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## PRESIDENT PIERCE TESTIFIES FOR PTC, TWO-PERSON CREWS AT CONGRESSIONAL HEARING

**D**ennis Pierce, National President of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLET) and President of the Teamsters Rail Conference, testified before the U.S. House of Representatives on June 2 and urged the timely implementation of Positive Train Control (PTC), coupled with a minimum two-person operating crew to ensure safety along the nation's railroads.

Testifying before the House's Transportation and Infrastructure (T&I) Committee at a hearing titled "Oversight of the Amtrak Accident in Philadelphia," President Pierce's testimony covered several core elements of federal oversight of the railroad industry, stressing that two-person train crews backed by PTC would go a long way toward preventing future accidents.

While PTC would help mitigate accidents, he said, it should not be used to replace crew members who work inside the cab of America's locomotives.

"PTC is no silver bullet," he



A copy of President Pierce's statement appears on Page 2 of this issue.

said. "It's not designed to prevent every accident and any claim that PTC renders the second crew member unnecessary is just not true. PTC can't replace the second crewmember. It doesn't provide a second set of eyes and ears trained on the road ahead, or monitor the 'left' side of the train for defects like hot wheels, stuck brakes or shifted lading, or observe the 'left' side of highway-rail grade crossings for drivers who fail to stop,

or separate stopped trains that block crossings to allow first responders to cross the tracks."

In support of two-person train operations, President Pierce urged members of the T&I Committee to take up and support Congressman Don Young's Safe Freight Act — H.R. 1763 — that would require two crew members inside the locomotive cabs of freight trains and light engines used in connection with the movement of freight. He also

**"PTC is no silver bullet. It's not designed to prevent every accident and any claim that PTC renders the second crew member unnecessary is just not true. PTC can't replace the second crewmember." — Dennis Pierce**

asked the Committee to reconsider the Northeast Rail Service Act of 1981 (NERSA), a federal law that eliminated the second crewmember on Northeast Corridor passenger locomotives.

In addition, President Pierce addressed and discussed crew member fatigue, blaming inaccurate crew line-ups and unpredictable work schedules for causing "systemic fatigue" throughout the industry.

He also downplayed the notion of inward-facing cameras as an accident prevention measure. "Cameras can be an accident investigation tool but they create a false sense of security if more than that is expected," he said. "Cameras don't slow or stop trains, PTC does."

"The truth is that some railroads have shown much more interest in using the camera data to punitively attack certain em-

ployees than for post-accident investigations, and that is just unacceptable," Pierce said.

President Pierce also called for Congress to increase funding for Amtrak.

"We can't expect Amtrak to run a first-class railroad if it's funded at Third World levels," Pierce said. "Amtrak is a good investment ... a necessary resource, and shortchanging Amtrak creates other costs elsewhere. I strongly urge you to provide the resources necessary for Amtrak to thrive and grow, and not just to limp along."

Others witnesses who also testified include: Christopher Hart, Chairman, National Transportation Safety Board; Joseph H. Boardman, President and Chief Executive Officer, Amtrak and Sarah Feinberg, Acting Administrator, Federal Railroad Administration. ©

## BLET urges FRA to require additional buffer cars on crude oil trains

**T**he Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen is urging the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and the nation's Class 1 rail carriers to take action to address a serious shortcoming in current railroad operating regulations that endangers the lives of train crew members who work on crude oil trains.

Specifically, the BLET is asking the FRA to take regulatory action to mandate an increased number of buffer cars between the lead locomotive and trailing tank cars that contain oil. Current regulations require five buffer cars on a mixed freight train if the first car contains oil, but through a loophole in

the regulations, only one buffer car is required on unit oil trains that could contain over 100 oil tankers. In derailments, locomotives can be a primary ignition source for spilled oil.

"Since engine and train crews occupy the cab of that potential ignition source, there should be as much distance away from the fuel source as possible," wrote BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce in a letter to FRA Administrator Sarah Feinberg on April 28, 2015. "Five cars may be insufficient, but one car is obviously not enough."

"The recent series of unit oil train derailments makes it plain for all to see that [the current] rule bears no relationship whatsoever to safe

operations," Pierce continued. "A change in the rule would require minor, easily accommodated operational changes and not the need for some expensive technology."

Not only would the extra buffer cars make for a safer work environment, Pierce wrote, it would also allow train crew members to help ensure public safety in the event of future oil train derailments.

"The Casselton, North Dakota wreck and the more recent CSX accident at Mount Carbon, West Virginia could have been much worse were it not for a two-person crew taking swift action to separate the locomotive consist from the train containing

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3



In a coal dominant region, a trio of vibrant BNSF locomotives, including brand new GE ES44AC No. 8093 leads a westbound crude oil empty through downtown St. Albans, W.Va. enroute to the Bakken oil fields of North Dakota from an oil facility in Yorktown, Va. Photo: Chase Gunnoe



### BLET President's Message

Full text of June 2nd's written testimony **pg. 2**



### Right To Work Update

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### Texas Retirement

Pedigo elected Texas SLB Chairman; Terry Briggs retires **pg. 5**

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**BLET PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE BY DENNIS R. PIERCE**

# SAVING LIVES

**President Pierce says two-person train crews and Positive Train Control would combine to drastically improve railroad safety**

*The following is the full written statement of Dennis R. Pierce, BLET National President and President of the Teamsters Rail Conference, before the United States House of Representatives Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure as part of its June 2, 2015, hearing into oversight of the Amtrak accident in Philadelphia.*

Good morning, Chairman Shuster, Ranking Member DeFazio, and Members of the Committee. My name is Dennis Pierce and I am the National President of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, or BLET, which has nearly 39,000 active members; I also am the President of the 70,000-member Rail Conference of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. My testimony today will encompass the views and concerns of both groups.

I would like to begin by offering my most sincere condolences to the victims of the tragic Amtrak 188 accident and to their families. One of the most difficult parts of my job is when I have to convey the BLET's sorrow to the families of members killed in the line of duty. I have had to do that eleven times — to the families of Glenn Steele, Chance Gober, Dan Hall, John Hall, Todd Burckhard, J. G. Hadden, Chris Carter, Tom Anderson, Tom Kenny, Stanley Watts and Darrell Amerson — since I became BLET National President on July 1, 2010, and unfortunately I fear that I will have to do it many more times during my tenure.

What is even more difficult



President Pierce delivery his testimony before the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee on June 2, 2015. Photo: International Brotherhood of Teamsters

to accept is when proven safety technology exists that could have prevented even one of those deaths. In fact, of the eleven names I just mentioned, five of those deaths could have been prevented by Positive Train Control alone. Further, for the period from 2005 through 2013, the NTSB completed 16 investigations of railroad accidents that could have been prevented or mitigated with Positive Train Control (PTC). These 16 accidents claimed 52 lives and injured 942 others; the damages totaled hundreds of millions of dollars. These figures exclude the PTC-preventable accidents that NTSB did not investigate. So believe me when I say that I share the frustration of those

whose lives have been forever changed by the Amtrak 188 tragedy.

