

Submitter: Pete Petersen
On Behalf Of: Smart 471
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB723

Good Morning. I writing you on behalf of the proposed 2 person rule. My Name is Pete Petersen. I am a locomotive engineer working out of Eugene, Oregon. For the last 19 years I've been working Union Pacific Railroad. In those 19 years I have consistently seen example after example of why we need 2 people in the cab.

During my time as an conductor I've had to handle many incidents that my engineers just can't do. Memorial Day weekend 2012 we were coming close to town. As we came around a blind corner, we encountered a man sitting on the west rail. There was nothing my engineer could do except put the train in Emergency and follow procedure. We ended up hitting this guy and came to a stop. We notified the dispatcher and I started walking back. The man appeared to be dead at a distance. As I got closer I could tell he was still breathing. I had my engineer call 911 and I stayed with the man until help arrived. Had the train only had one crew member. Who would have stayed with the train? Who would have gotten the man help? Who would have seen he wasn't dead and gotten help quicker?

February 2013 my Engineer and I boarded our train to head South. We were barely out of town when we saw a man laying next to the East rail wearing a reflective Jacket. We're we're able to stop the train and we notified the dispatcher. I walked up to help the man. The man was still breathing but was Bleeding Badly from his head. I had my engineer call 911 and I did what I could to help the man until help arrived. I ended up having to place my lantern next to the road we were near. This way help was able to find us. Had there only been one man in the cab. All they would have been able to do is call for help and stay with the train.

I've worked in Heavy Grade Territory my whole career. Aside from the sidings. Most of our run is pretty remote. Put that together with 20 tunnels. You can see that if things went bad. One person wouldn't be able to do it all. If the train goes into emergency in a tunnel. Who would cut the locomotives away so the Engineer doesn't suffocate on the Locomotive exhaust? What happens when a weak knuckle fails and the train is in two pieces in a spot that is inaccessible? When we experience a PTC problem and the system put the train into emergency. Who ties the train down? Who's going to inspect the train to make sure everything is still upright and on the rail.

I know those are a lot of what ifs. However; those what ifs play out on almost a daily basis. These are real world examples of what happens on my territory. It also illustrates why I need my conductor.

On a daily basis conditions are always changing. When the dispatcher need to issue you an addition to your warrants. They will issue that change through PTC or Verbally. Even if EMS is running the train. I still have crossings to blow for. Random people to provide warning for. The auto control telling to take manual control. Or a whole host of other items that need my attention. Having my conductor there to deal with the dispatcher makes all the difference. If I was by myself, I'd probably have to stop the train.

Finally, fatigue is a huge issue in our industry. Everyone is over worked and over tired. We go to work at all hours of the day and night. Believe me when I tell you, that having a second person to talk with makes a huge difference. You may have heard rumors of people purposely sleeping on trains. I haven't experienced that issue. That being said, people do nod off from time to time. And when operations run around the clock with little to no time off. You have to expect that. I know that I've nodded a few times, despite my best efforts to stay awake. And every time it's not the alerter that gets me. It's my conductor.

I hope my letter helps in showing you the importance of having 2 people in the cab. Safety is job number 1 in our industry. And in the name of safety. Please keep two people in the cab.

Thank You,

Pete V.C. Petersen