

Freight car derailment causes headaches for Montreal-Halifax Via train

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Mont-Joli is 30 kilometres northeast of Rimouski.

The derailment of a CN freight car in the Mont-Joli region in the Lower St. Lawrence is causing headaches for Via Rail's service in the Maritimes.

The derailment forced a passenger train that left Montreal Friday evening for Halifax to stop in Mont-Joli around 3:20 a.m. Saturday.

The 91 passengers waited between five and seven hours before boarding three buses to continue on their way Saturday morning. The train was supposed to stop in Matapédia, Campbellton, Bathurst, Miramichi, Moncton, Truro and Halifax.

It's not known what was in the freight car that derailed, nor when the track is expected to reopen. The cause of the derailment also isn't known.

"It's not the trip they were expecting. On board they can eat in the restaurant car, others can sleep in the sleeper cars (and)...take in the scenery in our dome cars, so it's not at all the same type of trip that we're offering them because of this incident," said Mylène Bélanger, the spokesperson for Via Rail Canada.

"Verifications are underway to find out the state of the infrastructure," Bélanger added.

The same passenger train is supposed to leave Halifax on Sunday to return to Montreal. Via Rail is in contact with passengers to update them on the situation.