As background information, the BLET's Safety Task Force is a party to the ongoing National Transportation Safety Board investigation of Amtrak 188. An investigative team from the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees Division of the Teamsters Rail Conference also is assisting in the investigation. Both Organizations are governed by the NTSB's confidentiality rules and, therefore, and have been asked not disclose any investigative information that may have come to our attention unless it has been publicly released by the NTSB.

In this regard, the NTSB has

publicly commented on two points. One is that excess train speed at the Frankford Junction curve contributed to Amtrak 188 leaving the tracks. The other is that this accident would not have occurred if PTC, as an overlay on top of the existing signal system, had been operational.

Beyond that, I can tell you that the Amtrak 188 tragedy places a number of core elements of federal oversight of the nation's railroads front and center. One is the statutory mandate that PTC be implemented by year's end. Another is the safety redundancy afforded by maintaining two-person crews in locomotive cabs. A third is the vexing issue of crew fatigue. Fourth, I want to brief-

ly address inward-facing cameras as I am certain that subject will come up during this hearing. And, finally, I want to comment on the nation's expectations for Amtrak.

But before I turn to those issues, I'd like to spend a few moments giving you — and all those watching — the unique perspective shared by locomotive engineers and, indeed, all railroad operating employees. It is important that you spend a few minutes in our shoes, because what non-railroaders see as solutions to problems often bring with them adverse unintended consequences that we can identify in advance.

About one in ten thousand Americans is a working locomotive engineer today. We comprise one of the most highly skilled, highly trained and highly regulated and federally licensed professions in the nation's workforce. Our work is very dangerous, with the potential for catastrophe — for ourselves, our co-workers, the traveling public and the communities through which we work — always lurking in the background, as May 12th starkly reminds us.

Just as in nearly every other workplace over the past couple of decades, technology has revolutionized the workplace of locomotive engineers in freight and passenger service. In fact, the efficiency and the productivity of today's locomotive engineer are at levels that couldn't be imagined 50 years ago.

But the increased efficiency and productivity due in part to various technologies are increasingly being offset by heightened safety risks:

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## BLET NATIONAL DIVISION ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

Official communications between BLET members and the National Division require a hard copy of the correspondence, bearing a signature, being received by the National President to be considered an "official communication." This is to provide that the actual question(s) are addressed, and ensures that when official

interpretations are made they have reference to a specific request and can be used in future correspondence.

The volume of e-mails received makes it impossible for the National President to answer all unofficial communications. Therefore, it is the policy of the BLET that e-mails addressed to the National President will be reviewed and forwarded to

the appropriate officer or staff for a timely response; however, an e-mail message is not considered an official communication.

Moreover, anonymous e-mails and e-mails that do not provide sufficient information concerning the sender to enable National Division staff to confirm the sender's membership status will not receive any reply or acknowledgement. This poli-

cy is intended to allow the National President to be aware of the opinions and suggestions of the membership, while at the same time providing a timely response to the member's unofficial communication, if a response is necessary, without needlessly expending limited BLET resources.

**ADOPTED AT CLEVELAND, OHIO ON JULY 22, 2010. ©©**





## GENERAL PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE BY JAMES P. HOFFA

# BANKS NEED TO BE SHOWN WHO'S BOSS

**W**all Street's continuing war against workers seems endless.

Just when you think it can't get any worse, it does. And even when big players in the financial world get caught for wrongdoing, the penalties never seem to make a difference.

The latest example happened recently when the Justice Department announced that five major banks -- Citicorp, JP Morgan Chase, Barclays, The Royal Bank of Scotland and UBS -- were pleading guilty to felony charges and agreeing to pay more than \$5 billion to settle charges they had worked together to manipulate international interest and foreign currency exchange rates.

Yet despite the "brazen" activity by the banks, as Attorney General Loretta Lynch put it

herself, no one ultimately will spend a day in jail for engaging in these illegal activities. That is simply outrageous.

The bad behavior of banks is nothing new for hardworking Americans, who have taken the brunt of the financial world's malfeasance. They've seen Wall Street fritter away their pensions and retirement investments and jeopardize their future. Financial institutions teamed up with big business last December to push through a federal spending bill that attacked workers' pensions and put their retirements at risk.

The same Wall Street banks that rake in hundreds of millions of dollars managing pension funds lobbied to reduce pension benefits for the people whose sweat created those funds. Congress did the bankers' bidding

and reduced benefits, but the banks get to keep making millions on the backs of the very pensioners whose benefits were cut. That is unfair, unjust and plain un-American.

It's well past time for the big banks to face the consequences of their actions with punishments that have real teeth. Penalties need to be higher than any bank would pay just as part of the cost of doing business.

Banks have continually abused the benefits given to them. It's only fair that people get treated the same as the powerful. That's what's going to get America working again.

Fraternally,

**JAMES P. HOFFA**  
TEAMSTERS GENERAL  
PRESIDENT



66 The bad behavior of banks is nothing new for hardworking Americans, who have taken the brunt of the financial world's malfeasance. They've seen Wall Street fritter away their pensions and retirement investments and jeopardize their future. 99

## Schulz elected Wisconsin State Legislative Board Chairman

**C**huck M. Schulz was elected Chairman of the Wisconsin State Legislative Board at its quadrennial meeting in Madison, Wisc., May 18-21, 2015.

Brother Schulz is a Canadian National-Wisconsin Central locomotive engineer who serves as Local Chairman and Legislative Representative of BLET Division 175 (Neenah). He first joined the BLET in November of 2000.

Also elected during the meeting were: 1st Vice Chairman Anthony M. Dimond, Division 176 (Adams); 2nd Vice Chairman Joshua L. Weatherford, Division 12 (La Crosse); Secretary-Treasurer Eric A. Stroik, Division 174 (Stevens Point); Alternate Secretary-Treasurer Paul M. Dinauer, Division 882 (Milwaukee); and Chaplain Lee D. Rushenberg, Division 188 (Superior). Elected to serve on the Audit Committee were: Committee Chairman Gordy A. Hill, Division 173 (Fond du Lac); Rory T. Lendved, Division 209 (Green Bay); and Andy W. Doney, Division 241 (Altoona).

Representing the BLET National Division at the meeting were: First Vice President E. Lee Pruitt; Director of Regulatory Affairs Vincent Verna; and Special Representative and Director of Organizing Paul Aird.

"I am proud to congratulate and thank Brother Schulz and the officers

**"I am proud to congratulate and thank Brother Schulz and the officers of the Wisconsin State Legislative Board. I have every confidence they will do an excellent job of representing the best interests of BLET members in Wisconsin."**

— DENNIS PIERCE

of the Wisconsin State Legislative Board," BLET National President Dennis Pierce said. "I have every confidence they will do an excellent job of representing the best interests of BLET members in Wisconsin. They will have their work cut out for them considering the anti-union political environment brought about by the state's governor."

Special guests attending the meeting included: Minnesota State Legislative Board Chairman David Brown; Ohio State Legislative Board Chairman Timothy Hanely; Canadian National-Wisconsin Central General Chairman John Reynolds; and Kathleen Bisbikis National Second Vice President and National Legislative Representative, BLET Auxiliary.

