

THE LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEER

NEWSLETTER • APRIL 2002

Engineers picket CSXT

Informational picketing focuses on professionalism of engineers, exclusion of BLE from remote control

For two days in March, members of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers conducted informational picketing against CSX Transportation along the route of a special train carrying the railroad's Board of Directors from New Orleans to Nashville.

The purpose of the informational picketing was to remind corporate officers that locomotive engineers are the rail industry's most highly trained and productive workers — they are the true professionals whom the railroad should

be relying upon to operate cutting-edge remote control technology that it introduced earlier this year.

Overall, approximately 300 BLE members participated in the March 5-6 campaign. At key points along the 600-mile route, including New Orleans, Birmingham, Mobile, Montgomery and Nashville, BLE members lined the tracks with picket signs and large banners. On March 5, the banners carried

See Informational Pickets, Page 4



Locomotive Engineers conduct informational picketing at Calera, Ala.

ID to create Passenger Service Dept.



Seated, from left: T.C. Brennan, ID Staff Counsel; R.J. Darcy, Division 373 Local Chairman; and R.J. Nunziato, PATH General Chairman. Standing, from left: M.B. Kenny, Amtrak General Chairman; R.G. Dixon, SEPTA General Chairman; R.A. Vallochi, New Jersey Transit General Chairman; R.M. Evers, Long Island Rail Road General Chairman; and E.W. Rodzwick, BLE First Vice-President & Alternate President.

International President Don M. Hahs announced in early April that the BLE is in the process of establishing a Passenger/Commuter Service Department to improve the services it provides to all passenger railroad general committees of adjustment.

At the request of the passenger general chairmen, President Hahs named First Vice-President E.W. Rodzwick to head the department. He will be assigned to represent the ID on their respective properties.

The announcement came after months of discussions between the ID and the passen-

ger general chairmen, who represent engineers on Amtrak, Long Island Rail Road, METRA, Metro North, New Jersey Transit, PATH and SEPTA.

More information will be provided in upcoming editions of the *Locomotive Engineer Newsletter*. •

BLE ratifies deal with CN's Wisconsin Central Division

On March 13, the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers announced ratification of a ground-breaking labor agreement with the Wisconsin Central Division (WCD) of Canadian National.

"Negotiations were launched well in advance of the expiration of the current

agreement because of a strong labor and management interest in exploring alternative methods of compensating operating employees," BLE International Vice-President Rick Radek said.

"In contrast with standard Class 1 railroad mileage- and rule-based wage systems, this

progressive agreement is based on a concept of hourly wage and job guarantees. We believe this less complex pact should lead to more cooperative and less adversarial relations between labor and management."

See Wisconsin Central, Page 7

BLE files lawsuit over remote control

Secretary of Transportation Mineta, FRA Administrator Rutter named as defendants

The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers filed a lawsuit on March 22 in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia over the issue of remote control locomotives.

The lawsuit claims that Secretary of Transportation Norman Mineta and Federal Railroad Administrator (FRA) Allan Rutter have not lived up to their responsibilities in administering the Federal Railroad Safety Act of 1970, and

the Locomotive Inspection Act, which regulates interstate commerce and safety in the railroad industry.

In January, six of the nation's largest railroads (Burlington Northern Santa Fe, CSX Transportation, Norfolk Southern, Union Pacific, Conrail, and Kansas City Southern) began operating locomotives in terminal opera-

See Remote Control, Page 5

Teamsters, BLE meet again

Members of the BLE's Executive Committee will meet with members of the Teamsters General Executive Board in early April to discuss the proposed merger or affiliation of the two unions.

As this issue of the *Newsletter* went to press, BLE International President Don M. Hahs had assigned First Vice-President & Alternate President Ed Rodzwick and General Secretary-Treasurer William C. Walpert to attend meetings

at Teamster headquarters in Washington D.C., on April 3, 4 and 5.

The purpose of the meetings will be to expand on the groundwork created at a March 6 meeting between BLE President Hahs and Teamster President James P. Hoffa. At that meeting, the two presidents agreed on a basic structure to govern the discussions.

See Teamsters, Page 3



BLE NEWS

BLE measure would improve Pa. rail safety

On March 12, the Pennsylvania House of Representatives passed legislation supported by the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers to improve rail safety on the vast network of tracks that crisscross and flow through the Commonwealth.

The legislation was sponsored by State Rep. Mike Veon (D-Beaver Falls). Rep. Richard Geist (R-79), Chairman of the Pennsylvania Transportation Committee, also worked closely with the BLE and pushed for passage of the bill.

The bill's language deals with the unsafe practice of operating locomotives in "reverse" or backwards fashion. The bill also addresses the issues BLE raised over potential health concerns train crew members face when required to operate diesels backwards, creating heightened exposure to noxious diesel emissions.

According to BLE Pennsylvania State Legislative Board Chairman Ken Kertesz, the idea for this legislation was first developed by former BLE Pennsylvania State Chairman Norman Hendrickson, who retired in 2000.

"However, the Board continued to work hard to get where we got today," Brother Kertesz said.

He thanked Board officers Bob Sorg, Jim O'Neill, Dave Caniff and all the Division Legislative Repre-

sentatives who assisted on the project.

"Last, but not least, Mabel Grotzinger, GIA Vice President, assisted us tremendously in getting this legislation the attention it deserved," Chairman Kertesz said.

Veon's measure (H.B. 1247) would prohibit large freight locomotives from operating in reverse or in the backup position on main and secondary lines. Exceptions include emergency situations, switching operations and passenger transportation. The bill passed the House 198-1, and it will now be referred to the Pennsylvania Senate Transportation Committee for action.

"Operating a large freight in reverse forces engineers into a contorted position that keeps them from seeing instruments and gauges while facing the direction of movement and checking trackside signals, and it subjects them to the back draft of noxious fumes from the train's smoke stack," said Veon, who represents the 14th Legislative District.

Railroad companies may run trains backward over thousands of grade crossings for as long as 12 hours, endangering the public and causing undue fatigue on engineers. Moving in reverse, the crew could have as much as 75 feet of high-hood locomotive in front of them, reducing their ability to see cars

or pedestrians on the crossings.

"Really, what these operators face is equivalent to what motorists would face if they were forced to drive their cars in reverse at a high rate of speed around curves and bends in the road over a long period of time," Veon said. "It is a risky situation that we need to fix for the state's 1,300 locomotive engineers."

Veon's bill would affect reverse operations that are common practice for larger freight trains used by companies such as CSX and Norfolk Southern, which together operate 90 percent of the freight in Pennsylvania. Smaller railroads and short lines would be exempt from the bill because they typically operate for short distances at relatively low speeds.

Veon's legislative district borders the Conway rail yard, Norfolk Southern's single largest rail classification yard, featuring an engineer training center and locomotive shop, among other facilities. A network of tracks extends from the yard and spreads throughout Beaver County as part of the northeast transportation system.

The Veon proposal was modeled after a similar measure in Maine, which now has a law in place to prohibit reverse operations for all trains. •

NEWS BRIEFS

CSX CEO was paid \$10 million in 2001

CSX Corp. Chairman and Chief Executive John Snow's compensation package for fiscal 2001 amounted to \$10 million, including \$7.1 million in restricted stock awards, according to a news article at CBSMarketwatch.com.

Snow's salary for the year was \$1.2 million with a \$1 million bonus, compared with a \$1 million salary and no bonus in 2000, according to a proxy filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

The executive also received \$753,057 in other compensation, the filing said, that included personal benefits, like life insurance premiums, and matching contributions under the company's savings plan.

