



Railroad Workers United

Unity—Solidarity—Democracy: The Rank and File in Action!

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RWU Resolution in Opposition to Crew Monitoring Cameras

Whereas, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) in January 2010 made a recommendation that inward facing cameras be used to constantly monitor train crew activities; and

Whereas, implementation of such a rule would be a grave transgression upon the right to privacy of every engineer and trainman in the United States; and

Whereas, most railroad accidents are not caused simply by operator error; and

Whereas, most accidents that are in fact blamed on human error, more often than not, are caused by underlying factors such as miscommunication, fatigue, improper training or lack of qualification -- factors that video recorders in the cab of the locomotive are not going to correct or alter in any way; and

Whereas, management of Class I railroads already carry out massive amounts of efficiency testing of train crews -- most do more testing than what is required by federal regulations -- and have already put in place system-wide performance monitoring programs; and

Whereas, all transportation workers -- in fact all workers -- could fall victim to constant employee surveillance if this attempt to monitor locomotive train crews is implemented; and

Whereas, constant audio and video surveillance would have disastrous consequences for workplace morale, solidarity, worker rights, and in fact, upon safety itself; and

Whereas, if the rail carriers can use invasive video monitoring to point to individual behavior as the cause of every railroad accident, then there would be little incentive for the company to make the necessary investment to address systemic factors -- dangerous conditions, lack of safety devices, overwork, low morale, poor training, worker fatigue -- that are the real underlying causes of most railroad accidents and injuries;

Therefore Be It Resolved, that Railroad Workers United oppose any and all attempt to place inward facing cameras in the cabs of locomotives for the purpose of monitoring the train crew; and

Be it Further Resolved that RWU support union efforts to resist this technology; and

Be it Finally Resolved, that RWU encourage all working people and all unions to join the fight to stop invasive technology of this nature which would do little if anything to increase safety, but would most assuredly further degrade the quality of work life.

Adopted by the RWU Steering Committee 2-02-10