"I offer my humblest appreciation and thanks to the members of the Wisconsin State Legislative Board for the op-

portunity to serve the membership in Wisconsin. In looking forward, we in this state have many challenges that can't be done alone — we need all members to stand side by side," Chairman Schulz said. "Brother Dimond has been an example of leadership and labor activism in the years past, particularly in some of the most turbulent and historic times. I look forward to learning from him and advancing the causes of our Brotherhood with him and the rest of the members of the Board."

President Pierce also thanked Brother Dimond for his years of service as Chairman of the Wisconsin State Legislative Board (2007-2015) and for his ongoing dedication to our Brotherhood.

The Wisconsin State Legislative Board represents approximately 1,200 active and retired members in 13 Divisions. ©©

### ADDITIONAL BUFFER CARS

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more explosive crude oil," Pierce wrote.

Considering the predicted likelihood of future derailments, Pierce said now is the time to take proactive measures to prevent possible tragedies.

"With the U.S. Department of Transportation projecting ten crude oil or ethanol related derailments a year for the next two decades costing \$4 billion annually, and 2015 on target to exceed that number, BLET respectfully requests that FRA take appropriate proactive measures to ensure that train crews have a chance to escape the aftermath of such derailments with their health and lives intact," Pierce wrote.

In addition to urging the FRA to act, the BLET is also requesting that the nation's Class 1 railroads "take immediate voluntary action to address this serious weakness in the current regulations by adding additional buffer cars to all unit oil trains."

The action by BLET is in tandem with a call by its Teamsters Rail Conference partners Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees Division (BMWED) to reduce the frequency of oil train derailments by increasing track maintenance. According to BMWED National President Freddie N. Simpson: "The wear and tear on the track structure, coupled with the volatility of the commodities being transported, requires additional track maintenance to stay ahead of the rate of track degradation." The BLET and BMWED are member Divisions of the Rail Conference, International Brotherhood of Teamsters. ©©



# Driscoll elected Conrail SSA/CSXT-ND General Chairman

**B**rother Patrick T. Driscoll, BLET Division 382 (Buffalo, N.Y.), was elected to his first full term as General Chairman of the Conrail SSA/CSXT-Northern District General Committee of Adjustment at the Board's quadrennial meeting in Buffalo, N.Y., May 19-20, 2015.

Brother Driscoll joined the BLET in 1994 as a Conrail locomotive engineer and has been an officer of Division 382 since 2000. He was elected Local Chairman in 2006, 2009 and 2012. He has served the GCA as Vice General Chairman and Alternate General Chairman, and in 2014 served the National Division as a member of the By-laws Committee at the Third National Convention in Las Vegas. Driscoll had been serving as General Chairman since January 1, 2015, following the promotion of former General Chairman James P. Louis to the office of National Vice President.

Also elected to the GCA were: 1st Vice General Chairman Harvey N. Benn, IV, Division 169 (Syracuse, N.Y.); Alternate General Chairman Rich Vogt, Jr., Division 387 (Camden, N.J.); 2nd Vice General Chairman Greg Lund, Division 421 (Buffalo); 3rd Vice General Chairman Mark Krajewski, Division 46 (Albany, N.Y.); Secretary-Treasurer Chris Eleczko, Division 421 (Buffalo, N.Y.); and Alternate



Officers, delegates and guests attending the Conrail SSA/CSXT-Northern District General Committee of Adjustment's quadrennial meeting in Buffalo, N.Y., May 19-20, 2015.

Secretary-Treasurer Rich Bartela, Division 382 (Buffalo, N.Y.).

Representing the BLET National Division at the meeting were: National President Dennis R. Pierce; National Vice President Gil L. Gore; and National Vice President Louis.

"I offer my congratulations and thanks to all officers of the Conrail General Committee of Adjustment," President

Pierce said. "Brother Driscoll has some big shoes to fill but I have every confidence he will do an excellent job representing our members and protecting their interests."

Special guest Dave Kearsing, Chairman of the New York State Legislative Board, was also in attendance. Also in attendance from the National Division were John Fink, Director of Bylaws

Administration, and Matt Kronyak, Special Representative. Both are members of BLET Divisions belonging to the Conrail SSA/CSXT-Northern District GCA.

The General Committee is comprised of 14 different BLET Local Divisions on two properties (Conrail Shared Assets and CSXT Northern District) and represents approximately 1,400 active and retired members. @@



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## Missouri Gov. Nixon vetoes Right To Work bill

**O**rganized labor scored a major victory on June 4 as Governor Jay Nixon vetoed legislation that would have made Missouri the 26th Right To Work state in America.

In a statement regarding his veto of House Bill 116, Gov. Nixon said: "This extreme measure would take our state backward, squeeze the middle-class, lower wages for Missouri families, and subject businesses to criminal and unlimited civil liability. Right To Work is wrong for Missouri, it's wrong for the middle-class — and it must never become the law of the Show-Me-State."

He vetoed the bill at UAW Local 249 in Kansas City with scores of union members and supporters in attendance. Missouri State Legislative Board Chairman Brian Kelley represented the BLET at the veto ceremony.

"It was an honor to be there," Brother Kelley said. "There was so much energy and emotion in the air you could feel it."

BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce thanked Brother Kelley and all involved for their efforts to lobby against the anti-worker legislation.

"First and foremost, a big thank you goes out to all BLET Brothers and Sisters and their families in Missouri who took the time to make their voices heard on this issue. Also, Brother Kelley has gone above and beyond the call of duty in fighting against the Right To Work bill in Missouri, and he deserves our thanks for all his hard work and dedication. I also would like to recognize National Vice President Jim Louis and BLET National Mobilization Coordinator—West Paul Aird



Missouri Governor Jay Nixon, at the podium, shortly after vetoing the Right To Work bill passed earlier this year by the state's legislature.

for orchestrating our membership response through the Mobilization network," President Pierce said.

Supporters of the bill are lobbying the Missouri House and Senate in an attempt to override the Governor's veto. The BLET is monitoring the situation closely and will launch another mobilization drive, if necessary, to help oppose these anti-union efforts.

President Pierce and Brother Kelley also thanked Gov. Nixon for vetoing the bill and standing up for labor, their families and the middle-class.

"I called the governor's office and told his staff to thank him," Brother Kelley said. "We cannot thank him enough... that is for sure!" @@



# Gary Pedigo elected Texas State Legislative Board Chairman: Briggs retired June 2

**T**he BLET's Texas State Legislative Board held its 14th quadrennial convention on April 19-21 in Austin, Texas. In attendance were delegates representing 38 of the 41 Local Divisions in Texas. Brother Gary R. Pedigo, BLET Division 177 (Denison, Texas), was elected by acclamation to the office of Chairman. Incumbent Chairman Terry D. Briggs, Division 530 (Commerce, Texas), did not seek reelection and retired effective June 2, 2015.

Brother Pedigo was elected Second Vice Chairman at the Texas State Legislative Board's 13th quadrennial convention in 2011. He also currently serves as Local Chairman and Legislative Representative of Division 177. A Union Pacific locomotive engineer, Brother Pedigo has held continuous membership in the BLET since January 1, 1979. According to the Texas SLB Bylaws, terms of office for all newly elected officers begin on June 1.

