



## **UTU seeks winner-take-all vote on UP**

Today, May 27, the United Transportation Union (UTU) is sending the National Mediation Board (NMB) a representation application seeking a winner-take-all representation election among train and engine service employees on Union Pacific Railroad (UP).

Currently, the UTU represents UP train service employees (about 14,000), while the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, a division of the predominantly truck drivers' Teamsters Union, represents UP engine service employees (about 9,000), for collective bargaining on UP, although UTU has many engine service members.

UTU contends that new technology and other factors, such as the line of progression from train service to engine service, have blurred historical craft distinctions to create a single craft or class of train and engine service employees on UP.

A similar UTU request made in January 1998 was denied by the NMB in February 2000, after three NMB-appointed arbitrators concluded that "the conditions here present do not support an order for the Board to impose a single craft or class."

Much has changed since that ruling.

-- There are now well over 1,000 remote control assignments on UP manned by train service employees.

-- Remote control is used in nearly 70 percent of all jobs in UP terminals.

-- The number of train and engine service employees who are cross-utilized between train and engine service has been increasing steadily. It is not uncommon for a UP operating employee to work some days of a week in train service, and other days in engine service, depending upon the UP's off-shifting manpower requirements.

Moreover, subsequent to its 2000 ruling on the previous request involving UP, the NMB found a single class or craft of train and engine service employees to exist on other railroads, including Terminal Railroad Association of St. Louis, the Paducah & Louisville Railway, the Manufacturers' Railroad, and the Texas-Mexican Railway. The UTU won three of those winner-take-all elections; the BLET one.

Additionally, the NMB said in 2002 -- in a case involving Kansas City Southern Railway -- that the railroad workplace not only is

changing, but that technology "could ultimately result in a combined craft or class of train and engine service employees." In fact, the NMB said, "the UTU is not precluded from applying for a combined craft or class of train and engine service employees in the future."

"There is an overriding community of interest among operating employees," said UTU International President Paul Thompson. "This is a consequence of reduced crew consists, the creation of the single line of progression from trainmen to engineers, the incidental work rules applicable to train and engine service employees, the ebb-and-flow of work, the fact that trainmen and engineers are part of a single operating unit with joint and equal responsibility for the operation of the train, and the increasing use of remote control technology."

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