

Rail: Sixth delay in call for tenders

NELSON SERGERIE

GASPÉ - Yet another delay - the sixth - has occurred in the opening of bids for the last of the four major calls for tenders launched on March 21 for the rehabilitation of the railroad between Port-Daniel-Gascons and Gaspé.

The new date for opening the proposals is now set for August 22, although it was originally scheduled to be opened on April 22. The process has since been postponed five times.

The work involves repair-

ing two bridges in Gascons, one between Gascons and Newport, another in Newport and one in Douglastown. The bridge between Grande-Rivière and Sainte-Thérèse-de-Gaspé also needs to be replaced, along with a retaining wall in Pabos Mills.

On December 10, 2011, Via Rail suspended train service between New Carlisle and Gaspé due to the deterioration of the track and bridges. On August 13, 2013, the service was suspended between Matapédia and New Carlisle for the same reasons. A bus link was

offered until the end of September.

Since then, the Quebec government has announced \$872 million to rehabilitate the rail line between Matapédia and Gaspé.

The section between New Richmond and Port-Daniel-Gascons is expected to be back in service by the end of this year, and the section between Port-Daniel-Gascons and Gaspé by the end of 2026. Via Rail has consistently stated that it will return to the region once the rail line is fully repaired to Gaspé.



A section of the rail in the Bourg de Pabos sector of Chandler

Photo: N. Sergerie