Elected by acclamation to serve as First Vice Chairman was Benjamin L. Wright, Division 189 (Fort Worth, Texas). Reelected to serve as Secretary-Treasurer was Scott J. Piekarski, Division 620 (Fort Worth, Texas). Also elected were: Second Vice Chairman Catarino A. Garcia, Division 566 (Del Rio, Texas); Alternate Second Vice Chairman Larry J. Williams, Division 944 (Dallas, Texas); and Alternate Secretary-Treasurer Warren D. Stevens, Division 197 (San Antonio, Texas). Elected to serve on the audit committee



were: Allen C. Allee, Division 703 (Teague, Texas); Larry M. Yaws, Division 574 (Amarillo, Texas); and Tommy L. Johnson, Division 871 (Slaton, Texas).

Representing the National Division at the quadrennial meeting were: National President Dennis R. Pierce; First Vice President E. Lee Pruitt; National Secretary-Treasurer Stephen J. Bruno; Vice President & National Legislative Representative John P. Tolman; Vice President Michael D. Twombly; Vice President Cole W. Davis; and Vice President Michael D. Priester. Vice Presidents Twombly, Davis and Priester are assigned to the various properties operating in Texas. The General

Chairman from each General Committee of Adjustment representing one or more Local Divisions in the state of Texas also attended.

"I offer my congratulations to Brother Pedigo and I know that he and all officers of the Texas State Legislative Board will do a fine job of representing the best interests of our members in the proud state of Texas," President Pierce said. "I also express my deepest thanks to Brother Terry Briggs for his years of selfless service to the Brotherhood and its members as a Division officer, a Convention Delegate, and as a State Legislative Board Chairman. On behalf of the BLET, I wish



him a long, happy and healthy retirement."

Brother Briggs announced his retirement following a railroad career that spanned over 44 years. He hired out on the Rock Island in Shawnee, Okla., on April 11, 1971, and first joined the Brotherhood on March 1, 1973. He was elevated to the office of Chairman of the Texas State Legislative Board in 2001, following the election of former Chairman Raymond Holmes to the office of BLET Vice President & National Legislative Representative. Brother Briggs was reelected to the Texas State Legislative Board Chairman's office in 2003, 2007 and 2011. He was also active with the BLET's National Association of State Legislative Board Chairmen (NASLBC) for many years.

Established in 1889, the Texas State Legislative Board represents 41 divisions and more than 3,500 active BLET members. @@



## DENNIS PIERCE MESSAGE

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- The use of "distributed power" or DP locomotives — which are strategically placed in the middle or at the rear of freight trains even though they are controlled by the engineer on the lead locomotive — allows railroads to run much longer and heavier trains with one crew ... that's good in terms of efficiency and productivity. However, the engineer must divide his attention in order to monitor and control those sets of locomotives separately, including constantly making separate mental calculations to operate each set of locomotives ... and that increases risk.

- A large number of locomotives are equipped with "fuel saver" technology, which optimizes fuel consumption through a series of computer calculations ... again, good for efficiency and productivity. However, the system records all locomotive activity and if the engineer substitutes his or her professional judgment and experience for the computer algorithm, the engineer could suffer employment sanctions ... again, there is increased risk because the system punishes exercises of professional judgment and experience.

- Virtually every locomotive in America is equipped with an "event recorder" that records dozens of locomotive activ-

ities ... which, once more, is good for efficiency and productivity. However, event recorder data is routinely downloaded during a trip, and then analyzed by a computer program that looks for — among things — rapid manipulation of the throttle that increases fuel usage or rapid braking that more quickly wears out brake shoes on locomotives and cars. When an anomaly is discovered, the computer automatically notifies someone in railroad management, which leads to a more in-depth investigation and, all too often, causes the engineer to suffer employment sanctions even when no accident or incident results ... once more, risk is increased because the system punishes exercises of professional judgment and experience.

A typical workday for today's freight locomotive engineer consists of up to 12 hours of monitoring and operating multiple train control systems, all the while doing his or her best to avoid the pitfalls presented by fuel saver and event recorder technologies, all of which distracts the engineer from focusing on the external environment in which the train is operating. Similar distractions exist for passenger and commuter engineers, who have to account for every minute of delay during their trip, even if the train's schedule allows that time to be made up when the train arrives at its final destination.

Today's operating environment also increases risk because engineers are punished for taking steps to avert a potential emergent situation. When I was a young locomotive engineer, the "old timers" used to tell me, "If you think you need to use your emergency brakes to avoid a problem and don't do it immediately, you're already too late." Today, I am convinced that preventable train accidents and incidents are occurring due to the fact that engineers have been trained under threat of discipline to never apply the emergency brake. When they do, even if it is to avoid an unsafe situation, engineers are routinely charged with a violation of railroad policy. In other words, the foundation of today's operation leads to accidents in situations where they wouldn't have happened in the past.

The fact of the matter is that the level of vigilance required of a locomotive engineer has reached the point of task overload in many parts of the industry. And when too much is expected of any system — whether man or machine — some type of breakdown is inevitable.

It's fashionable to look for a single cause of an accident, and when the cause appears to be a human error that usually seems to be the end of the inquiry. It's been said that if people would just not make mistakes then everything would

work fine ... their otherwise faultless systems would run smoothly and without incident.

Anyone who engages in root cause accident analysis will tell you this is an oversimplification that punishes the person, in most cases an employee, and camouflages underlying systemic problems. If drivers obeyed every speed sign and every traffic law and never made mistakes there would be no car collisions; yet we mandate seatbelts and airbags because we know humans are not infallible. Because weaknesses and shortcomings in equipment design and operational practices are generally found if a thorough root cause analysis of an accident is performed, the question really must evolve into "which humans" made errors that contributed to the accident in addition to the last human assumed to have made an error.

So, for example, we know that Amtrak's Automatic Train Control (ATC) system was active for westbound moves through Frankford Junction, but was not active for eastbound moves, such as the move Amtrak 188 was making at the time of the derailment. Amtrak has explained that the westbound speed reduction from 110 mph to 50 mph entailed a higher risk than the eastbound speed reduction from 80 mph to 50 mph, which made ATC ac-

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## DENNIS PIERCE MESSAGE

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tivation for the westbound move a higher priority. Was that decision a human error that contributed to the accident? Similarly, if we eventually learn that, for some reason, the engineer of Amtrak 188 became temporarily confused as to his location, it may be reasonable to conclude that the simple use of speed signs in the approach to the curve, as a reminder, may have prevented this accident. That would raise a question whether the decision not to post such signs was a human error that contributed to the accident.

It also may be true that Amtrak was forced to prioritize ATC installation the way it did because the railroad did not have sufficient resources to implement ATC on a faster scale, including financial resources. Did the decision to not appropriate sufficient funding to implement ATC on a faster scale constitute a human error that contributed to the accident? Our attention is currently focused on the engineer's actions or inactions on May 12th, and while those actions may have been the last link in a chain of events leading to the tragedy, they are far from being the only link. And, so, it is within this context that I will now turn to the current status of PTC.

## POSITIVE TRAIN CONTROL (PTC)

I'm not going to take this Committee's valuable time by providing a chapter and verse recitation of the history of PTC. We all know that the NTSB has been advocating this type of technology for more than 40 years. In fact, I recently saw a table that I believe the NTSB prepared, covering August of 1969 through the end of 2013, which detailed over 140 PTC preventable accidents that killed 288, injured over 6,500 and resulted in over \$327 million in property damage. There has been PTC development, but no full implementation on any railroad throughout almost that entire period.

