal. It's unclear what happened that caused his death.

A spokesperson for Logistec, Katia Reyburn, said the company is providing assistance to the family and co-workers affected, and is fully cooperating with the federal investigation.

Logistec operates in more than 54 ports and 80 terminals across North America. The company employs about 3,200 people and has been operating for more than 65 years in North America.

Reyburn added that working at ports can be risky, and that health and safety is the company's number one priority.

The results of the probe won't be released publicly, the ESDC statement said. The Canada Labour Code limits the sharing of the investigative report to the workplace parties because they contain personal information.

"If non-compliance is identified, the Labour Program will ensure the employer's compliance by enforcing Part II of the Code through a series of escalating actions, depending on the seriousness of the contravention and the workplace parties' willingness to comply."

The company spokesperson said they would share more information publicly if they could once the investigation wraps up. It's unclear how long it will take.

Johnstown is on the St. Lawrence River about 90 kilometres south of Ottawa, near Prescott.