

# THE TRAIN DISPATCHER



## ATDA INDUCTED INTO CENTURY OF SERVICE HALL OF FAME

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## Legal Notice – Dues

Article 2, Section 4(b) defines the national dues rate. Effective October 1, 2024, the national dues rate is \$128.35 per month. System dues are determined separately by each system committee as shown below. To determine your monthly obligation, add the system dues amount shown below to the national dues rate.

4b. (1) The monthly National dues of all Active members of this Association ("full dues"), except as otherwise provided in this Section shall be determined annually by multiplying the average truck rail traffic controller (train dispatcher) total daily rate of pay (eight hours straight time pay plus allowances) in effect on July 1 by .295 and rounding up to the next five cents, provided such dues shall not be less than what was in effect on the preceding June 30.

(2) The monthly National dues for active members holding positions rated less than \$300.00 per day as of July 1, 2019, shall be determined by multiplying the average daily rate of pay (eight hours straight time pay plus allowances) in effect on July 1 for each craft by .295 and rounding up to the next five cents.

## System Dues Rates

### Effective October 1, 2024

Alaska: \$22.15	CPKC: \$24.45	NS: \$23.75
Amtrak TD/PD: \$20.90	KRR MOW: \$10.65	PATH: \$24.90
Amtrak LD: \$21.85	KRR TY&E: \$12.25	SIRT: \$20.70
Berkshire & Eastern: \$17.70	L&I BO: \$9.85	SunRail: \$19.20
BNSF: \$26.05	L&I TD: \$15.05	TRRA: \$29.75
BNSF (MRL): \$25.00	Keolis: \$18.20	Trinity TD: \$20.45
BRC: \$25.15	NICTD: \$15.05	Trinity TY&E: \$15.35
Conrail: \$22.85	Metra: \$19.45	Tri-Rail: \$20.65
CSX – East: \$23.65	NJT PS: \$20.85	WC: \$24.30
CSX – South: \$25.20	NJT RiverLINE: \$17.00	
IHB: \$26.45	NJT TD: \$20.85	

## Death Benefit Beneficiary

The Executive Board adopted the following policy change:  
"If you have not designated a Beneficiary at the time of your death for any amount of benefits payable because of your death, the benefit amount will be paid to:

1. your surviving spouse, if any;
2. your surviving children, if there is no surviving spouse; or
3. your estate, if there are no surviving children.

Any payment will discharge our liability for the amount so paid."

If you would like to establish a beneficiary or modify an existing beneficiary form, go to our website [www.atda.org](http://www.atda.org) go to member forms and select ATDA Beneficiary Form. Print out the form and once completed, return the form to the Office of the Secretary-Treasurer.

## AMERICAN TRAIN DISPATCHERS ASSOCIATION

**National Headquarters**  
4239 West 150th St  
Cleveland, Ohio 44135  
Telephone: (216)251-7984  
[atda.org](http://atda.org)

*Affiliated with the A.F.L./C.I.O  
and the Transportation Trades  
Department/Rail Division*

### OFFICIAL ROSTER

**L. ED DOWELL, President**  
4239 West 150th St.  
Cleveland, Ohio 44135  
Office: (216) 251-7984

**BILL SIKES, Secretary-Treasurer**  
4239 West 150th St.  
Cleveland, Ohio 44135  
Office: (216) 251-7984

**BRANDON M. DENUCCI, Vice President**  
175 Pineview Drive  
Marquette, MI 49855  
Phone: (412) 848-8344

**KEVIN S. PORTER, Vice President**  
8513 Gillis Court  
North Richland Hills, TX 76182  
Phone: (817) 733-7664

**BARRY A. CROSS, Vice President**  
309 Joy Ct.  
Bear, DE 19701-3367  
Phone: (302) 668-6713

**COLIN THURMAN, Vice President**  
101 Captiva Drive  
Ponte Vedra, FL 32081  
Phone: (443) 844-7058

**KEVIN M. KETCHAM, Trustee**  
516 High Desert Drive  
Fort Worth, TX 76131  
Phone: (817) 307-8141

**DAVID W. URSINI, Trustee**  
2824 Red Wolf Drive  
Fort Worth, TX 76244  
Phone: (817) 614-1070

**J. ANDY BREWER, Trustee**  
P.O. Box 858  
Powderly, Texas 75473  
Phone: (903) 272-6394

### STAFF

**PAUL ARDEN**  
Director of Research

**DAVID W. URSINI**  
Executive Asst to the President

**DAN LANIGAN**  
Accountant

**AMBER DAVIS**  
Membership and Member  
Benefits Specialist

## From the President



**L. Ed Dowell, President**

The last 12 months have been a transformational time for ATDA. Since the October 2023 General Assembly, we have taken steps forward that have significantly strengthened our union, improved the lives of our members, and elevated the organization to the forefront of our industry.

As you may recall, my stated priority at the conclusion of the General Assembly was to improve member engagement and information sharing. Secretary-Treasurer Bill Sikes has taken this task head-on, regularly informing members and sharing our accomplishments through the current ATDA website. The stream of information has been so constant that we have published a total of eighty-five press releases during that time. These updates were necessary to amplify what has transpired, because ATDA has drastically increased its activity.

As an example, consider that we have participated in three protest / rallies over the past year. In each case we visually and vocally stood up to rail industry giants, demanded changes in safety, improved wages, and the provision of paid sick days. We have reached C3RS agreements covering 100% of our members on two Class-1 Railroads. No other union can say that. We also reached agreements for the former PanAm train dispatchers that have changed their lives. At one point they were one of the lowest wage-earning train dispatcher groups,

but today they are making Class-1 level wages. Earlier this year we organized the Genesee & Wyoming train dispatchers.

The year also marked a significantly accelerated political effort, as we pursued every available opportunity to build support for our members' interests. We walked the halls of congress, meeting with Republicans and Democrats alike, compelling both to support rail labor and rail safety. We advocated for you directly to the President of the United States, the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of Transportation, the FRA Administrator, the NTSB Chair, and many others. And for the first time ever, a U.S. Senator met with us at our ATDA HQ for a direct conversation about our interests. Wherever the opportunity has arisen to exert influence, we have moved to capitalize. This includes attending high-speed rail announcements, high-speed rail conferences, rail safety conferences, as well as arbitration & mediation conferences. The point is, we will not sit idly on the sidelines.

When I say "we," this does not just mean, me, Secretary-Treasurer Sikes, or the Executive Board. Involving local leadership in the trajectory of their organization is a top priority. To that end, twenty-two members have participated in the events and/or committees this year. This includes taking part in FRA regional meetings, the CPKC Protest, arbitration advocate training, a civil & women's rights conference, a Secretary of Transportation press conference, Rail Labor Day on Capitol Hill, and our new Automation and AI committee.

Additionally, it is important that our members across the county have an opportunity to meet their ATDA President either at union meetings or office visits. Since taking office in October 2023, I have attended either union meetings and/or office visits at Amtrak (NY & Boston), BNSF (Ft. Worth & Spring), CPKC, CSX, Keolis (South), NIRC, NJT (Power & Train Dispatcher), NS, Tri-Rail, and WC. I will continue to seek out additional opportunities to interact with our members in the coming year.

Although we have enjoyed tremendous recent success, this only the latest chapter of our great Organization's storied history. That legacy was recently honored by the Department of Labor, as ATDA was inducted into its Century of Service Hall of Fame in Washington, D.C. The award was in recognition

of ATDA's 100+ years of service to our members. As your President, it was a great honor to accept this recognition on behalf of our organization directly from the Acting Secretary of Labor, Julie Su. In a testament to our multi-generational responsibility and success, we were thankful that former ATDA President Leo McCann and other retired ATDA Officers were able to attend the ceremony.

These accomplishments reflect our shared values and collective determination. They underscore the critical importance of our continued vigilance, and the responsibility we share to advocate for improvement of our members' lives. This is true not only in economic terms, but also through quality-of-life enhancements.

As we celebrate our building momentum, we must take the initiative, stay engaged, and think forward. Together, we can continue to build a better future for all, but we have much work ahead. Train Dispatcher certification will

begin in 2025. We still have wage disparity in locations that must be resolved. Also, the Union Pacific Train Dispatchers deserve better and it's time for us to help them organize.

Let's go make a difference, because WE CONTROL THE RAILROAD.