The final impetus for a PTC mandate was the September 12, 2008 head-on collision between a Metrolink commuter train and a Union Pacific freight train in Chatsworth, California. That accident claimed the lives of 25, and injured over 100 others who were on board. Congress responded swiftly — and appropriately — by enacting the Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008 less than a month after the tragedy.

The RSIA established a December 31, 2015 deadline for PTC implementation on routes where it is required. However, significant segments of the industry began dragging their feet on PTC before the ink on the legislation was dry. These dilatory tactics included suing the Federal Railroad Administration in order to paralyze its rulemaking efforts to execute your mandate.

And even today industry lobbyists are telling you that the railroads need a blanket extension of five years. They also have built in a back door to their proposal that would add yet another two years to the deadline, pushing this life-saving technology all the way back to nearly 2023.

To be sure, there have been some significant problems. Obtaining radio spectrum has been difficult, particularly in some large metropolitan areas. And the Federal Communications Commission's process for approving radio towers was not designed for the volume of requests that PTC has triggered. These are legitimate roadblocks to a national implementation of PTC, and should be addressed as such.



But do these problems justify a blanket, industry-wide delay of 5-7 years? Amtrak doesn't think so. In fact, long before the May 12th tragedy Amtrak announced that it would be able to meet the deadline. Coming from a railroad that relies so heavily on government funding, I think that says a great deal about whether the December 31, 2015 deadline is reasonable. Also — if my memory serves me correctly — BNSF Railway likewise plans to install PTC with or without a government mandate. These rail carriers should be commended for at least trying to meet the requirements of the law since it passed or even before it passed.

So I want to underscore today that you should not be stampeded into granting a blanket PTC delay. Address the legitimate peripheral problems, to be sure, but hold the industry's feet to the fire to implement as much as they can by the statutory deadline, and provide strong evidence of localized problems — to FRA's satisfaction — that may cause them to miss the deadline on some portions of their system. If you don't do that, you will reward bad behavior ... punish BNSF and Amtrak for making PTC the economic priority you demanded in 2008 ... and dishonor the memory of those who perished in Philadelphia on May 12th.

## I. CREW SIZE

As much life-saving promise as PTC holds, it is by no means a silver bullet ... it won't prevent every railroad accident because it's not designed to prevent every railroad accident. This is important to remember, because there are some who erroneously insist that deployment of PTC will render the second crew member in the locomotive cab unnecessary. On freight trains that second crew member is the conductor, and on many Amtrak intercity trains that do not operate on the Northeast Corridor it's a second locomotive engineer.

While PTC as an overlay on an existing signal system will, indeed, prevent many serious railroad accidents, it cannot replace a conductor or a second engineer because the technology doesn't do all the things that those crew members do. In addition to in-cab safety redundancy at numerous levels throughout the trip, the public safety aspect of the duties of this second engine crew member includes, among other things ... monitoring the "left" side of the train for defects such as stuck brakes or shifted lading to mention just two ... observing the "left" side of highway-rail grade

crossings for drivers who fail to stop for the approaching train ... and separating stopped trains that are blocking crossings, to facilitate the movement of motor vehicles operated by first responders and other emergency personnel who must cross the tracks.

Because we are here as a direct result of the Amtrak 188 accident, I also think it's important to summarize for the Committee how a lone engineer came to occupy the locomotive cab on that train because that question has been asked. Prior to 1983, crews for Amtrak trains on the Northeast Corridor and all commuter rail service in the Northeastern U.S. were provided by Conrail. The locomotives of conventional passenger and commuter trains were crewed by two individuals: an engineer and a fireman, each with separate duties and responsibilities. Multiple-unit passenger trains — such as the old Metroliners and non-locomotive-drawn commuter trains — had only an engineer, but the train crew had access to the operating cab at all times.

On August 13, 1981, the Congress passed the Northeast Rail Service Act of 1981, or NERSA, as part of the much larger Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981. Section 1136 of NERSA relieved Conrail of any legal obligation to operate commuter service as of January 1, 1983, and Section 1165 relieved Conrail of any legal obligation to provide crews for intercity passenger service on the Northeast Corridor. Section 1143 of NERSA expressly eliminated the second engine crew position on all locomotive-drawn commuter rail trains. Armed with that legislative precedent — and mindful of where its funding originated — Amtrak refused to crew Northeast Corridor trains after December 31, 1982, with any more than the one crew member identified by the Congress for the commuter trains running on the same tracks ... the locomotive engineer.

As you know, on April 13th, Congressman Young introduced the Safe Freight Act — H.R. 1763 — which would, if enacted, mandate that no freight train or light engine used in connection with the movement of freight may be operated unless it has a crew consisting of at least two individuals, one of whom is a certified locomotive engineer, and the other of whom is certified as a conductor. This is the same bill that was introduced as H.R. 3040 in the last Congress and had about 80 co-sponsors. Congressman Young's bill was referred to the Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and Haz-

ardous Materials on April 14th, and we urge you to take action on the bill during this session. I would also suggest that the events of May 12th are cause for Congress to reconsider the 1981 NERSA language that eliminated the second set of eyes and ears on passenger and commuter trains on the Northeast Corridor.

## II. FATIGUE

Another oversight concern is crew member fatigue. Now, let me say at the outset that I am not suggesting fatigue was or may have been a causal factor in Amtrak 188. I don't believe that sufficient information has been obtained for anyone to make such a determination. However — and like PTC — fatigue mitigation has been a subject that NTSB has pointed to again and again as a causal factor in rail accidents.

This Committee knows well how serious this issue is. Hours of service laws governing operating employees were fundamentally overhauled by Congress in 2008, with enactment of the RSIA. But, I must tell you, I'm disappointed that very little progress has been made on this front since then.

Particularly troubling is the fact that post-accident discussions regarding how to prevent fatigue in the railroad industry have almost uniformly centered on processes to identify individual workers who may be suffering from a sleep disorder and removing them from work until they obtain medical treatment. Completely ignored are the very same fatigue factors that affect locomotive engineers and trainmen regardless of whether they have a sleep disorder — namely, poor lineup information and far too many surprise calls for work — that we have identified for more than a decade. Confirmed data has also shown that variable work cycles where engineers move from shift to shift routinely contribute to fatigue, yet very little has been done to address any of these issues.

The fact of the matter is that the only relief from fatigue the RSIA-driven changes have provided has come from additional time off duty and restrictions on contact by the railroad during statutory off-duty periods. Little meaningful progress has been made towards greater predictability of work schedules since you enacted RSIA nearly seven years ago, and the railroads have tightened down their attendance policies to the point where exhausted operating employees are going to work tired rather than risk discipline or dismissal by calling off fatigued. I am here to tell you that C-PAP machines that treat sleep apnea will not begin to solve the railroad industry's systemic crew fatigue problems when the involved employees are not given reliable predictions as to when they need to get their rest. It is clear to me that Congressional oversight of railroad safety needs to ramp up its efforts regarding predictability of work.

