The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLET) and members of the U.S. House of Representatives expressed outrage over the Department of Homeland Security’s announcement on March 31 that it was issuing voluntary security guidelines — as opposed to mandatory regulations — for railroad companies that transport the most hazardous chemicals in the United States.

The BLET, as a member of the Teamsters Rail Conference, has publicly expressed concern about glaring security oversights on the nation’s railroads. Those concerns were summarized in the Teamsters’ report, “High Alert: Workers Warn of Security Gaps on America’s Railroads.”

On March 31, the Department of Homeland Security attempted to address some of those security concerns. However, its security plan is merely a suggestion — it is nothing more than a list of voluntary measures that the railroad companies may implement if they so choose.

“The Bush administration dropped the ball on this important national security issue,” BLET National President Paul Harrison said. “Our members are the first line of defense when it comes to the security of America’s railroads, and the Bush administration’s rail security plan issued today has let them down.”

While the security guidelines issued by the Bush administration note that many hazardous materials carried by rail “have the potential of causing significant numbers of fatalities and injuries if intentionally released in an urban environment,” the document also states that “All measures are voluntary.”


Representative Edward Markey is the author of legislation that would require the Department of Homeland Security to impose additional security regulations for shipments of extremely hazardous materials, including re-routing of such shipments around areas that raise particular security concerns whenever possible. The legislation was recently adopted as an amendment to H.R. 4439, a bill to re-organize the Transportation Security Administration.

During the election process, the carrier improperly influenced the vote by holding mandatory group meetings with workers; changed work policies for train and engine service employees; and gave workers pay increases during the election process.

“Guys literally lost their jobs helping organize the property,” said BLET Organizing Director Tommy Miller. “The NMB ruling is a victory. We Trust,’ and (the March 31) notice is the latest example of the Bush Administration letting them down.”

The National Mediation Board (NMB) is conducting a second representation election at the Stillwater Central Railroad after ruling that the carrier violated the Railway Labor Act by improperly influencing workers during the original election process.

“The carrier’s intent was to influence employees and convey the idea that the union was unnecessary,” the NMB determined. “The Board has found such deliberate conduct intended to influence employees in their selection of a representative to be contrary to Section 2, Ninth of the Railway Labor Act.”

The NMB issued its ruling on March 15 after a protest by the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, which is seeking to organize approximately 20 train and engine service employees at the Kansas-based shortline railroad.

An August 2005 representation election at Stillwater resulted in only nine of 20 workers voting in favor of BLET. However, the BLET filed charges of election interference on August 26, 2005, after learning how the carrier had improperly influenced the vote.

“During election campaigns, a carrier must act in a manner that does not influence, interfere with, or coerce employees’ selection of a collective bargaining representative,” the NMB wrote in its 46-page ruling. “When considering whether employees’ freedom of choice of a collective bargaining representative has been impaired, the Board examines the totality of the circumstances as established through investigation. In such an evaluation, each conclusion may not constitute interference in and of itself, but when combined with other factors, the totality evidences improper interference.”

After months of investigation, the NMB agreed with BLET, ruling that conditions for a fair and unbiased election were tainted after the carrier: fired meetings with workers; changed work prior to the BLET’s presence on the property. During these meetings, the carrier implied that it was willing to address worker concerns and that union representation was not necessary. The carrier also implied that working conditions might deter riorate and that wages might decline if the union was voted in.

Divisions must be ‘square on the books’ to seat delegates

With the upcoming First Quadrennial Convention of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen scheduled for June 19-22, all BLET Divisions are reminded that their secretary-treasurers must file their monthly dues reports in a timely fashion in order to seat their delegates at the convention.

Section 23, page 31, of the BLET By-laws states: “Any delegate whose division is not square on the books and any division that has not paid its pro rata assessments, as provided in these By-laws, also its indebtedness to other divisions, shall not be allowed a seat in the ND.”

