

Sent: Friday, May 26, 2017
Subject: National Negotiations Update

Brothers and Sisters,

This is an update of what's going on with National Negotiations.

Unfortunately, our Bargaining Coalition hasn't met with the railroads since our last meeting of February 22nd, following which I emailed you all an update on March 6th (resent March 28). To date, we still have not received a counter-proposal from the railroads that they promised to give us. We have been advised that the coalition of the BMW-T and SMART Mechanical did receive a counter proposal from the railroads, and that it isn't a proposal that even came close to meeting the needs of their members or was one that they would even consider. In fact, they indicated to us that it was a step backwards in the negotiating process.

A few weeks ago, an email was sent to some of you that included information about the BMW-T/SMART Coalition National Negotiations and a link to a BMW-T video. The email was a bit misleading in that it indicated that this is where the IBEW and our coalition was in the negotiating process. Just to make it clear, there are three Rail Labor Union bargaining coalitions negotiating nationally with the railroads, and we are all at different stages in the bargaining process. The only official notice of what is going on with IBEW National Negotiations is what comes out of this office or from IBEW President Stephenson.

We are in a difficult situation with this round, and our choices on how to proceed are limited and not very palatable. We could ask for a release from mediation and proceed to a Presidential Emergency Board (PEB). However, due to the situation with the Trump administration, we don't know if we'd get released or not. And then if we did get released, we don't know if Trump would even appoint a PEB. And if he did appoint a PEB, he could choose whomever he wanted to serve on it, and we would most likely get a report from a PEB that was very favorable to the railroads and that would not be acceptable to us at all. Then if a PEB report were issued and we can't reach agreement with the railroads based on the findings of the PEB, the dispute would end up before Congress for them to decide on a contract for us, another avenue which would probably not bode favorable for us. So, it seems at this time as if we are between a rock and a hard place with not many options. If there is one bright spot in this unfortunate situation it is that your Health and Welfare benefits will remain the same until a new agreement is reached, and your monthly Health and Welfare Cost Share will remain the same also.

In the near future, I plan on requesting a meeting of the three Rail Labor Bargaining Coalitions to discuss future negotiating strategies. I'll continue to keep you updated as matters progress.

If you have any questions pertaining to the foregoing, please don't hesitate to contact me. May you all have enjoyable and safe holiday weekends!

Fraternally and in Solidarity,

Bill Bohné, Jr.
Director - IBEW Railroad Department
202-728-6016