



# **Railroad Workers United**

***Solidarity • Unity • Democracy***

***The Rank & File in Action!***

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## **Press Release**

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**For immediate release**

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## **Rail Workers Group Launches Campaign in Opposition to “Precision Scheduled Railroading”**

On June 1, the cross-craft association known as Railroad Workers United (RWU) announced its intentions to formally oppose an operating plan known as “Precision Scheduled Railroading.” The plan has been implemented - or is in the process of being - on most all major railroads in North America, including Union Pacific (UP), CSX, Canadian National (CN), Canadian Pacific (CP), Norfolk South (NS), and Kansas City Southern (KCS).

According to RWU spokesperson Mark Burrows, “This operating plan has been propelled into the forefront in recent years by the quest for short-term profits by hedge fund investors with no concern about the long-term viability nor health of the rail industry. While PSR might help to deliver record profits and all-time low operating ratios, this operating plan is in fact a farce, a thinly veiled disguise that relies on deferred maintenance, lax safety standards, a decline in infrastructure investment, and reduced manpower/labor costs in order to ‘succeed.’”

As a result says Burrows, “PSR has been problematic for rail workers of all crafts, shippers of all shipping groups, general rail safety, the industry itself and the nation as a whole. The profit-driven speed-up has contributed to worker fatalities and crippling injuries. Workers are vulnerable to ever more hazards and dangers, as are surrounding communities.”

“Railroad workers understand that PSR is a direct attack on us – a war being waged by the carriers – that affects employees of all carriers, in all crafts, members of all unions. PSR stands to decimate our ranks, immiserate our work lives while wreaking havoc on our personal lives, degrade our working conditions, erode safety and health, and harm the industry that we have worked so hard to build up.”

The group has drafted an “Open Letter” to all rail union leaders urging them to unite around the issue and to fight back. “This is an issue that affects all railroad workers from all crafts and hence all unions,” notes Burrows. “We urge the various rail union leaders to come together and take the lead in the fight against PSR.”

RWU has drafted a formal Resolution and has created a leaflet, a poster, and a series of cartoons to promote the campaign among rail workers and the general public. According to Burrows, “Rail workers need the broadest possible unity in this struggle. In addition, we need to build alliances with shipper groups, community and environmental organizations, as well as passengers and rail advocates if we are to succeed.”