The convention begins June 19. It is essential that each Division ensure that the April 2006 Dues Remittance report is filed prior to the opening of the convention.

All BLET division secretary-treasurers were formally reminded of this constitutional requirement in a letter dated March 2 from National Secretary-Treasurer Bill Walpert.

The First Quadrennial Convention, held once every four years, will take place at Bally’s in Las Vegas, Nevada, from June 19-22, 2006.
Bush administration drops the ball

“IT IS TIME FOR YOUR DEPARTMENT TO TAKE A MORE ACTIVE ROLE IN SECURING OUR NATION’S RAIL SYSTEMS.”

— House Democrats to the Department of Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff

By Charles P. Crisp

Railroad Security
(Continued from Page 1)

nies decide just what security precautions should be taken. This Administration is doing nothing more than asking indus-
try to do us a favor and please protect the public — this is an abdication of its re-
sponsibility to the American people.”

The risks

Each day hun-
dreds of thousands of shipments of extremely hazardous materials travel through densely popu-
lated areas and near critical in-
frastructure such as bridges and power plants. Enough chlorine to kill 100,000 people in half an hour is routinely con-
tained in a single rail tanker car that rolls right through crowded urban centers with-
out adequate security protec-
tion.

In 2003, an Ohio-based Al Qaeda operative was arrested for plotting to collapse a bridge in New York City or derail a train in Washington, D.C. He has since pled guilty. Last year, an accidental crash of a Nor-
folk Southern train containing chlorine in Grantville, S.C., killed 9 people and caused hos-
ter launches. Some trains are targeted rail systems in

safety problems on the nation’s rail-

The BLET applauds appointment of Jo Strang to FRA safety post

The BLET commends the Depart-
ment of Transportation for its appointment of Jo Strang as Associate Admin-
istator for Safety of the Federal Rail-
road Administration.

“We worked with Ms. Strang on many issues in the past at the NTSB and in her previous position at the FRA,” BLET National President Don M. Chaudhuri said. “I believe that she is an excellent person to fill this post and I look forward to working with her.”

The safety of our nation’s railroads is a paramount concern for us. I hope that Ms. Strang continues to be a proactive voice for safety in the indus-
tory.”

Mr. Strang has served as the FRA Acting Associate Administrator for Safety since October 30, 2005. She will be primarily responsible for the FRA inspector force that identi-
ﬁes safety problems on the nation’s railroads, enforces federal rail safety laws and regulations, and investigates train accidents. She also will play a key role in rail safety research, the development of new regulations, and will report to FRA Administrator Joseph H. Boardman.

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She previously served as FRA’s Deputy Associate Administrator for Railroad Development, Acting Head of the Office of Research and Develop-
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tor based in Chicago. In addition, she was an Associate Director for the Na-
tional Transportation Safety Board’s Office of Railroad, Pipeline, and Haz-
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Mr. Strang received a Master of Sci-
dence degree in economics from Marquette University and a Bachelor’s Degree in economics and geology from the University of Cincinnati. She was selected for the position by the Depart-
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**BLET NEWS**

**GIA Dialogue**

By Becky Schneider

1st Vice President & U.S. National Legislative Representative, Grand International Auxiliary

National and state legislative developments have a profound effect on the policies and operation of every industry in today’s modern world. Staying in touch with legislation that impacts the railroad industry is one of the most important things that we can do as railroad employees. We make a real difference.

The Legislative Department is relatively new in relation to how long the GIA has been around. It began in 1981, when Ruth Windham introduced a resolution for the position of National Legislative Representative (NLR) to be tied to the office of 2nd Vice President. She was the first member elected to the position. Since that time, the department has grown exponentially as more members understand and realize the importance and impact of laws passed by Congress. Because almost all railroad activities are governed by Federal laws and regulations, the only way to truly effectuate change is at the national level.

