BLE scores Tex Mex victory

Bankruptcy threatens 23,000 Amtrak jobs; Members asked to contact Congress, White House

The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers announced on June 25 that it has negotiated a set of procedures to be followed in upcoming arbitration hearings, which will determine whether Locomotive Engineers or trainmen have the right to operate remote control technology.

The tripartite arbitration decision — between the BLE, United Transportation Union and six railroad companies (BNSF, Conrail, CSX, KCS, NS and UP) — was reached after months of negotiations. The UTU is a party to the hearing because its collective bargaining agreements, as well as BLE’s, are involved in the dispute. UTU was also a part of the January court ruling issued by the U.S. District Court in Chicago.

“BLE is going to work hard and fight aggressively to keep Locomotive Engineers from losing their jobs,” BLE President Don M. Hahs said.

The three parties could not agree on a single question to pose to the arbitrators, so each party submitted its own question. The merits arbitration panel will render a decision on the questions posed on page 6 of the arbitration agreement.

The BLE question states, “The assignment of other than locomotive engineers to operate locomotives via remote control in connection with the movement of cars, trains and/or engines in terminal operations is a violation of the exclusive rights of locomotive engineers to perform such service pursuant to existing BLE agreements and established practice.”

Due to the timelines established in the agreement, it is expected that the dispute will be resolved around the end of the year. A copy of the six-page arbitration agreement is available on the BLE website.

BLE legislative and political leaders were joined on Capitol Hill by Teamster General President James Hoffa in a lobbying effort to save Amtrak. Front row, from left: Dale McPherson, BLE Vice-President; John Mullen, BNSF General Chairman; James Hoffa, IBT General President; Don Hahs, BLE International President; Ken Kertesz, Pennsylvania State Legislative Board Chairman; and Brian Gallaher, Secretary of the New York State Legislative Board. Back row, from left: John Tolman, assistant to the International President; Derrill Blake, West Virginia State Legislative Board Chairman; J.T. Norris, Virginia State Legislative Board Chairman; Raymond Holmes, BLE Vice-President & U.S. National Legislative Rep.; and Tommy Roberts, Connell General Chairman.

Hahs testifies at Senate hearing on rail safety, fatigue

BLE President Don M. Hahs told the Senate’s Surface Transportation Subcommittee that the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers has created a fatigue counter-measure plan that would greatly improve safety in the railroad industry.

Drawing a link between safety of employees and the economic health of railroad companies, President Hahs spoke at length about worker fatigue at a hearing on July 10. Citing unreliable work schedules, under-staffing and Hours of Service loopholes, the BLE President noted that there are many causes of fatigue, but said that each employee has an individual threshold for tolerating it.

The three-pronged BLE approach to eliminating fatigue would focus on education, information and empowerment. It would empower railroad operating employees with the right to call off work if they are fatigued after completing a set amount of work each month. The BLE President asked that Congress serve as a mediator and facilitator to bring the essential parties together to address fatigue as a way of improving rail safety. He also noted that the Hours of Service Act covers railroad workers but not employees worked by outside contractors, who often perform the same work as railroad employees.
CN reaches another ground-breaking agreement with BLE

Canadian National (CN) and the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers (BLE) announced the signing of a pro-
gressive labor agreement covering 415 locomotive engineers who work on CN's former Illinois Central properties in the
United States. The tentative agreement — mod-
elled on one ratified by BLE members on
CN's Wisconsin Central Division earlier this year — would eliminate all prior work rules and agreements in
exchange for guaranteed time off and
job security for all BLE members cur-
rently qualified as locomotive engi-
ners. The new agreement would also
see engineers paid an hourly wage, a
modernization of the mileage- and rule-
based compensation system that dates
from the era of the steam locomotive but
remains standard in the rail indus-
try.

The three-year agreement, which is
subject to BLE ratification, would take
Rick Radek, BLE international
vice-president, said: “This agreement
mirrors the success we had in negoti-
ating a new compensation model for
our members on CN's Wisconsin Cen-
tral Division. This innovative approach
to rail industry wage and working con-
ditions will improve labor relations on
the railroad and secure a better bal-
ance between work and home life for
our members.”

