Focus on fatigue

The National Transportation Safety Board has determined that crew member fatigue was a major cause of a fatal rear-end collision involving a BNSF coal train and a standing maintenance of way equipment train in Red Oak, Iowa, that occurred on April 17, 2011.

Killed in the accident were BLET Division 642 President Tom Anderson, 48, and his conductor, UTU member Patricia Hyatt.

"Once again, this investigation draws attention to the dangers of human fatigue," National Transportation Safety Board Chairman Deborah Hersman said in a statement. "The human body is not designed to work irregular schedules, especially during the circadian trough, when our bodies are at their lowest alertness."

At its April 24 hearing in Washington, D.C., the NTSB determined that both crew members were asleep at the time of the accident. Representing the BLET at the hearing were Carl Fields, Coordinator of the Safety Task Force (STF), and Dan Lauzon, a STF Primary Investigator.

"The striking coal train conductor's and the engineer's irregular work schedules contributed to their being fatigued on the morning of the collision," the NTSB concluded. "Based on the conductor's and the engineer's irregular work schedules, their medical histories, and their lack of action before the collision, both crew members on the striking coal train had fallen asleep due to fatigue."

The NTSB also concluded that the absence of Positive Train Control (PTC) contributed to the accident, although it likely would have not prevented this particular accident, which occurred while the BNSF coal train was governed by restricted speed.

Additionally, the absence of crashworthiness standards for modular locomotive cabs contributed to the severity of damage to the locomotive cab of the striking coal train.

In responding to the release of the NTSB's Report, BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce strongly condemned the "blame the worker" tone of the Safety Advisory. He warned BLET members to be on alert as the Safety Advisory recommends that railroads "increase the level of operational testing with regard to the operation of trains on main tracks at restricted speed."

President Pierce said: "The NTSB, the Federal Railroad Administration, and the railroad industry should keep in mind that railroading is a complex system of operations and simply laying blame at the feet of operating employees will not get to the root cause of these accidents nor will it prevent similar accidents in the future. Indeed, everyone can — and should — go much further than simply conducting additional and burdensome compliance tests on operating crews."

The Safety Advisory is a follow up to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) published Safety Advisory No. R-11-10, issued on January 12, 2012. It also comes on the heels of a NTSB hearing held April 24 regarding the fatal rear-end collision involving a BNSF coal train and a standing maintenance of way equipment train in Red Oak, Iowa, which happened on April 17, 2011.

"Railroad operating rules governing restricted speed require that train crews be prepared to stop within one-half their range of vision," the FRA wrote in the April 25 edition of the Federal Register. "During the previous 12 months, the railroad industry has experienced six rear end collisions that resulted in four employee fatalities, [and] eight employee injuries.... It appears these six incidents may have occurred because the train crews did not properly identify and comply with block and interlocking signal indications that required operation of their trains at restricted speed."

The Safety Advisory acknowledges that main line rear-end collisions are seldom caused by one single factor, but...
By the time this edition of the Locomotive Electronic Newsletter was published, the BLET National Division Electronic Communications Policy was adopted at Cleveland, Ohio on August 22, 2010. The policy sets guidelines for how electronic communications should be handled within the union, and it includes provisions for how messages should be sent and received. The policy also includes a section on how to report violations of the policy, and it establishes a process for dealing with complaints. The BLET National Division Electronic Communications Policy is an important part of how we communicate within the union, and it helps to ensure that our communications are handled in a professional and respectful manner.
A shot of jobs is necessary prescription for ailing economy

America’s labor market is sick. Forty-five million Americans—one in seven—are unemployed or underemployed. The same numbers are on food stamps. That isn’t a coincidence. The only way to cure this sickness is with a shot of jobs. We can do that by bringing back the jobs that fled overseas.

We lost more manufacturing jobs in the past 10 years than during the Great Depression. More than 50,000 manufacturing facilities have closed. And it isn’t just manufacturing. Service jobs are going overseas as well—in aircraft maintenance, call centers, professional services, software engineering, administrative services and health care.

President Obama has administered some needed medicine to our weak economy. He saved the domestic auto industry and car sales are booming. He invested in infrastructure, putting people to work. He reformed the financial industry, which will help prevent the kind of economic meltdown we suffered through in 2008.