In 1996, Mabel Groitzinger was elected 2nd Vice President and NLR. Because her home is located close to the BLET’s Washington, D.C. office, and because of the working relationship already developed with key players there, she became an integral part of that department, and was unofficially appointed to monitor hearings and developments concerning Amtrak. She jump-started the process of in-depth education as GIA members as to the “goings on” in Washington, and how decisions there affect our spouses and families. She also began the practice of setting a GIA Legislative Agenda.

The Brotherhood went to Federal court in March 14 in the U.S. District Court for the Central District of Illinois. Two locomotive engineers are on their way back to work at the Kansas City Southern thanks to the efforts of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen.

“The Brotherhood went to Federal court to get these brothers their jobs back,” BLET National President Don Habs said. “We did so and saw that they were reinstated with full back pay.”

The BLET obtained a favorable ruling on March 14 in the U.S. District Court for the Central District of Illinois. The carrier also argued that the Board’s ruling was not supported by sufficient evidence, but the Court ruled “(The Board’s) findings are not reviewable in that regard.”

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In recent years, our Legislative Department has expanded to include GIA State Legislative Representatives. The state program is still growing as more State Legislative Representatives are appointed. We are committed to making a difference at the state level as well as the national level. As I near the end of my term as the GIA NLR, I believe we have accomplished a great deal and indeed have made a difference. I encourage each of you to add your voice to ours. When our voices come together with a united message for a common cause, we are powerful and we are heard.

To feel free to contact me at beckygia1@earthlink.net or (915) 581-1373, or any International Officer to learn more about the GIA and how you can help to make a difference.

**Brotherhood helps members get back to work at KCS**

Two locomotive engineers are on their way back to work at the Kansas City Southern thanks to the efforts of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen.

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**Improved monthly audit form developed for BLET Divisions, SLBs, GCAs**

A new interactive spreadsheet that makes monthly auditing easier for State Legislative Boards, General Committees and Local Divisions is now available from the BLET’s Education & Training Department.

The new interactive spreadsheet, available for download as a Microsoft Excel file, contains built-in formulas so that Secretary-Treasurers can simply input data and the spreadsheet will perform automatic calculations.

The monthly audits became required beginning in June of 2005 in order to comply with the Constitution of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters.

"The new interactive spreadsheet was developed to ease the workload of our Secretary-Treasurers," said BLET National Secretary-Treasurer Bill Walpert, who also heads the Education & Training Department. "Secretary-Treasurers from General Committees, State Legislative Boards and Local Divisions had input into the creation and development of this spreadsheet."

NST Walpert cautioned that the new form is still a beta version. He encouraged Secretary-Treasurers to test the spreadsheets prior to submitting final reports. Feedback or changes regarding the new form should be e-mailed to Ken Kroeger, Coordinator of the Education & Training Dept., at: Kroeger@blet.org.

The new reporting form, known as a "Trustees/Auditing Committee Report," can be downloaded here: http://www.blet.org/ BLETAuditReport2006.xls

BLET Bylaws provide that divisions will be audited by "trustees" of the division. The vice president, local chairman and legislative representatives are designated as "trustees" by the Bylaws.

The general committees and state legislative boards should be audited monthly by their respective auditing committees. The monthly audits do not require the convening of the auditing committees. The audits can be performed by mail, if necessary.

 Once the monthly audit is performed, the records should be maintained at the division, general committee or state legislative board. There is no requirement to send the audit to the National Division or the IBT.
BLET member is BNSF's Safety Employee of the Year

Brother Duane C. Wetsch recognized by peers for good attitude, dedication to safe operations

Duane C. Wetsch, a member of BLET Division 105 in Forsyth, Mont., was recently named Safety Employee of the Year at BNSF Railway's Yellowstone Safety Team.

"Duane shows up every day with a good attitude and ready to help anyone who needs it. He makes sure the job gets done, and he makes sure it's done safely," his anonymous nominator's letter said.