In addition, CSX granted Snow options for 800,000 shares of the company's common stock. The options have an estimated value of \$8 million, the filing said. •

UP execs get big stock incentives

The chairman and chief executive of Union Pacific Corp. received \$6.5 million in stock incentives plus \$1.2 million in compensation for 2001.

Richard K. Davidson's salary was \$1.1 million and he was given other compensation of \$107,945, according to a regulatory filing.

Davidson also received \$4.5 million in restricted stock awards and nearly \$2 million in stock options.

The president and chief operating officer of Union Pacific Railroad, I. Evans, received \$2.6 million in stock incentives plus a \$683,340 salary in 2001.

According to the Securities and Exchange Commission filing, Davidson and other executives chose to pass on \$7.8 million in 2001 cash bonuses in exchange for restricted stock equal to 150 percent of the amount of the bonuses. •

CP spinoff pays off for rail executives

Last year's breakup of Canadian Pacific Ltd. into five separate companies resulted in big payouts for executives at Canadian Pacific Railway.

Robert Ritchie, president and chief executive officer of CPR, pocketed \$8.6 million last year (all figures in Canadian dollars), including \$5.5 million by exercising stock options and \$1.7 million through a long-term incentive plan. He will also receive another long-term incentive bonus this year worth as much as \$1.7 million.

The four-year incentive plan was shortened by a year because of the breakup, according to the management proxy circular that was made available to shareholders on March 6.

The breakup also allowed executives to cash in options in Canadian Pacific Ltd. early and helped boost the value of those shares. Ritchie is sitting on another \$2.4 million in CPR stock options, some of which will not be exercisable for several years.

Ed Dodge, CPR's chief operating officer, made \$3.4 million in 2001, including \$2.8 million by exercising stock options. He will also receive a long-term bonus this year of as much as \$1 million.

Mike Waites, the railway's chief financial officer, made \$1.5 million in 2001, including \$1 million by exercising stock options. His long-term bonus will be as much as \$764,750 when it is awarded at the end of the year. •

CN's Tellier paid \$2.7 million in 2001

In 2001, Paul Tellier, the president and chief executive on Canadian National Railway, was paid more than \$2.7 million (figures in U.S. dollars) in salary, bonuses, and other compensation.

The package included \$904,159 in salary, a bonus of \$797,400, a long-term incentive payment of \$978,900 and other compensation of \$43,598.

In 2000, he took home a \$807,972 salary and \$605,979 bonus. •

Warrington to leave top Amtrak post

The president of Amtrak, George Warrington, plans to resign his post to become executive director of New Jersey Transit.

Reports indicate that Warrington would remain at Amtrak until an interim successor was named, but did not state when he would move to

New Jersey Transit.

Mr. Warrington, 49, has been president of Amtrak for four difficult years in which the railroad tried to end its reliance on operating subsidies from the federal government. Under a deadline set by Congress in 1997, Amtrak must meet its operating costs from internal revenues by the end of this year.

But Warrington has acknowledged that the deadline cannot be met, and Congress is threatening to dismantle the company. A panel recommended last month that Amtrak be broken up and the job of running trains be opened to competition. •

Here's why we need a long memory...

If there's ever a case where railroad workers need a long memory, consider Sen. Rick Santorum (R-Pa.), according to the newsletter of the Transportation Communications International Union (TCU), *TCU Interchange*.

During his re-election campaign in 2000, Santorum "wrote a letter to Pennsylvania rail workers and retirees... boasting of his support for the railroad retirement" reform bill Congress cleared in late December 2001.

"But once re-elected, he refused to co-sponsor the bill, then voted for killer amendments" which failed. "Having failed to defeat the bill that way," Santorum and others "ultimately voted in favor," *TCU Interchange* adds.

Hopefully, railroad workers in Pennsylvania will remember this if Santorum runs for re-election when his term expires in 2006. •

FRA to require safety plan before freight mergers

Freight railroads involved in proposed mergers must submit plans with the government during federal review of such deals to ensure safe operations, according to regulations approved by the Bush administration on March 18.

The new rule stemmed from safety lapses, some serious, during large-scale industry consolidation in the mid-1990s, the Federal Railroad Administration said. Two of those deals created the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway and bolstered Union Pacific Corp.

During subsequent deals, federal rail regulators and the Surface Transportation Board, the agency that evaluates the competitive impact of proposed rail mergers, agreed to obtain safety plans as a condition of review.

The rules made final on March 18 make safety plans a formal requirement to be overseen by the FRA.

"The adoption of these new rules is a clear recognition of the value the administration places on the safety of the nation's rail network and the effects consolidation can have on the industry," said FRA Administrator Allan Rutter. •

BLE, Teamsters begin discussions

Meetings scheduled for April 3-5 at Teamster headquarters

Teamsters

Continued from Page 1

The BLE will establish a series of committees based on geographical regions, which will reflect the regional structure of the Teamsters. The BLE committees will be made up of a General Chairman from each region, a state legislative board chairman from each region, and representatives of passenger engineers.

Both presidents also agreed that any agreement regarding merger or affiliation should have an escape clause for each organization.

The BLE Advisory Board voted unanimously to begin exploratory talks with the Teamsters regarding a merger or affiliation on February 26. The proposed action would give the BLE membership in the largest union in the AFL-CIO, and the largest transportation union in North America.

"Our two unions serve a common purpose of transporting goods from manufacturers to consumers," Hoffa said in the upcoming Spring 2002 issue of the *Locomotive Engineers Journal*. "By joining together, we will create a seamless transportation union under the umbrella of the AFL-CIO. That means that employers will no



At a recent meeting between BLE and Teamsters officials, from left: BLE International President Don M. Hahs; Teamsters General President James P. Hoffa; BLE First Vice-President & Alternate President Ed Rodzwick; and Vice-President & U.S. National Legislative Representative Raymond Holmes.

longer be able to pursue their divide-and-conquer strategy to weaken transportation labor.

"The Teamsters Union has considerable experience in this area. In recent years, we have formed partnerships with the International Longshoremen's Association and the International Longshore and Warehouse Union, both AFL-CIO affiliates, to help bring the power of union repre-

sentation to port workers across North America.

"The three unions agreed to respect each other's traditional jurisdictions, eliminate any competition at ports, and coordinate their efforts to organize non-union workers. That's how solidarity works," Hoffa said.

Details of the April 3-5 meetings will be available on the BLE website and the next issue of the *Newsletter*. •

BLE to conduct local chairman workshops

The BLE Education & Training Department is conducting three Local Chairman workshops in 2002, and the first is scheduled for May 12-17 on the campus of the George Meany Center in Silver Spring, Md.

These workshops are normally held on the campus of the Meany Center, often making it difficult for West Coast BLE members to attend. To help alleviate this problem, the BLE has scheduled a Local Chairman workshop from June 2-7 on the Clark Kerr Campus of U.C. Berkeley in California.

The third Local Chairman workshop is scheduled for October 13-18 at the Meany Center.

Among other assignments, the workshops will include BLE organizational structure and functions, representing members at disciplinary and decertification hearings, union leadership skills, claim and grievance handling, and writing and editing skills. Participants also will learn how to effectively use the BLE arbitration database. A highlight of the workshops is when attendees participate in a simulated disciplinary hearing.

These classes are not just for new Local Chairmen, and the BLE encourages all Local Chairmen to attend one of these workshops.

The BLE Education & Training Department presents these workshops in conjunction with the staff of the George Meany Center. Workshops instructors will include BLE General Secretary-Treasurer William C. Walpert, BLE Vice-President Richard K. Radek, Special Representative Ken Kroeger, and BLE Arbitration Department Manager Greg Ross. In addition, Donald Spatz, an adjunct professor from the George Meany Center, will instruct at the workshops.

The BLE pays the costs of books, equipment, tuition and a Thursday evening graduation banquet. BLE members who attend are responsible for the cost of room and board.