## III. INWARD FACING CAMERAS

I also would strongly urge you not to blindly jump on the inward-facing camera bandwagon. These cameras are an accident investigation tool and not an accident prevention tool. Not a single life would have been saved if the locomotive cab on Amtrak 188 had been equipped with an inward-facing camera. Installation of cameras will provide the public nothing more than a false sense of security.

Over the 25 months since the first Class I freight railroad filed suit against us — seeking a judicial green light to



66 BLET has also made suggestions both to the freight carriers and to the FRA that the railroad industry follow the cockpit voice recorder model for the aviation industry. That model includes use of data for purposes of federal accident/incident investigation, with privacy protections enacted in law or regulation. 99

install these cameras — we have engaged in countless discussions with individual railroads, groups of railroads, the Federal Railroad Administration, and within the FRA's Railroad Safety Advisory Committee. So what I'm about to say should come as no surprise to anyone in the industry who has been paying attention.

Our primary concerns are similar to many concerns in America; they are about privacy and the railroads using the camera data punitively against employees. On the privacy issue, engineers and trainmen are all but captives on locomotives for up to 12 hours, with no ability to ever leave the locomotive cab in many cases. Yet, more than 2 years into these discussions, the railroads continue to refuse to even consider shutting the cameras off when trains are stopped. This level of continual surveillance for up to 12 hours — whether the train is moving or stopped — and with no way to ever take even take a break from that surveillance is oppressive and un-American. Insofar as punitive use of video data against locomotive engineers and trainmen is concerned, you only need to review what has happened since you last revised Whistleblower protections found in 49 U.S.C. Section 20109 to confirm that many major railroads routinely retaliate against their employees. Our concerns are not without merit.

BLET has also made suggestions both to the freight carriers and to the FRA that the railroad industry follow the cockpit voice recorder model for the aviation industry. That model includes use of data for purposes of federal accident/incident investigation, with privacy protections enacted in law or regulation. It also provides for detailed, collectively bargained conditions on whether, when and how such data is used by a carrier in its own internal processes.

The industry has rejected these good faith proposals out of hand and — in light of the failure by the RSAC to reach consensus on a proposed inward-facing camera regulation — it is apparent that FRA will have to issue a regulation based on its best judgment. I sincerely hope FRA will give appropriate consideration to the legitimate problems we have identified. It is clear to our Organization that the money being spent on cameras would be better spent installing true lifesaving technology like PTC, which would actually prevent an accident as compared to getting film of that same accident. I expect we will have more for you to consider in the coming months, but felt it was important for you to hear our position directly.

#### IV. SUPPORT FOR AMTRAK

Finally, and with all due respect to the Speaker, some things do come down to dollars and cents, at least for Amtrak. That's why the railroad's PTC implementation deadline is December 31, 2015, and not December 31, 2014. It's why ATC was operational westbound at Frankford Junction on May 12th, but wasn't operational eastbound at that location. It's why Amtrak doesn't have a second crew member in the cab of the locomotive, all of these items cost money.

All U.S. transportation modes are fed-

erally supported but — relatively speaking — passenger rail receives crumbs. When compared to the rest of the world, federal support for Amtrak in the Number One economic power on the globe is nothing less than shameful. Last year, 5.8% of China's government spending was on rail, and one-half of one percent of the U.K.'s government spending was on rail. The U.S. share? A minuscule three one-hundredths of one percent.

Calculated as a percentage of gross domestic product, 2013 government investment in rail in Britain was four times the U.S. investment. The French and the Australians invested six times as much as we did. And over the past decade we have consistently lagged behind India, Russia and Turkey.

We cannot continue to demand that Amtrak operate a first-class railroad while at the same time funding it at Third World levels. We cannot expect reliable perfor-

mance from the portions of the Northeast Corridor infrastructure that are 75 ... or 100 ... or 125 years old. And we shouldn't turn our noses up at a transportation mode that pays 85% of operating costs out of the farebox because of a retreat by some from the consensus in favor of federal support of transportation that dates back to before my 152-year-old Union was founded. It strains our collective memory to think of a case where we attack a problem by defunding it when we want a positive outcome. Programs or institutions that are defunded by Congress are defunded for one reason and one reason alone: so that they wither on the vine and die.

I'm going to resist the urge to climb up on my soapbox here, but I want to stress that the public transportation infrastructure upon which our nation and economy were built over generations is crumbling around our feet ... and that

includes Amtrak. Amtrak is a good investment, and a necessary resource. And shortchanging Amtrak creates its own costs elsewhere. I strongly urge you to provide the resources necessary for Amtrak to thrive and grow, and not just to limp along.

Chairman Shuster and Ranking Member DeFazio, I appreciate the opportunity to address you today. Working together over the years with this Committee — and with the Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials Subcommittee — much has been accomplished to enhance rail safety, and I look forward to working with you to implement the lessons learned from Amtrak 188. Thank you for inviting me to speak, and I will be happy to try to answer any questions the Committee may have..

**DENNIS R. PIERCE**  
BLET NATIONAL PRESIDENT



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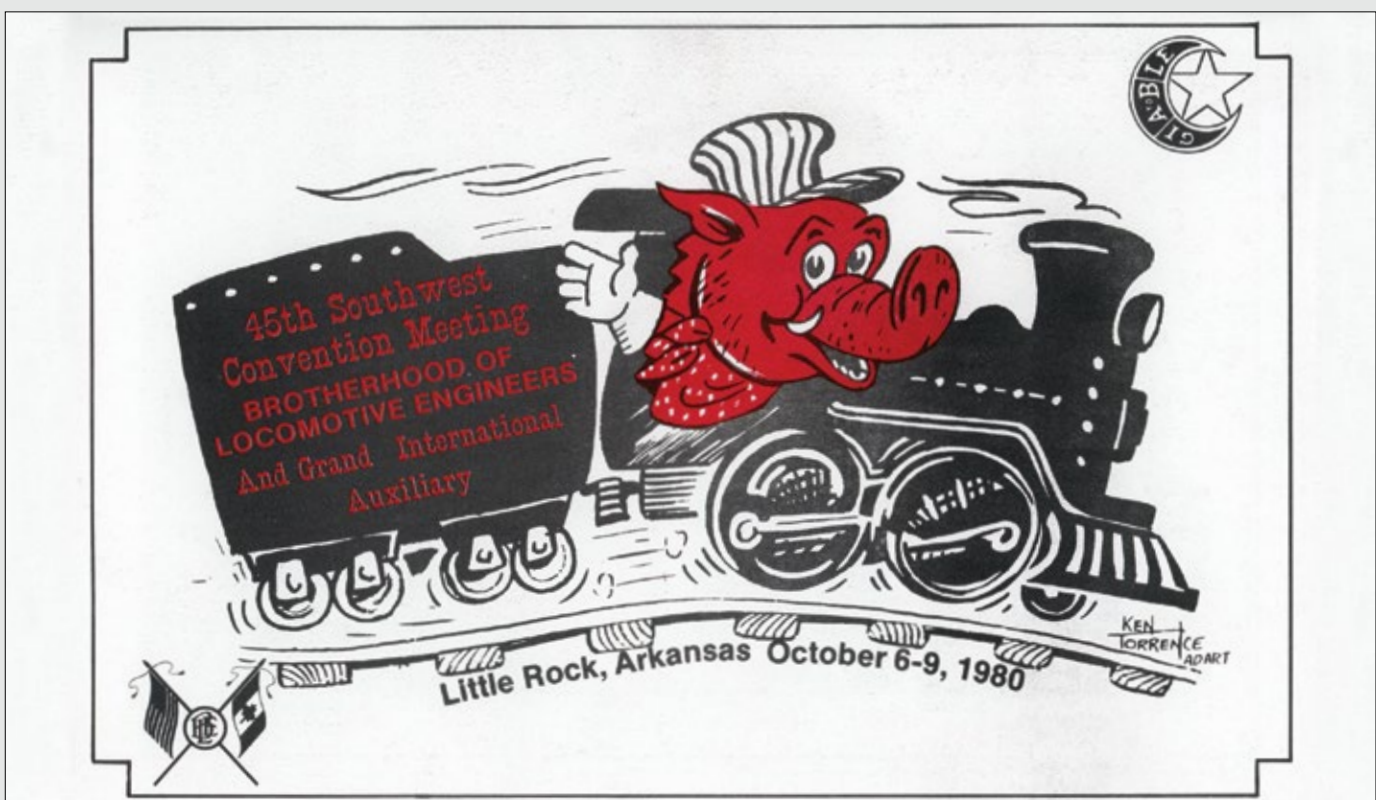
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### Photo of the Month: May/June 2015