Brother Wetsch is a long-time member of the BLET, having been initiated in November 1975, and holds executive-level membership since then. He has also served for more than 20 years as Secretary-Treasurer of the Montana State Legislative Board, as well as serving as Legislative Representative from his home division.

"I was pleased to learn of the award given to Brother Wetsch," said Montana State Legislative Board Chairman Craig Gilechrist. "I have known him for many years, and he approaches his work on the railroad sincerely, the same way he does his work in the union.

For the 15th year in a row, the safety team invited employees and their spouses to a recognition dinner at the Forsyth (Montana) Country Club. The event is held to show appreciation for every employee who worked through the previous year without injury, according to Howard Tait, BNSF's trainmaster in Forsyth, Mont.

While the event provides an opportunity to recognize some of the safest and best employees on the system, collectively, it also gives employees a chance to enhance their co-workers' outstanding leadership in safety.

This year's winners received a BNSF coal, their names on a plaque and a check. Employees nominated co-workers with anonymous letters, describing why they should receive the award.

The team also recognized Glen Greer, conductor on local MT101, as the TYA Employee of the Year. He was nominated for "his attitude toward new hires. Glen always takes the time to help new employees to get up to speed." Chang Han, general foreman of the Lomita yard, was recognized for his leadership and work on safety.

Congratulations to Brother Duane C. Wetsch, left, who was recently named Safety Employee of the Year by BNSF Railway's Yellowstone Safety Team in Montana. He has been a member of the Brotherhood since 1975 and has served as a Secretary-Treasurer for the Western States Region for more than 20 years. He is presented with an honorary plaque by BNSF Trainmaster Howard Tait.

DOL changes deadline for LM-30 reporting from March 31 to May 15

(The Caliber CPA Group, PLLC, issued the following bulletin to labor organizations on March 8.)

In 1983, the Department of Labor (DOL) first approved Form LM-30 “Labor Organization Officer and Employee Report” for purposes of LMRA. Since that time, it has remained essentially unchanged. Recently, the DOL has taken steps to revise the Form and is actively enforcing filing for union officers and employees.

The Form must be received by the DOL within 90 days after the end of the officer’s or employee’s fiscal year, typically December 31. Therefore, the 2005 filing must be completed on or by March 31, 2006. Although the DOL has no authority to grant extensions of the statutory filing deadlines, the Office of Labor-Management Standards (OLMS) recently granted a grace period so that reports filed on or before May 15, 2006 will be considered “on time.” The OLMS will not take any enforcement action unless the report is received after this date. Non-filing individuals will be subject to criminal penalties for willful failure to file.

Since another filing year has ended and the Form is due, we thought this would be a good time to review the filing requirements. We will also review the reporting change that was made by the DOL in November 2003.

Who Has to File?

Other than an employee exclusively performing clerical or custodial services. Prior to 2003, an employer would be required to pay an employer who had reportable transactions or interests. The Form is not filed by the labor union and from service providers to any trust in which the union is interested.

Reportable transactions or interests can occur when an officer or employee has reportable transactions or interests the LM-30 must be received from the OLMS, we recommend union officers and employees use the original Form LM-30 filing. However, if that amount of multiple transactions from a single employer or business to a single union officer or employee exceeds $250 in a fiscal year, the transactions will no longer be treated as de minimis and the aggregate value of the transactions must be reported in detail on the LM-30. Gifts or loans from multiple employers of one officer or employee should be treated as originating from a single employer when calculating whether the $250 threshold has been exceeded.

Revised Form LM-30?

On August 29, 2005, the OLMS published a proposed revised Form LM-30 and instructions, designed in a similar format to the revised Form LM-2. The comment period for the revised Form and instructions expired on October 29, 2005. The OLMS then extended the comment period for 90 days (this extension expired on January 28, 2006). To date there has been no information from the OLMS concerning the comments received or when a revised Form will take effect. Until we hear further from the OLMS, we recommend union officers and employees use the original Form. This version of the Form shows an expiration date of November 30, 2006 on the top right-hand corner.

