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## **RSZ can become prime transporters of bulk commodities – union**

By MUKULA MUKULA

The Railway Workers Union of Zambia (RWUZ) says Railway Systems of Zambia (RSZ) can become the preferred transporters of bulk commodities once the network is adequately rehabilitated.

RWUZ president, Kelly Kazika, said in an interview that RSZ could treble its business with the mines from the current 176,000 metric tones (MT) of copper cathodes and concentrate to 600,000 MT every three months.

Mr Kazika said acid import by the mines stand at 183,000 MT per quarter but could rise to an average of 600,000 MT once the railway network was rehabilitated.

He said since Government announced the new mineral taxes, RSZ has seen a drastic reduction in the importation of acid by the mines.

RSZ has sufficient locomotive power to haul up to 3.5 million MT of cargo per annum (an equivalent of 300,000 trucks carrying the same cargo on the roads.)

But RSZ was facing the huge challenge of vandalism by scrap metal dealers who, in some instances, were removing entire slippers and still.

He said the railway line from Ndola to Luanshya had completely been removed and that it would cost Government and RSZ billions of Kwacha to replace it.

Management at the RSZ plans to hold discussions with the chiefs, local councilors and members of Parliament where the railway line assesses to see how best they could assist in curbing the rampant vandalism of rail installations.

RSZ took over Zambia Railways under a concession agreement in 2003.

