

Bad weather and mechanical failure results in VIA Rail train delays

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The March 7-8 VIA Rail passenger train between Halifax and Montreal took almost 48 hours to travel between the two cities, instead of the 23 scheduled hours, due to a snowstorm and a mechanical failure that plagued one of its two locomotives. Instead of reaching Montreal around 10 a.m. on Saturday, March 8, it arrived at that time, but on Sunday morning, March 9. “Our son took that train in Campbellton, thinking that he would reach Montreal on time to catch his Amigo Express ride (to the Outaouais region) but he had to cancel this lift, and three more later on Saturday, as the train remained stuck in Rimouski for close to 12 hours because the track had to be plowed. An extra locomotive also had to be brought to Rimouski to replace the engine that had a mechanical problem,” explained Rachel Leblanc, of Saint-Siméon. Up to 152 passengers were on the train when the mechanical problem slowed down and eventually stopped the train in Rimouski. VIA Rail did not offer refunds to the passengers who requested them, limiting its compensation to travel credits in the Quebec City-Windsor corridor.