Form LM-10

Similar to Form LM-30 filers, employers will now have to file Form LM-10 “Employer Report” with the DOL disclosing certain specified financial dealings with a union or officer; agent, shop steward, employee or other representative of a union. The Form is due within 90 days after the end of the employer. However, the OLMS has also announced a grace period for Form LM-10 of May 15, 2006 for employers with a December 31 year end. Although the LM-10 is not identical to the LM-30 it will report much of the same information that is required on the LM-30.

Resources and Reminders

Additional information about Form LM-30 can be found on the DOL website at www.dol.gov/esa/olms_org.htm. On the right-hand side of website is a section for “Forms Download.” Under this heading, click on “All Other Forms.” Scroll down the page to the Form LM-30. From here you can download a PDF or HTML version of the Form and its instructions. You can also find various articles about the Form, examples of reporting, and how to file it under the “Quick Links” section of the home page.

As a final note, remember that if you have any reportable transactions or interests the LM-30 must be received by the DOL no later than May 15, 2006 for the year ended December 31, 2005.

About Caliber CPA Group

Caliber CPA Group was founded on a commitment “to provide services of a superior caliber.” Our firm is staffed with over 200 employees who provide value-added audit, accounting, tax, consulting, and technology services to the labor union community.

It’s through our experience working with hundreds of labor organizations at the local, regional, and national levels, that we’ve developed a familiarity with best practices in internal, administrative, and accounting controls. Our specialized audit programs are focused on identifying recommendations pertaining to strengthening internal controls and enhancing administrative efficiencies.

For more information about our firm and our unique services for organized labor, please visit our website at www.calibrecpa.com or call (866) 464-2839.
Our union has designated attorneys who are qualified to serve as counsel for BLET members in accordance with the Federal Employers’ Liability Act (FELA) governing workplace accidents.

In the event of an injury or death and before reaching any settlement with a railroad, members or surviving families should contact an attorney listed to get competent advice regarding their legal rights under the FELA.

In addition, if you or any members of your family have questions concerning medical malpractice, product liability or other types of injury cases, please don’t hesitate to contact one of these law firms for a consultation concerning your rights and remedies.
Credit for military service under Railroad Retirement

Many railroad employees have at some time served in the Armed Forces of the United States. Under certain conditions, their military service may be credited as railroad service under the Railroad Retirement Act.

The following questions and answers provide information on how military service may be credited towards railroad retirement benefits.

1. Under what conditions can military service be credited as railroad service?

   The intent behind the crediting of military service under the Railroad Retirement Act is to prevent career railroad employees from losing retirement credits while performing active duty military service during a war or national emergency period. Therefore, to be credited as railroad service under the Railroad Retirement Act, active duty service in the U.S. Armed Forces must be preceded by railroad service in the same or preceding calendar year.

   With the exceptions noted later, the employee must also have entered military service when the United States was at war or in a state of national emergency or have served in the Armed Forces involuntarily. Military service is involuntary when an employee is required by law, such as Selective Service System conscription or troop call-up from a reserve unit, to leave railroad service to perform active duty military service.

   Only active duty military service is creditable under the Railroad Retirement Act. A person is considered to have entered military service when an employee is required by law, such as Selective Service System conscription or troop call-up from a reserve unit, to leave railroad service to perform active duty military service.

2. What are some examples of creditable service performed by a member of a reserve component, such as the Army Reserve?

   Any military service a reservist was required to perform as a result of a call-up to active duty, such as during the current partial mobilization, would be creditable under the Railroad Retirement Act, so long as the military service was preceded by railroad service in the same or preceding year.

   Annual training duty as a member of a reserve component of a uniformed service is also considered active duty and may be creditable, provided the employee service requirement is met. The period of active duty for training also includes authorized travel time to and from any such training duty. However, weekend alone or evening reserve duty is not creditable.

