PEB 243 ISSUES RECOMMENDATIONS

Hearings held by Presidential Emergency Board (PEB) No. 243 concluded on October 20. PEB 243 then issued its recommendations on November 5, 2011 and the nearly two-year-old dispute over national wages, work rules and health and welfare benefits between 11 rail unions and the nation’s largest freight carriers continues to move toward final resolution.

The five-member PEB was appointed on October 6 by President Barack Obama, and was comprised of Chairman Ira F. Jaffe and Members Roberta L. Golick, Joshu-a M. Ivitis, Gil Vernon, and Arnold M. Zack. Chairman Jaffe presided over the six (6) days of hearing that began on Oc-tober 13 and concluded on October 20.

The PEB’s Report was sent to President Obama and included recommendations to resolve all issues in dispute in the bargaining round. As this Newslet-ter goes to press, the parties are sched-uled to meet on multiple occasions in an attempt to negotiate a voluntary settle-ment driven by PEB 243’s Report.

If no such voluntary settlement is reached by 12:00 a.m. EST on December 6, the Railway Labor Act’s procedures will have been exhausted. At that point, self-help again becomes available to the parties, meaning that one or more unions could strike, and/or the carriers could lock-out their workers.

Congress has intervened numerous times in the past to legislatively prevent or stop self-help, usually by passing a law that requires the parties to accept the PEB’s recommendations as their settle-ment. Such legislation could originate in either the Senate or the House of Repre-sentatives, would require a majority in both chambers for passage, and must be signed into law by President Obama.

CARRIER POSITIONS

The industry, represented by the Na-tional Carriers’ Conference Committee of the National Railway Labor Confer-ence, presented its case to the Board first. The carriers argued that the recently-concluded agreement with the United Transportation Union (UTU), covering less than 30% of the workforce, should be treated as a pattern.

The carriers argued that record prof-itability did not support larger wage

Continued on page 7...

FRA issues safety advisory help prevent yard switching fatalities and injuries

On October 11, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) issued a safety advisory to the railroad industry in an effort to help prevent employee injuries and fatalities when working between rail cars during switching operations.

In recent months, the railroad industry has experienced three employee fatalities that occurred when employees were between rolling equipment. Over the last two years, two additional employee fatalities have occurred in the same circumstances.

The most recent fatalities in 2011 happened on September 8, August 15 and July 15. In each case, the FRA’s preliminary in-vestigations found evidence to “indicate that the workers involved either did not have enough room or time to avoid moving equipment, or were unaware that equipment was in motion.”

The FRA’s Safety Advisory seeks to raise awareness and en-sure universal compliance with safety rules that protect em-ployees who must physically place themselves between rolling equipment in the normal course of their work.

Highlights of the recommen-dations contained in the October 11 Safety Advisory include:

- Reviewing and revising existing switching operation safety rules as needed;
- Ensuring the use of sound communication protocols to notify employees when going between two pieces of rolling equipment;
- Emphasizing the shared ob-ligation and responsibility of managers and employees in fol-low ing established rules and pro-cedures; and
- Encouraging heightened situ-tional awareness and vigilance.

FRA Administrator Joe Szabo said: “Rail carriers must ensure a consistent and clear message throughout their organiza-tions that performing work safely takes priority over expediting a train movement.”

In 1998, at FRA’s request, a voluntary group comprised of industry stakeholders was formed to examine and address safety hazards in the yard oper-ating environment. The Switching Operations Fatality Analysis (SOFA) Working Group, as it came to be known, includes representatives from the Association of American Railroads (AAR), the American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association (ASLRRA), the Brotherhood of Locomotive En-gineers and Trainmen (BLET), and the United Transportation Union (UTU). The Working Group has issued several re-pports, and notably five key “life-saver tips,” which have been widely credited with bring-ing about tangible improve-ments in operating safety.

BLET National President Dennis Pierce thanked the FRA for its diligence in addressing this critical safety issue. “I urge all BLET members to take the necessary time to do their jobs safely,” President Pierce said. “Going home safely to your fam-ily is the top priority.”