In solidarity,



**L. Ed Dowell**  
President  
American Train Dispatchers Association



## EMPLOYEE COST SHARE OF NATIONAL HEALTH AND WELFARE PLAN SET TO DROP BY OVER 10% ON JANUARY 1, 2025



## YOUR TRACK TO HEALTH

**October 10, 2024** – The Cooperating Railway Labor Organizations (CRLO) and National Carriers Conference Committee (NCCC) announced today that the employee cost share of the National Health and Welfare plan will drop by 10.2% on 1/1/2025, to \$277.54 per month. The announcement follows an ongoing review of plan costs between the union (CRLO) and railroad carrier (NCCC)

groups, and their agreement on calculations of next year's Employee Cost Share amount.

ATDA President Ed Dowell currently serves as Secretary-Treasurer of the CRLO, while ATDA Vice President Brandon Denucci serves as ATDA's CRLO subcommittee member. More information will soon be available on <http://www.yourtracktohealth.com>

## ATDA PRESIDENT ED DOWELL ELECTED CHAIRMAN OF COOPERATING RAILWAY LABOR ORGANIZATIONS

**Washington, D.C.** – On November 7, 2024, American Train Dispatchers Association (ATDA) President Ed Dowell was elected by acclamation as Chairman of the Cooperating Rail Labor Organizations (CRLO). CRLO consists of each rail labor union President or designee whose members are covered by the Railroad Employees National Health & Welfare Plan or the SMART-TD Health & Welfare Plan. CRLO serves as a critically important advocate for the healthcare of over 300,000 American railroad workers and their dependents. Also elected were Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen (BRS) President Mike Baldwin, re-elected to a second term as Vice-Chairman, and National Conference of Firemen and Oilers (NCFO) President Michael Pistone, elected as Secretary-Treasurer.

for the jointly managed National Health & Welfare Plan. Dowell has selected ATDA's David Ursini to serve as CRLO Administrator, who will also serve as Administrator for the National Health & Welfare Plan.

Commenting on his election as Chairman, Dowell said "It is a great honor to be elected by my fellow rail Chiefs. I look forward to working closely with Vice Chairman, BRS President Baldwin, and Secretary-Treasurer, NCFO President Pistone. I want to thank outgoing Chairman TCU President Artie Maratea and Administrator TCU's Ellen Conboy for all their time and effort leading CRLO. Most members are unaware of all the work CRLO does. It's not glamorous. Behind the scenes, it takes a lot of hard work to jointly manage a 2+ billion-dollar healthcare plan. We have one of the best healthcare plans in the nation and CRLO not only manages but fights to preserve the benefits that have been collectively bargained."

On 11/1/2024, the National Railway Labor Conference (NRLC) announced that Jeff Rodgers will become its Chairman. CRLO Chairman Dowell and NRLC Chairman Rodgers will each serve as Co-Chairman

# US DEPARTMENT OF LABOR INDUCTS ATDA INTO CENTURY OF SERVICE HALL OF FAME



ATDA President Ed Dowell (left) receives a commemorative award from acting Secretary of Labor Julie Su, marking the induction of ATDA into the DOL's Century of Service Honor Roll

**Washington, D.C.** – On September 17, 2024, the United States Department of Labor (DOL) inducted the American Train Dispatchers Association (ATDA) and 8 other labor unions into its Century of Service Hall of Fame. Held at the DOL's Washington, D.C. headquarters, the event recognized labor unions whose histories have recently surpassed the 100-year mark.

In addition to highlighting the past contributions of the inducted unions, the event focused on the increasingly bright and equitable future of the American Labor movement. Acting Secretary of Labor Julie Su, AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler, and several other speakers reinforced this theme, encouraging unions to fight on behalf of all workers, regardless of race, gender, or background.

As an Organization whose solidarity is firmly rooted in seniority alone, ATDA embraces this message and will continue fighting to provide improved pay and working conditions for all members. Carrying this even further, ATDA President Ed Dowell continues to advance the inclusion and empowerment of ATDA's nationwide

membership. The DOL event provided another showcase of this commitment, as over 20 ATDA leaders, members, staff, and past national officers were invited to take part in the historic commemoration.

Reflecting on the significance of the day's events, President Dowell said "It was a great honor to accept this recognition on behalf of the ATDA, and a privilege to receive it directly from Acting Secretary of Labor, Julie Su. Sharing this moment with some of our current ATDA leaders and some of our past officers was truly an unforgettable experience. It is our members who have made our great Organization what it is today, and I have profound confidence in their ability to shape our future. I have no doubt that our collective efforts will continue to result in improved wages, benefits, and quality of life for our members for many years to come."



From left to right: ATDA Trustee & BNSF General Chairman Kevin Ketcham, ATDA Membership & Member Benefits Specialist Amber Davis, ATDA Trustee & Kiamichi General Chairman Andy Brewer, Amtrak General Chairman Jessica Veltri, NS Integrated General Chairman Nick Serrano, Tri-Rail General Chairman Erica Ray, and WC General Chairman Tim Evans



Front row, from left to right: ATDA Vice Presidents Colin Thurman, Kevin Porter, Brandon Denucci, and Barry Cross Jr. Back row, from left to right: ATDA Executive Assistant to the President David Ursini, Secretary Treasurer Bill Sikes, Acting U.S. Secretary of Labor Julie Su, and ATDA President Ed Dowell.

## GENESEE & WYOMING TRAIN DISPATCHERS VOTE TO UNIONIZE WITH ATDA



From left to right: ATDA Executive Assistant to the President David Ursini, President Ed Dowell, and Vice President Barry Cross in G&W's St. Albans, Vermont Dispatch Center.

**Washington, D.C.** – On September 4, 2024, the National Mediation Board (NMB) announced that Train Dispatchers from the Genesee & Wyoming Railroad (G&W) have voted to unionize with the American Train Dispatchers Association (ATDA). Based at the American Rail Dispatching Center (ARDC) in St. Albans, Vermont, the G&W Dispatchers control railroad traffic in 43 states and over 13,000 miles of short-line track.

Labeled by Progressive Railroading as the "... behemoth organization that grew from that humble beginning to become North America's largest short-line holding company..." G&W has steadily grown over the years by acquiring smaller short-line operations and absorbing their track assets. Throughout the decades of this growth, increasingly more territory has been added to a workforce of Train Dispatchers with no representation or collective voice. But that time is over because they have chosen to organize with ATDA. Negotiations will begin soon between ATDA and G&W to establish the group's first Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Commenting on the successful unionization vote, ATDA President Ed Dowell said, "We are ready to sit down with G&W leadership and negotiate a historic first agreement for the ARDC train dispatchers. Furthermore, we are ready to build trust and a working relationship between their leadership and ours. Just as important however, we are eager to build trust with the train dispatchers.

*They are now part of a fraternal organization of members across this great nation, doing the same job, facing the same struggles as they take care of their families, working to pay bills, and dealing with stressful work. From this day forward, we will stand with them in solidarity as we fight for better pay, better benefits, and better quality of life."*

ATDA Secretary-Treasurer Bill Sikes, who led the organizing drive at G&W, added the following, "G&W Dispatchers, we are honored to welcome you to the ATDA. Your concern for one another throughout this process exemplifies what the ATDA is all about.

*Also, thank you to our organizing team: ATDA Vice President Barry Cross, Trustee Andy Brewer, and KCS General Chair August Miles. Your professionalism, dedication, and genuine concern for the G&W Dispatchers made a real difference."*

ATDA Vice President Barry Cross further congratulated the newly unionized G&W Dispatchers, by saying "I am extremely pleased the ATDA Team was able to successfully organize the Genesee and Wyoming Train Dispatchers in Saint Albans, Vermont. This was a long time coming! To the G&W Dispatchers, welcome to the ATDA! I look forward to representing you and fighting for your interests! Also, I would like to personally thank Ed Dowell, Bill Sikes, Andy Brewer, and August Miles for their support and hard work to make this happen!"

## ATDA MEMBERS RATIFY 5-YEAR AGREEMENT WITH BNSF TO INCREASE WAGES AND ACCELERATE PAID VACATION ACCRUAL



BNSF system ATDA members listening to General Chairman Kevin Ketcham's presentation on the new 5-year agreement.

**Fort Worth, Texas** – On October 3, 2024, members of the American Train Dispatchers Association (ATDA) voted at a near two-thirds margin to ratify an agreement with the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railway that will increase wages, accelerate paid vacation accrual, and add other contractual improvements. The wage increases established by the agreement total 17.5% over 5 years, with a frontloaded raise schedule that compounds to 18.77%.