   Active duty in a State National Guard or State Air National Guard unit may be creditable only while the reservist was called to Federal active duty by the Congress or President of the United States. Emergency call-up of the National Guard by a governor for riot or flood control would not be creditable.

3. What are the dates of the war or national emergency periods?

   The creditable periods that affect current retirements are:
   - September 8, 1939, through June 14, 1945.
   - December 16, 1950, through September 14, 1957.
   - August 2, 1990, to date as yet undetermined.

   If military service began during a war or national emergency period, any active duty service the employee was required to continue in beyond the end of the war or national emergency is creditable, except that voluntary service extending beyond September 14, 1978, is not creditable.

   Railroad workers who voluntarily served in the Armed Forces between June 15, 1946, and December 15, 1950, when there was no declared national state of emergency, can be given railroad retirement credit for their military service if they:
   - performed railroad service in the year they entered or the year before their military service, and
   - returned to railroad service in the year their military service ended in the following year, and
   - had no intervening nonrailroad employment.

4. How can military service be used to increase benefits paid by the Railroad Retirement Board?

   Railroad retirement annuities are based on length of service and earnings. If military service is creditable as railroad service, a person will receive additional compensation credits for each month of creditable military service and railroad retirement credit for each active military service month not already credited by actual railroad service.

   Creditable military service may be used in addition to regular railroad service to meet certain service requirements, such as the basic 10-year or 5-year service requirements for a regular annuity, the 20-year requirement for an occupational disability annuity before age 60, the 25-year requirement for a supplemental annuity, or the 30-year requirement for early retirement benefits.

5. Can United States Merchant Marine service be creditable for railroad retirement purposes?

   No. Service with the Merchant Marine or civilian employment with the Department of Defense is not creditable, even if performed in wartime.

6. Are railroad retirement annuities based in part on military service credits reduced if other benefits, such as military service pensions or payments from the Department of Veterans Affairs, are also payable on the basis of the same military service?

   No. While railroad retirement employee annuities are subject to reductions for dual entitlement to social security benefits and, under certain conditions, Federal, State, or local government pensions, as well as certain other payments, railroad retirement employee annuities are always exempt from reduction for military service pensions or payments by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

7. Are the unemployment and sickness benefits payable by the Railroad Retirement Board affected if an employee is also receiving a military service pension?

   Yes. The unemployment and sickness benefits payable by the Board are affected if a claimant is also receiving a military service pension. However, payments made by the Department of Veterans Affairs will not affect railroad unemployment or sickness benefits.

   When a claimant is receiving a military service pension, benefits are payable only to the extent to which they exceed the other payments for those days. In many cases, the Department of Veterans Affairs will make payments to the employee rather than the Board.

8. Can proof of military service be filed in advance of retirement?

   No. Railroad employees are encouraged to file proof of their military service well in advance of retirement. The information will be recorded and stored electronically until they actually retire.

   If employees do not have a record of their military service, their local Railroad Retirement Board office will explain how to get acceptable evidence. If employees do not have an official record of their military service, their local Railroad Retirement Board office will explain how to get acceptable evidence. Employees can also get this information from the Board’s Web site at www.vrrb.gov.

9. How can an employee get more information about the crediting of military service by the Railroad Retirement Board?

   For more information, an employee should contact the nearest office of the Railroad Retirement Board. Most Board offices are open to the public from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on Federal holidays.

   Employees can also find the address and telephone number of the Board office serving their area by calling the automated toll-free RRB Help Line at 1-800-908-0772. They can also get this information from the Board’s Web site at www.vrrb.gov.
Delegate Elections Update: — A total of 135 IBT locals, including 12 BLET General Committees of Adjustment, had contested elections by the April 30, 2006 cut-off date for delegate elections. Delegates and alternates from other General Committees, BWMED System Federations, and IBT and GCC locals were nominated without opposition. Get the list of certified delegates at www.ibtvote.org.