Visit the BLET website to view a copy of the SAFETY ADVISORY: www.blet-t.org/pr/pdf/ SA201102.pdf
Fighting for your best interest

At this Newsletter goes to press, the BLET and the other unions who have not settled their contract differences are in the final stages of the negotiating process that is set forth in the Railway Labor Act. With PEB 243’s report and recommendations in hand, both the Unions and the Carriers must now make some very important decisions. Ultimately, one of two things will happen.

The first option is for the Carriers and each Union to reach a voluntary settlement in the round, with the PEB’s recommendations driving this final attempt to negotiate. Both good and bad can come from this option.

On the good side, any time the parties settle their differences without using a third party, totally removed from the impact of the final outcome, they generally benefit. If for no other reason, a voluntary settlement means that the membership has controlled the outcome through the ratification process, instead of allowing a third party — in this case, a highly unpredictable Congress — to control the outcome.

On the downside, the only settlement available to us now includes the concessions on health and welfare benefits that we have steadfastly rejected from Day One. Add that if we do not reach and/or ratify a voluntary settlement, Congress will be forced to take control. We cannot rule this option out as there are certain things that our membership will just not accept.

There are many in our union who feel that their issues in this round have largely been ignored in the Carriers and the PEB. Even if the odds are against us, many of our members cannot reconcile the large gap between how our corporate employers treat themselves and the way they treat us. We all struggle with the gap between CEO compensation and the compensation and benefits that engineers receive. This is especially true in light of the fact that not one load of freight gets delivered from producer to consumer without an engineer doing his or her part in the process.

Unfortunately, if Congress does take control of our dispute, there are concerns over what those leading the war on the workers in Congress will do. A congressional settlement requires legislation to be passed by both the House and the Senate, and signed into law by the President. We have all seen products from the legislative process that were offensive to labor, and that no stone was left unturned. As your National President, trust that I do not take this lightly.

We are working now to find a way to negotiate a settlement in the round that, if nothing else, minimizes the impact of what the PEB has recommended for our health and welfare benefits. Time will tell if that effort is successful, but again, this must be part of our effort to insure that every possible solution is considered.

In the end, I know that — like my predecessors before me — I will have to make a very difficult and lonely decision. There are those who say that this is the membership’s decision to make, and that I should submit the last best offer that we receive to the membership and allow them to democratically make the decision. Others argue that, absent meaningful changes to the PEB recommendation, the answer should not only be no, but that no such tentative agreement should even be submitted for ratification. You can trust that I do not take this decision lightly.

Along with our focused National Wage Team, I am working with the Presidents of the other unions who have not reached settlements, so that BLET members can benefit from the strength that our numbers can provide. I have also scheduled a meeting with all of the General Committees that are affected in any way by the outcome of this bargaining round.

I know that many of you work on properties where your wage and work rule issues have been settled, and that you did not expect to pay additional health care costs when you ratified your wage packages. Indeed, our central fight has been to prevent that from happening. I can assure you that the input from each property, no matter how it is situated, will guide which path we choose to follow.

Our efforts on your behalf will continue until this fight is over, but please know this. We could not have gotten this far without the strong support of each and every man and woman in the BLET, because you have stepped up to the plate whenever we asked. As this dispute moves ever closer to final resolution there is no doubt in my mind that we will call upon you again, and that you will respond as you have in the past. Regardless of the outcome of the pending struggle, I take great comfort in your support.

