



Date: August 1, 2009

Briefing No. 2009-001

SIGNAL DEPARTMENT BRIEFINGS AND BULLETINS

The word bureaucracy brings to mind endless forms to fill out and lots and lots of rules and regulations. As the railroad industry grows and learns more about itself and railroad and signal technology changes rapidly there is always a need to create what often appears to be more and more bureaucracy. In fact, we think if we don't watch out, we can probably get so mired down in reading rules, following procedures and filling out forms that we will not be doing anything but that and actual productive work will not happen. Since we can't avoid the growth of things like FRA rules, CPUC regulations, newer technology to learn and better safety knowledge the smart thing to do is figure out better ways to become more efficient and effective. That is why, for example, we use the Mirra Machine and are trying to develop a web site. And... that is why you have received this Signal Department Briefing.

We already have Signal Department Regulations and within the Regulations we have Sections, Supplements and Procedures. Most of our forms have been developed because of the requirements of our Regulations and are within them. Our Regulations are not as well organized as we would like and we'll probably be able to overcome that aspect of them with future versions. What is good and effective about the Regulations is that all the rules we need to adhere to are either in there or are referenced there. So... from a bureaucracy view point that aspect is efficient.

This document is the first official Signal Department *Briefing*. In the future there will be others. Their purpose will be to provide Signal Department personnel with relevant information on the operation of the Signal Department and other SSRR information of interest. We are also planning on developing Bulletins which I'll describe in a little more detail below.

Setting up these documents is not intended to develop more bureaucracy. Instead, the idea is to develop some consistency in how we communicate important information to all Department Members. As the Signal Department has grown so has the need for communication. If you are dealing with many aspects of the Signal Department as many of us do, you'll understand the need to be organized and not hap-hazard. By defining types of documents and giving them a number and filing them with a reference it will be easier to locate them for future reference. It will also be easier to actually file them because they will only go in one place (not the circular file). I hope you understand this is an effort to become more effective and efficient instead of more bogged down in email and paper.

There will be three, or perhaps more, types of Bulletins: Administrative, Technical and Safety. They will be issued only when deemed necessary and prudent.

Administrative Bulletins will be issued whenever we need to define in more detail how we handle the administrative parts of our work. For example: We are now using a Scheduler to schedule personnel assignments for our inspections and other work. We



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are learning as we go what works and what doesn't. Before long we will be developing a set of guidelines which describes what the Scheduler does and how the Scheduler does it. Eventually these guidelines may be included in the Regulations. In the mean time we'll issue an Administrative Bulletin and explain how to perform the scheduler's assignment.

Technical Bulletins will be similar. Technical Bulletins will be used to disseminate technical information about our systems to all personnel. For example: If we replace a Battery Charger at one of our crossings with a new type of Battery Charger we will use a Technical Bulletin to let everyone know and perhaps include the specifications or information about it.

Safety Bulletins will be issued whenever a safety issue has become known that all personnel should or must be aware of. For example: If we become aware that a certain type of Volt Ohm Meter is defective or hazardous and must not be used we will use a Safety Bulletin to alert all personnel and advise them not to use that type of meter.

Until now the material that we will be issuing in Briefings and Bulletins has been issued via email and erased or filed away to be lost possibly forever. Briefings and Bulletins will be numbered and they will be posted to the Mirra Machine and eventually a web site. On the Mirra Machine (or web site) there will be a reference document on which you can search for the Briefing or Bulletin you might want to locate.

I know there is going to be questions and comments about this proposal. We'll try it for awhile. If it does not work out, is not effective and not efficient we'll simply stop doing it and go back to email or develop some other methods. Please give this some objective thought and *then* let me have your questions and comments.

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