



FROM THE PRESIDENT

— Jerry C. Boles, BRS President

A Pivotal Year *for* **Our Craft**

This will be a pivotal year for our craft. We are going to face many challenges with Positive Train Control (PTC) installation winding down and the Carriers adopting the operating style of Precision Schedule Railroading (PSR), both of which had a negative impact on our craft, causing numerous job cuts, furloughs, and BRS members stretched to their limit.

When PTC was mandated by Congress, the Carriers each negotiated with the BRS and agreed on terms to most effectively have PTC installed. BRS bargained with every Carrier individually; each Carrier had different needs, ranging from hiring many craft employees, using contractors, setting minimum force levels, or a combination thereof. During the buildup to the installation of PTC, Carriers hired numerous employees to meet the deadline. BRS members did an incredible job of getting PTC installed, and put the railroads in great shape to make the December 31, 2020, deadline.

BRS members are now facing furloughs and job-cuts as the railroads try to reduce to pre-PTC employment levels. This is not the first time our Organization has experienced furloughs or job-cuts. Some of the more senior Signalmen will remember when Centralized Train Control (CTC) was the mass undertaking by the railroads. We weathered that storm and with solidarity and communication, we will weather this one and make it through.

As a furloughed member there may be protections

under your Collective Bargaining Agreement; it is imperative that you contact your local BRS representative to see what benefits exist with your Carrier. For members covered under the National Agreement, you are subject to the Employment Security Agreement, commonly known as "Feb. 7" protection. This "Feb. 7" protection was signed by the BRS in 1965, along

with BMWED and TCU, with the Carriers, to afford job stabilization and protections to our members. The driving force behind the Agreement was to address situations where a Carrier sought to change their operations, similar to today's environment.



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The "Feb. 7" Agreement provides definitions of who is a protected employee, with the main qualifier being an employee with ten or more years of employment relationship. Once established as a protected employee, the Agreement provides guidance on what the employee must do to remain protected and be afforded the compensation benefits provided for under the Agreement. Each Carrier should have and provide you with a benefits form that must be filled out in order to receive the benefits provided for under the "Feb. 7" Agreement. As with all things, it is critical that you maintain a paper trail and keep your records straight; when in doubt, communicate with your local representative.

Vigilance and professionalism are attributes we take pride in as Signalmen. These attributes are ever more critical in today's environment with Carriers extending territories and responsibilities for our members. Signalmen are being pressed to get more tests, inspec-

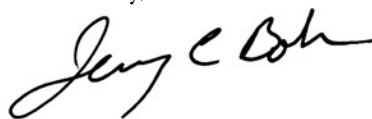
tions, and maintenance completed in their already tight schedule. The Carriers have prioritized operations and “efficiencies”, sometimes to the detriment of our members and the public. As Signalmen, it is our duty to continue to do a professional job to ensure safety over satisfaction of the Carriers’ PSR priorities. Our training and experience have armed us with the knowledge of the proper steps that must be taken to ensure each test is performed correctly and each task is completed in a safe manner.

It is imperative that we have our books at our side to follow each test procedure step-by-step and each safety rule written. We must have the courage to inform our supervisor that we do not have time to complete all the required test in the time allotted and when we need assistance. This, again, reaffirms the importance of keeping detailed documentation and maintaining good records of all repairs, tests, and tasks completed.

The full implementation of PTC will require immediate response time. Carriers will want a Signal Maintainer to promptly respond when a train is stopped because of PTC enforcement. Do not jeopardize your safety or well-being to get a train moving and do not let your lack of concentration and frustration lead you into a mistake.

In closing, the rail industry has changed dramatically in the past several years and will continue to change with PTC being implemented and the adoption of PSR by the Carriers. However, I know we will continue to provide the excellent service that the Nation’s railroads have come to expect from BRS Signalmen.

In Solidarity,



Jerry C. Boles — *BRS President*



BUY UNION

14.6 **NUMBER OF U.S. UNION MEMBERS**
MILLION

Every time we buy union-made products and services we support good middle-class jobs. With more than 14 million union members in the U.S. our buying power can help support and sustain the middle-class.

WAGES

The median weekly earnings of union workers are 28% more than non-union workers

NON-UNION \$717

UNION \$917

Median Weekly Earnings

UNION WORKERS MAKE 28% MORE THAN NON-UNION WORKERS

LIVE UNION

PAID VACATION

Union workers get

28%

more days off paid vacation, on average than non-union workers.

Union workers are more like to have health and retirement

BENEFITS

than non-union counterparts.



LIVE BETTER