E. Hunter Harrison, CN's executive
vice-president and chief operating of-
ficer, said: “The fresh and innovative
thinking displayed by both the BLE and
CN labor relations officers is relegat-
ing age-old labor-management prac-
tices to the past. This is an important
step in an industry whose traditionally
complex labor agreements for train and
engine employees have for years gen-
erated misunderstanding and confron-
tation. With this agreement, CN
achieves greatly enhanced employee
productivity while BLE members obtain
job security and significant lifestyle im-
provements.” •

BLE, BNSF sign agreement to create new era in employee safety

The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers (BLE) and
The Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway
Company (BNSF) announced an agreement in June
that will launch a new era in railroad employee safety
programs.

Through the agreement, which has been ratified
by BLE members, a new safety culture will be intro-
duced that focuses on the active participation of em-
ployees and BLE and BNSF leadership working as a
 team to create a safer workplace. The agreement also
establishes an approach to discipline that further
strengthens training and counseling instead of punitive
discipline.

“The BLE is happy to be a full partner with BNSF when it comes to safety,” BLE International Vice-
President Stephen Speagle said. “Accidents cost
BNSF millions of dollars each year, but they cost our
members their lives. The joint agreement — ratified
by BLE members and negotiated by the four BLE
general chairs, with the assistance of the Inter-
national Division of the BLE — will allow our mem-
ers to fully participate in creating a safer working environ-
ment.”

The agreement provides for BLE-represented
safety people to assure that the agreement’s proce-
dures are being implemented and interpreted uni-
formly across BNSF’s 33,000-route-mile system.
Safety forums at different BNSF locations will ad-
dress conditions that have to be corrected to improve
safe production, replacing the previous reporting,
cataloguing and investigative process.

Workplace coaching, counseling and retraining
will replace the existing discipline procedures for
non-repetitive and non-serious rules violations.

“This agreement represents a fundamental
change in our approach to safety for operating em-
ployees,” said M. David Dealy, BNSF’s vice-president,
Transportation. “Both BLE and BNSF will focus on
root cause analysis and corrective action to prevent
injuries caused by behavior as well as injuries caused
by environmental conditions.”

“Both the final ratification of the agreement
by the BLE membership is further evidence of the
need for change. We are hoping the appointment of
BLE Safety Coordinators and the implementation of
the new agreement will provide for the change
that everyone agrees is necessary.”

“We are proud to work with BNSF to make the
workplace safer for not just our members, but for
everybody working at BNSF” •

Antruk

Continued from Page 1

legislative leaders met with dozens of
congressional leaders to lobby for
Amtrak funding. Key political figures,
such as Secretary of Transportation
Norma field and Amtrak CEO David Gunn, held private meetings with the
BLE President.

First Vice-President & Alternate
President Ed Hodowicz and Vice-Presi-
dent & U.S. National Legislative Rep-
resentative Raymond Holmes also par-
ticipated in these high-level meetings.
In addition, more than 25 members, including several BLE State Legislative
Board Chairmen and Amtrak General
Chairman Mark Krey, were called to
capitol Hill. They assisted in the
lobbying campaign, which was held in con-
junction with other AFL-CIO affiliated
unions under the direction of the Trans-
portation Trades Department.

President George W. Bush ad-
dressed a special BLE-Teamster coali-
tion of legislative and political leaders
during a meeting at the White House.
BLE President Hahs attended the meet-
ing with James P. Hoffa, General Presi-
dent of the International Brotherhood
of Teamsters. In addition to Hoffa and
Hahs, other Teamster and BLE Inter-
national Officers, BLE State Legislative
Board Chairmen and BLE Labor Re-
lations officers have met with legis-
ta ting, and more than 150

3400 S. I-10 & Causeway Blvd.
University Hilton Hotel

Quality Inn of Albany

Winter Park Inn

Holiday Inn Metairie

Sheraton Hotel Airport

3135 S. I-85 & Billy Graham Parkway

Be On Alert! FRA to increase efficiency testing

The Brotherhood of Locomo-
tive Engineers has been informed by
the Federal Railroad Administra-
tion that, due to the recent in-
crease in accidents, efficiency
testing by the FRA will signifi-
cantly increase immediately.