These workshops are in addition to the ones offered at the BLE's four regional meetings throughout 2002. However, the three week-long workshops are more intensive and the courses cover a wider-range of topics in more detail.

Registration is on a first come, first served basis with class size limited to the first 25 who register. About 15 slots still remain for the May workshop at the Meany Center. To register, please contact Ken Kroeger of the BLE Education & Training Dept. at (216) 272-0986 or <kroeger@ble.org>.

Date change announced for 2002 EUMA

Dates for the 64th annual Eastern Union Meeting Association were changed from August 18-23 to August 18-22, EUMA Arrangements Ken Kertesz announced.

The new schedule (subject to change) is as follows:

- Sunday, August 18 — Registration; EUMA kickoff with bus trip to Steamtown National Historic Site in Scranton, Pa., including a steam-powered train ride to the Poconos, departing the hotel at 1 p.m.; Return to hotel at 5:30 p.m. for evening buffet reception from 6:15 p.m. to 9 p.m.
- Monday, August 19 — Registration; Opening session; Speakers; Workshops; Evening cocktail party.
- Tuesday, August 20 — Closed meeting; Workshops; "Night at the Races" with dinner.
- Wednesday, August 21 — Golf; Family Day; Evening banquet
- Thursday, August 22 — Breakfast; Checkout.

Brother Kertesz and members of BLE Division 263 will host the 2002 EUMA at the Woodlands Inn & Resort in Wilkes-Barre, Pa. Nestled in the Northeastern Poconos, members will enjoy a discounted room rate of \$95 per night (plus tax) for a single or double. Room rates include a fully cooked breakfast each morning and a shuttle service to and from the Wilkes Barre-Scranton International Airport.

Reservations can be made by calling (570) 824-9831 or (800) 762-2222. Be sure to mention the EUMA in order to

receive the discounted room rate. Members can check out scenic views of the hotel at its website, <http://www.thewoodlandsresort.com>. However, BLE registration information is not available on the resort's website.

Tentative activities include a golf tournament, formal banquet, and a tour of the Poconos. For further details, contact Brother Kertesz by phone at (570) 675-2417 or by e-mail at: <kkertesz@dallas.gotmc.net>.

As a reminder, the other 2002 regional meetings are scheduled as follows:

- JUNE 16-20, 2002... 75th South-eastern Meeting Association, Virginia Beach, Va.

Chairman T.C. Emory is hosting the 2002 SMA at the Virginia Beach Resort Hotel & Conference Center from June 16-20, 2002. Discount room rates of \$99 per night have been secured and the reservation deadline is May 24, 2002. Reservations can be made by calling (800) 468-2722 (in Virginia please call (800) 422-4747). A dinner cruise is being planned as part of the festivities. Space is available on a first-come, first-served basis, so you must register as soon as possible if you are interested. For pre-registration form, please contact Brother T.C. Emory at 4912 Euclid Rd., Virginia Beach, VA 23462. E-mail requests can be sent to Brother Emory at: <ble456@mindspring.com>.

- JULY 21-25, 2002... 62nd Annual International Western Convention, Kennewick, Wash.

Hosted by Chairman William Amaya in the Tri-Cities area of Washington State, the 2002 IWC is a convention you will not want to miss. Guests will stay at the Westcoast Tri-Cities Hotel at: 1101 N. Columbia Center Blvd., Kennewick, WA 99336, and reservations can be made by calling (509) 783-0611. Mention the BLE convention to receive discounted room rates of \$85 per night (U.S. and Canadian currency).

For details, contact Chairman Amaya at (509) 628-8844 or by e-mail: <hottthrottle.will@verison.net>. IWC 2002, the "Unlimited Convention," will coincide with the "Unlimited Hydroplane" race series. Guests can extend their stays a few days to enjoy the Columbia Cup hydroplane race, one of the fastest sports on the planet.

- SEPTEMBER 23-26, 2002... 67th Annual Southwestern Convention Meeting, Ft. Worth, Texas.

Chairman Mark Banton and members of BLE Division 500 host the 2002 SWCM, to be held at the Radisson Hotel, 815 Main Street Fort Worth, Texas, 76102. Reservations can be made by calling (817) 870-2100. The tentative agenda is as follows: Monday, September 23: convention registration and golf tournament (8 a.m.); September 24: opening ceremony and barbecue dinner; September 25: workshops and formal banquet; and September 26: closed meeting and SWCM business meeting. For more details, contact Chairman Banton at (817) 641-4606. •

BLE NEWS

Sweeney to Boyd: 'Reaffiliation jeopardized'

AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney warned that current United Transportation Union raiding practices will seriously jeopardize the organization's chances of future reaffiliation with the House of Labor.

In a recent interview with BNA's Daily Labor Report (DLR), UTU President Byron Boyd suggested that the UTU would reaffiliate with the AFL-CIO "once the UTU prevails" in its single-craft effort before the National Mediation Board.

However, in a March 22 letter to Boyd, President Sweeney set the record straight.

"The UTU's continued effort before the National Mediation Board to overturn estab-

lished craft and class distinctions in the rail industry remains a violation of the constitution and bylaws of the AFL-CIO," Sweeney wrote. "While we remain open to the reaffiliation of your national union, such a reaffiliation continues to be jeopardized by this constitution violation.

"Should the UTU prevail in changing long-established craft and class rules, it would most certainly not clear the way for the UTU's return to the Federation, as you are quoted as suggesting in the DLR interview. To the contrary, it would remove any such possibility of future reaffiliation, as long as this matter is not resolved to

the satisfaction of our affiliate, the BLE."

Sweeney condemned the UTU raid and promised to aggressively defend the BLE, while at the same time expressing his willingness to seek a mutually acceptable resolution to the current situation, "But neither the AFL-CIO, nor our affiliated national unions, will stand by while your organization attempts to destroy another national labor organization," Sweeney said.

He reminded the UTU President that the AFL-CIO's Executive Council recently adopted a resolution "expressing strong support for the Brotherhood of Locomotive

"The AFL-CIO, nor our affiliated unions, will stand by while your organization attempts to destroy another national labor organization."

— AFL-CIO President John Sweeney to UTU President Byron Boyd

Engineers in this dispute and authorizing the Federation to take all possible steps to support our affiliate in this matter."

Sweeney also expressed regret that Boyd had canceled a meeting scheduled for March 12 between Sweeney, Boyd, and AFL-CIO Secretary-Trea-

surer Richard Trumka. "I remain willing to meet with you and discuss any issues that you believe need to be addressed," he wrote. "I reaffirm my suggestion that this matter be discussed face to face."

A copy of Sweeney's letter is available on the BLE website in PDF format. •

BLE informational picketing targets CSXT, remote control

Informational Pickets

Continued from Page 1

messages pointing out the role professional locomotive engineers play in the day-to-day safe operations of the railroad. On March 6, the banners emphasized the significant economic impact the craft of locomotive engineer has on the railroad's bottom line.

These positive messages drew considerable hand waves and responses from passengers on the Board of Directors Special.

At Birmingham and Nashville, leaflets were distributed to managers explaining many of the advantages engineers bring to the railroad's operating plan to increase productivity and safety.

In New Orleans, BLE members par-

ticipated in a Town Hall meeting with railroad management, the first such meeting along the route. Discussions at the New Orleans meeting were direct and to the point regarding remote control technology.

Management responses to BLE questions were direct. Jobs will be lost as a result of remote control, and CSXT said remote control was not the end of their search for cost-cutting measures. Managers said the railroad will activate approximately 85 remote control units on CSXT property during 2002.

