



# **SYSTEM COUNCIL NO. 6**

**INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS**

**Tom Owens**  
**General Chairman**

**Shannon Spotswood**  
**Vice Chairman**

**Mike Stacks**  
**Secretary-Treasurer**

General Chairman's Report – March, 2019

Brothers and Sisters:

March 2019 Shop Craft Coalition Meeting - We were informed in the latter part of the meeting that the Carrier intends to furlough approximately 50 Mechanical employees in May, 2019. The points to be affected are Shaffer's Crossing and Chattanooga, with the greater impact being on Shaffer's Crossing. We were quite surprised that the Carrier was actually sharing this information with us at this early date. We were not given any craft specific numbers. Based on word of mouth from Shaffer's and Roanoke, a Carrier officer called certain mechanical employees at Roanoke with the information before we had left the parking lot from the meeting. No one has been affected at this date, but time will tell if the Carrier is being honest with the Organizations. It is difficult to trust what we are being told when a Carrier officer engages in such game playing regarding spreading information before the Organization is given enough time to address its members. I view it as a deliberate attempt to discredit the Organizations and stir discontent.

The justification for this furlough and future actions will be influenced by Precision Railroading techniques. The Carrier claims that for every one mile per hour of increased average train speed on the system, the Carrier needs 100 fewer locomotives. Their goal is over 500 less locomotives by 2021. To date, they have removed 113 locomotives. Another parameter they are using equates 1 employee for every 2 locomotives. So, with slightly over 100 locomotives removed, we were informed of a 50 employee furlough. Despite official comments of employee reduction coming from attrition, we still seem to be facing active workers being furloughed.

We also discussed the abusive nature of the Supervisory Gang Leader assignments. With examples provided by the IBEW and the other Organizations, the Carrier did agree to do an audit/review of the SGL positions for numbers and necessity. They were not agreeable to eliminating or capping the practice.

Medical delays in returns to service were also discussed. No medical department officer was in attendance at the meeting, but the Director of Labor Relations over medical claims will be working to address our complaints regarding the unresponsive nature of the medical department.

National Negotiations (From Director Bohne) - The first meeting of Rail Labor unions was held last October, with a brief follow-up in February. Our next meeting is scheduled for April 8th. To date it has been a slow process – with everything that all of the organizations have going on making it difficult to schedule a meeting where we can all be there. Many unions have expressed interest and we're still trying! We continue to believe the best possible way to serve all our union Sisters and Brothers and get the best possible agreement for all unionized railroad workers is to fight together. We'll update you following that meeting.

Also, within the next couple of weeks we'll be emailing all of our Railroad local unions and Railroad System Councils soliciting recommendations for our upcoming round of bargaining. All Local Union Presidents and Local Chairmen will be receiving our email request. So start preparing now. Our Section Six Notice can be served any time after November 1st. Please get involved in the process with your Local Union as bargaining is right around the corner and your input is very important.

SGL Claims – As expected and discussed, the Carrier is attempting to even deny the “reasonable trial” which is part of the Agreement language. It must be stressed to our membership that if the member’s desire is to truly hold an SGL position, the member will have to be able to prove qualifications. To acquire this knowledge, a member should arrange with supervision to shadow a SGL for the purpose of training. This will most likely have to be done during off shift time for the member, but some points have allowed on duty time. If a displacement of a SGL is not allowed, the member should make a note on the Carrier “allowed” displacement that his/her displacement of the SGL was not allowed by the Carrier.

Days 1 – 7: LU 1024 Comm member claim payment award; Letter/Awards research for 2273 subcontracting; LU 813 member return to work assistance; LU 2269 case review with LC; Comm hold/response information request; Comm performing BRS duties by contract research for RR Dept; LU 311 FMLA research; LU 1047 job bulletin issue; LU 1024 member info request; GO Team applicant review and verification; LU 2273 Team Leader claim; Travel arrangements for LU 311 & LU 632 meetings; LU 311 LC call; Signed Comm Division Wide Maintainer Letter of Understanding; Assisted member with RRB issue; LU 813 Comm START information; Monthly reports & financials; Research member transfer between LU 2271 and LU 513

Days 1-8: Pursued issue with individual discovered working 11 years without membership; LU 2271 START research; Contacted NS supervision regarding individual with membership; Travel to Chattanooga; Attended LU 311 meeting; Travel to Atlanta; Attended LU 632 Officer meeting; Travel to Knoxville; LU 311 member RRB assistance; LU 734 Comm member language question; LU 1865 OT issue; LU 312 bulletin board issue – member posting unapproved documentation; Cornerstone Insurance vendor contact; Website maintenance; LU 1142 claim response; LU 2172 & LU 513 calls regarding individual without membership

Days 15 – 21: Contacted LR regarding delinquent seniority rosters; LU 2271 member investigation prep; LU 1142 dismissal research; LU 311 member insurance issue; compiled seniority rosters; Self advancement letters for LU 2271, LU 513, LU 2271 to former members who walked away from NS employment; LU 632 LC call over 48 hour bump window; LU 2269 LC call; LU 311 Comm member vacation issue

Days 22 – 30: LU 1024 claim settlement over Division Wide Comm Maintainer; Seniority Roster reviews; Began researching non payment of dues cases; Travel to ATL; Shop Craft Coalition meeting; Travel to Knoxville; LU 1142 member insurance issue

In Your Service,

Tom Owens  
General Chairman