The majority of these in-
creased efficiency tests will occur
on the Burlington Northern-Santa Fe
and Amtrak. However, crews on
alls railroads need to maintain
increased vigilance to rules com-
pliance.

The BLE International Divi-
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Upcoming Railroad Retirement Board informational conferences

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

Registration for all informational conferences
begins six months prior to the program. The registra-
tion closes promptly at 8:30 a.m. and will end at 12:30 p.m. No
meetings are scheduled for August.

September 6 • Harrisburg, Pa.
Harrisburg East Holiday Inn
4751 Lindle Road

September 20 • Decatur, Ill.
Best Value Inn & Suites, 450 E. Pershing Rd.

September 27 • Louisville, Ky.
Executive Inn, 978 Phillips Lane

October 4 • Philadelphia, Pa.
Wyndham Philadelphia at Franklin Plaza
17th and Race Streets

October 11 • Houston, Texas
University Hilton Hotel
4800 Calhoun Rd.

September 20 • Tampa, Fla.
Hilton Tampa Airport Westshore
2225 N. Lois Ave.

September 27 • Louisville, Ky.
Executive Inn, 978 Phillips Lane

October 18 • Fort Worth, Texas
Holiday Inn South, 100 Alta Mesa East Blvd.

October 25 • Albany, N.Y.
Quality Inn Albany
3 Watervliet Ave. Extension, AV Room

November 8 • Metairie, La.
Holiday Inn Metairie
3400 S. I-10 & Causeway Blvd.

November 15 • Charlotte, N.C.
Sheraton Hotel Airport
3315 S. I-85 & Billy Graham Parkway

October 10 • Houston, Texas
University Hilton Hotel
4800 Calhoun Rd.
Dans un effort majeur pour éliminer les accidents associés à la fatigue en l’industrie ferroviaire, le Gouvernement Canadien a approuvé de nouvelles règles relatives au temps de travail et de repos au personnel d’exploitation des chemins de fer.

La Fraternité des ingénieurs de locomotives a joué un rôle de premier plan dans le développement de ces nouvelles mesures d’amélioration de la santé et de la sécurité. Ces règles, dont le texte final a été approuvé le 18 juin par le Ministre des Transports du Canada David Collenette, visent à prévenir les accidents liés à la surcharge de travail et à la fatigue.

Le Vice-président et Représentant légal de la Fraternité des ingénieurs de locomotives, Confrère Hucker, dit : « Les nouvelles règles seront un pas important vers le maintien d’un environnement de travail sécuritaire. Elles seront mises en œuvre dès avril 2003 et elles devront être respectées par toutes les sociétés ferroviaires qui sont membres de la FIL. »

La Fraternité des ingénieurs de locomotives des États-Unis qui se réunissent au Canada, a dit Confrère Anderson : « Les nouvelles règles afférentes à l’échelle de travail définissent des termes précises pour les dispositions de repos et de travail fractionné, telles que la durée des périodes de repos, la durée du travail, les conditions de travail fractionné, les règles de changement de roue, les séminaires sur la fatigue et les séminaires sur la santé. »

Les nouvelles règles sont la conséquence d’un effort conjoint entre le ministère des Transports du Canada, le syndicat et les sociétés ferroviaires de l’industrie canadienne.

Les nouvelles règles relatives au temps de travail et de repos au personnel d’exploitation des chemins de fer canadiens seront mises en œuvre dès avril 2003 et devront être respectées par toutes les sociétés ferroviaires qui sont membres de la FIL. Les sociétés ferroviaires qui ne sont pas membres de la FIL devront respecter les dispositions de ces règles dès leur entrée en vigueur.

Les nouvelles règles s’appliqueront à tous les chemins de fer au Canada et à l’exception de ceux qui ont déjà des mesures en place pour prévenir les accidents liés à la surcharge de travail et à la fatigue.

Les nouvelles règles sont mises en place pour assurer la sécurité du personnel et pour garantir une meilleure qualité de vie pour les employés des chemins de fer.

Les nouvelles règles s’appliquent aux travaux effectués sur les chemins de fer acquis par le gouvernement du Canada. Les sociétés ferroviaires qui ne sont pas membres de la FIL devront respecter les dispositions de ces règles dès leur entrée en vigueur.

