

Contract Talks Continue at Amtrak For On Board Service Workers, Clerks and Product Line Supervisors



Photo by Marc Ascher

Contract talks at Amtrak for TCU On Board Service Workers and Product Line Supervisors continue following the successful conclusion of talks for Carmen, Maintenance of Way and Maintenance of Equipment Supervisors.

As the *IAM Journal* went to press, contract talks continued for TCU On Board Service Employees (ASWC), Clerks and Product Line Supervisors at Amtrak. Negotiators reported they were cautiously optimistic that they were close to finalizing tentative terms for a new wage and work-rule agreement that mirrors

recent settlements reached by other unions at Amtrak.

Amtrak Agreements Resoundingly Ratified by Carmen and MofE and MofW Supervisors

Since the last issue of this magazine went to press, agreements were reached at Amtrak for TCU Carmen, Maintenance of Way and Maintenance of Equipment Supervisors, as well as for

other units of the IAM and several other unions. The new TCU contracts, ratified resoundingly by the affected members, run from January 1, 2000 to December 31, 2009 and contain substantial back-pay provisions, strong wage increases and no concessions in work rules.

Port Workers Soon Will Need Identification Credentials

Workers at the nation's ports will soon be required by the government to have a Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) if they are to have unescorted access to do their jobs at these ports. Legislation establishing the TWIC program became effective this year. The U.S. Coast Guard is now implementing the program port to port. As this happens, employers are required to comply by seeing to it that employees obtain their credential.

Some TCU members — among them certain rail employees and intermodal workers employed by contractors — whose duties require unescorted access in a port

will be required to obtain a TWIC. In order to receive one, an employee must be a U.S. citizen, lawful permanent resident, or an immigrant with work authorization.

If an individual is denied a TWIC, there are procedures by which the person may be able to present their case for being allowed a credential. This is due in large measure to lobbying, while Congress considered the bill, by TCU and other unions to assure that the program would include fundamental procedural protections for employees.

Members can get information about these review procedures from TCU representatives, but in all cases it is the responsibility of the individual applicant—not TCU—to follow the waiver and appeal procedures.

“We are committed to making the TWIC application process as fair as possible and will help local officers provide whatever assistance may be needed by affected members,” says TCU International President Bob Scardelletti.

Aetna Completes Dependent Eligibility Audit

Starting last September, TCU members were among those contacted by Aetna to verify eligibility of their dependents for insurance coverage. This audit was of freight railroad workers, including

TCU members working under the National Agreement, not those working at Amtrak. After several time-limit extensions reaching far beyond the original deadline, the audit concluded April 15, 2008.

As of that deadline, completed responses covering 228,187 dependents and spouses had been put in the records. Participants voluntarily requested removal of 2,529 dependents. The insurance company received incomplete responses for 9,044 dependents. And despite numerous efforts at outreach, no response was received for 17,024 dependents—including 1,691 dependents of TCU members. Failure to respond resulted in termination of medical, dental and vision plan coverage as of April 15.

Aetna reports that this audit data has now been trans-

Update Your Email Address

TCU is moving rapidly toward handling the majority of communications by email.

TCU members, if you have not yet added your personal email address (not your employment email) to your TCU records, please send it to administrator@tcunion.org.

ferred to UnitedHealthcare which will oversee follow-up. Questions should go to UnitedHealthcare at 800-753-2692. Aetna continues to handle the Amtrak audit, which is still in progress.



AP/Wide World Photo

New government regulations at the nation's ports require workers to obtain a Transportation Worker Identification Credential for unescorted access.