Additionally, the agreement accelerates the paid vacation accrual schedule, so Dispatchers reach each service threshold faster. The agreement also features improvements to the healthcare plan.

ATDA President Ed Dowell responded to the ratification, by saying "First of all, I'd like to thank ATDA Vice President Kevin Porter and General Chairman Kevin Ketcham for educating the members and helping to get this agreement ratified. By voting in favor of ratification, our

*members will enjoy wage increases and other benefits without years of delay."*

ATDA Vice President Kevin Porter, the Organization's lead representative to BNSF, echoed these sentiments, by saying "This Agreement checked the boxes that matter most for our dedicated members. The last two Agreements equate to a 42% wage increase over 10 years, add the ability to get paid time off faster for even our newest members, and impact on members and their families becomes unprecedented. Knowing our hard fought for health and welfare benefits get even better while our cost sharing percentages remains the same, only sets this Agreement in a class of its own. However, what makes this Agreement historic is the speed in which it was reached."

BNSF System General Chairman Kevin Ketcham went on to say, "I am excited to get this agreement ratified, as we have more work to do. Now it is time to focus on other issues that matter to our members."

## ATDA MEMBERS RATIFY 5-YEAR AGREEMENT WITH NORFOLK SOUTHERN TO INCREASE WAGES AND ADDRESS QUALITY OF LIFE ISSUES



From left to right: NS Integrated System Committee Vice General Chairman / System Treasurer Craig Duncan, ATDA Vice President Brandon Denucci, ATDA President Ed Dowell, and NS Integrated System Committee General Chairman Nick Serrano

**Atlanta, Georgia** – On October 3, 2024, members of the American Train Dispatchers Association (ATDA) voted in overwhelming favor (over 80% of the ballots cast) of ratifying a 5-year agreement with Norfolk Southern (NS) to increase wages and address quality of life issues. The agreement includes general wage increases of 17.5% over five years (before compounding), as well as a market rate wage adjustment to better align the compensation of NS Dispatchers with their Class I counterparts.

Altogether, the total compensation package marks the largest total wage increase for NS dispatchers in any round of bargaining in over 25 years (excluding those obtained through Presidential Emergency Board 250 in 2022). It also represents the first comprehensive agreement reached between the parties outside of national bargaining since 2009. In addition to the wage increases, the NS deal features several important work rule improvements. Among these are important enhancements to agreement language covering vacation, sick leave, and scheduling.

The ratification announcement is ATDA's second of the day, as it also announced that its members on the BNSF system have voted to ratify a similar agreement. Attention now turns to ATDA's members on the CSX system, with results of their own ratification vote scheduled to be released next week.

Commenting on the latest ratification news, ATDA President Ed Dowell said "As I said when we initially reached this agreement, a comprehensive agreement was long overdue. For decades, our NS members have lagged behind other Class-I railroads in wages and other benefits. This agreement changes that and brings them in line with their Class-I counterparts. I commend ATDA Vice President Brandon Denucci, General Chairman Nick Serrano, and System Treasurer Craig Duncan for all their hard work and dedication and getting this agreement reached and ratified."

ATDA Vice President Brandon Denucci, who represents the NS members, added, "I'd like to congratulate General Chairman Serrano for his efforts in delivering an agreement to the members that addressed their highest priorities. The overwhelming results speak for themselves."

NS General Chairman Nick Serrano, the Organization's lead local representative, went on to say "After months of negotiations, we reached what I believe is a historic agreement and the overwhelming response from our members to ratify it reinforced the efforts of the entire bargaining team including VP Brandon Denucci, System Treasurer Craig Duncan, and VP Colin Thurman. Not only is this agreement rare in that it was reached before the previous agreement expired, but it adds considerable quality of life and wages to current and future Train Dispatchers on our property."

## ATDA MEMBERS RETURN SPLIT RATIFICATION DECISION ON PROPOSED AGREEMENTS WITH CSX TRANSPORTATION



ATDA Vice President Colin Thurman (left) and CSX System Committee General Chairman Ben Craft (right).

**Jacksonville, Florida** – On October 8, 2024, members of the American Train Dispatchers Association (ATDA) returned a split ratification decision on proposed collective bargaining agreements with CSX Transportation. The larger group of CSX South ATDA members ratified the agreement with overwhelming support, as nearly 73% of their votes were in favor. The CSX East ATDA members on the other hand, narrowly voted against ratification, with just under 57% opposing.

Following their successful ratification vote, CSX South ATDA members will receive wage increases that compound to 18.77% over five years, along with work-rule improvements, and healthcare enhancements. Additionally, the agreement provides five paid sick leave days annually for all rostered members hired after 2004. Prior to the agreement's ratification, only those members rostered in 2004 or earlier received any paid sick leave.

Since the majority of CSX East members who voted opposed ratification, ATDA will soon serve "Section 6" notices on their behalf. This will start the process of amending their collective bargaining agreement through the terms established by the Railway Labor Act. Future updates will be provided on that process as they become available.

Commenting on the news, ATDA President Ed

Dowell said "I'd like to thank Vice President Colin Thurman and General Chairman Ben Craft. Together they worked to bring the best agreement to the table for our members to vote on. Our CSX South members will no longer have to wait years for wage increases and finally, much of the disparity between pre and post 2004 will end. At the same time, the disparity between East and South must still be addressed. So, for our CSX East members, the work will continue. There is no justifiable reason that they should earn less than the CSX South members."

ATDA Vice President Colin Thurman, the Organization's national representative on the CSX property, went on to say, "Members on CSX-South recognized the opportunity they had before them and overwhelmingly voted in favor of receiving their pay raises on time, the introduction of paid sick leave for dispatchers rostered after 2004, overtime pay for all off-assignment work and enhanced health and welfare benefits. This agreement is the result of months of bargaining, and I commend General Chairman Ben Craft for this accomplishment. Ben was determined to get the best deal possible for CSX dispatchers and the results speak for themselves."

CSX System Committee General Chairman Ben Craft, said the following, "Today, our South Agreement members voted in favor of an

agreement that not only includes the largest wage increase for a voluntary agreement in more than 20 years, but also provides much needed sick leave. Additionally, this agreement was reached sooner than any in recent history, so the members won't have to wait years to reap the benefits. I'd like to

thank Vice Presidents Colin Thurman and Brandon Denucci for their relentless support during this process. Moving forward, I remain committed to advocating on behalf of our brothers and sisters under the East Agreement. We will continue to pursue much needed and long overdue changes on their behalf."

## ATDA MEMBERS RATIFY 5-YEAR AGREEMENT WITH INDIANA HARBOR BELT RAILROAD, AVOIDING YEARS-LONG BARGAINING CYCLE



**Hammond, Indiana** – On November 13, 2024, members of the American Train Dispatchers Association (ATDA) ratified a new 5-year agreement with Indiana Harbor Belt Railroad (IHB) that will raise Train Dispatcher pay by a total of 17.5%. When compounded, however, increases will actually total 18.77% over the next 5 years.

*agreement meets the most important needs for our members. What's more, our collective bargaining process has now obtained combined wage increases of 42% over a 10-year period. When also considering the ability to earn paid time off faster (even for the newest members), and improvements to health and welfare benefits, we're looking at remarkable progress."*

Additionally, the agreement accelerates the paid vacation accrual schedule, so Dispatchers reach each service threshold faster. The agreement also features improvements to the healthcare plan.

IHB General Chairman Jordan Snoderly also celebrated the agreement, by saying, "First and foremost, thanks to Vice President Porter. This is my first experience with bargaining, and his leadership and experience through this was amazing. From where we started 9 years ago, it's amazing to think of where we're at now. It's unbelievable that I can support my family and have my lifestyle because of the ATDA."

ATDA President Ed Dowell celebrated the new agreement, by saying, "I'm encouraged to see yet another railroad agree to terms on fair wages and benefits. This agreement provides wage increases on schedule, rather than forcing a prolonged battle for retroactive pay. Additionally, I'd like to thank ATDA VP Kevin Porter and General Chairman Jordan Snoderly for their work on this agreement. It's now up to the members to make their voices heard."

ATDA VP Kevin Porter, the Organization's lead representative to IHB, said "This

## ATDA MEMBERS RATIFY 5-YEAR AGREEMENT WITH BELT RAILWAY OF CHICAGO TO INCREASE WAGES AND ADDRESS QUALITY OF LIFE ISSUES



**Bedford Park, Illinois** – On October 18, 2024, the American Train Dispatchers Association (ATDA) reached a tentative 5-year agreement with the Belt Railway of Chicago (BRC) that will increase wages, provide healthcare enhancements, and add other contractual improvements. The wage increases established by the agreement total 17.5% over 5 years, with a frontloaded raise schedule that compounds to 18.77%.