Fraternally,

Dennis R. Pierce
BLET National President

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 acknowledgment. This policy 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.
Standing Together

Corporations with money to burn and the politicians they own are attacking our right to collectively bargain. Collective bargaining rights make a decent, middle-class life possible for millions of U.S. workers — the kind of life where health care is affordable, we have a solid roof over our heads and where we have food on the table. But many corporations and elected officials are hell-bent on taking bargaining rights away. And it isn’t just organized labor taking bargaining rights away. It’s a war being waged now: A war is being waged where we have food on the table, a solid roof over our heads and for millions of U.S. workers and for America. Collective bargaining works — it makes sure, unemployment, indebtedness and medical catastrophe loom closer even as our standard of living slowly erodes. Workers have always had to stand together and fight for a fair wage, health benefits and retirement with dignity. And that’s why labor unions fit right in with the protesters who are occupying Wall Street and dozens of other cities. Today, the 99 percent are taking militant, nonviolent direct action in Lower Manhattan. They’re camped out in front of Los Angeles City Hall and the Chicago Federal Reserve Bank and in Boston’s Financial District. And, I am proud to see that members of our Rail Conference, both Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen and Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees Division, have been out standing tall with other union members and activists.

NST Walpert becomes Trustee of Railroad Retirement Investment Trust

Bill Walpert, National Secretary-Treasurer of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, has begun his term as a Trustee of the National Railroad Retirement Investment Trust (NRRIT). All Rail Labor Presidents, representing the 13 labor organizations whose members are covered by the Railroad Retirement system, unanimously appointed Brother Walpert to a shadow trustee position on May 13, 2011. He became a full Trustee following the confirmation of Walt Barrows as Labor Member of the Railroad Retirement Board on September 26, 2011.

BLET National President Dennis Pierce congratulated NST Walpert on his full time trustee position.

The NRRIT was established by the Railroad Retirement and Survivor’s Improvement Act of 2001, which was signed into law on December 21, 2001. The purpose of the Trust is to manage and invest Railroad Retirement Assets. The Trust invests the assets of the Railroad Retirement Account into a diversified investment portfolio in the same manner as those of private sector retirement plans. Prior to the Act, investment of Railroad Retirement Account assets was limited to U.S. government securities. The Trust oversees investments currently totaling approximately $25 billion. The NRRIT Board is comprised of seven Trustees, three selected by railroad labor unions and three by railroad companies. The seventh Trustee is an independent Trustee selected by the other six Trustees.

More information on the Trust is available on the Railroad Retirement Board website: www.rrb.gov/mep/tirt.asp.

Senate confirms Walt Barrows to RRB Labor Member post

On September 26, the U.S. Senate confirmed Walter A. Barrows to serve as the Labor Member of the Railroad Retirement Board.

Brother Barrows is the candidate unanimously endorsed by the BLET and the Teamsters Rail Conference Policy Committee, and he previously served as Secretary-Treasurer of the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen (BRS).

“Brother Barrows has our unanimous support and his expertise as a Trustee for the Railroad Retirement Investment Trust makes him by far the most qualified person for the position,” said Dennis R. Pierce, BLET National President and President of the Teamsters Rail Conference. “On behalf of the BLET, and the men and women of the Rail Conference, I offer congratulations to Brother Barrows on his hard-earned confirmation.”

President Barack Obama nominated Brother Barrows for the RRB Labor Member position in March of 2011. Regarding Brother Barrows and other nominees confirmed along with him, President Obama said: “I am honored that these talented individuals have decided to join this Administration and serve our country. I look forward to working with them in the months and years to come.”

Brother Barrows was elected to Secretary-Treasurer of the BRS in 1999 and was reelected in 2002, 2006, and 2010. In 2004, 2007, and 2010, Barrows was elected as a Labor Trustee to oversee the National Railroad Retirement Investment Trust Fund. The Trust manages investments currently totaling approximately $25 billion. BLET National Secretary-Treasurer Bill Walpert, who was appointed to serve as a shadow Trustee in May of 2011, fills the position vacated by Barrows and has become a full Trustee (see related article).

Barrows replaces outgoing Labor Member V. M. “Butch” Speakman on the three-member board. Speakman was scheduled to retire upon confirmation of his successor.

