



STAYING STRONG AND UNITED FOR MAINTENANCE OF WAY EMPLOYEES

by Wade Phillips, President, Teamsters Canada Rail Conference - Maintenance of Way Employees Division



New members and new executive board elected

The Teamsters Canada Rail Conference-Maintenance of Way Employees Division and its members have gone through a challenging 2020 in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. We have been fortunate that, for the most part, our members continued working during these unprecedented times and kept on proudly maintaining and upgrading the railway tracks across the country that are needed to supply communities with essential items.

The challenges that we have faced revolve around having a safe and healthy work environment. This has always been a priority, and this year has only heightened our awareness on the issue as our members are required to travel to communities where they do not live and stay away from home. Our members have looked after each other, and we continue to work with the companies to ensure that health and safety remain the major everyday focus.

Although we were in the midst of a pandemic, we were able to grow our Teamster family by welcoming new members from Alstom Transport in Brampton into our local. These members took a stand and joined our union in August. We continue to work on a first agreement that will see our new members get the fairness and stability that they sought when joining our organization. We could not be happier to have these members with us and look forward to them being more involved in our local as time goes on.

During the pandemic, we were challenged with finding new ways to run our union and can proudly say that we found a way forward. New agreements were reached in 2020 with Ontario Northland, Algoma Central and Hudson Bay Railway. The year 2021 will see us bargaining with several Genesee Wyoming properties in Ontario and Quebec, along with other companies.

At the end of 2020, Vice President Henry Helfenbein, along with Prairie Region Director Gary McDougall retired after over 40 years each in our organization! We wish both brothers nothing but the best in what we hope will be a long and healthy retirement.



▲ TCRC-MWED members at BC Rail, crossing the Fraser River at Station Name Sign Cisco, near Lytton, BC. April 2020.

We went through an election in 2020, where we saw our new executive board elected. The board which now consists of myself as president, Gary Doherty as vice president, Anthony Della Porta as secretary-treasurer, Patrick Gauthier as our atlantic region director, Maclean Foster as our eastern region director, Ron (Graham) Bradley as our prairie region director and Trevor Marshall as our pacific region director.

We stand together, committed to the membership and will be working on ways to improve the lives of our members as we stand strong and united to build a stronger Teamster voice in 2021.



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