**RETRO RAZORBACK:** This Arkansas Razorback proudly graced the cover of the program book for the 45th annual Southwestern Convention Meeting (SWCM), which was held in Little Rock, Ark., October 6-9, 1980. This year, BLET members will attend the 80th and final SWCM, which will be held in Tulsa, Okla., Sept. 13-17, 2015. For details, please visit: [www.ble-t.org/swcm](http://www.ble-t.org/swcm). **Photo:** BLET Archives



**Are you a photographer?** The National Division's Public Relations Department, which produces the Newsletter each month, has received numerous inquiries lately from BLET members volunteering to contribute their

images to the "Photo of the Month" section of the Newsletter. If you'd like to submit a photo for consideration, you may call Editor John Bentley at (216) 241-2630, ext. 248, or you can email: [Bentley@ble-t.org](mailto:Bentley@ble-t.org).

Please note only high resolution images can be used. Members are also encouraged to review their employer's policies regarding the use of cameras and other electronic devices while on duty.

## Advisory Board February/March 2015 Activity

In accordance with the BLET Bylaws, summaries of BLET Advisory Board members' activities are published monthly:

**NATIONAL PRESIDENT DENNIS R. PIERCE:** National Division Office, Cleveland; General supervision of BLET activities; General office duties; Correspondence and telephone communications; Supervision of Office Administration; General Supervision of Special Representatives; President, Teamsters Rail Conference; Policy Committee, Teamsters Rail Conference; CRLO meetings, Hollywood, Fla.; Rail Conference Policy Committee mtg., Hollywood, Fla.; Advisory Board mtg., Miami, Fla.; Regional Meeting Association mtg., Miami, Fla.; LM-2 Secretary-Treasurer Class, Tampa, Fla.; BLET/Union Pacific Railroad mtg., Omaha, Neb.; National Bargaining, Washington, D.C.; National Association of State Legislative Board Chairmen (NASLBC) annual mtg., Tucson, Ariz.

**FIRST VICE PRESIDENT E.L. (LEE) PRUITT:** National Duties include but not limited to: Director, Passenger Dept.; Shortline Organizing Dept.; Trainmen's Dept.; National Publications Committee; National Legislative Board; Teamsters Rail Conference Policy Committee; PRAC; and National Negotiations; CRLO mtgs., Hollywood, Fla.; Advisory Board mtg., Miami, Fla.; LM-2 Secretary-Treasurer Class, Tampa, Fla.; DOL Trustee training class, Cleveland; National bargaining, Washington, D.C.; NASLBC annual mtg., Tucson.

**NATIONAL SECRETARY-TREASURER STEPHEN J. BRUNO:** General supervision of Accounting Dept., Record Dept., Online Services Dept., Tax Compliance Dept.; Safety Task Force; PAC and FEC reports and filings; Implementation and training for BLET membership database; Pension, STD, 457 plan Trustee; Division, General Committee and SLB monthly Trustee reports; Mtgs. with vendors and financial institutions; Publications Committee; Passenger Dept.; National Bargaining Committee; IBT Human Rights Commission; CRLO mtgs., IBT Rail Conference Policy Committee mtg.; Advisory Board mtg.; DOL/OLMS LM Training; and STD premium changeover.

**VICE PRESIDENT & NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE REPRESENTATIVE JOHN P. TOLMAN:** Assigned to BLET Washington, DC office; General office duties, telephone and correspondence communications; Coordinate content of NLO website; Weekly PAC committee and legislative mtgs.; Attended Transportation Research Board mtg. & reception, Washington, D.C.; Several mtgs. with Republican Congressmen to discuss BLET's 2015 legislative agenda and Congress's agenda, Washington, D.C.; Mtg. with Association of American Railroads regarding inward facing cameras, Washington, D.C.; Mtgs. w/ State Legislators in Massachusetts to get H.R. 3040 sponsored in the House and Senate, Mass.; Various meetings and functions with Representatives and Senators.

**VICE PRESIDENT MARCUS J. RUEF:** Vice Chairman, National Railroad Adjustment Board (NRAB); National Mediation Board (NMB) Arb. Adv. Forum; Department Head, BLET Arbitration Department; Assigned to Illinois Central, Wisconsin Central, Indiana Harbor Belt, Belt Railway of Chicago, Metra, GRR and Illinois RR; Holiday; NMB freight rail symposium, Section 3 mtg., Miami; NMB arbitration advisory forum, Miami; BLET Advisory Board mtg., Miami; Mtg. w/ BLET regional meeting chairs, Miami; Assist GC Balonek w/ rules issues, Metra, Chicago; Assist GC Reynolds w/ rules issues and discipline case, WC, Chicago; Assist GC Semenek w/ discipline case, Metra, Chicago; Assist GC Craddock w/ manager issue, IC, Chicago; Office mtgs. and computer issues, Cleveland; Assist GC Cundari w/ negotiations prep., IHB, Chicago; UP grievance mediation, NRAB, Chicago; Assist GC Balonek w/ MOU draft, Metra, Chicago; Conduct ROAR & NRAB Labor Member forum, NRAB, Chicago; Assist GC Reynolds w/ agreement codification, WC, Chicago; Instruct at LC workshop, Cleveland; Union Track web conference call; WC GCA conference call.