At a similar town hall meeting in Birmingham, BLE General Chairman Cleatus Roy, CSXT-Western Lines, and General Chairman Tony Smith, CSXT-Eastern Lines, attended in support of their members' efforts. General Chairman Smith stressed that the CSXT



Locomotive Engineers conduct informational picketing at Calera, Ala.

Eastern and Western Lines pooled their efforts and worked collectively to make sure that the informational pickets were a success.

Organizers of the event, members of the BLE's National Mobilization Team, sent the following message to members of CSXT's Board of Directors:

"It is time for CSXT to acknowledge its engineers and the contribution they make to the total operating success CSXT has experienced in the past years," their statement reads. "CSXT is now number one in customer service, number one in reduction in derailments and fast closing in on Norfolk Southern in safety statistics. All these improvements are a direct result of locomotive engineers meeting the challenges of today's railroad by increasing productivity while, at the same time,

improving safety. Acknowledgement in this case means factoring locomotive engineers into their operating strategies for the future.

"(Remote control) is a matter of safety that cannot and will not be ignored," their statement continued. "It is also a matter of jobs and family security for many BLE members and railroad employees. It is the obligation of BLE leaders to resolve this issue and to preserve the rich tradition and future of locomotive engineers."

The BLE International Division and all CSX General Chairmen expressed their appreciation to the hundreds of BLE members who took their personal time to participate in this mobilization campaign. They also thanked General Chairman Gil Gore, Union Pacific-Southern Region, who gave his office and resources to help make this effort a success. •



Brother Brian T. Davis, a member of BLE Division 495 (Montgomery, Ala.), conducts informational picketing with assistance from his family in Montgomery.



Tommy Hudson (red shirt), Chairman of the Alabama State Legislative Board, gives an interview to members of the media during informational picketing in Birmingham, Ala.

Hahs responds to criticism from CSX Vice-President Crown

In a sharply worded reply to a misleading letter from CSX Executive Vice President A.F. Crown, BLE International President Don M. Hahs defended the BLE's rights and justifications in setting up informational pickets in March to inform members of the CSX Board of Directors about the BLE's position regarding remote control technology.

Hahs states that Crown's expression of "disappointment" over BLE members' decision to exercise their Constitutional rights by peacefully picketing is "particularly disturbing."

Crown's letter was sent to the four BLE General Chairmen who represent members on CSX, and expressed his opinion that the behavior of BLE members was inappropriate. He also made unsubstantiated comments that suggested that it was the BLE that refused to bargain with the carriers on the issue of remote control, the BLE President said.

"Your suggestion that it is this organization (the BLE), and not the company, that has somehow hidden the facts and declined to 'engage in meaningful dialogue' is pure rhetoric," Hahs wrote. "CSXT has never offered to bargain over remote control assignments. Instead, what you and the other carriers proposed was to 'brief' us on how you were going to take away our members' work in hope that we would walk away quietly."

Hahs refused to point out other inaccuracies in Crown's letter and suggested that these issues would best be taken up via collective bargaining and suggested a meeting regarding these issues.

"I urge you and all other carriers who are parties to the Letter of Intent entered into on September 26, 2001, to reconsider and meet with us to iron out a reasonable settlement of our differences," President Hahs wrote.

IN THE LINE OF DUTY

C.B. "Charlie" Smith

A BLE Local Chairman was struck and killed by an Amtrak train at approximately 12:30 a.m. near Wilmington, Del., on March 21.

Charles B. "Charlie" Smith, 35, was killed as he boarded his Norfolk Southern freight train just north of the Edgemore freight yard in Delaware. He was local chairman of BLE Division 484 in Delmar, Del.

According to preliminary reports, Brother Smith had just been transported to the train by the local trainmaster when the accident occurred. The trainmaster dropped off Brother Smith at the head of the 36-car train, then transported the conductor to the rear of the train for a routine inspection. It was at this time they noticed an Amtrak train headed north on the opposite track.

Sources familiar with the track in that area

speculate that Brother Smith either fell or was "sucked in" by the wind of the fast-moving Amtrak train.

"We'll probably never know what happened," said Everette M. Masten Jr., Secretary-Treasurer of Division 484 (Delmar, Del).

An Amtrak train reported to a dispatcher that it had hit something just north of Wilmington, Del., and Brother Smith's bag and lunch box were found on the platform of the lead engine.

Brother Smith, a resident of Greenwood, Del., was born on Oct. 15, 1966. He joined the BLE on Aug. 17, 1989, just prior to his 23rd birthday. He is survived by his wife and two children, a son, 18, and a daughter, 13.

"He was a very conscientious union representative and a good man," Brother Masten said. "He al-

ways had the interests of his men at heart. He was a good family man."

Brother Smith is the 26th BLE member killed in the line of duty since 1996 and the first this year. One year ago, Brother R.J. St. Marie, a member of BLE Division 366 (Houston), was killed in a crew transport vehicle while being transported to his off-duty location on March 21, 2001.

On behalf of the 59,000 men and women of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, BLE International President Don M. Hahs sent his deepest condolences to the Smith family.

Continuing a policy he initiated last year, President Hahs requested that the BLE flag atop the International Division headquarters in downtown Cleveland be flown at half staff following the death of a BLE member in the line of duty.

NTSB issues safety recommendation to CSXT

In a safety recommendation issued on March 21, the National Transportation Safety Board concluded that CSX Transportation's failure to sufficiently train and oversee a locomotive engineer, as well as a flawed operating rule, led to a fatal freight train derailment two years ago in Bloomington, Md.

One of cars involved in the Jan. 30, 2000, derailment destroyed a nearby home, killing a 15-year-old boy and seriously injuring his mother. Three other occupants of the home escaped without injury, and members of the train crew were not hurt. Overall, 76 of the train's 80 cars derailed, causing more than \$3.2 million in damages.

"The National Transportation Safety Board determined that the probable cause of the January 30, 2000, derailment of CSXT train V986-26 near Bloomington, Md., was the railroad's practice of including dynamic braking in determining maximum authorized speed without providing the engineer with real-time information on the status of the dynamic braking system," the NTSB safety recommendation stated.



"While the Bloomington accident engineer's actions do not appear to have directly caused or contributed to the accident, some of his actions, or some of his failures to act, reflect upon the efficacy of his supervision, training and support."

The engineer involved had been transferred from yard service to engine service just a few weeks before the derailment. The road foreman told him he could have a pilot for two roundtrips. For his first trip, a pilot was provided on the westbound leg (uphill) from Cumberland, Md., to Grafton, W.Va., which is the opposite direction of the accident. However, no pilot was provided for the second leg of the trip.

"The engineer said that when he was called for his second trip, he asked that a pilot accompany him on the return to Cumberland," the report states.

"But, he said, a crew caller told him that the crew caller and the lead crew caller would decide whether the engineer needed a pilot and, if so, would provide one. No pilot was provided."

According to company records, no CSXT supervisor had ridden with the engineer while he operated a train

down the 17-mile grade to monitor his performance or to provide specific train handling instruction and guidance, "even though this area was a critical train handling portion of the railroad," the NTSB said.

The NTSB recommended that, in the future, CSXT provide engineers with pilots when appropriate. It also recommended that CSXT change one of its operating rules, which it said contributed to the derailment.

"The Safety Board concluded that, because the CSXT rule regarding powering against the brakes does not address train speed, it is inadequate to ensure that an engineer does not exceed the bhp and head energy limitations of the tread brake system and thereby create conditions that can lead to a runaway train," the report stated.