Additionally, the agreement accelerates the paid vacation accrual schedule, so Dispatchers reach each service threshold faster.

The agreement will now be submitted for ratification by ATDA's members at BRC. Similar agreements reached by the union were recently ratified by its members at BNSF, CSX (South), and NS.

## ATDA MEMBERS RATIFY AGREEMENT WITH TERMINAL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION OF ST. LOUIS TO INCREASE WAGES AND ADDRESS QUALITY OF LIFE ISSUES



**St. Louis, Missouri** – On November 13, 2024, members of the American Train Dispatchers Association (ATDA) ratified a 5-year agreement with Terminal Railroad Association of St. Louis (TRRA) that will increase wages, provide healthcare enhancements, and add other contractual improvements. The wage increases established by the agreement total 17.5% over 5 years, with a frontloaded raise schedule that compounds to 18.77%. Additionally, the agreement accelerates the paid vacation accrual schedule, so Dispatchers reach each service threshold faster.

Commenting on the agreement's ratification, Terminal System Committee General Chairman said, "Any time you can obtain wage increases with no healthcare concessions, it's a significant win for our members. The enhancements to the dental and vision programs, coupled with the monthly cost-share reduction, will provide them with peace of mind. Plus, they don't have to wait two to three years for these improvements to arrive through National Bargaining."

## ATDA TRAIN DISPATCHERS FROM THE NORTHERN INDIANA COMMUTER TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT (NICTD) RATIFY NEW 7-YEAR AGREEMENT



NICTD System Committee General Chairman Ryan Chavez (left) and NICTD system ATDA member Jake Nekvasil at recent contract negotiations.

**Michigan City, Indiana** – On July 18, 2024, ATDA Train Dispatchers from the Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District (NICTD) ratified a new agreement that includes substantial pay increases. Between wage increases and eventual certification pay, members covered by the agreement will see their pay rise by 30% over the next 7 years. Additionally, their current five-year rate progression system will be replaced with one that only lasts a single year. This will provide far better wage equality across the roster and help ATDA members at the property to earn considerably more money during their initial years in the craft. Increased pay, however, is not the only improvement that NICTD Dispatchers will enjoy. Under the terms of the new agreement, five of the NICTD members' fourteen sick days will be converted to personal leave days, providing them with more flexibility in taking time off from work. On top of that, the Agreement provides a one-time allotment of three additional personal leave days to each Dispatcher, and compensation at the overtime rate plus 8 hours (time and one half plus 8 hours) for working on holidays.

ATDA's bargaining team consisted of NICTD

System Committee General Chairman Ryan Chavez, ATDA Director of Research Paul Arden, and ATDA Vice President Kevin Porter. General Chairman Chavez, who was instrumental in amplifying the members' concerns, had the following to say after the ratification became official: "I just wanted to thank Kevin Porter and Paul Arden for the hard work they put in on getting the contract settled. Without them and the members of the ATDA, it wouldn't have been possible. I also wanted to thank President Dowell for assigning Kevin and Paul to me this go around of negotiations. Also, to my members that gave all their input on what they wanted to see in the contract. I've always been a quiet guy when it comes to these types of meetings, but Mr. Porter got me out of my shell and made me speak. So just wanted to say thanks to ALL of you at the Cleveland office, for all your hard work.... Proud to be part of the ATDA."

In addition to recognizing the efforts of this bargaining team, the ATDA would also like to acknowledge the willingness of NICTD to negotiate an Agreement prior to the expiration of the one that was already in place.

## ATDA REACHES AGREEMENT WITH NORFOLK SOUTHERN TO INITIATE C3RS PILOT PROGRAM



**ATLANTA, August 6, 2024** – Norfolk Southern Corporation (NYSE: NSC) and the American Train Dispatchers Association (ATDA), in partnership with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), announced Tuesday their joint participation in the FRA's Confidential Close Call Reporting System (C3RS). This pilot program is designed to enhance communication and transparency to help improve railroad safety.

Under the one-year C3RS pilot, dispatchers at Norfolk Southern can report safety concerns with the certainty that such reports will not result in discipline. Submitted safety concerns are de-identified by NASA and provided for review by a joint committee of NS, ATDA, and FRA representatives, who will identify and recommend corrective actions to improve safety.

In January 2024, Norfolk Southern announced the first pilot program under the FRA's supervision in the industry, in conjunction with the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, and the International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers – Transportation Division.

"This is another step in our journey to become the gold standard of safety in the rail industry," said Alan H. Shaw, Norfolk Southern president and CEO. "We committed to working with our unions to make our safe railroad even safer, and we're proud to increase engagement and feedback through this pilot program. On behalf of Norfolk Southern, I want to thank the FRA for their leadership and reiterate our shared commitment to keeping rail the safest way to move freight over land."

In April 2024, the American Train Dispatchers Association announced the first Class I train dispatcher pilot program, covering 100% of the Burlington Northern Santa

Fe train dispatchers, and is currently the only C3RS pilot program on BNSF.

"Having reached C3RS agreements with two of the Class I Railroads, I encourage each of the remaining Class I's to follow the path we have set with BNSF and NS," said ATDA President Ed Dowell. "We cannot continue to accept accidents as the price of doing business in this industry. Changing over a century of adversarial culture takes courage and I appreciate Norfolk Southern's leadership in recognizing that C3RS can make a difference. We also thank Secretary Buttigieg and FRA Administrator Bose for prioritizing C3RS expansion to the Class I railroads."

"C3RS is a commonsense safety program that allows workers to confidentially share their experiences and safety concerns to prevent unnecessary accidents, injuries, or deaths. I appreciate the American Train Dispatchers Association and Norfolk Southern coming together to join this important program," said FRA Administrator Amit Bose. "All Class I railroads and their workers stand to benefit from the C3RS program, and FRA remains fully committed to expanding participation in this program even further."

Participation in this C3RS pilot is further reinforcement of Norfolk Southern, ATDA, and FRA's shared commitment to collaboration and transparency to advance safety. Key goals of the C3RS pilot program include:

- Collecting currently unreported unsafe practices, behaviors, or situations;

- Identifying and implementing corrective actions; and

- Sharing general trends and statistics to enhance railroad safety.



# WE ARE THE ATDA

## A Conversation with General Chairman Richard Driz

WE ARE THE ATDA is a spotlight that illuminates those making an impact for our organization. In this edition, you'll meet New Jersey Transit Power Supervisors General Chairman Richard Driz. As a power supervisor, he is a great reminder that the ATDA not only controls the railroad, but we power it too!



**ATDA:** Richard, you are a Power Supervisor for New Jersey Transit (NJT). Can you tell our readers a little about your job?

**Richard:** As a Power Supervisor we are tasked with the responsibility of maintaining and management of the power, the electrical grid and the electrical traction personnel for the electrified train territories of NJ Transit. In our position we deal with voltages from 1000V to 230,000v. As my retired Chief once advised me in the beginning of my career, we are here to run trains.

**ATDA:** NJT is the largest statewide public transit system (by ridership) in the United States. What is that like for your team during peak commute hours?

**Richard:** There are times the job is challenging. The bottom line is we are still here to serve the customers. This public transit system is here to make sure that the customers, the people are safely transported from point A to B. This system is to transport our precious humans willingly in comfort and without incident to their destination and perhaps their loved ones.

**ATDA:** I think I can speak for all Train Dispatchers in saying we wish we could blast an automated message to the field that says, "I know you're trying to reach me, stop hitting the button!" What's something like that for Power Directors?

**Richard:** We get the same phone calls, especially in crisis situations. One rule we try to adhere to is just be patient and nice. Everybody is just trying to do their job to the best of their abilities. Our jobs are high stressful enough. An added combative reaction is not helpful, in fact counterproductive. It's

surprising how a little nicety comes a long way on doing a job and doing a great job.

**ATDA:** In addition to working in your craft, you also serve as General Chairman for NJT's Power Directors. Can you talk about what that position means to you?

**Richard:** Being the General Chairman is being concerned, not just for the needs of my own craft, but the needs of the collective: the Members. There are times individuals cannot and will not agree, such is human nature. Having a mutual positive root cause to make the job better in the present and in the future, makes the Members come together. This makes the Union Members stronger and unified. Of course, having a strong union such as the ATDA makes my job a lot easier.