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Robert D. Broka, Director of the BLE’s Records Department, provides instruction during the Secretary-Treasurer workshop. Every state belonging to the SMA is represented each year during the annual GIA flag ceremony.

Steve Christian of BLE Division 524 (Van Buren, Ark.), receives assistance from his wife, Trefana, during the Secretary-Treasurer workshop. Brother Christian is Local Chairman and Secretary-Treasurer of Division 524, and is S-T of the Arkansas State Legislative Board.

Two old head engineers and two future engineers at the SMA banquet. From left: Paul Wingo, Secretary-Treasurer of the Norfolk Southern-Southern Lines General Committee of Adjustment, and Ray Wallace, Norfolk Southern-Southern Lines General Chairman.

First Vice-President & Alternate President Ed Rodzwicz, right, congratulates SMA Chairman T.C. Emory for the fine job he and his organizing committee members did in planning the 75th annual SMA.

BLE International President Don Hahs (far right, podium) fields questions during the closed meeting. Seated, from left, is Vice-President Paul Sorrow; First Vice-President & Alternate President Ed Rodzwicz; Vice-President Merle Geiger; Vice-President Steve Speagle; General Secretary-Treasurer Bill Walpert; Vice-President U.S. National Legislative Representative Raymond Holmes; and Vice-President Joseph A. Cassidy Jr.

International Vice-President Paul Sorrow, left, takes time for a one-on-one conversation with Brother Herman M. Connell, Local Chairman of BLE Division 291 in Crewe, Va.

From left: Tennessee State Legislative Board Chairman J.L. Brittain and Kentucky State Legislative Board Chairman Tommy Mayne.
BLE International President Don M. Hahs, standing, gives his welcome address during opening ceremonies at the 75th annual Southeastern Meeting Association. Seated is SMA Chairman T.C. Emory, who serves as Local Chairman of BLE Division 456 (Norfolk, Va.).

Friendly faces welcome guests at the registration booth. From left: David T. Fernald, Local Chairman of BLE Division 2 (Jackson, Mich.); and Larry W. Sykes, General Chairman of the Norfolk Southern-Northern Lines and a member of BLE Division 1 (Detroit, Mich.).

First in line to ask questions during the BLE closed meeting is Tony Smith, General Chairman of the CSX Transportation-Eastern Lines.

BLE International Officers during the closed session, from left: Vice-President Stephen D. Speagle; First Vice-President & Alternate President Ed Rodzwicz; and General Secretary-Treasurer Bill Walpert.

BLE State Legislative Board Chairmen and Division Legislative Representatives discuss the November elections during the SMA's legislative workshop.

Brother E.L. McCulloch, former BLE International Vice-President & U.S. National Legislative Representative and a retired member of BLE Division 182 (North Little Rock, Ark.).

Tony Wayland is a retired member of BLE Division 620 (Fort Worth, Texas) and Onita Wayland is International President of the Grand International Auxiliary.
BLE NEWS

BLE welcomes Tex Mex members

Tex Mex Engineer Steven Vella, a member of BLE Division 244 (Laredo, Texas). He is one of the organizers who assisted in the Tex Mex representation election, in which the BLE won the right to represent the Tex Mex operating employees.

A prominent safety reminder for Tex Mex operating employees.

Houston Locomotive Engineer Pat McGuire, seated in an engine in the Tex Mex terminal, as he is about to handle a train bound for Laredo.

At BLE “campaign headquarters” in Laredo, Texas. From left: Arnold Salinas, Secretary-Treasurer of BLE Division 244; Tom Miller, BLE Special Representative; and Joe Zawada, Local Chairman of BLE Division 232.

Shown here is the U.S. Customs inspection building for trains crossing the Rio Grande River at Laredo, Texas. The Union Pacific locomotives shown are completing the crossing of the international bridge from Mexico. Tex Mex and UP utilize the bridge to receive trains that originated in Mexico.

Carl Star, Tex Mex Locomotive Engineer, in a locomotive at the Houston Tex Mex terminal.

Brother Tavy Villarreal Jr., a member of BLE Division 244 (Laredo, Texas), is one of the Team Captains who assisted in the Tex Mex representation election.