Any member may contact a delegate or alternate delegate to the IBT Convention. A member needing contact information for a delegate may ask the delegate’s GCA, or may obtain that information from the Election Supervisor’s office.

Delegate Convention Expenses: — Delegates attending the IBT Convention are on official union business, and each General Committee is responsible for paying the travel, lodging, last wages and per diem expenses for its delegates (and for alternates, if the General Committee election plan provided for that). An Advisory Regarding Payment of Expenses for Convention Delegates and Alternate Delegates explaining this responsibility was mailed to each General Committee and to each elected delegate and alternate. You can get this Advisory at www.ibtvote.org.

Know the Procedures for Nominating IBT International Union Officers: — The Election Supervisor has issued the Supplemental Rules that state the schedule and procedures for nominations of candidates for IBT International Union Office at the 2006 IBT Convention, which will take place in Las Vegas, Nevada on June 26-30, 2006. Get a copy of the Supplemental Rules at www.ibtvote.org.

Election Protests: — IBT members, including BLET members, have filed more than 260 protests raising issues including candidate eligibility, bulletin board access, use of union resources, and fundraising.

Do You Want Your Own Copy of the 2006 Rules? — Contact the Election Supervisor’s Office in Washington, D.C. and request your copy of the 2006 Rules. Rules booklets are available in English, Spanish and French. Call toll-free 888-IBT-2006 (888-429-2006) or send your request by email to ElectionSupervisor@ibtvote.org

Richard W. Mark
Election Supervisor
Office of the Election Supervisor
for the International Brotherhood of Teamsters
1725 K Street NW
Washington, DC 20006
888-IBT-2006 (Toll Free)
202-429-4099 (Fax/interstate)
www.ibtvote.org

As delegate election results are certified, the name and GCA affiliation of each elected delegate will be posted to the list of Certified Convention Delegates and alternate delegates. Each certified delegate and alternate will receive a confirming letter from the Election Supervisor.

There are separate links to the certified delegate lists for IBT locals, GCC locals, BWMED SFs and BLET GCAs.

Election Supervisor’s Fifth Report to BLET Members

Delegate Elections Update: — A total of 135 IBT locals, including 12 BLET General Committees of Adjustment, had contested elections by the April 30, 2006 cut-off date for delegate elections. Delegates and alternates from other General Committees, BWMED System Federations, and IBT and GCC locals were nominated without opposition. Get the list of certified delegates at www.ibtvote.org.

Any member may contact a delegate or alternate delegate to the IBT Convention. A member needing contact information for a delegate may ask the delegate’s GCA, or may obtain that information from the Election Supervisor’s office.

Delegate Convention Expenses: — Delegates attending the IBT Convention are on official union business, and each General Committee is responsible for paying the travel, lodging, last wages and per diem expenses for its delegates (and for alternates, if the General Committee election plan provided for that). An Advisory Regarding Payment of Expenses for Convention Delegates and Alternate Delegates explaining this responsibility was mailed to each General Committee and to each elected delegate and alternate. You can get this Advisory at www.ibtvote.org.

Know the Procedures for Nominating IBT International Union Officers: — The Election Supervisor has issued the Supplemental Rules that state the schedule and procedures for nominations of candidates for IBT International Union Office at the 2006 IBT Convention, which will take place in Las Vegas, Nevada on June 26-30, 2006. Get a copy of the Supplemental Rules at www.ibtvote.org.

Election Protests: — IBT members, including BLET members, have filed more than 260 protests raising issues including candidate eligibility, bulletin board access, use of union resources, and fundraising.

Do You Want Your Own Copy of the 2006 Rules? — Contact the Election Supervisor’s Office in Washington, D.C. and request your copy of the 2006 Rules. Rules booklets are available in English, Spanish and French. Call toll-free 888-IBT-2006 (888-429-2006) or send your request by email to ElectionSupervisor@ibtvote.org

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As delegate election results are certified, the name and GCA affiliation of each elected delegate will be posted to the list of Certified Convention Delegates and alternate delegates. Each certified delegate and alternate will receive a confirming letter from the Election Supervisor.