But it wasn’t enough to stem the hemorrhaging. In the past 10 years, U.S. multinational corporations cut their work forces by 2.9 million in this country and hired 2.4 million overseas. That trend shows no sign of stopping. If our economy is ever to recover, our tax, trade and public investment policies must support good jobs at home.

U.S. companies actually get tax incentives to ship jobs overseas. Congress should get rid of those incentives—and soon.

There’s something the U.S. Trade Representative could do to cure our sick labor market. He should immediately end negotiations on the Trans-Pacific Partnership deal. It’s just another job-killing giveaway to multinationals.

These issues won’t capture as much media attention as the latest poll, the latest gaffe or what the candidates did or didn’t do on high school. But these are the issues that American working families really care about.

FRA issues safety advisory

Continued from page 1

stressed that train crew members must maintain constant situational awareness while in the cab.

“Eleven slight lapses in situational awareness, particularly when operating trains on ‘Approach’ and ‘Restricting’ signal indications can lead to tragedy,” the FRA wrote.

FRA also warned against the practice of ‘self dispatching.’

“Self-dispatching is the operation of a train based on assumptions about the locations of other trains. These assumptions are sometimes developed through overheard radio conversations among other train crew members.”

As part of Safety Advisory 2012-02, the FRA issued five recommendations to railroads. They are as follows:

1. Review with operating employees the circumstances of the six rear end collisions identified above.
2. Discuss the requirements of restricted speed and related operational tests at future instructional classes (and also as part of ad hoc coaching and briefings) for operating employees, with a focus on the railroad’s absolute speed limit for such operations, as well as requirements that ensure the ability to stop in one-half the range of vision. Special emphasis should be placed on situations in which the range of vision is limited (e.g., curves).
3. Evaluate quarterly and 6-month reviews of operational testing data as required by Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) section 217.9, and, as appropriate, increase the level of operational testing with regard to the operation of trains on main tracks at restricted speed. A representative number of operational tests should be conducted on trains following other trains in an occupied block, particularly in high-density corridors. Operational tests should also include a review of locomotive event recorder data to verify compliance with restricted speed requirements.
4. Reinforce the importance of communication between crew members located in the controlling locomotive, particularly during safety critical periods when multiple tasks are occurring, including such activities as copying mandatory directives, closely approaching or passing fixed signals that require trains to operate at restricted speed; approaching locations where trains’ movement authority is being restricted; and during radio conversations with other employees or job briefings about work to be done at an upcoming location.
5. Review with operating employees the requirements of subparagraph C of 49 CFR part 220, and reinforce that the improper use of electronic devices during safety critical periods often leads to a loss of situational awareness and resultant dangers.

In his response to the FRA Safety Advisory, Teamsters General President James P. Hoffa stated:

“The NTSB, the Federal Railroad Administration, and the railroad industry should keep in mind that railroading is a complex system of operations and simply laying blame at the feet of operating employees will not get to the root cause of these accidents nor will it prevent similar accidents in the future.”

— Dennis Pierce

Sign up for BLET News Flashes!

Register at www.ble-t.org to get Brotherhood news emailed to you.

Stay up-to-date with the latest Brotherhood news by going to the BLET website and signing up to receive BLET News Flash alerts via email.

The News Flash alerts are news articles from the BLET National Division website that are sent automatically emailed to you. To register, just go to www.ble-t.org. In the lower right hand corner of the page, you will find an area to enter your email address to begin receiving the most current news from the BLET National Division.

It is a great way to keep informed on the most recent issues impacting your job, your contract and your Brotherhood.

Fraternally,

James P. Hoffa
Teamsters General President
General Chairman Tony Smith was re-elected by acclamation to his sixth consecutive term of office at the fifth quadrennial meeting of the CSX Eastern Lines General Committee of Adjustment in Troy, Ala., on April 24.

Brother Smith, a member of BLET Division 332 (Montgomery, Ala.) and first joined the Brotherhood on July 1, 1979, also elected by acclamation were: Vice General Chairman Warren E. Hinely (Division 903, Savannah, Ga.); Secretary-Treasurer Mike L. Taylor (Division 769, Sanford, Fla.); and 1st Vice General Chairman Gary D. Best (Division 498, Abbeville, S.C.). Additional elected officers include: 2nd Vice General Chairman Chris R. Hyde (Division 314, Rocky Mount, N.C.); 3rd Vice General Chairman Jeff M. Dziwulski (Division 309, Jacksonville, Fla.); 4th Vice General Chairman Otto G. Valdes-Cas-tillo (Division 49, Miami, Fla.); and Alternate Secretary-Treasurer Jason D. Wise (Division 435, Hamlet, N.C.).

BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce represented the National Division at the quadrennial session, along with First Vice President E. Lee Pruitt and National Vice President Gill L. Gore. President Pierce was as-signed to all CSX General Committees during his term as a National Vice President, a post which is now filled by Vice President Gore.

“I congratulate all officers of the proud CSX Eastern Lines General Committee of Adjustment,” President Pierce said. “Brother Smith has been a rock of stability and long service to the order. The other two are Marvin L. Geiger (1967-1985) and Tony Smith (1991-present). In addition to the election of officers, the delegates to the quadrennial session addressed key concerns of the membership and conducted business for the good of the order.

The CSX Eastern Lines General Committee of Adjustment represents approximately 1,300 members from 21 different divisions who work in six different states—Alabama, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia.

I CONGRATULATE ALL OFFICERS OF THE PROUD CSX EASTERN LINES GENERAL COMMITTEE OF ADJUSTMENT. BROTHER SMITH HAS BEEN A ROCK OF STABILITY SINCE TAKING OFFICE 21 YEARS AGO. MEMBERS ALL ALONG THE CSX EASTERN LINES BENEFIT FROM HAVING ONE OF THE MOST HARD NOSED AND TENACIOUS GENERAL CHAIRMEN IN THE BROTHERHOOD.” — DENNIS PIERCE

CSX Eastern Lines: GC Tony Smith re-elected by acclamation to sixth term

Mark L. Wallace was elected by acclamation to serve as General Chairman of the Norfolk Southern—Southern Lines General Committee of Adjustment at its quadrennial meeting in Knoxville, Tenn., on May 8. The delegates also bid farewell to two long-serving and dedicated Brothers who announced their retirement at the meeting: General Chairman W. M. “Bill” Overton Jr. and 1st Vice Chairman & Secretary-Treasurer W. A. “Billy” Thompson.

Brother Wallace is a member of BLET Division 267 (Asheville, N.C.) and has held continuous membership in the Brotherhood since February 26, 1997. Also elected by acclamation was Jerry G. Sturdivant, BLET Division 110 (Ludlow, Ky.), who will serve the GCA in a full-time capacity as 1st Vice Chairman and Secretary-Treasurer.

The delegates also elected the following officers to four-year terms: 2nd Vice General Chairman Fred M. Cox, Division 52; 3rd Vice General Chairman T. R. “Ty” Thompson, Division 423 (Tuscumbia, Ala.); 4th Vice General Chairman C. R. “Rusty” Jones, Division 239 (Knoville, Tenn.); 9th Vice General Chairman Rodney A. Nokes, Division 199 (Danville, Ky.); and Alternate Vice General Chairman C. Scott Brown, Division 259 (Easton, Pa.).

The delegates also elected Regional Chairman to serve the membership, including: Coastal Region Chairman Duane C. Lance, Division 786 (Macon, Ga.); Eastern Region Chairman J. B. “Ben” Lee, Division 166 (Charlotte, N.C.); Southern Region Chairman T. Y. Thompson, Division 423 (Tuscumbia, Ala.); Central Region Chairman R. D. “Ronnie” Carter, Division 205 (Chattanooga, Tenn.); and Northern Region Chairman A. J. McEwee, Division 74 (Harrisburgh-Enola, Pa.).

BLET First Vice President E. Lee Pruitt and National Vice President Willard Knight represented the National Division at the meeting. Other special guests included: Norfolk Southern General Chairman Bob Linsey (NS-Northern Lines); Norfolk Southern General Chairman Kevin S. Peak (NS—Eastern Lines); and 1st Vice Chairman R. Randy Fannen Jr. (NS—Eastern Lines).

“I congratulate General Chairman Wallace and all officers of the Norfolk Southern—Southern Lines General Committee,” BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce said. “They have big shoes to fill following the retirements of Brother Overton and Brother Thompson, but I am confident they will do an admirable job. On behalf of the National Division, I thank Brothers Overton and Thompson for their many years of distinguished and honorable service to the Brotherhood and offer sincere best wishes for a happy and healthy retirement.”

