

RWU Resolution on Crew Fatigue

Whereas, all too many railroaders in North America work long irregular hours and all too often are chronically sleep deprived; and

Whereas, these long hours without enough sleep have been the cause of countless injuries and deaths over the years, both on and off the job; and

Whereas, crew fatigue contributes greatly to all sorts of problems on and off the job – physical, mental, emotional, marital, family, etc.; and

Whereas, excessive work hours means less time for other aspects of life – hobbies, interests, family, friends, community and union work, etc.; and

Whereas, airline pilots, by law may only log 100 work hours per month and truckers just over 300, railroad train and engine employees can log up to 432 hours per month; and

Whereas, the rail carriers compound the problem when they implement draconian “availability policies”, making it nearly impossible for some railroaders to mark off; and

Whereas, countless studies, together with common sense, have proven that crew fatigue has been a major contributor to disastrous railroad accidents in recent years: and

Whereas, despite study after study, meeting after meeting, the unions and the carriers have more often than not been unable to reach agreement on ways and means to provide adequate and proper rest for train and engine crews;

Therefore, Be it Resolved, that Railroad Workers United (RWU) at its Founding Convention in Dearborn, Michigan, April 11, 2008 recognizes that excessive work hours and the resultant crew fatigue are major issues in the rail industry that must be confronted head on; and

Be in Further Resolved that RWU develop a “Taskforce on Crew Fatigue” to make recommendations, to work cooperatively with groups like Railroad Employees Safety & Quality (RESQ), and develop a nationwide campaign to combat crew fatigue and excessive work hours.

Passed by the RWU members assembled at the RWU Convention, April 11, 2008 in Dearborn, Michigan.