There are separate links to the certified delegate lists for IBT locals, GCC locals, BWMED SFs and BLET GCAs.
Rail, port security key issues for 2006

Only 5 percent of port shipments inspected

Port and Rail Security Concerns

It was astonishing to learn, as many people in the U.S. did recently, that only 5 percent of all shipments passing through our ports are inspected. Similar to the lack of security at our ports, our rails remain open to trespassers and possible terrorist activity despite the bombings in London and Madrid several years ago. Rail corporations still continue to try and further reduce the number of rail workers operating trains. However, we are aggressively fighting rail crew reduction schemes—in the legislature and at the bargaining table.

Despite the Bush administration’s plan to give away the security of our ports to a firm from Dubai, we led the fight to get this plan overturned. Our nation’s security should never been in the hands of any firm that isn’t a truly American personality.

Upcoming BTF Convention

We invite you to participate in the upcoming Teamsters Convention that will be held June 29-30, 2006 in Las Vegas. This convention will immediately follow our convention and will consist of numerous items for the convention delegates to discuss and debate and other business items necessary for running the union for the next five years. Each of our conventions is held at five-year intervals so this is also a time when we take stock of our past accomplishments while planning out the targets for the years ahead.

As one of the unions, which chose to merge with us since our last convention, we will especially welcome your participation. Our brothers and sisters at the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees and Trains Communicate Conference will also be joining us.

We are going to set up some aggressive organizing plans, which include a commitment to short line organizing. Bringing union benefits to the skilled, hardworking workers on short lines must be a priority.

In Solidarity

James P. Hoffa
General President

APRIL 2006

CALENDAR & EVENTS

JUNE 4-9, 2006...79th Annual BLET-GIA Southeastern Meeting Association (SMA)
Hosted by SMA Chairman T.L. Reid and the members of BLET Division 19B and Division 205. The 79th annual SMA will be held at the Chattahoochee Marriott at the Convention Center in Chattanooga, Tenn. See www.ble-t.org or March 2006 newsletter for registration form and other details.

JUNE 12-16, 2006...68th Annual BLET-GIA Eastern Union Meeting Association (EUUA)
Hosted by EUUA Arrangements Chairperson R.J. Chapter and the members of BLET Division 157, the 68th annual EUUA will be held at the Tropical Cays & Resort on the Boardwalk in Atlantic City, N.J. See www.ble-t.org or March 2006 newsletter for registration form and other details.

JUNE 19-22, 2006...BLET National Division Convention, Las Vegas, Nevada
The First National Convention of the BLET National Division will be held at Bally’s in Las Vegas.

JUNE 25-29, 2006...27th Teamsters International Convention, Las Vegas, Nevada
The 27th International Convention of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters will be held at Bally’s in Las Vegas.

JULY 18-21, 2006...66th Annual BLET-GIA International Western Conference (IWC)
Hosted by S.Y. Raabkord and the members of BLET Division 94, the 66th annual IWC will be held at the Holiday Inn Rapid City—Rushmore Plaza in Rapid City, S.D. See www.ble-t.org or March 2006 newsletter for registration form and other details.

AUGUST 20-24, 2006...71st Annual BLET-GIA Southeastern Meeting Association (SMA)
Hosted by A.L. Williams and the members of BLET Divisions 182, 279, 515, 855 and BGA Auxiliary 37, the 71st annual SMA will be held at The Peabody Little Rock in Little Rock, Ark. Make reservations by calling 1-800-PEABODY or 1-309-778-7000. For more details, contact A.L. Williams by e-mail at: ALW9513@bighog.net, or Vietnam Norman Baker at (513) 851-6998.