The NTSB recommended that CSXT take the following steps to prevent similar accidents in the future:

- "Systematically ensure that engineers are provided with pilots as appropriate and that locomotive engineers are fully evaluated over the whole of their territories, particularly in critical areas of train handling such as steep grades. (R-02-8)

- "Revise your locomotive engineer training and requalification programs as necessary to ensure that they address (1) the emergency use of the two-way end-of-train emergency switch, (2) the proper use of power during a brake application to prevent heat fade and loss of braking, and (3) the use of all styles of locomotive radios, especially their use during emergency situations to call the dispatcher. (R-02-9)

- "Modify CSX Transportation Rule 3.3.7, *Speed Control on Descending Grade*, Paragraph C, "Use of Power on Heavy Descending Grades," to impose a speed limit in addition to the maximum distance and brake pipe reduction currently imposed to prevent excessive heat generation, heat fade, and loss of braking ability. (R-0-10)

- "Calculate and document steep-grade maximum authorized speeds to ensure that trains can be stopped by use of the air brake system alone. (R-02-11)

- "Establish procedures to revise steep-grade maximum authorized speeds as necessary. (R-02-12)"

A copy of the safety recommendation is available at the BLE website: http://www.ble.org/pr/pdf/R02_8_12.pdf

BLE files lawsuit against Secretary of Transportation Mineta, FRA Administrator Rutter

Remote Control

Continued from Page 1

tions by means of microprocessors and remote control devices handled by ground employees. As part of implementation, the carriers eliminated positions held by locomotive engineers and now operate the locomotives without any employees at the controls inside the locomotive cabs.

The railroads have announced that the microprocessors installed on the remote control locomotives have replaced the functions previously per-

formed by locomotive engineers who are certified by FRA regulations.

The suit alleges that the FRA and the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) were fully aware of the actions of the six carriers initiating remote control operations without locomotive engineers in the cabs and that such operations are within the regulatory jurisdiction of the FRA and DOT.

The microprocessors and remote control devices are "parts and appurtenances" within the meaning of the Locomotive Inspection Act and subject to regulations ensuring inspections and repair of defects, the suit claims.

The lawsuit alleges that since the FRA or DOT never prescribed required regulations for inspections or tests of the remote control equipment, they have violated their mandatory obligations under the Safety Act and the Locomotive Act. Their failure has resulted in an increased risk of danger to locomotive engineers, other rail workers and the public at large, says the suit.

"The harm caused by the defendants' failures to act can only be remedied by the intervention of, and issuance of an injunction by this Court," the suit stipulated.

The civil action asks the court to

"grant the plaintiff a permanent injunction requiring the defendants to comply with their statutory obligations under Section 20702 of the Locomotive Act to undertake inspections, prescribe tests and promulgate regulations applicable to the installation, use and inspection of locomotive parts and appurtenances that enable the operation of locomotives via remote control so as to ensure that every railroad carrier is in compliance with its obligations under Section 20701 of the Locomotive Act."

The full text of the lawsuit is available on the BLE website at: <http://www.ble.org/pr/pdf/dotfra.pdf> •

RETIREMENT NEWS

RRB announces financing changes

In addition to amending benefit provisions of the Railroad Retirement Act, the Railroad Retirement and Survivors' Improvement Act of 2001 (P.L. 107-90) significantly revised the financing of the railroad retirement system through provisions for the investment of railroad retirement funds in non-governmental assets, adjustments in the payroll tax rates paid by employers and employees, and the repeal of a supplemental annuity work-hour tax.

The following questions and answers provide information on the changes effected by the new law.

1. How is the railroad retirement system funded?

Payroll taxes paid by railroad employers and their employees

are the primary source of funding for the railroad retirement system. Coordinated with social security taxes, tier I railroad retirement payroll taxes are at the same rate as social security taxes, while tier II taxes are set at rates considered necessary to finance railroad retirement benefit payments over and above social security levels.

Other sources of income include a financial interchange with the social security trust funds, revenues from Federal income taxes on railroad retirement benefits, appropriations from general treasury revenues provided after 1974 as part of a phase-out of certain vested dual benefits, and earnings on investments.

2. How is the financing of the railroad retirement system changed by the new law?

The new law allows greater latitude in the investment of railroad retirement assets. Under prior law, the investment of funds not needed immediately for benefit payments or administrative expenses had been limited to interest-bearing securities restricted to obligations of the U.S. Government, obligations guaranteed as to principal and interest by the U.S. Government, or other obligations that are lawful investments for trust funds.

The new law provides for the transfer of railroad retirement funds from the Railroad Retirement Account and the Social Security Equivalent Benefit Account to a new National Railroad Retirement Investment Trust, whose Board of Trustees is empowered to invest Trust assets, other than assets transferred from the Social Security Equivalent Benefit Account, in non-governmental assets, such as equities and debt, as well as in governmental securities.

3. Will the new National Railroad Retirement Investment Trust be a Federal body and who will serve as its Trustees?

The National Railroad Retirement Investment Trust will not be treated as

an agency or instrumentality of the Federal Government. Its Board of Trustees will be comprised of seven members: three members selected by rail labor to represent the interests of labor; three members selected by rail management to represent the interests of management; and one independent member selected by a majority of the other six members. The Trustees will be appointed only from among persons who

have experience and expertise in the management of financial investments and pension plans. The members shall be appointed for three-year terms. However, the initial labor and management members will be divided into three groups, with one group appointed for

a one-year term, one group for a two-year term, and one group for a three-year term.

The Trustees are authorized to retain independent advisors to assist in the formulation and adoption of investment guidelines; retain independent investment managers to invest the assets of the Trust in a manner consistent with such investment guidelines; and invest assets of the Trust, pursuant to such guidelines.

4. Will the new National Railroad Retirement Investment Trust be subject to the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA)?

The Trustees are subject to reporting and fiduciary standards similar to ERISA requirements with respect to fiduciaries of private employee pension benefit plans. However, no rules similar to the funding requirements of ERISA and related provisions apply to the Trustees, the Trust, or Trust assets.

5. How did the financing provisions of the new law affect the tier II payroll tax rates paid by employers, employee representatives and employees?

The new law reduced the tier II tax rates on rail employers, including rail labor organizations, in calendar years 2002 and 2003, and beginning with 2004 provides automatic adjustments in the tier II tax rates for both employers and employees. It also repealed the supplemental annuity work-hour tax rate paid by employers and employee representatives, beginning with calendar year 2002.

The tier II tax rate on rail employers was reduced from 16.10 percent to 15.60 percent in 2002 and to 14.20 percent in 2003, but the tier II earnings base was not changed; and for 2002, that amount remains at \$63,000. The tier II tax rate for rail employee representatives is 14.75 percent in calendar year 2002 and 14.20 percent in 2003. An employee representative is a labor official of a non-covered labor organization who represents employees covered

under the Acts administered by the Railroad Retirement Board.

While there is no change in the tier II tax rate of 4.90 percent on employees in the years 2002 and 2003, beginning with the taxes payable for calendar year 2004, tier II taxes on both employers and employees will be based on an average account benefits ratio. Depending on the average account benefits ratio, the tier II tax rate for employers will range between 8.20 percent and 22.10 percent, while the tier II tax rate for employees will be between 0 percent and 4.90 percent.

6. What is the average account benefits ratio and, in basic terms, how will this mechanism work?

As defined in the new law, the "average account benefits ratio" is, with respect to any fiscal year, the amount determined by the Railroad Retirement Board by dividing the fair market value of the assets in the Railroad Retirement Account and of the National Railroad Retirement Investment Trust (and for years before 2002, the Social Security Equivalent Benefits Account) as of the close of such fiscal year by the total benefits and administrative expenses paid from the Railroad Retirement Account and the National Railroad Retirement Investment Trust during such fiscal year. If the ratio is not an exact multiple of 0.1, it is raised to the next highest multiple of 0.1.

Likewise, the term "average account benefits ratio" means, with respect to any calendar year, the average determined by the Secretary of the Treasury of the account benefits ratios for the 10 most recent fiscal years ending before such calendar year.

