

Division 13 Members,

Train handling and ABTH compliance has come under a renewed scrutiny. Limiting in-train forces and rapid dynamic brake applications has become highlighted this past weekend. Our RFE has been asked to brief crews about the increased risk of derailments and train separations. Maybe they should not build trains over two miles long and this would not be such an issue? Perhaps they should build trains correctly to minimize slack action? Neither one of these ideas will happen, so it is up to us to protect ourselves and follow the rules associated with train handling, no matter how long it takes to get from point A to point B.

Over this past weekend, there were over a half dozen engineers identified on the Chicago Division through emails. Fortunately, no one was identified at La Crosse. The remote road foreman desk is still actively pulling downloads for exceptions along with software programs used to identify and flag the exceptions. Currently, the General Manager of the Chicago Division has instructed management to enter a "Coach and Counsel" letter to engineers listed with train handling exceptions. This is subject to change if the exceptions continue. I have included attachments provided by management for your review. Below is an example of an email the RFE received this weekend from the remote desk of an engineer flagged for multiple exceptions.

While validating a rapid dynamic braking event on 07/10/2022, at 18:06:16, the engineer transitioned from setup to dynamic brake 6 in 5 seconds. At 18:19:16, a transition from setup to dynamic brake 6 in 3 seconds. At 20:06:45, the engineer went from setup to dynamic brake 6 in 5 seconds. At 20:21:00, the engineer went from setup to dynamic brake 8 in 4 seconds. At 21:23:27, the engineer transitioned from setup to dynamic brake 7 in 4 seconds. These events potentially caused excessive in-train buff forces.

Mike Banks
Local Chairman
BLET Division 13