

Dear WUTC,

I would like to take this opportunity to comment on the nations railroads implementation of remote control technology (RCT).

I am currently employed as a locomotive engineer with the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR). I have worked and currently retain seniority as a Conductor, Brakeman, Switchman, and I previously have qualified as a maintenance of way section foreman as well a sectionman earlier in my carrier. I have seen many changes in the railroad industry over my 27 year carrier. Those changes range from crew reductions, centralized traffic control, mergers and acquisitions, implementation of computer technologies, end of train devices, intermodal operations, etc and now satellite relayed RCT operations.

I am appalled at the disregard for public safety and the environment due to the lack of thorough examination by the industry as well as federal agencies responsible for the oversight of this technology and its implementation. The public, the environment and possibly our national security will be the proving ground for this countries railroads rush to greed. Consider the railroads actions to date. A court order has been placed on the union that represents locomotive engineers not interfere in any way with RCO implementation. Most recently the carrier (UPRR) has threatened to exercise their options by that court order if a informational picket somehow affects their operations. The carriers have not nor have they been required to solicit or advise the public, counties or the cities of the implementation of this technology.

They have however put road way signs up indicating remote control operations are being conducted at affected areas. The FRA has issued a Safety Advisory that has no teeth. For example the advisory recommends that RCO operations shall not operate in Centralized Traffic Control Systems (CTC) nor within interlocking limits. The Union Pacific has begun to initiate RCO operations in the Seattle to Tacoma area which include Traveling Switchers, Locals, and yard jobs. Most if not all of the jobs either regularly, or occasionally are required to operate within CTC on Interlocking limits! The carriers is being allowed unbridled authority to do as they wish without restraint and I strongly recommend that your commission take a hard look and listen approach by adopting at a minimum the FRA recommendations issued Feb 14, 2001.

Thank You, N.R. Flores BLE Division 892 President