On or before November 1, 2003, the Railroad Retirement Board is to compute the account benefits ratio for each of the most recent 10 preceding fiscal years and certify those ratios to the Secretary of the Treasury. On or before November 1 of each year after 2003, the Railroad Retirement Board will compute the account benefits ratio for the fiscal year ending in such year and certify that ratio to the Secretary of the Treasury.

The following shows the employer/employee representative and employee tier II tax rates payable depending on the average account benefits ratio.

- If the average account benefits ratio is less than 2.5, the employer and employee representative tier II tax rate would be 22.1 percent and the employee tier II tax rate would be 4.9 percent.

- If the ratio is at least 2.5 but less than 3.0, the employer/employee representative and the employee rates, respectively, would be 18.1 percent and 4.9 percent.

- If the ratio is at least 3.0 but less than 3.5, the respective rates would be 15.1 percent and 4.9 percent.

- If the ratio is at least 3.5 but less than 4.0, the respective rates will be 14.1 percent and 4.9 percent.

- If at least 4.0 but less than 6.1, the rates will be 13.1 percent and 4.9 percent.

- If at least 6.1 but less than 6.5, the rates will be 12.6 percent and 4.4 percent.

- If at least 6.5 but less than 7.0, the rates will be 12.1 percent and 3.9 percent.

- If at least 7.0 but less than 7.5, the rates will be 11.6 percent and 3.4 percent.

- If at least 7.5 but less than 8.0, the rates will be 11.1 percent and 2.9 percent.

- If at least 8.0 but less than 8.5, the rates will be 10.1 percent and 1.9 percent.

- If at least 8.5, but less than 9.0, the rates will be 9.1 percent and 0.9 percent.

- If at least 9.0, the rates will be 8.2 percent and 0 percent.

7. Did the new law affect tier I tax rates?

The new law does not affect the 7.65 percent tier I social security equivalent tax rate. The tier I tax on employees and employers remains the same as for social security covered employees and employers, and is divided into 6.20 percent for retirement and 1.45 percent for Medicare hospital insurance. The maximum amount of an employee's earnings subject to the 6.20 percent rate is \$84,900 in 2002; the Medicare hospital insurance tax is applied to all earnings.

8. How did the new law affect the railroad retirement supplemental annuity tax?

The new law repealed the railroad retirement supplemental annuity tax, which is no longer payable for years after 2001. This work-hours tax had been paid solely by rail employers, including rail labor organizations, and employee representatives and at a rate determined quarterly by the Board. It also eliminated the separate Supplemental Annuity Account under the Railroad Retirement Act. Supplemental annuities will now be funded by the new Railroad Retirement Investment Trust.

9. Will employees continue to receive supplemental annuities at age 65 if they have at least 25 years of railroad service and at age 60 if they have at least 30 years of railroad service?

The supplemental annuity provisions of the Railroad Retirement Act are not affected. Employees will still be eligible if they meet the requirements for a supplemental annuity, including a current connection with the railroad industry and at least one month of railroad service before October 1, 1981.

10. Did the new law change any other financing provision of the railroad retirement system?

The new law did not change the provisions for the financial interchange with social security or the vested dual benefit appropriations, or the transfer of revenues from income taxes on railroad retirement benefits to the railroad retirement trust funds. •



RETIREMENT NEWS

Compensated employment effects retroactivity of disability annuities

March 13, 2002

Release No. 04-2002
Subject: Retroactivity of Disability Annuities

To Chief Executives, Railway Labor Organizations:

This is to call your attention to a situation which sometimes arises in cases involving disability annuity applications under the Railroad Retirement Act.

The maximum retroactivity of a disability annuity application is 12 months prior to the filing date; and a five-month waiting period, beginning with the month after the month of the onset of disability, is required before disability annuity payments can begin.

However, while employment rights need not be relinquished, payment of an employee's disability annuity also cannot begin earlier than the day after the employee stops working in compensated service for any railroad employer, including labor organizations. Such work includes service for more than \$24.99 in a calendar month to a local lodge or division of a railway labor organization. Also, work by a local lodge or division secretary collecting insurance premiums, regardless of the amount of salary, is railroad work which must be stopped. In fact, an em-

ployee cannot file an application for a disability annuity until he or she is no longer on the payroll of a railroad or railroad union.

An employee can incur a substantial loss in benefits if he or she is unaware of this restriction, as illustrated in the following example:

In mid-January, an employee develops a medical condition that precludes his working his regular railroad job. He files for sickness benefits under the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act since he expects that he will be able to return to work in the near future. Meanwhile, he performs various clerical tasks for his local lodge and is paid \$50 a month. Finding that his condition is more serious than he realized, he tries to file an application for a disability annuity with the Railroad Retirement Board in late November. At that time he is informed that his work for the local lodge is considered compensated service for a railroad employer and that he cannot even file his application until this work stops. On November 30th, the employee quits working for his local lodge and files his application.

The subsequent evaluation of the employee's medical evidence by the Board shows that the onset date of the employee's disability was January 15th. After serving the required waiting period, payment of the employee's

annuity could have been retroactive to July 1st. However, because of his compensated service to his local lodge, the earliest his annuity can begin is December 1st. Since his monthly annuity is larger than the monthly payments he received from the union, this resulted in a substantial loss of benefits.

If, in this example, the employee had ceased all work for the railroad and railway labor organization, filed an application for disability annuity, prior to a return to temporary compensated service, the annuity could retroact to the earliest date possible. However, the annuity would be suspended for any month the employee was in compensated service. If the application was filed after the temporary return to compensated service ended, the earliest the annuity could begin is the day after that service ended.

As you can see, it is very important that employees be aware that there are work restrictions on disability annuity payments under the Railroad Retirement Act. Consequently, employees should not hesitate to contact their local Railroad Retirement Board office if they have any questions or need any guidance in these matters.

Sincerely,
V.M. Speakman Jr.
Labor Member
U.S. Railroad Retirement Board

U.S. Railroad Retirement Board announces reminders for 2002

2002 Tier I Earnings Base and Tax Rate

\$84,900 — Annual Maximum
6.20% — Employee and Employer Tax Rate
\$5,263.80 — Maximum Employee and Employer Tax

2002 Tier II Earnings Base and Tax Rates

\$63,000 — Annual Maximum
4.90% — Employee Tax Rate
\$3,087.00 — Maximum Employee Tax
15.60% — Employer Tax Rate
\$9,828.00 — Maximum Employer Tax

2002 Medicare Hospital Insurance Earnings Base and Tax Rate

Annual Maximum — No Limit
1.45% — Employee and Employer Tax Rate

Total Tier I, Tier II & Medicare Hospital Insurance Maximum Tax

(Based on Earnings of \$84,900)
Employees — \$9,581.85
Employers — \$16,322.85
(Additional Taxes are 1.45% of Earnings in Excess of \$84,900)

Amount Needed For Quarter of SSA Coverage

\$870.00 in 2002 (Up to 4)

2002 Employer RUIA Tax Rate

3.15% — 12% on First \$1,100 Per Month

Employee RUIA 2001 Qualifying Earnings

\$2,625.00 — For Benefit Year 2002 (Beginning July 1, 2002)

RUIA Daily Benefit Rate

For Benefit Year 2002 (Beginning July 1, 2002) — \$52

Work Deduction Exempt Amounts

Age 65 (for months prior to age 65 in the calendar year):

Annual — \$30,000;
Monthly — \$2,500

(\$1 Deduction for Each \$3 in Excess Earnings)

Under Age 65;
Annual — \$11,280;
Monthly — \$940

(\$1 Deduction for Each \$2 in Excess Earnings)

Basic Medicare Premium

\$54.00

Cost-Of-Living Increase, December 2001

Tier I — 2.6%
Tier II — 0.8%

RRB schedules 2002 informational conferences

The U.S. Railroad Retirement Board will offer free informational conferences for elected BLE officials throughout the 2002 calendar year.