**VICE PRESIDENT MIKE TWOMBLY** — Assigned to all Union Pacific GCAs (Eastern District, Northern Region (former C&NW), Western Lines (Pacific Harbor Lines), Western Region (Portland & Western), Central Region, Southern Region; On duty at home office; General office duties, telephone, email, correspondence communications, etc.; UP-Southern Region, UP-Western Region joint conference, Hurst, Texas; Advisory Board mtg., Miami; UP-Central Region Article 40 (F) negotiations, Kansas City, Mo.; Tacoma Rail GCA, Article 4 negotiations, Tacoma, Wash.; LM-2 Secretary-Treasurer training, Tampa, Fla.; UP-Southern Region New York Dock Section 4 negotiations, Tampa;

UP-Southern Region, UP-Western Region joint conference, Tampa; UP-Central Region grievance mediation 0120, Chicago; UP-Eastern District Division 388 mtg., North Platte, Neb.; UP-Southern Region New York Dock Article 1 Section 4 negotiations at Spring, Texas, and Phoenix, Ariz.; UP-Southern Region and UP-Western Region joint conference, Las Vegas.

**VICE PRESIDENT GIL GORE:** Assigned to all CSX; Grand Trunk Western; Union Pacific-Southern Region GCA special assignment; Dispute Resolution Committee (DRC) issues, CSXT; General office duties, paperwork, correspondence, emails, telephone calls, etc.; Holiday; BLET conference calls; CAPS discussion w/ CSX General Chairmen; CRLO meetings, Miami; Talleyrand RR negotiations conference call, Miami; BLET Advisory Board mtg., Fla.; TRR conference call; Bombardier negotiations, Jacksonville, Fla.; CSX conference call; Savannah arbitration prep., Jacksonville; PLB 7655 w/ GC Thornton; DRC codification mtg., Jacksonville; Savannah Arbitration-Twomey, Jacksonville.

**VICE PRESIDENT MICHAEL D. PRIESTER:** Assigned to all BNSF (former ATSF, former C&S, CRI&P, FWD, former STL-SF, BNSF/MRL), Panhandle Northern, Missouri & North Arkansas, Montana Rail Link, Great Western; Texas Pacific; General office duties, telephone, email, correspondence communications, etc.; Mtgs. w/ BNSF Labor Relations and GC Wilson, Fort Worth, Texas; Advisory Board mtgs., Miami; Meeting with Divisions 98, 621, 107 and 687 w/ GC Wilson, Lincoln, Neb.; Mtgs. w/ BNSF Labor Relations, Division 758 and GC Wilson, Portland, Ore.; PLB 7477 w/ GC Holdcraft, Chicago; Mtg. w/ Divisions 64, 344 and 462 w/ GC Holdcraft, BNSF, Wichita; PLB 7542 w/ GC Thurman, Ft. Myers; Local Chairman workshop w/ GC Wilson and GC Thurman, Fort Worth.

**VICE PRESIDENT COLE W. DAVIS:** Assigned to: Kansas City Southern (MidSouth Rail, South Rail, Gateway Western, Illinois & Midland), Texas Mexican Rwy.; CP Rail System/US (Indiana Southern, Iowa, Chicago & Eastern, Dakota, Minnesota & Eastern); Springfield Terminal (St. Lawrence & Atlantic, Delaware & Hudson), Cedar River, Louisville & Indiana, Huron & Eastern; General office duties, telephone, email, correspondence communications, etc.; CP & DM&E issues, assisting GC Semenek; KCS issues, assisting GC Parker; Mid South issues, assisting GC Craddock; Advisory Board mtgs., Miami; Huron & Eastern issues, assisting GC LaDrig; Springfield Terminal and D&H issues, assisting GC Moore; DM&E contract negotiations w/ GC Semenek, Minneapolis, Minn.; TexMex issues, assisting GC Rodriguez; D&H contract negotiations w/ GC Moore, Albany, N.Y.; Indiana Southern contract issues, assisting GC Semenek; Springfield Terminal contract negotiations/ GC Moore, Boston.

**VICE PRESIDENT R.C. (RICK) GIBBONS:** Assigned to: All Norfolk Southern General Committees; Wheeling & Lake Erie; Chicago, Fort Wayne & Eastern; New York, Susquehanna & Western; New England Central; Connecticut Southern; Western New York & Pennsylvania; Indiana & Ohio; RSAC/RSIA Fatigue Management Group; General office duties, telephone, email, correspondence communications; Advisory Board mtg., Miami, Fla.; LM-2 Secretary-Treasurer workshop, Tampa, Fla.; NS Annual Service/Safety mtgs., w/ NS General Chairmen, Atlanta, Ga.; PLB 7574, assisting GC Wallace, NS, Norfolk, Va.

**VICE PRESIDENT JAMES P. LOUIS:** Assigned Amtrak; Long Island Rail Road; New York & Atlantic; Metro North; New Jersey Transit; PATH; SEPTA; Metra; Union Railroad; National Division Department Head, Education & Training Dept.; National Division Department Head, Internal Organizing, Mobilizing & Strategic Planning Dept.; LIRR issues, assisting GC Sexton; Advisory Board mtg., Miami, Fla.; SEPTA/FRA hearing, re: Hours of Service, assisting GC Dixon, Philadelphia; Conrail mtg., assisting GC Driscoll, Philadelphia; SEPTA issues, assisting GC Dixon; Conrail mtg. w/ GC Driscoll; Union Track conference call; E&T Online Training, Cleveland; PATH mtg., assisting GC Nunziato, Jersey City; LM-2 Secretary-Treasurer workshop, Tampa, Fla.; NJT conference call, assisting GC Decker; Trustee Training class, Cleveland; National Mediation Board hearing, NJ Transit, assisting GC Decker, Washington, D.C.; E&T conference call; PATH issues, assisting GC Nunziato; E&T Dept. workshop for Local Chairmen, Cleveland; Union Track mtg., Cleveland.

## BOSTON TO HOST BLET FOR FINAL EUMA, JULY 26-30, 2015

The members of BLET Division 191 are welcoming all active and retired BLET members and their families to Boston for the 77th annual Eastern Union Meeting Association (EUMA), July 26-30, 2015.

Delegates to the Third National Convention in 2014 voted to change the BLET's regional meeting structure so that there will be only two regional meetings per year beginning in 2016. As a result, the 77th EUMA coming up in July will be the final EUMA. Arrangements Chairman Kevin J. Moore and the members of the EUMA Arrangements Committee are planning a convention that you will not want to miss. Brother Moore is

General Chairman of the Springfield Terminal/Delaware & Hudson General Committee of Adjustment and Chairman of the Massachusetts State Legislative Board.

Guests will stay at the Boston Park Plaza Hotel and Towers. Room reservations can be made by calling the hotel at (800) 225-2008.

The 2015 EUMA begins with registration and a welcome reception the evening of Sunday, July 26. The opening ceremony, closed meeting for BLET members, and an open meeting for members of the BLET Auxiliary will following on Monday, July 27. A limited number of tickets are available on a first come, first served basis



for a Boston Red Sox/Chicago White Sox major league baseball game at historic Fenway Park on the evening of July 27.

On Tuesday, July 28, the annual EUMA golf tournament will be held at the Ponkapoag Golf Course. For non-golfers, a Duck Tour of Boston has been scheduled. The tour will take guests throughout the city and to some of the many historic sites that Boston has to offer. Also, the hotel is conveniently located only blocks from Boston's shopping district on Newbury Street.

The BLET Education and Training Department will host several training classes for BLET officers and members on Wednesday, July 29. The 77th annual EUMA will conclude that evening with the EUMA scholarship banquet. ☺☺