The Tex Mex Brothers visit the BLE’s Cleveland headquarters following the representation election. Seated, from left: Caesar Carrero; David Snow; J.J. Vara; and Tavy Villarreal Jr. Standing, from left: Bill Walpert, General Secretary-Treasurer; Don Mahs, International President; and Ed Rodzwicz, First Vice-President & Alternate President.

The Tex Mex Brothers visit the BLE’s Cleveland headquarters following the representation election. Seated, from left: Caesar Carrero; David Snow; J.J. Vara; and Tavy Villarreal Jr. Standing, from left: Bill Walpert, General Secretary-Treasurer; Don Mahs, International President; and Ed Rodzwicz, First Vice-President & Alternate President.
Tex Mex workers select BLE over UTU

Tex Mex

Continued from Page 1

workers explaining the benefits of belonging to a union affiliated with the AFL-CIO.

In addition to AFL-CIO and Teamster influence, the BLE was assisted by some of its own. Special Representative Tom Miller played an integral role in the BLE’s success. He worked closely with several Tex Mex employees who spent weeks campaigning on BLE’s behalf, including Tavy Villarreal Jr., Caesar Carrera, David Snow, J.J. Varu, and George Leyendrecker.

“Brother Miller and our new Tex Mex members deserve congratulations for their hard fought victory,” President Hahs said. “On behalf of the men and women of the BLE, I thank them.”

The BLE victory concludes a nearly three-year battle for representation rights on Tex Mex.

In September of 1999, the BLE petitioned the National Mediation Board to hold a representation election for only the locomotive engineer craft. The UTU International delayed the election, arguing that, “The proper craft or class on Tex Mex is Train and Engine Service Employees.”

The NMB decided the issue in March of 2000, ruling in favor of the UTU’s petition to combine operating crafts and dismissing the BLE’s petition. The NMB ruled that because of the creation of a single operating craft, a two-year ban on representation elections was necessary to promote “labor stability” on the Tex Mex.

Once the two-year ban was lifted, the BLE petitioned the NMB again, seeking to hold a representation election for the combined “train and engine service employee” craft, which was forced upon the employees by the UTU petition. The results, 60-49 in favor of the BLE, were certified by the NMB on July 15.

While we don’t agree with the concept of combining operating crafts, the craft of train and engine service employee was forced on the workers by the UTU’s previous petition, and we were required to work under the confines of the NMB’s decision,” President Hahs said. •

SWCM 2002 Golf Outing

Mountain Valley Country Club

Monday, September 23

The cost is $40 per person, which includes green fees, lunch, refreshments, transportation, and various prizes.

Name: ____________________________
Handicap: _________________________

Make checks or money orders payable to “SWCM golf” and mail to:
Mike Sharber
SWCM 2002 Golf Chairman
P.O. Box 1916
Burleson, TX 76028

BLE’s Franklin P. Greene Fund resumes lending to college-bound

The Franklin P. Greene Fund, which suspended lending in 2001, is now accepting loan applications from college-bound sons of BLE members.

Don M. Hahs, BLE International President and Trustee of the Greene Fund, announced on June 15 that four loans in the amount of $2,500 each will be available.

The Franklin P. Greene Educational Loan Fund was established in 1966. Its foundation was stipulated in the will of Brother Greene, a member of Division 266 (Gladstone, Mich.).

Brother Greene left an estate in trust of the BLE with instructions that the funds be available for loans to sons of U.S. locomotive engineers, living or deceased.

Brother Greene was an engineer on the Soo Line from 1905 to 1940. Before his death at age 86, Brother Greene wrote Grand Chief Engineer Guy L. Brown of his intention to establish the educational loan fund.

“Everything I have I owe to the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers,” he wrote. “And I want to take this means of showing my appreciation for what the organization has done for me.”

Brother Greene’s will stipulated that the parent of applicants must be a BLE member in good standing or must of have been in good standing at the time of his or her death.

To request an application, qualified applicants are asked to contact Jenny Berndt in the BLE Accounting Office at: (216) 241-2630, extension 211, or berndt@ble.org. •
Statement by Teamsters General President Hoffa on UTU’s smear of BLE

The railroad industry’s future is at stake for engineers facing possible decertification events, exclusively by the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers.

BLS Publications Committee:
Dan M. Wells, International President
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William C. Winger, General Secretary-Treasurer
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