

## **Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employes Division Of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters**

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### **Two Members Killed, Several Injured in MBCR Rail Accident** *Union Assails Railroad Safety Record*

(Southfield, MI) – Two members of the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employes Division (BMWED) of the Teamster Rail Conference were struck and killed yesterday when a Massachusetts Bay Commuter Railroad (MBCR) train was mistakenly routed onto the track where they were working. Several other crewmembers were injured, at least one seriously.

According to initial reports, the work crew had established the required on-track safety and had exclusive authority to occupy the track to conduct maintenance. Trains were correctly re-routed around the roadway work crew for the entire day until, for reasons unknown at this time, a MBCR commuter train was routed directly onto the track where the men and equipment were authorized by the MBCR dispatch center to work on the track.

“Our hearts and prayers go out to the families of those killed and injured,” said Freddie Simpson, President of the BMWED. “We are sickened by this tragedy and appalled by the safety record of the MBCR. This is abhorrent and totally unacceptable.”

“Per mile of railroad operated, MBCR has one of the worse roadway worker safety records of any railroad in the country,” said Rick Inclima, Director of Safety for BMWED. “There have been four BMWED roadway worker fatalities on the MBCR since December 6, 2003, yet the railroad has not taken significant steps to improve roadway worker safety. MBCR management still refuses to even fill the vacant BMWED safety liaison positions required under the agreement.”

Amtrak ran this commuter service in the Boston area for years without incident while providing strong support for the BMWED safety liaison’s and the resulting safety culture. Since MBCR took over operations on July 1, 2003 and abolished the safety liaison positions, there have been four BMWED roadway worker fatalities, the highest of any commuter railroad in the country. BMWED General Chairman Brad Winter said, “I’ve been a union officer for many years and deal with over a dozen railroads. At no time have I seen such an abysmal safety failure as we have seen at MBCR.”

“We call on MBCR to take immediate steps to end this carnage,” said Perry Geller, Secretary-Treasurer of the BMWED. “And we call on MBCR to abandon their cavalier approach to roadway worker safety and to immediately reinstate the safety liaison positions which were in effect prior to MBCR assumption of operations in July 2003. We expect decisive and immediate action by MBCR. Failure to do so will not be tolerated by BMWED and its members.”

BMWED represents approximately 40,000 men and women who build, inspect, maintain and repair the tracks, bridges, buildings and related infrastructure of all Class I Railroads and many commuter railroads throughout the United States.

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