The Teamsters Rail Conference Policy Committee is comprised of members of the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees Division and the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, both divisions of the Rail Conference of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters.
Open enrollment began November 1, 2011 for BLET Short Term Disability plan

If you desire to OPT-IN or OPT-OUT of Part B coverage under the BLET Short Term Disability Insurance Plan, complete the remainder of this form. Be sure to include your signature and the date, and deliver to your Division Secretary-Treasurer by DECEMBER 15, 2011.

"I ______________________________________ (Print your name here and sign below), hereby choose to: (Mark with an “X”)  
• OPT-IN  
• OPT-OUT  
of the BLET Short Term Disability Insurance Plan, Part B I understand that if I OPT-OUT, I may only seek enrollment in Part B during a future open enrollment period.”

Signature: ________________________________________________
Date: ____________________________
Phone Number: ____________________________

DEADLINE IS DECEMBER 15, 2011
Bobby Brown elected General Chairman of BNSF GCA (C&S, CRI&P, FWD)

Bobby J. Brown of BLET Division 574 (Amarillo, Texas) was elected General Chairman of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (former C&S, CRIP, FWD) General Committee of Adjustment at their quadrennial meeting in Amarillo, Texas, September 15-16, 2011. Brother Brown has held continuous membership in the BLET for nearly 32 years, first joining the Brotherhood on December 1, 1979. Also elected were: 1st Vice Chairman Joe R. Berlin II (by acclamation), Division 186 (Fort Worth, Texas); 2nd Vice Chairman Barry W. Allen, Division 186 (Denver, Colo.); 3rd Vice Chairman Craig B. Knight (by acclamation), Division 703 (Topeka, Kansas); Secretary-Treasurer Tim R. Williamson (by acclamation), Division 430 (Trinidad, Colorado); and Alternate Secretary-Treasurer Michael Negus (by acclamation), Division 33 (Battle Creek, Michigan).

Secretary-Treasurer Steve Brant (by acclamation), Division 812 (Detroit), first joined the Brotherhood on June 1, 1977. He began serving as GTW General Chairman in 1992, when he replaced outgoing General Chairman Austin Morrison of Division 574 (Amarillo, Texas), along with all the officers of the General Committee, will do an excellent job of representing their members and enforcing their contract,” President Pierce said.

He also recognized outgoing General Chairman Austin Morrison of Division 33 (Battle Creek, Michigan) for his many years of service to the BLET. “Brother Morrison faithfully served the Brotherhood as General Chairman for 22 years,” President Pierce said. “That is a long time to serve any elected office, and on behalf of the entire BLET, I thank Austin Morrison for his dedication and commitment.”

GTW General Chairman John Karakian reelected by acclamation for sixth straight term

The BLET’s Grand Trunk members are proud of the significant role their forefathers played in the founding of our Brotherhood more than 147 years ago. A Grand Trunk locomotive engineer, B. Northrup, was one of the 19 original delegates who met for four days beginning on May 5, 1863, to form the original Brotherhood of the Footboard. The GTW GCA represents 250 locomotive engineers who operate over approximately 700 miles of track predominantly in Michigan. The GTW’s main corridor is from Port Huron, Mich., to Chicago, but also has operations in Illinois, Indiana, Ohio and the province of Ontario, Canada.

General Chairman John Karakian by acclamation for a sixth consecutive four-year term at their quadrennial meeting in Novi, Mich., on August 17.

Brother Karakian, a member of BLET Division 812 (Detroit), first joined the Brotherhood on June 1, 1977. He began serving as GTW General Chairman in 1992, when he replaced outgoing GC Paul Hicks. Also reelected by acclamation for his sixth straight term was Vice General Chairman Marty J. Tyler of Division 650 (Durand, Mich.). Brother Tom Greenman of Division 33 (Battle Creek, Michigan) was reelected by acclamation as Secretary-Treasurer.

Representatives from the BLET National Division included: National President Dennis R. Pierce; National Secretary-Treasurer William C. Walpert; Vice President & National Legislative Representative John P. Tolman; National Vice President Willard E. Knight; and Director of Benefits A. Dan Cook. Greg Powell, Chairman of the Michigan State Legislative Board, was also in attendance.

