

INTERNATIONAL
BROTHERHOOD OF TEAMSTERS
AFL-CIO



OFFICE OF
JAMES P. HOFFA
GENERAL PRESIDENT

August 9, 2004

Dear BMW Member:

We are writing you regarding the proposed merger between the BMW and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters that, if approved by you, will further unite rail labor under one strong banner.

Later this month, you will receive a ballot in the mail in which you will be asked to determine whether BMW will continue on as a small Union within the fragmented Rail Labor community, or whether BMW members will become part of the Teamsters Union Rail Conference uniting rail labor from different crafts into a powerful force for progress in the industry. By joining with the 1.4 million members of the Teamsters, BMW members will have the backing of the most powerful transportation Union in the country.

The choice you will make is critical to your future, your family's future and the future of rail labor. We are sending you the enclosed video so that you can make the most informed decision possible. The question before you is the same question our forefathers in the labor movement asked themselves over a hundred years ago: are we better off in the world today by going it alone, or are we better equipped to deal with the challenges we face by joining together?

This video presents the case for why we believe that BMW members should vote in favor of the merger with the International Brotherhood of Teamsters and why the BMW should join together with the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen to build a powerful Teamsters Rail Conference.

By joining the Teamsters Rail Conference, BMW members will gain greater bargaining strength, greater political strength, and greater economic strength.

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Uniting BMW and BLET together in the Rail Conference will create a formidable new voice for Rail Labor and establish a solid foundation for uniting additional rail Unions within the Conference. We believe that the choice is clear: We are all stronger when we are united.

In Solidarity,



James P. Hoffa
General President, IBT



Fred Simpson
President, BMW

JPH:FS/dw

Enclosure



The BMW/IBT Merger Agreement



BMW will become an autonomous craft division (BMWED) within the Teamsters Rail Conference. This means that the BMW Division and its affiliates will maintain their autonomy, identity, structure, and bylaws.

BMW will maintain its current jurisdiction. As part of the Teamsters Rail Conference, the BMW Division will maintain its jurisdiction for the class and craft of maintenance of way employees.

BMW will maintain authority over its contracts. BMW will remain the bargaining representative and will retain authority in bargaining and enforcement, and will control any decisions affecting bargaining, including the decisions to accept or reject a contract or to strike.

BMW affiliate bodies will retain their autonomy and independence. Under the Merger Agreement, the Teamsters Union cannot force the mergers of BMW affiliates (System Federations/Divisions and Local Lodges), and BMW affiliates will retain all finances, property, and other assets.

BMW will be an equal partner with other Rail crafts in the Rail Conference. The BMW Division of the Teamsters Rail Conference will have proportional representation on the Rail Conference Policy Committee based upon the size of our membership.

BMW Railroad Retirement and health care benefits are fully protected. All BMW Railroad Retirement and health care benefits will continue as they are.

BMW member Grand Lodge dues payments will remain the same. BMW members will receive the increased benefits of membership in the BMW/IBT but will not incur an increase in the dollar amount paid to Grand Lodge as a result of the merger.

BMW members will vote in all IBT International elections. BMW members in good standing will be eligible to vote for, and run for, all IBT International Officer positions under the provisions of the IBT Constitution.

BMW and its members will benefit from the enormous resources of the Teamsters Union. Our System Federation/Divisions and the Grand Lodge will now have complete access to the most extensive professional support services in the labor movement including Research, Safety and Health, Lobbying, Corporate Affairs and Strategic Campaigns, Education, and many other departments and services. Teamster services will be provided in cooperation with the BMW Officers and Staff currently providing services and representation to the membership.

BMW and its members will benefit from the Teamster organizing program. The Teamsters Union budgets nearly \$15 million per year at the national level for organizing, and many millions more at the local level. The BMW Organizing Director will work closely with the Teamsters Organizing Department to organize new members into the BMW.

BMW Locals and their members will benefit from Teamster solidarity. Teamster solidarity during BMW negotiations will provide new strength at the bargaining table. The Teamsters have nearly 500 Local Unions located in almost every state and Canadian province. The backing of over 1.4 million Teamster members will provide us strength and support in bargaining, politics, and organizing.