**ATDA:** You've been an ATDA member for over 18 years. What kind of impact has that had on your life?

**Richard:** Being in a Union like the ATDA has changed the trajectory of my life. It has afforded me a different career path. Kid you not, it is not easy, but it is a satisfying change especially with a strong union behind my career. I was a Manufacturing Engineer and a nonunion. The career was filled with layoffs and career uncertainties. The day

I changed my career was after 9/11. The telecom industry hit bottom line. I was laid off. Here I am a newlywed with a new family and a baby, with no job and no health care. The union job has changed all those grim prospects. Since then, I've never looked back.

**ATDA:** If a Union Pacific Train Dispatcher asked you if it is worth it to unionize with ATDA, what advice would you offer?

**Richard:** I was never a union member before. I was in the corporate world. Being in a union, especially the ATDA, I have found my career family, so to speak. With the ATDA I can live the cliché for a lack of a better description: the ATDA got my back. The difference in job security between the corporate world versus

being an ATDA member is night and day. My days of being worried about my job is laid to the past because I know my union brothers and association will be there. Being an ATDA Union member allowed me to enjoy my career, family and take care of my health.

**ATDA:** What do you enjoy doing in your free time when you're not powering the railroad?

**Richard:** Besides driving my wife crazy, I enjoy Traveling. I enjoy meeting new kind and interesting Humans. Enjoying and exercising my 2nd amendment. I especially enjoy it if I get to interact with the ATDA Family through quarterly meetings or conferences. Bottom line is to enjoy life no matter how trivial or hard it is.

## CSX SYSTEM DISPATCHER "DOC" HUCKE RETIRES, CONCLUDING RAILROAD CAREER THAT BEGAN IN 1979



"Doc" Hucke (left) with his wife, Kathy on retirement day

**Jacksonville, Florida** – On August 4, 2024, James "Doc" Hucke retired as a CSX Train Dispatcher, concluding a railroad career that began 45 years ago. Starting out as a flagman & brakeman on the Southern Railway in 1979, Doc was eventually promoted to conductor in 1985. After Southern merged with the N&W Railroad to become Norfolk Southern, he left the railroad for 15 years, while helping to raise his two children.

Returning to the railroad in 2002, Doc began his Train Dispatching career with CSX Transportation. He then spent the next twenty-two years working for the company, Dispatching various territories on its Louisville Division. Over the course of this time, he would work through the Carrier's decentralization of 2009, its reconsolidation of Dispatchers to Jacksonville Florida in 2017, the Covid-19 pandemic, and the CSX implementation of precision scheduled railroading.

As Train Dispatchers do, Doc made the best of tough circumstances, and eventually retired as the second-shift incumbent of the "LB" Dispatch desk. Moving forward, Doc's plans are to spend time watching his three grandkids grow up and to travel as much as possible.

**With his Train Dispatching career now completed, ATDA wishes Doc the best as he enjoys retirement. However, to date, we have been unable to verify that he is actually a doctor.**

## ATDA PRESIDENT DOWELL ESTABLISHES AI & AUTOMATION COMMITTEE



IHB System Train Dispatcher Darrell Statzer focuses on his territory as he works the desk.

**Cleveland, Ohio** – On July 1, 2024, ATDA President Ed Dowell established a committee to evaluate the use of automation and artificial intelligence (AI) within the Train Dispatching craft. With such technology presenting an increasingly unpredictable threat to jobs of all kinds (including those of Train Dispatchers), the move will better position ATDA to be proactive as its impact on the craft becomes clearer. The committee, which will be overseen by ATDA Vice President Brandon Denucci, and chaired by CSX System Committee General Chairman Ben Craft, will analyze rail carrier usage of related technologies across all properties represented by the ATDA. The information they provide

will then be incorporated as ATDA's national leadership formulates an ongoing strategy to counter AI's threat to members' jobs.

Commenting on the move, Dowell said *"The ATDA recognizes the threat that automation and AI pose to our members' jobs and we will not simply sit back and wait to see how things shake out. As the industry experts on Train Dispatching, our members understand better than anybody which tasks must remain in the capable hands of our soon-to-be-federally-certified Train Dispatchers, and when a machine simply can't be trusted to protect the public. So, it only makes sense that we empower them to be part of this fight."*

## JESSE KOTTNER ELECTED AS FIRST CPKC GENERAL CHAIRMAN

**Kansas City, Missouri** – On November 13, 2024, American Train Dispatchers Association (ATDA) member Jesse Kottner was elected as the first General Chairman of the newly-formed CPKC System Committee. Formed because of the recent merger of the Canadian Pacific and Kansas City Southern Railroads, the CPKC System Committee represents ATDA members

from the former KCS and SOO Line Systems. Commenting on his election, Kottner said, *"This election is about the members and not us as candidates. I'm thankful for the support and for the other candidates for their willingness to serve. I'm looking forward to meeting more of the members on our newly merged committee and moving forward together."*

## ATDA JOINS RAIL LABOR PROTEST OF KEOLIS COMMUTER SERVICES OVER ITS REFUSAL TO BARGAIN IN GOOD FAITH

**Boston, Massachusetts** – On October 23, 2024, national and local leaders of the American Train Dispatchers Association (ATDA) took part in a multi-union protest of Keolis Commuter Services in Boston, Massachusetts. The protest was a response to Keolis's refusal to provide fair wage increases during what has become a protracted round of bargaining.

ATDA's members at Keolis have been directly impacted, as they have worked without a new agreement for two years, and currently earn nearly 13% less than their ATDA counterparts from Amtrak (some of whom work in the same building). What's more, Keolis currently demands that its ATDA Train Dispatchers pay retroactive healthcare contributions as part of any new agreement.

In a time when many other railroads are displaying a readiness for change, the actions of Keolis have positioned them as a backward-thinking holdout in an industry that may finally be moving forward. Unfortunately, however, "moving forward" isn't just critically important for the underpaid Train Dispatchers. That's because Train Dispatchers are highly skilled workers, who work in safety critical positions, in a competitive job market. Keolis after all, is not the only employer of Train Dispatchers in its passenger-rail-rich market... or even in its own building. Being the lowest payer may save the corporation a few dollars, but it may also encourage Keolis Train Dispatchers to take their specialized and valuable skillsets to neighboring railroads across town, or across the hall.

That's why this isn't just a Train Dispatcher problem, it's a Boston problem. Are Bostonian commuter train passengers comfortable with Keolis initiating an exodus of its talented Train Dispatchers, who protect countless lives each day, through corporate greed?

**ATDA President Ed Dowell**, who was on hand for and spoke at the protest, offered a very direct commentary on the situation, *"This rally demonstrated that rail labor is unified in our pursuit of a fair agreement. Our Keolis members should not be making \$50 less per day than our Amtrak members, while they work side by*



ATDA President Ed Dowell (left), MBCR System Committee System Treasurer / Vice General Chairman Sarah Gouthro (front), and ATDA Vice President Barry Cross (right)

side. We have been bargaining for two years and Keolis has refused to properly address our concerns. ATDA will do whatever it takes to get a fair and ratifiable agreement."

**ATDA Vice President Barry Cross**, who was also on hand for the event, added the following, *"It is time for Keolis to get off their rear ends and give all Union workers on property the wages they deserve! The ATDA is committed to continue working toward this goal and obtain the best agreement possible!"*

**MBCR System Committee System Treasurer / Vice General Chairman Sarah Gouthro**, who works as a Keolis Train Dispatcher, offered first-hand insight on the situation, *"Today's rally was a show of solidarity of the 14 unions that maintain and operate the commuter rail in Boston and an expression of our fight to secure fair and equitable contracts for our members. We've been at the negotiating table for almost 2 years and its time for our Carrier to step up and meet us with wages and work rules that reflect the safety and efficiency that we provide. WE CONTROL THE RAILROAD. It's time our Carrier recognizes that."*

## Meet Amber Davis: ATDA Membership & Member Benefits Specialist

*In this special feature, we will introduce you to ATDA Membership & Member Benefits Specialist Amber Davis, and the integral role she plays in our Organization's success. While many have interacted with her over the years, you may be surprised to learn how much she does on behalf of our members.*



**ATDA:** Amber, can you tell our members how long you've been with ATDA and how your role has grown over that time?

**Amber:** I first started with ATDA in June of 2008. At the time, I was hired as a temp doing clerical work and was only supposed to be around for that summer. But former ATDA President Leo McCann never fired me! I worked part time for several years until 2015, when I became the full-time Assistant to the President. This past fall (October 2023), I was promoted to Membership & Member Benefits Specialist, and that's the role I'm in today.

