



Transportation Communications Union / Int. Assoc. of Machinists & Aerospace Workers (TCU/IAM)



Federal Government Must Investigate Precision-Scheduled Railroading (PSR)

Position: The railroad workers of the Machinists District 19 and the Transportation Communications Union (TCU/IAM) have grave concerns regarding the safety implications and commercial impact of so-called Precision-Scheduled Railroading (PSR), an operating model that is sweeping the Class 1 freight rail industry.

This “new” operating model is indeed not new; rather, the PSR model is an excuse to reduce headcounts to unsafe levels, work employees harder and longer causing greater fatigue, and bully or outright eliminate service for shippers and customers. **Congress, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and the Surface Transportation Board (STB) MUST provide greater scrutiny of this operating model.**

Labor unions are not in the business of dictating how our employers operate; however, when those operations cause safety to be compromised, unions have a duty to our members and the general public to convey our concerns, and raise public awareness.

Further Reading:

- [“As CSX workforce shrinks, accidents pile up and morale plummets” *Jacksonville Business Journal*, 2/14/18.](#)
- [“Beware the operating ratio trap” *Railway Age*, 2/11/19](#)
- [“PSR: Short-term gains, but at what cost?” *Railway Age*, 4/21/19](#)

Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) Funding

The Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) is an independent federal agency that administers retirement, survivor, disability, and unemployment-sickness insurance benefit programs to over 753,000 beneficiaries in every state and every congressional district. The RRB’s operations are self-funded through its own respective trusts, and do not require any dollars from the general revenue fund. However, the RRB still requires an appropriation from Congress to access those funds.

Underfunded and Outdated: The RRB itself has been woefully underfunded for decades, despite its self-funding nature. Staffing levels have decreased, and the agency’s aging information technology (IT) system remains badly outdated. Currently, the RRB’s IT services run on a *40-year-old legacy mainframe system*. Basic modern services like password changes and address updates are impossible. The inefficiency of the system requires staff to devote significant time to paper-based servicing, while similar industry practices utilize digitized platforms. The RRB estimates the total cost of overhauling the IT system will be \$42.5 million. Recognizing the need for these upgrades, Congress appropriated \$10 million in no-year funds in both FY18 and FY19 spending bills (\$20 million total).

Funding Request: The Association of American Railroads (AAR) and the Rail Labor Division (RLD) – which includes TCU and IAM – have **jointly requested that Congress fully fund the RRB at \$137.216 million in the FY2020 LHHS appropriations bill**. This figure includes adequate funding for staffing levels to fulfill the agency’s core missions as well as \$11.861 million in no-year funding for the IT modernization.