

Join the Fight Against PSR!

There is a lot that YOU, the rank & file railroader can do to play a role in this struggle. Here are a few ideas:

- Make copies of this leaflet and distribute broadly.
- Make copies of the "RWU Resolution Against PSR" and post at work.
- Draft your own Resolution and move adoption at your local meeting.
- Pressure your national union officials to oppose PSR.
- Post stickers and posters in your workplace opposing PSR.
- Engage in pickets and rallies in your terminal and region.
- Check out the RWU website for more ideas and resources.
- Notify RWU of local activities and we will help publicize them.
- Need assistance? Contact RWU for logistical advice and support.
- Join Railroad Workers United! (see below).

Sign me up as a Member of Railroad Workers United

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

City _____ State/Province _____ Post Code _____

Country _____ Email _____

Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

Union _____ Local # _____

Railroad _____ Craft _____

Work Terminal _____ Year of Service _____

Position(s) held in your union (if any) _____

I am a (check one): RR Employee RR Retiree RR Family Member Other _____

Please check to affirm this statement: "I am not a manager/officer of a railroad."

Mail this form together with at least one year's due (\$50.00) to:

Railroad Workers United

P.O. Box 2131

Reno, NV 89505

Or apply and pay dues online at www.railroadworkersunited.org

"Precision Scheduled Railroading"

What it is and Why Railroad Workers Oppose It



Railroad Workers United
www.railroadworkersunited.org
info@railroadworkersunited.org
202-798-3327

Precision Scheduled Railroading - Bad for Workers, Shippers, Passengers, & the Railroad!

Stockholders Win - Everyone Else Loses

By its name, Precision Scheduled Railroading (PSR) sounds like it would be a good deal for all stakeholders. It is not. PSR is a Wall Street driven operating system that delivers for one group - the stockholders.

Workers

Each time a railroad implements PSR, the workforce is subjected to stress. Elimination of terminals, fewer train starts, the closure of hump yards and diesel shops, and the general downsizing and streamlining of infrastructure all result in mass layoffs and furloughs, displacements and uprooted work lives for employees. Long established safety and other work rules are abolished, degraded or violated wholesale. Union agreements are violated and/or renegotiated, resulting in longer hours, more difficult and dangerous working conditions, and a demoralized workforce. Hazardous conditions and discipline multiply, injuries and staff turnover rates increase, while collective technical proficiency declines. Morale and motivation suffer. The power of the union is eroded.

Shippers

Likewise, when PSR becomes the operating plan, countless shippers - both large and small, from all groups - suffer eroded service at increased rates. With the latest round of PSR rollouts at UP, NS and KCS, shipper complaints abounded, rivaling the level during the CSX start-up a few years earlier. Late deliveries, a lack of available rail cars, and a spike in demurrage and accessorial charges are common complaints coast-to-coast. As a direct result, shippers complain of financial losses and bankruptcies, while others have switched from rail to truck, adding to the problem of overcrowded highways. Meantime, hundreds of domestic and international origin-and-destination interline pairs have been eliminated by PSR.

Trackside Communities

The lack of fluidity and increasing longer trains - hallmarks of PSR - result in more blocked railroad crossings, a headache at best and an impediment to emergency services at worst, along many mainlines, especially in the vicinity of rail terminals. Existing and potential small shippers from small towns stand to lose service, hurting these economies. The longer/heavier trains of PSR -especially in the context of relaxed safety standards and procedures - means derailments are more likely and stand to be more catastrophic.

Passengers

PSR has been an impediment to on-time performance for passenger trains that are "hosted" by freight railroads. Amtrak recently rated the nation's Class I hosts, reporting an average grade among them of "C-" with CN ("D minus") and NS ("F") the worst. According to former rail CEO Matt Rose, "I think we've seen, actually, a degradation in overall performance of the rail network in general ... You would think these would be working perfectly with more people going to PSR. You would think Amtrak performance would be at an all-time high. You would think commuter rail service would be at an all-time high. They're not."

The Railroad and the Nation

Rail can be the safest, most efficient, environmentally sensitive means to move both freight and passengers. We need to increase track capacity, raise train speed, and build up infrastructure. But PSR focuses instead on the operating ratio, disregarding other metrics of success and vitality. Former CEO Matt Rose notes that Wall Street is dictating, "Less is better. Less capital is better. Fewer market opportunities are better. Fewer unit trains are better. It's all about lowering the operating ratio. I disagree with almost all of that. I truly believe that every industry, every business, needs growth." And *Railway Age Magazine* Contributing Editor Frank Wilner decried the "Operating Ratio Trap", stating, "In fact, an obsession with lowering the operating ratio can feed a perverse result. While deferring maintenance and shedding locomotives, employees and track miles reduces operating expenses and improves operating ratio, such actions can discourage new business, irritate existing customers and labor partners, adversely impact safety ..."

We Need to Fight Back

With so many angry, injured, and disaffected stakeholders, one might expect an all-out counter-attack from the groups listed in this flyer. Opposition is building across North America. The key to victory - as always of course - are unity, solidarity, and action!

Rail Union Unity

PSR is negatively affecting railroaders on practically all rail carriers from all rail crafts - from transportation to maintenance-of-way, from the shop crafts to signal maintainers, clerks to dispatching. As such, it has the potential to unify railroad workers like never before. It is imperative that our union leadership put aside past and parochial differences and disagreements and unite in the face of this crisis. Divided and scattered, the myriad unions are ineffectual to take on the challenge of confronting PSR. It is time for all railroaders to slough off craft and union distinctions and come together as an all-craft coalition of rail workers. Attend your local union meetings, demand unity and action. Consider creative tactics (rallies, pickets, and other actions) to draw attention to our plight and the destruction being caused by PSR. The rail carriers have held us divided for more than a century. Our most powerful weapon is unity of action!

Building Community Support

As you just read on the left hand side of this leaflet, rail workers are not alone. Shippers, trackside communities, environmental activists, passengers and others are disaffected by PSR and are potential allies in the fightback. Many of them are actively organizing themselves already: shippers demanding hearings from the Surface Transportation Board (STB); passengers and rail advocates demanding better OTP and freight railroad accountability; community and environmental activists who are urging a robust and revitalized rail system that moves more freight and passengers. These stakeholders are our natural allies, just as we are theirs. PSR and its attack on ALL of us offers us a golden opportunity to come together and resist collectively.

Railroads for the People, Not the Wealthy

Ultimately, PSR begs the question: What is the purpose of a nation's railroads? Wall Street's answer: to serve the stockholders, hedge funds, and those who own it. We however believe that the railroads are a public asset, a public utility that is essential for our society. As such, they should be run in the interests of the nation whose healthy environment, communities, and economy all rely on them; the shippers who patronize them; and the passengers who ride upon them; without compromising the safety and dignity of the workforce.

