

# ***BMW NEWS RELEASE***

**Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employes**

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## **BMW Rail Union Members Overwhelmingly Approve Merger with Teamsters**

**Southfield, MI**—October 27, 2004. Members of the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employes (BMW) have overwhelmingly approved the merger of the BMW with the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT) as well as the transfer of jurisdiction agreement for the BMW Canadian members.

76 percent of BMW members voting approved the merger with the IBT today.

BMW President, Freddie N. Simpson, who will now become President of the BMW Division of the Teamsters Rail Conference, congratulated BMW members for making such an informed and historic decision. "The BMW members today have voiced their commitment to a strong and positive future and have taken a giant step in consolidating rail labor," said Simpson. "I would also like to offer thanks to the members of the BMW merger negotiation committee, Gary Cox, David Tanner, Bill Palmer, Paul Beard, Mark Wimmer and Scott Dawson, as well as offer my appreciation to committee advisors Rick Inclima, Steve Powers, Gail Meisel, Don Griffin, Bill Bon and Bill Hildenbrand. A special debt of gratitude also goes to BMW Secretary Treasurer Perry K. Geller, Sr. with thanks to BMW Chicago staff member Sandy Mattox."

"More than two years ago, the BMW's leadership embarked on a path of reform aimed at strengthening the union's hand in fighting for its members' interests. The membership's vote today is a milestone in that process – an important step on the road to rail unity," declared Simpson.

"We are proud and excited to be part of the Teamsters Rail Conference. Ratification of the merger with the IBT has demonstrated our members determination to strengthen and improve our positions both within the rail and labor communities," stated Simpson. "With over 42 percent of union members in the rail industry now united under the Teamsters banner, our strength at the bargaining table will most certainly be improved. With both the BMW and the BLET together as autonomous divisions of the Teamsters Rail Conference, railroad workers will have greater power at the workplace, in the halls of Congress, and in negotiations."

"This is an extraordinary moment in the history of the labor movement," said Jim Hoffa, Teamsters General President. "As did my father, I have envisioned one union representing all transportation workers—roads to rails, ports to planes—that would provide workers with real power on the job and in the political arena. This historic merger brings us closer to our vision of that seamless transportation union."

The BMW will become a division of the Teamsters Rail Conference, which was established in January 2004. In the beginning of the year, the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen became the first division of the Rail Conference when their members overwhelmingly approved their merger with the Teamsters. With the addition of the BMW members, the Teamsters Rail Conference now represents almost 70,000 union rail members and becomes the 7<sup>th</sup> largest Division at the IBT.

BMW members build, maintain, inspect, and repair the railroad tracks, bridges, and related structures throughout North America.

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