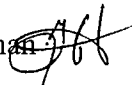


MEMORANDUM

June 28, 2010

To: All Local Chairmen – CSXT & FEC

CY: Membership c/o LC
James A. Stem, UTU National legislative Director

From: John Hancock, General Chairman 

RE: SAFETY ALERT – EXTREME HEAT ON THE EAST COAST

This past week, I contacted the appropriate officials at all railroads to notify them of our concerns involving the extreme heat in which train service employees are working.

As you are aware, manpower has been reduced on ground service jobs, therefore, our members are being subjected to more strenuous working conditions. Please advise the membership that they should take appropriate safety precautions, in taking necessary breaks and getting in cooler temperature locations, when possible. All Local Chairmen should contact local officers to discuss this issue so that personal health is ensured.

So far this year, we have had at least two instances of heat stroke (one of which CSXT is refusing to acknowledge), and one in which the employee refuses to report for fear of retaliation. This is a most important safety issue, and your personal health should come first and foremost.

We also deem it important that all should file an unsafe condition report when required to work in extreme conditions without a locomotive being air conditioned. A copy of the unsafe report should be made available to this Office.

Please advise this office of any problems or safety alert issues.

ANDRES TRUJILLO, Director
UTU Florida Legislative Board

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DAVID E. MEADOWS
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WYLIE GILKEY
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Secretary

June 21st, 2010

Mr. James Marks, Vice President-Safety
CSX TRANSPORTATION
500 Water Street, J-120
15th Floor
Jacksonville, FL. 32202

Mr. Don K. Jones, Division Manager
Jacksonville & Atlanta Divisions
CSX TRANSPORTATION
6735 Southpoint Drive South
Jacksonville, FL. 32216

Dear Sirs:

This letter is in reference to the extreme heat conditions the crews all around our state are experiencing in the discharge of their duties to CSX. Our organization has grave reason for concern and asks that you take in consideration the information herein provided and devise and implement a more comprehensive and detailed safety plan dealing with the dangers of heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

We currently have a confirmed report of a heat exhaustion incident, which occurred on the y108 a few days ago and was reported to carrier officer Walter Smith by the affected employee. M. W. Denton. Additionally, you may be aware of the incident involving Mr. G. Grey of Miami, which may be a case of a heat stroke.

We also have unconfirmed reports of employees-suffering some symptoms of heat exhaustion but being unable to recognize them for what they were until later a friend or family member was able to put two and two together. Lack of understanding of the manifestation of the symptoms and perhaps the inability to relate them in the midst of what can be diminished mental capacities while being affected, may account for the fact that you were not ultimately informed.

In fact, medical and scientific data reveal that employees under "heat stress", not only are at danger of the medically defined heat exhaustion and heat stroke, but there are significant negative productivity consequences.

An employee working under heat stress will be lethargic and tired. She or he may have difficulty concentrating and staying on the task at hand. They may also exhibit poor judgment in situations that may otherwise be routine decision making. In an environment such as ours, this is the recipe for disaster as well as lower productivity.

This is merely the third week of June, the "hot" months are still to come. The conditions around us are likely here to stay and worsen as the next few decades unfold. In the midst of what may turn out to be a record setting summer season, the carrier seems to be adding to this already dangerous situation, an additional ingredient.

I have reports of further consolidation of the existing advertised jobs (y225 and yr62) in Jacksonville. This, at a time when the carrier keeps reporting a steady uptick of volume and cars handled, just as the rest of the industry seems to be experiencing, is a step in the wrong direction.

While short term the employees, particularly those just returned from furlough may make heroic attempts to meet the additional productivity demands by the carrier, such policy can only result in an eventual disaster. Employees and or equipment and discipline are likely to be the victims.

At this time, shorter tours of duty, (not 12 hours under the sun), frequent mandatory, prescribed and followed up on hydration breaks, (where employees and managers keep track off how long a crew has been working without a break and are required to take one without fear of disapproving managerial attention), readily available cool water and or other hydrating drinks, areas where the employees could cool off while taking that hydration break, (even if it is in the air conditioned cab of a supervisor's vehicle at outlying points). Strong consideration to begin installing air conditioners in the cabs of all engines would also be a smart long term strategy to combat heat exhaustion, (the limited efforts by the carrier to date are insufficient and proper allocation of retrofitted engines may need a review), meaningful and effective education on the symptoms of heat exhaustion and prevention to both employees and managers, are some of the areas that would greatly contribute to keep the rest of this likely to be brutally hot summer from becoming one riddled with accidents, injuries or worse, as a result of not managing the conditions around us.

As an example of a proactive policy in this regard, I want to single out the efforts of FECR, your counterpart in Florida, who have taken a proactive approach to heat stress management, providing coolers with water and Gatorade at various points in their switching yards, before any problems arise. They have a policy on hydration breaks which the employees are free to make use of but that some managers actually enforce, out of genuine concern for their charges. Finally, for decades, FECR has installed climate control in all of its engines, switchers and over the road units. It makes for a safer operation, with the employees keeping their windows closed as they travel through "unsafe areas" and it has also helped make FECR a leader in productivity, with a higher average train speed system wide than many competitors and an ability for scheduled on time performance that can be the envy of many in the industry, while helping keep heat related and other injuries as well as property damage to a level enviable by the industry.

I urge you to take into account the preceding and formulate a stronger heat stress/cooling/hydration management policy that will proactively address the concerns of the employees, the organization and I am sure of CSX as well. The benefits of undertaking and underwriting these initiatives, may well go beyond the prevention of injuries, accidents or fatalities where heat plays an important role, already an important goal, but it may also lead to improved safe productivity and worker morale.

The UTU stands ready to work with you as necessary in the formulation and implementation of such a policy. Please contact my office or General Chairmen Hancock's if we can be of any assistance or if you wish to discuss these ideas further.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'AT', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the left and two vertical lines to the right.

Andres Trujillo, Director
UTU Florida Legislative Board

Cc: James A. Stem, National Legislative Director, UTU
John C. Hancock, General Chairman UTU
All UTU, CSX Local Chairman and Legislative Representatives, Florida