

Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers
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Mr. Matthew K. Rose
Chairman, BNSF Railway
P.O. Box 961052
Ft. Worth, TX 76161-0052

April 23, 2002
File: Remote Control Operations

Dear Mr. Rose:

This letter is in reference to an article concerning remote control operations on BNSF dated Thursday, April 18, 2002, in the Business Digest section of the Star Telegram. In that article you were quoted as saying that the use of crew members other than locomotive engineers to operate remotely controlled locomotives was a "productivity matter". The undersigned believe that contrary to what you may have been advised by others, our efforts to insure that our agreements are complied with and that locomotive engineers are assigned to the controls of all remotely operated locomotives have also been an effort to provide BNSF with the most productive remote control operation possible. The use of locomotive engineers, who are the most highly trained and productive operating employee, on every remote controlled locomotive will not only insure a more productive final product, but a safer work environment as well.

Our experiences with remote controlled operations on other properties have shown that the most efficient use of the technology often involves an operation where certain functions are performed with the remote control device, while others are performed using the control stand of the locomotive. Often times the operation itself drives the need to utilize the locomotive in other than remote status. Fully licensed locomotive engineers are the only operating employee that can provide that service, and to date, they have been removed from all so called "remote control pilot projects" that this Carrier is implementing. In addition, fully licensed locomotive engineers have the most comprehensive working knowledge of the operating and safety rules and must constantly maintain this knowledge to retain their certification. With all due respect, for you to generalize that this is just a "productivity matter" ignores the true productivity that locomotive engineers provide this Carrier. The economics of the BNSF must include the locomotive engineer if this company truly intends to implement the most efficient, safe and productive operation with remote control technology.

The undersigned General Chairman have approached the Officers of this Company on multiple occasions requesting that BLE be given its rightful seat at the table and that the remote controls be assigned to locomotive engineers. To date, our requests have fallen on deaf ears. We are now advised that additional terminals will be converted to remote controlled operations. Even though the Carrier has publicly stated that no employees will fall out the bottom during the pilot phase of this project, many locomotive engineers' positions have been abolished and several trainmen have been furloughed as a direct result of the pilots implemented to date. In addition, access to Locomotive Engineer Training for these same ground crew members is being eliminated, ultimately depriving them of the promotion and advancement to the craft of locomotive engineer that they desire. The Carrier has refused our requests for protective benefits for the displaced engineers as well, even while Carrier Officers and UTU publicly state that protection will be given to all affected by implementation of the remote controlled service. The manner in which this service is being cut over is not only causing irreparable harm to our members, but is creating an environment where even the operating employees who survive the current implementation will be adversely impacted. It is apparent to us that remote control is being implemented in a fashion that has the potential to alienate all surviving operating employees. At the same time, the information we have received from Mandan, North Dakota indicates that extra engines with a traditional crew are being utilized on a regular basis to insure that the necessary work is performed. When all of this is considered, it does not appear that this service is being implemented in a manner that would insure the "productivity" that this Carrier had hoped to achieve.

We the undersigned remain willing to meet with the Carrier and would request that you personally meet with us to discuss these matters. If the Carrier truly desires a safe, productive and efficient working environment, then locomotive engineers must be given the opportunity to participate in that environment. We will be convened in Ft. Worth on May 7th and 8th and are available to meet with you then or at any time that is convenient for you.

Sincerely,



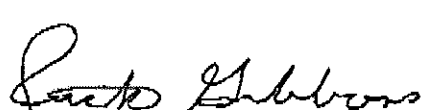
Dennis R. Pierce
General Chairman



John D. Mullen
General Chairman



Austin G. Morrison
General Chairman



Rick C. Gibbons
General Chairman

cc: Carl Ice, Executive Vice President and COO
Dave Dealy, Vice President, Transportation
John Fleps, Vice President, Labor Relations
Don M. Hahs, International President, BLE
Ed Rodziewicz, First International Vice President, BLE
Steve Speagle, International Vice President, BLE