Brother Wallace follows in the footsteps of his father, Ray C. Wallace, who served the GCA as General Chairman from 1986-2008. Immediately prior to his election as General Chairman, Brother Wallace served the General Committee as 2nd Vice Chairman. He has also served as Local Chairman and Vice Local Chairman of Division 267. Retiring General Chairman Bill Overton had been serving as General Chairman since 2009. He has held continuous membership in Division 239 (Knoxville, Tenn.) since joining the Brotherhood on August 1, 1974. Retiring 1st Vice Chairman Billy Thompson has held elected office on the General Committee level dating back to the Conrail era. He has held continuous membership in Division 325 (Wilkinsburg, Pa.) since joining the Brotherhood on July 1, 1977. The BLET’s Norfolk Southern—Southern Lines General Committee of Adjustment represents more than 3,000 active members from 47 different divisions.

I CONGRATULATE ALL OFFICERS OF THE PROUD CSX EASTERN LINES GENERAL COMMITTEE OF ADJUSTMENT. BROTHER SMITH HAS BEEN A ROCK OF STABILITY SINCE TAKING OFFICE 21 YEARS AGO. MEMBERS ALL ALONG THE CSX EASTERN LINES BENEFIT FROM HAVING ONE OF THE MOST HARD NOSED AND TENACIOUS GENERAL CHAIRMEN IN THE BROTHERHOOD.” — DENNIS PIERCE

NS-Southern Lines GCA: Mark Wallace elected General Chairman by acclamation

Seated, from left: General Chairman Mark Wallace; 1st Vice Chairman & Secretary-Treasurer Jerry Sturdivant; 2nd Vice Chairman Fred Cox; 3rd Vice Chairman Ty Thompson; 4th Vice Chairman Rusty Jones; and 5th Vice Chairman Rodney Nokes.

From left: Vice President Willard Knight; Retiring NS-Southern Lines General Chairman Bill Overton; NS-Northern Lines General Chairman Bob Linsey; NS-Eastern Lines General Chairman Kevin Peak; and First Vice President E. Lee Pruitt.
KCS General Chairman Sam Parker reelected by acclamation

General Chairman Sam W. Parker was reelected by acclamation to his fifth consecutive term of office at the Kansas City Southern General Committee of Adjustment’s quadrennial meeting in Shreveport, La., May 15-17, 2012. Brother Parker has held continuous membership in BLET Division 599 (Shreveport, La.) since he joined the Brotherhood on July 1, 1979. He was first elected General Chairman in 1996, and was subsequently reelected in 2000, 2004 and 2008.

Brother R. W. “Bud” Pickett of Division 599 (Shreveport, La.) was reelected to continue serving as 1st Vice Chairman. The following Brothers were reelected by acclamation: 2nd Vice Chairman Jim O. Fisher Jr., Division 612 (Nederland, Texas); Secretary-Treasurer David A. Spradlin, Division 573 (Greenville, Texas); and Alternate Secretary-Treasurer David M. Grubbs Jr., Division 569 (Heavener, Okla.).

BLET National Division President Dennis R. Pierce attended the quadrennial meeting and made a presentation to the delegates on May 15. First Vice President E. Lee Pruitt and National Secretary-Treasurer William C. Walpert also addressed the delegates on May 15.

“It was my honor and privilege to address the Kansas City Southern officers and delegates,” President Pierce said. “For many years, Brother Parker and the entire General Committee of Adjustment have done an excellent job of representing our Kansas City Southern membership.”

Also representing the National Division were: Vice President Cole Davis; Special Representative Jim Bradford; Special Representative and Coordinator of Education & Training Ken Kroeger; and Special Representative and Director of Organizing Kent Confer. Brother Confer delivered a mobilization presentation to the delegates on May 17. Also in attendance as a special guest was Louisiana State Legislative Board Chairman Arlin Todd.

The Kansas City Southern General Committee of Adjustment represents more than 400 members from seven different BLET Divisions in Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Kansas.

National Labor College announces hazardous materials training

The National Labor College’s Rail Workers Hazardous Materials Training Program is offering two train-the-trainer courses this summer.