**ATDA:** A lot of members have talked to you when they reach out to our National Headquarters, but they may not be familiar with what you do. Can you talk a little bit about the work you do in your current role?

**Amber:** One of the great things about my role is that I get to be involved in quite a bit of what happens at ATDA HQ. This includes taking calls from members, answering their questions, and connecting them with the officers and staff who can resolve any issues. I'm also ATDA's liaison to Union Plus, which provides benefit to every member. But I still take care of a lot of clerical work at headquarters, coordinating with President Dowell & Secretary-Treasurer Sikes as they keep the ATDA moving from day to day.

**ATDA:** You mentioned that you answer calls from members who reach out to our National Headquarters. What's it like interacting with them, and something you'd like them to know about the Organization?

**Amber:** First, I LOVE taking calls from the members and the opportunity to speak with them. Honestly, getting to know all the different

members from across the United States is one of my favorite things about my job. It's a validating feeling when I'm able to answer their questions and they end the call feeling better than when it started. Plus, I see their names on documentation all day, so when they call, I already feel like I know them. One thing I'd like them all to know is that they shouldn't be hesitant to contact us whenever needed.

**ATDA:** Earlier, you said that you are ATDA's liaison to Union Plus. Would you mind talking about what Union Plus is, and what they offer to our members?

**Amber:** Union Plus is a discount program for union members. They offer discounts on a wide variety of products and services that can save our members money. This includes mortgage discounts, pet insurance, cell phone service, and they even have a credit card program. There's no cost to the members for any of it, it's just a perk of their ATDA membership. I encourage everyone to check out their offerings at the [UnionPlus.org](http://UnionPlus.org) website and to let me know if they have questions!

**ATDA:** We're certainly in a season of change for ATDA. As someone whose service has spanned through multiple leadership teams, what's your perspective on the trajectory of the Organization?

**Amber:** What's happening now is exciting because our new team is building on a great foundation that was laid out by President McCann and the prior officers. The organization is in a great place because of the work they did, and now President Dowell and the Executive board are building on that to make us even stronger.



### Union Plus Benefits and Discounts

## How do you want to save money today?

*Do you want to save a bunch of money? Of course you do. Thousands of union families save money every day by taking advantage of exclusive benefits from Union Plus.*



See more at [unionplus.org](http://unionplus.org)



ATDA 02-2022

# ATDA WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

The ATDA extends fraternal greetings to its newest members, who are listed below. As an organization that has represented Rail Workers for 107 years, we will never forget those who paved the way before us, those who now stand together, or those still to come.

New Member	System Committee	New Member	System Committee
Jacob E Mathews	Terminal RR System Committee	Taylor K Gardner	BNSF System Committee
Paul Arroy	Amtrak System Committee	Derwin K Gentry	BNSF System Committee
Joseph E Burton	Amtrak System Committee	Landen M Green	BNSF System Committee
Christopher A Campbell	Amtrak System Committee	Dustin C Hammes	BNSF System Committee
Mason P Clark	Amtrak System Committee	Marvin W Hillis	BNSF System Committee
Thomas J Decrescenzo	Amtrak System Committee	Angel E Hines	BNSF System Committee
Diane Della Pesca	Amtrak System Committee	Ebony D Jackson	BNSF System Committee
Joseph M Gerbino	Amtrak System Committee	Faith E Jackson-Sanders	BNSF System Committee
John M Giardina	Amtrak System Committee	Tiana M Jauregui	BNSF System Committee
Daniel Gonzalez	Amtrak System Committee	Thomas J Jenner	BNSF System Committee
Nicholas M Lou	Amtrak System Committee	Caleb B Johnson	BNSF System Committee
Vincent E Marcoon	Amtrak System Committee	Lila Jones	BNSF System Committee
Mechaela A McCoy	Amtrak System Committee	Keosha D Jordan	BNSF System Committee
Stuart M Methven	Amtrak System Committee	Zachary T Justice	BNSF System Committee
Kimair R Mundy	Amtrak System Committee	Michael D Lancaster	BNSF System Committee
Osafamen I Ogbeiw	Amtrak System Committee	Vito G Marcello	BNSF System Committee
Michael J Rodrigues	Amtrak System Committee	Shannon D Mitchell	BNSF System Committee
Adrian Rodriguez	Amtrak System Committee	Erik M Monreal	BNSF System Committee
Alexander J Rosczyk	Amtrak System Committee	Sherri A Myers	BNSF System Committee
Brandon J Schaller	Amtrak System Committee	Sidney D Offerd	BNSF System Committee
Rudolph Serebrinskiy	Amtrak System Committee	Erik J Pino	BNSF System Committee
Dennis J Stingel	Amtrak System Committee	Alexander K Plankers	BNSF System Committee
Alexander L Theoharpoulos	Amtrak System Committee	Aaron D Plaunty	BNSF System Committee
Samantha Negrelli	BELT System Committee	L Kelly Prichard	BNSF System Committee
Christopher J Alvarez	BNSF System Committee	Lawrence L Schroeder	BNSF System Committee
Ebony R Anderson	BNSF System Committee	Stephen M Schwark	BNSF System Committee
Gary J Artis	BNSF System Committee	Arthur R Shields	BNSF System Committee
Brandon S Barthold	BNSF System Committee	Jessica K Smith	BNSF System Committee
Michael T Becknell	BNSF System Committee	Zackery A Snyder	BNSF System Committee
Chandler D Bird	BNSF System Committee	Eric A Soto	BNSF System Committee
Rodney G Black Jr	BNSF System Committee	Andrew J Spisak	BNSF System Committee
Paul D Bourzikas	BNSF System Committee	Stephanie N Swearingin	BNSF System Committee
Jarrett Bowman	BNSF System Committee	Jared N Swiney	BNSF System Committee
Danesha W Brown	BNSF System Committee	Dion Thompson	BNSF System Committee
Carisha A Burns	BNSF System Committee	KeLeesha C Toney	BNSF System Committee
Michael Cervera	BNSF System Committee	John E Tozer	BNSF System Committee
Shane W Close	BNSF System Committee	Michael A Turner	BNSF System Committee
Joshua C Connell	BNSF System Committee	Deion J Waddy	BNSF System Committee
Ali R Cowan	BNSF System Committee	Reagan E Walsh	BNSF System Committee
Michael J Creaser	BNSF System Committee	Joseph A Walters	BNSF System Committee
Austin B Crysup	BNSF System Committee	Candace N Walton	BNSF System Committee
Chase E Cummins	BNSF System Committee	Jacee S Weems	BNSF System Committee
Bon S Davidson	BNSF System Committee	Sydney Willett	BNSF System Committee
Jonathan R Espinoza	BNSF System Committee	Jessica L Wolfe	BNSF System Committee
Sophia L Ferreira	BNSF System Committee	James M Kuczek	Conrail System Committee
		Timothy L Beazley	CSXT System Committee
		Logan K Czajkowski	CSXT System Committee
		Elijah L Farmer	CSXT System Committee
		Nathan A James	CSXT System Committee