“As evidenced by his sixth straight term of office by acclamation, Brother Karakian is a hard working and tenacious General Chairman,” President Pierce said. “I thank him and his delegates for their efforts on behalf of the Brotherhood and offer my congratulations to Brother Karakian and all officers of the Grand Trunk Western GCA.”

The BLET’s Grand Trunk members are proud of the significant role their forefathers played in the founding of our Brotherhood more than 147 years ago. A Grand Trunk locomotive engineer, B. Northrup, was one of the 19 original delegates who met for four days beginning on May 5, 1863, to form the original Brotherhood of the Footboard.

The GTW GCA represents 250 locomotive engineers who operate over approximately 700 miles of track predominantly in Michigan. The GTW’s main corridor is from Port Huron, Mich., to Chicago, but also has operations in Illinois, Indiana, Ohio and the province of Ontario, Canada.

Transportation Workers protecting each other since 1910
David K. Brown reelected Minnesota State Legislative Board Chairman

David K. Brown was re-elected by acclamation to a second term as Chairman of the Minnesota State Legislative Board at their quadrennial meeting in Bloomington, Minn., September 27-29, 2011. Brother Brown is a member of BLET Division 517 (St. Paul, Minn.) and has 40 years of service with the BNSF Railway. He first joined the Brotherhood on December 1, 2002.

“I am honored for the opportunity to perform the duties of this office for another four years,” Brother Brown said. “Together we will work to support legislation and the candidates in this state and this nation that benefit our rail labor agenda.”

The delegates elected the following slate officers — all by acclamation — to serve BLET members in Minnesota:

- Wally Czerwinski of BLET Division 202 (Dilworth, Minn.) was elected 1st Vice Chairman; Chuck Loomis of BLET Division 549 (Willmar, Minn.) was elected 2nd Vice Chairman; Mark Anderson of BLET Division 333 (St. Paul, Minn.) was re-elected to his third term as Secretary-Treasurer; and Joel Mueller of BLET Division 9 (Waseca, Minn.) was elected Alternate Secretary-Treasurer.

Elected to the Audit Committee were: Joel Mueller, Division 9 (Waseca, Minn.); Greg Shirly, Division 27 (St. Cloud, Minn.); and Rick Johnson, Division 357 (Minneapolis, Minn.).

BLET National President Dennis P. Pierce congratulated these officers on their election and thanked them for serving the Brotherhood. He expressed his regret that he was unable to attend the meeting himself due to National Mediation Board hearings in Washington, D.C., regarding the BLET’s national contract and possible strike.

“Congratulations to Brother Brown on his second term of office,” President Pierce said. “I have every confidence that he and his slate of dedicated officers will do an excellent job of representing the best interests of BLET members in Minnesota.”

In place of President Pierce, BLET 1st Vice President E. Lee Pruitt addressed the delegates. He discussed current contract negotiations, possible strike scenarios, FRA Emergency Order 26 and inward facing cameras in locomotive cabs.

National Secretary-Treasurer William C. Walpert reported on National Division finances, membership totals and the state of the BLET Education and Training Department and the proposed training center in Cleveland. BLET Vice President and National Legislative Representative John P. Tolman spoke about a bill to propose favorable changes to the Rail Safety Improvement Act.

Sereena Hogan, BLET Auxiliary Vice President and National Legislative Representative, made a presentation on the Auxiliary and how they can help the BLET members.

Other VIPs and guests included: Ken Kroeger, BLET Special Representative and Coordinator of Education and Training; Matt Wilson, BLET General Chairman (BNSF-MRL, GoGo); John Reynolds, BLET General Chairman (CN/WC); Keith Stauber, BLET General Chairman (CN/DM&IR); Katherine Blauvelt, Field Director for U.S. Senator Al Franken; Minnesota Senator Scott Dibble, Ranking Minority Member of the Senate Transportation Committee; Minnesota Representative Frank Hornstein, DFL Lead of the Transportation Policy and Finance Committee; Tom Dwyer, National President of NARVRE; Mike Condon, BLET General Chairman (CN/WC); Keith Stauber, BLET General Chairman (CN/DM&IR); and Matt Wilson, BLET General Chairman (BNSF-MRL, GoGo).