Registration for all informational conferences begins at 8 a.m.. The program will begin promptly at 8:30 a.m. and will end at 12:30 p.m.

What follows are the informational conferences that the Railroad Retirement Board has scheduled for 2002.

April 26 • Salt Lake City, Utah
Holiday Inn — Airport
1659 West North Temple

April 26 • East Hanover, N.J.
Ramada Inn & Conference Center
130 Route 10 West

May 3 • Altoona, Pa.
Ramada Inn Altoona, Pa., Ballroom C,
1 Sheraton Dr. (Plank Road exit)

May 10 • Birmingham, Ala.
Medical Forum Bldg.
950 22nd St., North

May 10 • Kansas City, Mo.
Embassy Suite
7640 N.W. Tiffany Springs Parkway

May 10 • Spokane, Wash.
Spokane International Airport
8909 Airport Rd.

May 10 • Middleburg Hts., Ohio
Clarion Hotel, Cleveland Airport-
West
1700 Bagley Road, I-71

May 17 • Little Rock, Ark.
Embassy Suite
11301 Financial Centre Parkway

May 17 • Atlanta, Ga.
Holiday Inn, 1810 Howell Mill Road

Wisconsin Central

Continued from Page 1

The BLE represents about 310 locomotive engineers on WCD. The three-year agreement, effective April 2002, settles wage and work rule issues for engineers through March 2005, and supersedes an existing agreement with a term through yearend 2002.

Brother Radek assisted WC General Chairman Jeff Bochman during negotiations. Radek said the deal will provide across-the-board pay increases of approximately 30 percent for the BLE engineers. In addition, the deal reinstates overtime pay and implements a first-ever scope rule on the property.

The new deal gives engineers lifetime protection as well.

"They cannot be demoted," Radek said. "They stay engineers and will earn the monthly guarantee. Brother Bochman and I are pleased that the agreement was ratified."

The new contract maintains the current level of health and welfare benefits, and also maintains workers' "Performance Bonus Incentive Plan," a profit sharing/bonus program.

Under the old contract, WC engineers were paid a weekly salary and a 12 hour basic day. Under the new agreement, engineers are paid an hourly rate on a 10 hour basic day, then paid time-and-a-half for work in excess of 10 hours.

BLE International President Don M. Hahs applauded General Chairman Bochman, Vice-President Radek and all BLE Brothers and Sisters involved for coming to an equitable agreement.

E. Hunter Harrison, CN's executive vice-president and chief operating officer, said: "I applaud the BLE and WCD leadership in forging a breakthrough agreement. It will preserve the work-rule flexibility of an earlier agreement while enhancing compensation and quality of life for WCD engineers. This is truly important, because I've long believed that the complexities of Class 1 labor agreements create almost as many employee life quality and operating problems as the agreements are intended to solve." •

BLE NEWS

BLE ends strike, ratifies contract with CB&CNS

Agreement with RailAmerica shortline brings two-month strike to a conclusion

Members of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers ratified their first-ever contract with the Cape Breton & Central Nova Scotia Railway (CB&CNS) on March 28, concluding a strike that began nearly two months ago.

"I am pleased to announce that the strike is over," said BLE Canadian Director Gilles Hallé. "The workers will go back to work at midnight (on March 28)."

Brother Hallé commended the Brothers of BLE Division 900 for sticking together and bringing the strike to a successful conclusion. "It was a big show of solidarity," he said.

BLE International President Don M. Hahs and Brother Hallé both recognized Special Representative Robert J.

Toole for his outstanding work on a job well done.

CB&CNS is a subsidiary of RailAmerica, operating along 245-miles of track throughout Nova Scotia. RailAmerica calls itself the world's largest operator of regional and shortline railroads.

The strike began on February 6 at 7 a.m. when BLE members walked off the job over a host of issues, including seniority, work schedules, wages, rest, crew consist, vacation, pension plan, training, and spare boards. Contract negotiations first began in early 2001.

Brother Hallé said the agreement meets the needs of the CB&CNS workers, and that more details about the contract will be provided shortly. •

BNSF safety agreement out for ratification

The four BLE General Committees of Adjustment representing locomotive engineers on the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway are in the process of voting on a proposed safety agreement, which stems from the April 2001 "safety summit" between the BLE, BNSF and the United Transportation Union.

The proposed agreement would give the General Committees and local committees more involvement in the safety process, and would provide employees with remedial training instead of punitive discipline procedures.

More details regarding the specifics of the proposed agreement will be released if the proposal is ratified by a majority of BLE members on the BNSF.

The BLE is a democratic organization which gives its members the right to vote on agreements that govern their daily working rules, no matter what craft they are working in. This allows

members to ratify agreements that they feel are in their best interest. It was out of concern that public statements would interfere with this process that the BLE requested nothing be published regarding the BNSF safety agreement until our internal ratification process was completed.

The four general chairmen, Rick Gibbons, Dennis Pierce, Austin Morrison, and John Mullen, along with Vice-Presidents Dale McPherson and Stephen Speagle, worked in concert with the UTU general chairmen and BNSF management to secure this proposed agreement.

The BLE ratification process for the BNSF safety agreement is expected to conclude at the end of April. •



APRIL 2002 CALENDAR & EVENTS

MAY 12-17... Local Chairman Workshop at George Meany Center, Silver Spring, Md.
Under the direction of General Secretary-Treasurer Bill Walpert, the BLE Education & Training Department hosts the first of three Local Chairman workshops in 2002. These classes are not just for new local chairmen — the BLE encourages all local chairmen, regardless of experience, to attend. Classes are also open to non-local chairmen, provided they have their local chairman's permission to attend. Registration is on a first come, first-served basis with class size limited to the first 25 who register. To register, contact Brother Ken Kroeger of the BLE Education & Training Department at: (216) 272-0986, or e-mail: <kroeger@ble.org>. See Page 3 of this issue for more details.

JUNE 2-7... Local Chairman Workshop at Clark Kerr Campus, U.C. Berkeley, California
Among other assignments, the workshops will include BLE organizational structure and functions, representing members at disciplinary and decertification hearings, union leadership skills, claim and grievance handling, and writing and editing skills. Participants also will learn how to effectively use the BLE arbitration database. A highlight of the workshops is when attendees participate in a simulated disciplinary hearing. To register, contact Ken Kroeger at: (216) 272-0986, or e-mail: <kroeger@ble.org>. See Page 3 of this issue for more details.

JUNE 16-20... 75th Southeastern Meeting Association, Virginia Beach, Va.
For preregistration form, please contact Chairman T.C. Emory at 4912 Euclid Rd., Virginia Beach, VA 23462. E-mail requests can be sent to: <ble456@mindspring.com>. See Page 3 for more details.

JULY 21-25... 62nd Annual International Western Convention, Kennewick, Wash.
To be held at the Tri-Cities Hotel and hosted by Chairman Will Amaya, (509) 628-8844 or <hottthrottle.will@verizon.net>. See Page 3 of this issue for more details.

AUGUST 18-22... Eastern Union Meeting Association, Wilkes-Barre, Pa.
Hosted by Arrangements Chairman Ken Kertesz and members of BLE Division 263 at the Woodlands Inn & Resort. Contact Kertesz at (570) 675-2417 or: <kkertesz@dallas.gotm.net>. See Page 3 for details.

SEPTEMBER 23-26... 67th Annual Southwestern Convention Meeting, Ft. Worth, Texas
Hosted by Chairman Mark Banton and members of BLE Division 500 at the Radisson Hotel in Fort Worth. Contact Chairman Banton at (817) 641-4606, or see Page 3 for details.