The Rail Workers Hazardous Materials Training Program is building a nationwide pool of peer instructors to deliver hazmat training. This DOT-funded train-the-trainer course provides regional peer trainers with the skills and knowledge necessary to deliver this awareness lever hazmat training at their job-sites, union meetings and in their communities.

The dates are July 16-21 and July 22-27, 2012.

Completion of the five-day Hazmat Course or Online Course is a prerequisite to attend the July 16-21 workshop. It will be held on the campus of the National Labor College in Silver Spring, Md.

The July 22-27 course requires no prerequisites. It will be held at the NLC campus in Silver Spring.

For registration information, please visit the Rail Workers Hazardous Materials Training Program website, www.hazmatgmc.org. You may also email Henry Jajuga, Director, or Freddie Thomas, Administrative Services, or call: (301) 439-2440.
Legislation ends major TCRC strike at CP Rail

Fatigue management, work rules and pension plans were core issues as 4,800 members of Teamsters Canada Rail Conference went on strike at Canadian Pacific Railway on Wednesday, May 23.

The Canadian government intervened in the dispute, passing legislation that forced TCRC members back to work on June 1.

CP Rail is drastically and unfairly trying to cut its workers’ pensions by up to 40 percent while generously improving the retirement benefits of its managers.

“The drastic cut in pensions angered our members,” said TCRC vice-president and chief negotiator Doug Finnson.

“A pension plan is a deferred salary, not just money the company can distribute to its shareholders and managers without being accountable to anyone.”

According to TCRC, “CP proposed significant reductions for TCRC’s members. Meanwhile management within the same pension plan are scheduled for increases despite contributing nearly half of what our members contribute.”

Rest Beatty, President of Teamsters Canada Rail Conference, said: “CP management doesn’t seem to be bothered by this flagrant inequality.”

BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce said the National Division is supporting TCRC in their efforts to obtain a fair and equitable agreement.

“The hypocrisy of CP Rail management is astounding,” BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce said. “It is a sign that the War on Workers is spreading throughout North America. Our TCRC Brothers and Sisters were among 100 percent of our support in their ongoing struggle against CP Rail.”

TCRC accused CP Rail of negotiating in bad faith, never really working to find common ground. Instead, the railway dragged out the negotiations in hopes that the government would step in and force TCRC members back to work.

Back-to-work legislation made its way through Canada’s parliament the week of May 28, and TCRC members were forced back to work on June 1.

On April 26, Teamsters announced that 95% of its members had voted to go on strike.

Teamsters Canada president Robert Bouvier offered an explanation on what is behind CP Rail’s attempt to reduce pensions.

“I think there’s only one reason they’re asking for these concessions: to further enrich a handful of shareholders at the expense of workers. CP workers strike is in a way a battle for all Canadian workers.”

The Brotherhood as an International Vice President from 1996 to 1999 and then as First Vice President, the union’s second-highest office, from 1999-2001.

President Pierce also thanked outgoing General Chairman Mark D. Whitchurch for his dedicated service to the GCA as General Chairman and Secretary-Treasurer.

The General Committee represents about 800 members from 19 different Divisions. The GCA also represents multiple railroads, including CN properties (Illinois Central, Chicago Central & Pacific, Cedar River Railway), Kansas City Southern properties (MidSouth Rail Corp., SouthRail Corp, Gateway & Western), and the IC Electric Division of Metra in Chicago.

Craddock elected CN-IC General Chairman

Craddock elected CN-IC General Chairman

Chairman, a position he held since 2008.

served the GCA as Second Vice General Chairman, a position he held since 2008.

Chairman, a position he held since 2008.

Chairman W.D. “Billy” Evans, Division 203 (Jackson, Miss.); Second Vice General Chairman and Secretary-Treasurer Charles R. Lough Jr., Division 131 (Chicago); Third Vice General Chairman Tim B. Dunn, Division 24 (Centralia, Ill.); and Fourth Vice General Chairman and Alternate Secretary-Treasurer Tom P. Bloom, Division 114 (Waterloo, Iowa).

Brother Evans also serves the Brotherhood as Chairman of the Mississippi State Legislative Board.

Alternate officers elected were: W.J. “Bill” Clayton, Division 315 (Clinton, Ill.); Second Alternate Vice General Chairman Lanie M. Keith, Division 593 (Memphis, Tenn.); Third Alternate Vice General Chairman W.P. “Pat” Randolph, Division 512 (Belleville, Ill.); and Fourth Alternate Vice General Chairman J.S. “Shawn” Early, Division 8 (Slater, Mo.).

BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce represented the National Division at the meeting, along with First Vice President E. Lee Pruitt, Vice President Marcus J. Ruel, Vice President Steve Bruno and Vice President Cole W. Davis. Wisconsin Central General Chairman John Reynolds also attended the meeting.

“I congratulate these Brothers and thank them for their dedication to our Brotherhood,” National President Pierce said. “I have every confidence they will do an excellent job of representing our Illinois Central members.”

The delegates were honored to host two retired General Chairman who served the GCA for many years. Brothers James L. McCoy served as Illinois Central General Chairman from 1986-1996 and John R. Koonce served from 1996-2011. Brother McCoy also served the Brotherhood as an International Vice President from 1996 to 1999 and then as First Vice President, the union’s second-highest office, from 1999-2001.

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Calendar & Events

June 29, 2012
U.S. Railroad Retirement Board Informational Conference
ROANOKE, VA.
The Railroad Retirement Board will hold free informational conferences to BLET officers throughout 2012. Registration begins at 8 a.m. The program begins at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 12:15 p.m. At the Hyatt Place, 5040 Valley View Blvd., North NW

July 15-16, 2012
Modular Emergency Response Radio- logical Transportation Training (MERTT)
NATIONAL LABOR COLLEGE, SILVER SPRING, MD.
The amount and variety of radioactive material shipped by rail is expected to increase in coming years. With the increase in rail shipments comes the increased risk for rail incidents. A federal grant covers the cost of rail worker training to increase their knowledge of the transportation of radioactive materials. This training course is also available on August 17-18, 2012. For more information or to register online, please visit www.hazmatgmc.org.

July 29-August 1, 2012
72nd annual International Western Convention (IWC)
CROWN PLAZA HOTEL, BILLINGS, MONT.
Hosted by Arrangements Chairman Craig Gilchrist (Montana State Legislative Board Chairman, BLET Division 298) and Co-Chair D.B. Kenner (Division 195). At the Crown Plaza Billings (27 North 27th St., Billings, Mont. 59101), phone: (406) 252-7400, Contact Brother Gilchrist: blecag@nemontel.net; or Brother Kenner: kennerdb@yahoo.com.
Please visit the IWC website: www.bletiwc.org.

August 19-24, 2012
73rd annual International Eastern Union Meeting Association (EUMA)
ATLANTIC CITY, N.J.
Hosted by Arrangements Chairman Matt Kropyok (New Jersey State Legislative Board Chairman and Division 776 Local Chairman), the 2012 EUMA will be at Bally’s (Park Place and the Boardwalk (1900 Pacific Ave.), Atlantic City, N.J. 08401, phone: (800) 343-7253, www.ballysac.com). Contact Brother Kropyok: mckropyok@aol.com or (201) 978-6436.

September 7, 2012
U.S. Railroad Retirement Board Informational Conference
ALBANY, N.Y.
Registration begins at 8 a.m. The program begins at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 12:15 p.m. At the Albany Ramada Plaza, 3 Watervliet Avenue Ext.

September 9-13, 2012
77th annual Southwestern Convention Meeting (SWCM)
GALVESTON, TEXAS
Hosted by Arrangements Chairman Jack Sweeney (Division 776 Local Chairman), the 2012 SWCM will be at the Moody Gardens Hotel (Seven Hope Blvd., Galveston, Texas 77554), phone: (888) 388-6484, www.moodygardenshotel.com. Contact Brother Sweeney: jsweeney@coachlink.net

September 14, 2012
U.S. Railroad Retirement Board Informational Conferences
FORT WORTH, TEXAS AND RENTON, WASH.
Registration begins at 8 a.m. The program begins at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 12:15 p.m. In Fort Worth at the Crown Plaza Fort Worth South, The Fort Worth Room, 100 E. Altamesa. In Renton at the Holiday Inn, One South Grady Way.
BLET members unanimously ratify contract at Eastern Idaho RR

For the second time in 2012, BLET members have unanimously approved a new contract agreement with a short line railroad.

In February, membership at the Great Western Railway of Colorado unanimously ratified a new contract. Now in March, BLET members have once again unanimously ratified a new agreement with the Eastern Idaho Railroad (EIRR).