New Member	System Committee	New Member	System Committee
Gracie M Marble	CSXT System Committee	Daryl A Herring	Norfolk Southern Integrated System Committee
Pedro A Marrero	CSXT System Committee	Bilal A Ibn Rabah	Norfolk Southern Integrated System Committee
Samuel A Mayer	CSXT System Committee	Justin J Inveninato	Norfolk Southern Integrated System Committee
Colton E McElroy	CSXT System Committee	Alexander C Jensen	Norfolk Southern Integrated System Committee
Tyler T Morris	CSXT System Committee	Matthew H McGoldrick	Norfolk Southern Integrated System Committee
Dakota T Partridge	CSXT System Committee	Christopher M Mims	Norfolk Southern Integrated System Committee
Christopher D Posey	CSXT System Committee	Derrick A Mitchell	Norfolk Southern Integrated System Committee
Samuel D Spence	CSXT System Committee	Rebekah J Mullins	Norfolk Southern Integrated System Committee
Christopher A Thomas	CSXT System Committee	Jenna J Newman	Norfolk Southern Integrated System Committee
Madison C Watts	CSXT System Committee	Julian A Reeves	Norfolk Southern Integrated System Committee
Rianna R White	CSXT System Committee	Reshodrec J Reynolds	Norfolk Southern Integrated System Committee
Jerrell L Whitley III	CSXT System Committee	Jeremy A Rowe	Norfolk Southern Integrated System Committee
Matthew L Crumpton	Kiamichi System Committee	Lucas R Stamets	Norfolk Southern Integrated System Committee
Joshua W Lewis	Kiamichi System Committee	Bethelehem N Teklu	Norfolk Southern Integrated System Committee
West D Stegall	Kiamichi System Committee	Keneshia Q Tinniehill	Norfolk Southern Integrated System Committee
Casey J Taulli	Kiamichi System Committee	Charles D Waller	Norfolk Southern Integrated System Committee
Taylor D Teague	Kiamichi System Committee	Jonathan A Washington	Norfolk Southern Integrated System Committee
Nick A Ayala	MBCR System Committee	Jaleesa L Williams	Norfolk Southern Integrated System Committee
Kyle D Lincoln	MBCR System Committee	Shamara Wright	Norfolk Southern Integrated System Committee
Joshua D West	MBCR System Committee	Peter C Abashian	SOO System Committee
Renita A Coleman	METRA System Committee	Stephanie L Craddick	SOO System Committee
Andrew M Gaskin	METRA System Committee	Kaitlyn M Disney	SOO System Committee
James Maryanski	New Jersey Transit - RiverLINE System Committee	Christyne M Hays	SOO System Committee
Jeffrey B Thomas	New Jersey Transit - RiverLINE System Committee	Joseph L Tresp	SOO System Committee
Jerry Guareno	New Jersey Transit - TD System Committee	Arerion N Yarbrough	SOO System Committee
Allison E Haynes	NICTD System Committee	Aimee N Holderman	SIRT System Committee
Devian M Bonner	Norfolk Southern Integrated System Committee	Jeanelle A Foster	Sunrail System Committee
TreyTajh T. Carter	Norfolk Southern Integrated System Committee	Brittany E Cain	Trinity Rail System Committee
Matthew A Cobb	Norfolk Southern Integrated System Committee	Derek A Gonzales	Trinity Rail System Committee
Thorne B Crews	Norfolk Southern Integrated System Committee	Dustin A Green	Trinity Rail System Committee
Casey L Curry	Norfolk Southern Integrated System Committee	Cesar A Hurtado	Trinity Rail System Committee
Robert J Davis	Norfolk Southern Integrated System Committee	Helen E Jackson	Trinity Rail System Committee
Grant E Dennington	Norfolk Southern Integrated System Committee	Lisa A McLaughlin	Trinity Rail System Committee
Jeremy O Dobbs	Norfolk Southern Integrated System Committee	Salvador S Oropeza	Trinity Rail System Committee
Joseph M Donnolo	Norfolk Southern Integrated System Committee	Merlina Pollazani	Trinity Rail System Committee
Rachael P Fairhurst	Norfolk Southern Integrated System Committee	Layloni D Washington	Trinity Rail System Committee
Frankyn Fleites	Norfolk Southern Integrated System Committee	Cheryl D Williams	Trinity Rail System Committee
Amanda R Forrest	Norfolk Southern Integrated System Committee	Derek C Reed	WC System Committee
Darren E Garrett	Norfolk Southern Integrated System Committee	Rafter J Van Driessche	WC System Committee
Tristin M Gingerich	Norfolk Southern Integrated System Committee		
Joshua C Goss	Norfolk Southern Integrated System Committee		
Tujuana S Grubbs	Norfolk Southern Integrated System Committee		

# STATUS OF DISPUTES

Docket #	Carrier	Claimant	Subject	Status
PLB-7494-158	CSX	D. O. Marcovsky	Discipline	Case sustained by Arb. Phillips October 1, 2024
PLB-7494-159	CSX	A. C. Johnson	Discipline	Case sustained by Arb. Phillips October 1, 2024
PLB-7494-160	CSX	R. Yorro	Order of call	Case sustained by Arb. Phillips October 1, 2024
PLB-7153-12	KRR	M. Metzger	Discipline	Assigned to Arb. Benn - Awaiting Decision
PLB-7814-33	BNSF	N. Atkinson	Discipline	Case sustained in part by Arb. Bell October 28, 2024
PLB-7814-34	BNSF	D. Crawford	Discipline	Case denied by Arb. Bell on November 4, 2024
PLB-7814-35	BNSF	L. Chaison	Discipline	Case denied by Arb. Bell on November 4, 2024
PLB-7814-36	BNSF	K. Cartner	Discipline	Case denied by Arb. Bell on November 4, 2024
PLB-7644-49	WC	C. Stuckey	Discipline	Case sustained in part by Arb. Phillips on November 4, 2024
PLB-7644-50	WC	D. Day	Discipline	Case sustained in part by Arb. Phillips on November 4, 2024
PLB-7299-59	NS	E. Johnson	Discipline	Assigned to Arb. Phillips - Board scheduled for November 13, 2024
PLB-7299-60	NS	K. C. Moore	Order of Call - OT	Assigned to Arb. Phillips - Board scheduled for November 13, 2024
PLB-7299-61	NS	S. K. Palmer	Discipline	Assigned to Arb. Phillips - Board scheduled for November 13, 2024
PLB-7299-62	NS	Various claimants	Scope - Form Y	Assigned to Arb. Phillips - Board scheduled for November 13, 2024
PLB-7578	METRA	F. McGlaston	Discipline	Assigned to Arb. Bohne - Waiting on NMB funding
PLB-	NS	A. Brimah	Discipline	Awaiting assignment to a Public Law Board
PLB-	NS	A. Knorre	Discipline	Awaiting assignment to a Public Law Board
PLB-	NS	P. Incarnato	Improper diversion	Settled on property
PLB-	NS	W. B. Hendricks	Order of Call - OT	Settled on property
PLB-	NS	J. R. Carr	Order of call issue	Settled on property
PLB-	CSX	D. Neeley	Discipline	Awaiting assignment to a Public Law Board
PLB-	CSX	O. Ponce	GAD order of call	Awaiting assignment to a Public Law Board
PLB-	CSX	M. L. Hucks	Discipline	Awaiting assignment to a Public Law Board
PLB-	CSX	J. Mitchell	GAD Order of call	Awaiting assignment to a Public Law Board
PLB-	CSX	C. Hadley	Exercise of seniority	Awaiting assignment to a Public Law Board
PLB-	BNSF	M. L. Penney	Discipline	Awaiting assignment to a Public Law Board
PLB-	BNSF	Z. Manning	Discipline	Awaiting assignment to a Public Law Board
PLB-	BNSF	L. Harvey	Discipline	Awaiting assignment to a Public Law Board
PLB-	BNSF	A. Lincoln	Discipline	Awaiting assignment to a Public Law Board
PLB-	BNSF	L. Harvey	Discipline	Awaiting assignment to a Public Law Board
PLB-	BNSF	R. A. Miller	Discipline	Awaiting assignment to a Public Law Board
PLB-	BNSF	Z. Manning	Discipline	Awaiting assignment to a Public Law Board
PLB-	BNSF	R. A. Reid	Discipline	Awaiting assignment to a Public Law Board
PLB-	BNSF	S. W. Brown	Discipline	Awaiting assignment to a Public Law Board
PLB-	BNSF	D.M. Gonzales-Rosas	Discipline	Awaiting assignment to a Public Law Board
PLB-	BNSF	L. J. Chaison	Discipline	Awaiting assignment to a Public Law Board
PLB-	BNSF	C. J. Cawyer	Discipline	Awaiting assignment to a Public Law Board
PLB-	BNSF	L. Harvey	Discipline	Awaiting assignment to a Public Law Board
PLB-	BNSF	S. M. Sharrer	Discipline	Awaiting assignment to a Public Law Board
PLB-	BNSF	S. K. Irving	Order of Call - OT	Awaiting assignment to a Public Law Board
PLB-	BNSF	A. I. Hendrich	Order of Call - OT	Awaiting assignment to a Public Law Board
PLB-	BNSF	M. A. Magana	Discipline	Awaiting assignment to a Public Law Board
PLB-	BNSF	C. N. Norris	Discipline	Awaiting assignment to a Public Law Board
PLB-	BNSF	R. A. Miller	Discipline	Awaiting assignment to a Public Law Board
PLB-	BNSF	M. Valero	Discipline	Awaiting assignment to a Public Law Board
PLB-	BNSF	M. D. Behrens	Discipline	Awaiting assignment to a Public Law Board
PLB-	BNSF	S. M. Hogue	Discipline	Awaiting assignment to a Public Law Board

# SUMMARIES OF DISPUTES

The following are brief summaries of recent Arbitration Awards involving ATDA members.