The Minnesota State Legislative Board thanked all those who helped make their meeting a success.

The Minnesota State Legislative Board is comprised of 12 Divisions representing a total of 1,025 members.

To apply for membership and become a part of the BLET... see the BR&CF’s new brochure today... ask a BR&CF member where you work for an application... or visit our website at www.brcf.org or call us toll free at 800-233-7080.

The BR&CF is a not-for-profit organization with a proven track record of giving back to members and the rail labor community. The BR&CF created the North American Railway track record of giving back to members and the rail labor community. The BR&CF is comprised of 12 Divisions representing a total of 1,025 members.

There is a difference.

Compare monthly costs.
Get the best value from the BR&CF.

Daily Benefit Level | $100 ($102*) | $150 | $200 ($201*) | Difference on $200 With BR&CF You Save.
--- | --- | --- | --- | ---
BR&CF | $38.00 | $57.00 | $76.00 | $15.92 every month
LECMPA (*) | $59.50 | $87.50 | $117.25 | $41.25 every month
UTU | $66.00 | $99.00 | $132.00 | $56.00 every month

The BR&CF is the least expensive protection when disciplined for eligible occurrences and is committed to remaining affordable. You could save up to $672 each year. The BR&CF is the least expensive protection when disciplined for eligible occurrences and is committed to remaining affordable. You could save up to $672 each year.

The BR&CF is a not-for-profit organization with a proven track record of giving back to members and the rail labor community. The BR&CF created the North American Railway Foundation to help make things better for all of us.

Compare apples to apples. It’s clear the BR&CF works for you.

To apply for membership and become a part of the BR&CF... act today... ask a BR&CF member where you work for an application or visit our website at www.brcf.org or call us toll free at 800-233-7080.

LECMPA and UTU rates are accurate and effective on date of print.

*LECMPA is an acronym for the Locomotive Engineer, Conductor, Machinist, and Plateful Association.

The BLET is an affiliate of the Transportation Workers Union of North America, a federation of railroad labor unions. The BLET is committed to the safety, health and well-being of its members.

The BLET is committed to the safety, health and well-being of its members.

The BLET is an affiliate of the Transportation Workers Union of North America, a federation of railroad labor unions. The BLET is committed to the safety, health and well-being of its members.

The BLET is an affiliate of the Transportation Workers Union of North America, a federation of railroad labor unions. The BLET is committed to the safety, health and well-being of its members.
PLANT AHEAD FOR 2012!

JUNE 24-29, 2012
85th annual South Eastern Meeting Association (SMA)
CROWN PLAZA HOTEL BILLINGS, MONT.
Hosted by Arrangements Chairman Craig Glisch (Montana State Legislative Board Chairman) and Co-Chairman D.B. Kenner (Division 195). At the Crown Plaza Billings (27 North 27th St., Billings, Mont. 59101), phone (406) 252-4700. Contact Brother Glisch: mcag@montanelt.net

AUGUST 19-24, 2012
74th annual Eastern Union Meeting Association (EUMA)
ATLANTIC CITY, N.J.
Hosted by Arrangements Chairman Matt Kronyak (New Jersey State Legislative Board Chairman and Division 231 local Chairman), the 2012 EUMA will be held at Bally’s, 500 Harrah’s Place, Atlantic City, NJ 08404. (800) 345-7233, www.ballysac.com. Contact Brother Kronyak: rkronyak@ballyslights.com or (215) 768-6345.