The EIRR contract runs through March 31, 2016. The first general wage increase is 6% and is in addition to a signing/longevity bonus tied to ratification.

The negotiating team consisted of: Mike Twombly, BLET National Vice President; Adam Delgado, President of Division 113; and Jim Dayton, Union Pacific-Western District General Chairman.

The membership’s health and welfare plans remain unchanged. In addition to pay, the BLET obtained an improved bereavement leave. Among other provisions, the agreement also goes beyond seniority, crew requirements, a job preference system, calling, extra board, claims and grievances, days off, and holidays.

Negotiations started in 2009 and the final vote was unanimously in favor of the agreement. There are 12 members working for the EIRR. General Chairman Dayton reports that the Organization anticipates the number of BLET members to increase, as the EIRR is expected to hire more workers to handle projected increases in traffic levels.

The EIRR is a Watco subsidiary and has nearly 270 miles of mainline track. It started operating in late 1993 as one of the largest single short line systems in Union Pacific’s history. It handles mostly agricultural products in the areas of Idaho Falls and the Snake River (from Buhl/Weippe to Mindoika), and moves about 35,000 carloads per year, and interchanges with UP at Idaho Falls and Mindoika, Idaho.

**CONTACT HIGHLIGHTS:**

The EIRR contract runs through March 31, 2016. The first general wage increase is 6% and is in addition to a signing/longevity bonus tied to ratification.

**NEGOTIATING TEAM MEMBERS:**

Mike Twombly, BLET National Vice President; Adam Delgado, President of Division 113; Jim Dayton, Union Pacific-Western District General Chairman

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**Advisory Board March 2012 Activity**

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

**NATIONAL PRESIDENT DENNIS F. PERE: National Division Office, Cleveland, General supervision of BLET activities, General Office duties, Correspondence and telephone communications, Supervision of Safety Task Force, Meetings with vendors and financial institutions, Paperwork.**

**VICE PRESIDENT W. J. ROSS:**

Supervision of NDOTS field activities, Correspondence and telephone communications, Supervision of the Negotiation Team, Meetings with vendors and financial institutions, Paperwork.

**VICE PRESIDENT MICHAEL D. PRIESTER:**

Supervision of NDOTS field activities, Correspondence and telephone communications, Supervision of the Negotiation Team, Meetings with vendors and financial institutions, Paperwork.

**VICE PRESIDENT W. G. LEWIS:**

Supervision of NDOTS field activities, Correspondence and telephone communications, Supervision of the Negotiation Team, Meetings with vendors and financial institutions, Paperwork.

**VICE PRESIDENT R. E. GREGG:**

Supervision of NDOTS field activities, Correspondence and telephone communications, Supervision of the Negotiation Team, Meetings with vendors and financial institutions, Paperwork.

**VICE PRESIDENT MICHAEL G. PARKER:**

Supervision of NDOTS field activities, Correspondence and telephone communications, Supervision of the Negotiation Team, Meetings with vendors and financial institutions, Paperwork.

**VICE PRESIDENT T. M. RICHARDS:**

Supervision of NDOTS field activities, Correspondence and telephone communications, Supervision of the Negotiation Team, Meetings with vendors and financial institutions, Paperwork.

**VICE PRESIDENT J. W. SMITH:**

Supervision of NDOTS field activities, Correspondence and telephone communications, Supervision of the Negotiation Team, Meetings with vendors and financial institutions, Paperwork.

**VICE PRESIDENT W. L. GALE:**

Supervision of NDOTS field activities, Correspondence and telephone communications, Supervision of the Negotiation Team, Meetings with vendors and financial institutions, Paperwork.

**VICE PRESIDENT D. H. BROWN:**

Supervision of NDOTS field activities, Correspondence and telephone communications, Supervision of the Negotiation Team, Meetings with vendors and financial institutions, Paperwork.

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**Photo of the Month: June 2012**

**MONTGOMERY’S RIVER WALK:** With a new crew on board, CNSX locomotive 5037 departs the MNSA Yard and begins its journey to Wetumpka, Ala., on January 29, 2012. The train is passing underneath the new pedestrian bridge along the Alabama River Walk in Montgomery, Ala. Photo courtesy Fred Cross

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**Safety Task Force Hotline**

**(800) 360-5414**

Report major accidents when they happen