## PLB No. 7494 Case No. 152, Arbitrator Phillips – CSX

### Failure to give clear instructions.

The Claimant was charged with failure to give clear and direct instructions to a train crew and failing to verify train length information prior to planning a meet. Following an investigation, the Claimant was found guilty and dismissed from service. The Organization argued that one of the trains involved in the meet needed to set out a bad order at a location beyond the meeting point, and that the train misunderstood the Claimant and took his whole train to the set-out location. When the Claimant noticed that his board indicated that the crew had taken their entire train with them, he immediately stopped the movement and had the crew shove back to the location where the meet could take place. The Board found that the Claimant was in violation of Carrier rules presented, and noted "it is most noteworthy that Claimant himself stated that he should have job briefed better and that he had not done so." The Board also found that in light of the Claimant's long tenure with the Carrier, he should be returned to service with his seniority unimpaired, but without back pay.

### Claim sustained in part.

## PLB No. 7494 Case No. 154, Arbitrator Phillips – CSX

### Rule G violation.

The Claimant was charged with a violation of his "Rule G" bypass agreement, after testing positive during an alcohol screening test. Following an investigation, he was dismissed from service. The Organization argued that although the result of the test indicated that Claimant's blood alcohol content was above the allowable limit set by the Federal Railroad Administration, the

Claimant exhibited no signs of intoxication before or during the testing procedure; and that because the Claimant was a long-term employee, discipline was not warranted. The Board found that the record contained substantial evidence to demonstrate a violation of Carrier rules and that given that it was the Claimant's second violation in less than 5 years, dismissal was warranted.

### Claim denied.

## PLB No. 7494 Case No. 153, Arbitrator Phillips – CSX

### Failure to have a recrew in place.

The Claimant was charged with allowing an evening local train to expire on single main track without having a plan in place for a recrew. Following an investigation, the Claimant was found guilty and dismissed from service. The Organization noted that the local train was under the control of the Manager of Train Operations (Trainmaster) and that a plan to recrew the local was already in place when the Claimant was questioned by the Chief Dispatcher. The Organization also successfully argued that it was standard practice for the morning crew to protect the evening local if they expired. The Carrier also offered no alternative action that the Claimant should have taken. The Board found that the Carrier failed to meet the required burden of proof of a violation of the rule cited in the charge letter. It also noted that contradictory testimony at the investigation could have been resolved had the Carrier provided witnesses requested by the Organization. The Board ordered that the Claimant be returned to service with all rights unimpaired and compensated for all lost time with the exception of a period prior to the investigation when the Claimant was medically unqualified to perform service.

### Claim sustained.

**PLB No. 7494 Case No. 157,  
Arbitrator Phillips – CSX**

**Personal day declined.**

The Claimant was denied a personal leave day even though the vacancy could have been filled by the use of a Train Dispatcher on their rest day at the overtime rate of pay. The Carrier asserted that it was only required to grant personal leave days "consistent with the needs of service," and it also rejected the Organization's position that another dispatcher was available to protect the vacancy. The Organization asserted that contractual language specifically stated that personal leave days would be granted even if such requests would result in overtime being paid. The Organization also challenged the Carrier's "needs of service" defense, stating that in making an affirmative defense, the Carrier failed to cite any specific "needs of service" requirement that prevented the granting of Claimant's personal leave day. The Board found that the Organization met its burden of proof in providing sufficient evidence to support the claim. The Board noted that while the CBA does allow for the denial of a personal leave day based on the requirements of service, the Carrier failed to show that any such needs prevented it from granting the Claimant's personal leave request. In sustaining the Claim, the Board also reaffirmed the long-standing principle that a monetary remedy is appropriate when a violation of the CBA occurs, even when the CBA does not specify a remedy. The Board ruled that the Claimant be compensated in line with what he would have received had he been required to work an assignment other than one obtained in an exercise of seniority.

**Claim sustained.**

**PLB No. 7299 Case No. 54,  
Arbitrator Phillips – NS**

**Improper cancellation of Form Y.**

The Claimant was charged with voiding a Form Y bulletin that was in effect on an adjacent territory, not under their control. After an investigation, the Claimant was found guilty and assessed a 15-day deferred suspension. The Organization asserted that the Claimant was denied a fair and impartial investigation due to the absence of a requested witness – the Train Dispatcher who was working the adjoining territory on which the Form Y was in effect. The Organization also asserted that the Carrier failed to meet its burden of proof that the Claimant was guilty, noting that the investigation showed that the Claimant had no indication or knowledge that the Form Y in question had been voided on the adjacent territory. It noted that the Carrier provided no reason why it would be possible for a dispatcher to remove a bulletin item protecting territory that the Claimant did not control. The Board determined that discipline was not warranted in this circumstance. The Board also noted that the absence of the requested witness undermined the Carrier's case.

**Claim sustained.**

**PLB No. 7769 Case No. 6,  
Arbitrator Simon – Keolis**

**Failure to report for assignment on-time.**

The Claimant was charged with being AWOL for failing to report for their first shift assignment on time and for being in violation of a final warning waiver from a previous incident. After an investigation, the Claimant was dismissed from the Carrier. The Organization argued that the Claimant was running late and had notified the Carrier prior to the start time of her shift that she would be late, and during that notification, she was instructed not to report for her assignment. The Organization noted that other Train Dispatchers in similar

situations had been allowed to report late. The Organization also asserted that the Carrier could not justify the level of discipline assessed against the Claimant. The Board noted that the Claimant was in violation of the Carrier's Attendance Policy, which stated that an employee would be considered AWOL for failing to notify the Carrier at least 1 hour prior to the starting time of their assignment that they would be late, and that the Carrier was under no obligation to allow her to come to work late. The Board concluded that the Claimant was properly disciplined, considering her lengthy history of disciplinary actions related to attendance which included a recent final warning.

**Claim denied.**

**PLB No. 7299 Case No. 56,  
Arbitrator Phillips – NS**

**Improperly authorizing a train past  
an unlocked bridge indication.**

The Claimant was charged with improperly authorizing a train by an unlocked bridge indication prior to an engineering department employee confirming that the bridge was seated and locked. After an investigation, the Claimant was found guilty and assessed a 15-day deferred suspension with a 9 month probationary period. During the investigation, testimony revealed that the Claimant was unable to display a signal at a movable bridge. After communicating with the on-site bridge tender and being told that the bridge was "green and lined," the Claimant gave a train permission past the bridge stop signal. The Organization asserted that the Carrier failed to establish its burden of proof that the Claimant was in violation of Operating Rule 265(c), arguing that there was nothing in that rule to determine who is a qualified Engineering department employee and that the Carrier's method for establishing qualification by reviewing the bridge tender's profile in Outlook was inconclusive. The Organization also asserted that the Claimant's assumption that the employee stationed at the bridge was qualified to inspect it, which was confirmed

by the bridge tenders' communication, was reasonable. The Organization also maintained that it is not the duty of Train Dispatchers to determine the qualifications of other employees and noted that the Carrier's witness conceded that he was not able to determine the bridge tender's actual qualifications. The Board found that the discipline assessed was not warranted. The Board noted that the record did not demonstrate that the bridge tender was unqualified to make the assessment that the bridge was safe to traverse.

**Claim sustained.**

**PLB No. 8025 Case No. 8,  
Arbitrator Yurek – NS**

**Failure to stop a train for inspection after  
two consecutive track lights were left on.**

The Claimant was charged with failing to require a train to stop and inspect his train, after a manager saw two track lights on behind the train, and failure to promptly notify the signal maintainer. After an investigation, the Claimant was found guilty and assessed a 5 day deferred suspension. The Organization asserted that on the night in question, the Claimant noticed a track light on behind a train, and that he followed proper protocol for a single track light by putting in a ticket to call the signal maintainer and track department. An inspection found a loose track switch. The Carrier asserted that a manager saw two track lights on. The Board noted that the manager's testimony regarding the lights as shown on investigation exhibits left it unable to determine whether the evidence supported the charge that two consecutive track lights were on. Therefore, the Board determined that the Carrier did not meet its burden of proof.

**Claim sustained.**



**American Train Dispatchers Association**

4239 West 150th St  
Cleveland, Ohio 44135  
E-Mail: info@atda.org  
atda.org



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