OCTOBER 13-18... Local Chairman Workshop, George Meany Center, Silver Spring, Md.
See Page 3 this issue for registration details and other information.

Advisory Board March Activity

By action of the delegates at the Fifth Quinquennial Convention, summaries of BLE Advisory Board members' activities are published monthly:

International President Don M. Hahs—International Office: General supervision of BLE activities; National wage/rule mtgs., New Orleans; Mtgs. w/ General President James P. Hoffa, International Brotherhood of Teamsters; FRA mtgs., remote control issue; Mtg. w/ NMB nominee H. Hoglander; TTD Exec. Council mtg.; AFL-CIO Exec. Con. mtg.; Western General Chairman's Assoc. mtg.; National Assoc. of State Legislative Board Chairmen mtg., regional; Advisory Board mtg.; Special Rep mtg.

First Vice-President & Alternate President Edward W. Rodzwick—Assisted President in general operation of ID office; General office duties; NCCC Section 6 mtg.; Mtg. w/ General Chairmen from Amtrak, LIRR, SEPTA, NJT, PATH and Metro North; Mtg. w/ VGC Thompson, NSR, VGC Linsey-NP, General Chairman Roberts-CSX NSD and ST Vassie CSX NSD; NLRB mtg.; Western General Chairman mtg.; Advisory Board mtg.; Mtg. w/ Special Reps.; Mtg. w/ James Hoffa, President IBT.

General Secretary-Treasurer William C. Walpert—General supervision of BLE financial and record depts.; ID office; BLE Education & Training Dept.; Internal Organizing, Mobilizing & Strategic Planning Dept.; BLE Safety Task Force; Mtgs. w/ vendors and financial institutions; AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer mtg., Washington; Staff mtg.; Western General Chairman's mtg., Las Vegas; Remote control workshop, Las Vegas; Advisory Board mtg., Las Vegas; Special Rep. mtg., Las Vegas.

Vice-President Paul T. Sorrow—CSX PLB 6470, PLB 6448; NS health & welfare negotiations; I&O contract negotiations; Reviewed Section 6 notices for upcoming contract talks w/ GTW and Wheeling & Lake Erie; CSX Northern Lines Executive Cmte. mtg.; NS SBA 1063; Work/rest mtg.; Advisory Board mtg.; Assisted NS, GTW and CSX general committees w/ various issues; General office duties.

Vice-President Joseph A. Cassidy Jr.—Mtg. w/ CSX General Chairman Roberts; Mtg. w/ CSX management, re: claims; Mtg. w/ all CSX general chairmen & VP Sorrow; Mtg. w/ VP Labor Relations Peifer; Mtg. w/ ATDD gen'l. chairman; Conference on CSX crew mngmt.; New York Susquehanna & Western; Elgin Joliet & Eastern arbitration; Western General Chairman's Assoc. mtg.; Duluth, Missage & Iron Range Rwy.; Remote control discussions; Mtg. w/ CSX gen'l. chairman.

Vice-President & U.S. Nat'l Legislative Representative Raymond A. Holmes—Washington D.C. office; CRLO mtgs.; AFL-CIO political directors mtg.; BLE conference call; Mtg. w/ members of Australian Parliament, re: rail safety; Railroad Retirement Coalition mtg.; TTD/Rail Div. leg. mtg.; FRA hearing-dispatching of U.S. rail operations; Receptions: Cong. Sherman (D-CA), Cong. Turner (D-TX) Senator Shelby (R-AL); FRA RSAC mtg.; FRA hearing, re: Alcohol/drug use, foreign railroads; Amtrak hearing; Mtg. w/ staff of Cong. Oberstar (D-MN); DCCC mtg., review of House races; TTD mtg., AFL-CIO mtgs., New Orleans; Advisory Board mtg.

Vice-President Merle W. Geiger Jr.—Assigned to following properties: Kansas City Southern; Midsouth; South Rail; Gateway Western; Springfield Terminal contract negotiations; Assisted GC Parker in preparing arbitration cases-PLB 6355 (KCS); PLB 6355 session, Dallas; Mtg. w/ KCS and GC John Koonce, along w/ Local Chairmen from Midsouth Rail, Southrail & Gateway Western; Western General Chairman's Assoc. mtg., Las Vegas; Advisory Board mtg., Las Vegas; General office duties, research.

Vice-President Stephen D. Speagle—Office work, BNSF/MRL; Mtg. w/ MRL regarding bridge insurance for retirees, Mizoula, Mont.; Mtg. w/ Division 262; Safety Summit mtg. w/ BNSF, Fort Worth; Mtg. w/ CSX general chairmen on health & welfare, Cincinnati, Ohio; Western General Chairman's Assoc. mtg., Las Vegas; Advisory Board mtg., Las Vegas.

Vice-President E.L. "Lee" Pruitt—Assisted general chairmen & members of the following properties: UP-Western Lines; UP-Western Region; UP-Central Region; UP-Southern Region; Tacoma Belt; General office duties; Conf. call, UP general chairmen, re: remote control; Assist GC Hannah, UP-Western Lines; Assist UP-Tacoma Rail; Remote control mtgs. w/ UPRR, Omaha; Assist GC Gore & Rightnowar, UPRR, re: officers running trains; Mtg. w/ Donnigan and 11 local chairmen, UPRR, Salt Lake City; Arbitration Board PLB 6170, UPRR-SR; Western General Chairman mtg., Las Vegas; Advisory Board mtg., Las Vegas.

Vice-President Richard K. Radek—ID Office; BLE Decertification Helpline services; Director of Arbitration Dept; National Railroad Adjustment Board (NRAB); Illinois Central; Wisconsin Central; Indiana Harbor Belt; METRA; Belt Rwy. of Chicago; Paducah & Louisville; Chicago Central & Pacific; METRA arbitration assistance, seniority dispute, Chicago; NRAB arbitration, various, W. Palm, Fla.; IHB negotiation/general assistance; Western General Chairman Assoc. mtg.; Remote control case presentation; Advisory Board mtg.

Vice-President Dale McPherson—UP Eastern Lines; CP/U.S. (So.); I&MRL; M&NA; LP&N; Longview Sw. Co.; TRRA-St. Louis; General office duties; NCCC mtg.; IMRL sale mtgs., Davenport, Iowa; Telephone, correspondence; Mtgs. w/ UPRR, Omaha; Mtgs. w/ GC Browning, Brim. So. contract; Mtg. w/ M. Kelly, UP work/rest; Western Gen. Chair. Assoc. mtgs., Las Vegas; Advisory Board mtg.

Vice-President & Canadian Director Gilles Hallé—Ottawa Office; General Chairman's mtg., Calgary; Mtg. w/ RCTC, Montreal; Mtg. at Baultar, Sherbrooke; Mtg. w/ CN; Annual vacation; BLE Advisory Board mtg.


Vice-President & National Legislative Representative-Canada T. George Hucker—Ottawa Office; National Legislative Board-Canada; Mtg. w/ CP Rail; Return to work case-Division 243; Preparation & work on brief to FRA w/ Provincial Board Chairman, re: Random drug & alcohol testing; Presentation of brief to FRA, Washington D.C.; Algoma Central negotiations, Sault Ste. Marie; AFL-CIO TTD mtg. & BLE Advisory Board mtg., New Orleans; BLE LTD mtg., Ottawa.

Decertification Helpline

(800) 393-2716

The railroad industry's first and only hotline for engineers facing possible decertification events, offered exclusively by the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers.





THE LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEER NEWSLETTER

Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers
Since 1863, a Tradition of Forward Thinking


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Contact us: www.ble.org • (216) 241-2630
Kathleen Policy, Associate Editor

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55