SEPTEMBER 9-12, 2012
77th annual Southwestern Convention (SWCM)
GALVESTON, TEXAS
Hosted by Arrangements Chairman Jack Sweany, Division 776 local Chairman. The 2012 SWCM will be at the Moody Gardens Hotel (Seven Hope Blvd., Galveston, Texas 77554, phone (888) 388-6848. www.moodylodging.com. Contact Brother Sweany: jsweany@coastal-link.net

SUMMARY ANNUAL REPORT FOR BLET DISABILITY AND WELFARE BENEFIT TRUST FUND

T his is a summary of the annual report for the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen Disability and Welfare Benefit Trust Fund, 30-1/2, for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2010.

The trust fund is the retirement fund, or net assets of $453,682. This increase includes unremitted appreciation or depreciation in the value of plan assets, that is, the difference between the value of the plan’s assets at the end of the fiscal year and the value of the plan’s assets at the beginning of the year during which the current fiscal year was carried out.

The plan has a contract with Metrop- olitan Life Insurance Company to pay certain benefits under the terms of the plan. The total premiums paid for the plan year ending December 31, 2010 was $2,245,479.

BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The value of plan assets, after sub- tracting liabilities of the plan, was $6,442,675 as of December 31, 2010, com- pared to $4,793,793 as of December 31, 2010. During the plan year the plan experienced an increase in its

PEB 234 RECOMMENDATIONS

Concerning plan liabilities, increases, claiming that future profit margins are at risk. They also argued that huge increases in productivity over past years have led to technical and logistical improvements and various oth- er factors. According to the carriers, there is “no evidence that rail labor jobs were more difficult, require more skill or effort, or that rail labor has in any other way become inherently more productive than labor in general.” Concerning health care benefits, the carriers argued that Rail Labor benefits are “overly generous” and urged the PEB to reduce cost shifting from the carriers directly onto the shoulders of the oldest and least healthy workers, and those with families.

RAIL LABOR POSITIONS

The unions were represented by two coalitions: the Coalition of Rail Unions, representing over 100,000 workers in these before the Board; and the Rail Labor Bargaining Coalition (RLBC), representing 62% of those be- fore the Board. The Coalition of Rail Unions is com- prised of: American Train Dispatchers Association; International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers; Inter- national Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers; Transportation Communications Union, including Brotherhood of Railway Careers; and Transport Work- ers Union. The RLBC consists of: Broth- erhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen; the International Association of Way Employees Division; Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen; International Brotherhood of Boilermakers and Black- smITHs; Brotherhood of Firemen and Engi- neers; and Sheet Metal Workers Inter- national Association.

BLET CRAFT SPECIFIC ISSUES

Each union presented argument, evi- dence and testimony concerning major issues before the Board to the benefit of its members. The BLET’s presentation sought favorable PEB recommendations regarding: elimination of the entry rate and the two-tiered pay scales; adoption of a new table of home-terminal meal allowance provi- sion contained in the BLET Contract; and the CSX Transportation as the national standard; immediately increasing the certifi- cation allowance to $10.00 per trip or tour of duty, adjusted for future general wage payments to service providers; 3. Assets held for investment, in excess of 5% of plan assets; and 5. Insurance information includ- ing sales data and binding insurance carriers. The coalition’s recommendation was a copy of the full annual report, or any part thereof, write to or call the Office of Brotherhood of Loco- motive Engineers and Trainmen, National Plan Administrator, at 1370 Onto- rio Street, Standard Building Mazzin- i, Cleveland, OH, 44113-1702 or (216) 241-2630. The charge to cover copying costs will be 25 for the full annual report, or 25 for any part thereof.

You have the right to receive a copy of the full annual report, or any part thereof, on request. The items listed below are included in that re- port:

1. An accountant’s report; 2. Financial and information on

The coalition also made joint presen- tations concerning wages, vacation and health care benefits.

• Regarding wages, the unions argued that continuing record profitability and sustained productivity gains provide a justification for general wage increases greater than those agreed to during the last contract negotiations. • Regarding vacation, the unions re- quested a 6th week for those having more than 36 years of seniority and proration of vacation for those workers who fail to qualify for the full allotment. BLET Na- tional President Dennis R. Pierce testi- fied on this issue, explaining the compli- cated process by which locomotive engineers qualify for vacation.

• Regarding health care benefits, the unions requested that the PEB recom- mend no changes at this time. Rail Labor countered the carriers’ claims that the current health and welfare plan is too generous by presenting evidence that the current level of benefits is no more cost- ly than the national average, after dis- counting for reserves. The carriers pointed out that these benefits were originally created by the coalitions seeking a balanced plan. The majority of BLET’s craft agreed the PEB’s proposed health care benefits are “overly generous” and urged the PEB to reduce cost shifting from the carriers directly onto the shoulders of the oldest and least healthy workers, and those with families.

As for the others, it suggested “local han- dling” for a few and withdrawal of all other benefits. Lastly, the PEB re- commended adoption of only one craft- specific union proposal, and that lump sum payment not be included.

Although the recommendations are not binding, the parties to such a voluntary settlement. The Board did not recommend it be adopted instead; it referred that issue to on-property handling.

Because these portions are furnished without charge.

You also have the legally protected right to review the annual report at the main office of the plan at 1370 Ontario Street, Cleveland, OH, 44113-1702 and at the U.S. Department of Labor’s field office in Washington DC, or obtain a copy from the U.S. Department of Labor upon payment of copying costs. Requests to the Department should be addressed to: Public Disclosure Room, Room N-1513, Employee Benefits Security Administration, U.S. Depart- ment of Labor, 20 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington DC 20210.

The charge to cover copying costs will be 25 for the full annual report, or 25 for any part thereof. The charge to cover copying costs will be 25 for the full annual report, or 25 for any part thereof.

The charge to cover copying costs will be 25 for the full annual report, or 25 for any part thereof. The charge to cover copying costs will be 25 for the full annual report, or 25 for any part thereof.

The charge to cover copying costs will be 25 for the full annual report, or 25 for any part thereof. The charge to cover copying costs will be 25 for the full annual report, or 25 for any part thereof.

The charge to cover copying costs will be 25 for the full annual report, or 25 for any part thereof. The charge to cover copying costs will be 25 for the full annual report, or 25 for any part thereof.

The charge to cover copying costs will be 25 for the full annual report, or 25 for any part thereof. The charge to cover copying costs will be 25 for the full annual report, or 25 for any part thereof.
BLET Job Bank: AMTRAK

AMTRAK has advised the BLET National Division that it is recruiting locomotive engineers to fill positions in six areas: Washington, D.C.-Zone 2; Washington, D.C.-Zone 5; Harrisburg, Pa.; Pittsburgh, Pa.; Charlotte, N.C.; and Nashville, Tenn.

According to AMTRAK’s “help wanted” ad, “Duties include safe operation of locomotives, complying with train orders, yardwork, signaling, railroad operating rules, special instructions, federal, state and local regulations to transport passengers and equipment safely and efficiently. Perform air brake tests as required. Must make timely and critical decisions under stressful conditions frequently.”

Additionally, “Candidate must have a high school diploma or GED. Candidates must have a current Class 1 Engineer Certificate and have been an engineer within the same company for one year.” Candidates must pass the Hogan Personality Inventory Test. Candidates must be able to report to their crew no later than 2:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday. The pay range is from $26.95 to $35.90 per hour, depending on how much service the candidate has as an engineer. Please fax resume as soon as possible to 202-906-3349. Please indicate “Attention: Sar- dan Bank Ask” on the fax cover sheet, and indicate the specific location you are interested in.

Interested parties are also advised to check the AMTRAK website to see if these and other positions are available. Further information on applicable engine engineer vacancies is available. Please log on to www.amtrak.com and click on “careers.”

Commuter railroads are also recruiting engineers. Check the websites for specific information. Further information is available on the National Association of Commuter Railroads (NACR) website at www.nacrrail.org. Contact the NACR at 800-722-2522.

Please note that AMTRAK is an equal employment opportunity employer. EOE, M/F, V/D.