

**NATIONAL RAILROAD ADJUSTMENT BOARD
THIRD DIVISION**

**Award No. 41192
Docket No. SG-40747
12-3-NRAB-00003-080626**

The Third Division consisted of the regular members and in addition Referee Edwin H. Benn when award was rendered.

PARTIES TO DISPUTE: (Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen
(
(Northeast Illinois Regional Commuter Railroad
(Corporation (Metra)

STATEMENT OF CLAIM:

“Claim on behalf of the General Committee of the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen on the Northeast Illinois Regional Commuter Rail Corp.:

Claim on behalf of D. A. Moore and R. W. Sorensen, for 26 hours overtime account Carrier violated the current Signalmen’s Agreement, particularly Rules 1, 15 and Side Letter 10 (dated May 16, 1999), when it used junior employees instead of the Claimants for overtime service on February 25 and 26, 2007 (sic) and denied the Claimants the opportunity to perform this work. Carrier’s File No. 11-21-559. General Chairman’s File No. 116-RI-06. BRS File Case No. 14040-NIRC.”

FINDINGS:

The Third Division of the Adjustment Board, upon the whole record and all the evidence, finds that:

The carrier or carriers and the employee or employees involved in this dispute are respectively carrier and employee within the meaning of the Railway Labor Act, as approved June 21, 1934.

This Division of the Adjustment Board has jurisdiction over the dispute involved herein.

Parties to said dispute were given due notice of hearing thereon.

The Claimants are Signal Testmen headquartered at the Tinley Park Wire Shop with assigned territory of the Rock Island, CWI, and Southwest Service Districts working 7:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M., Monday through Friday schedules. The Claimants hold prior rights on the Rock Island District.

This claim arose when, on Saturday, February 25, and Sunday, February 26, 2006, the Carrier assigned overtime to two signal employees (Signal Electronic Technicians – a higher classification than the classification held by the Claimants) who were junior in seniority to the Claimants and who did not hold prior rights on the Rock Island District. The overtime was scheduled and performed at the Root Street Interlocking and consisted of testing and inspection of signal aspects.

The relevant Rules provide:

“RULE 15

SECTION 1 – (a) OVERTIME – BEFORE AND AFTER BASIC DAY: The hourly rates named herein are for an assigned eight (8) hour day. All service performed outside of the regularly established working period shall be paid for as follows:

Overtime hours, either prior to or following and continuous with regular working period, shall be computed on the actual minute basis and paid for at one and one-half times the basic straight time rate.

Time worked in excess of sixteen (16) hours of work in any twenty-four (24) hour period, computed from the starting time of the employee’s regular shift, shall be paid for at double their basic straight time rate.

When overtime service is required of a part of a group of employees who customarily work together, the senior qualified available employees of the class involved shall have preference to such overtime if they so desire.”

Side Letter No. 10

“Prior rights, and the seniority that goes with it, shall be applied as being superior to an individual’s relative position on the system seniority roster when an employee is stationed on their prior rights district. Prior rights takes priority in the exercise of seniority, overtime allocation, and preference for receiving vacation or other paid for time not worked.”

As set forth in detail in Third Division Award 41188, Side Letter No. 10 and Public Law Board No. 5565, Award 34 govern this dispute:

“First, Side Letter No. 10 clearly gives the Claimant the right to the claimed overtime work ([p]rior rights takes priority in the exercise of seniority, overtime allocation . . .).

Second, in Public Law Board No. 5565, Award 34, the same dispute was determined in the Organization’s favor under the clear provisions of Side Letter No. 10:

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‘ . . . [U]nder the plain words of Side Letter No. 10 his RID priority rights ‘take priority in overtime allocation’. Side Letter No. 10 entitled him to priority in overtime allocation in the RID on March 10-11, 2001, over an employee in the same seniority class who had no such priority rights in the RID. . . . ’

For the Carrier to prevail, the Board would have to find Public Law Board No. 5565, Award 34 palpably erroneous. We cannot do so. That Award reasonably (and correctly, we believe) applies the relevant language to a similar factual dispute. For purposes of stability, we cannot find that Award to be palpably erroneous.

*** * ***

The bottom line here is that the language of Side Letter No. 10 is clear and unambiguous – ‘Prior rights, and the seniority that goes with it, shall be applied as being superior to an individual’s relative position on the system seniority roster when an employee is stationed on their prior rights district. Prior rights takes priority in the exercise of seniority, overtime allocation. . . .’ [Emphasis added] Public Law Board No. 5565, Award 34 recognized the clarity of that language and governs this dispute. The claim must therefore be sustained. . . .”

In its April 28, 2006 letter and before the Board, the Carrier contended that “. . . the two Claimants are headquartered at the Tinley Park Wire Shop, which is not on any district.” The Carrier points to Side Letter No. 10 which provides that the seniority benefits of that letter apply when “. . . an employee is stationed on their prior rights district.” Because the Claimants were “headquartered” at the Tinley Park Wire Shop “which is not on any district,” the Carrier argues that Side Letter No. 10 therefore does not apply.

However, the evidence is undisputed that when this dispute arose, the Claimants were working on their prior rights district and the overtime opportunities involved in this matter were on that district. For purposes of deciding this case, we need not parse any differences between the meanings of “headquartered” and “stationed.” If the parties intended the prior rights provisions of Side Letter No. 10 to apply only when an employee is “headquartered” on his prior rights district, they could have easily said so. The Claimants were working on their prior rights district. For purposes of Side Letter No. 10, that is sufficient to mean that they were “. . . stationed on their prior rights district.”

There is no evidence that the Claimants were not qualified to perform the work in dispute. Because of Side Letter No. 10 and Public Law Board No. 5565, Award 34, the Claimants were therefore entitled to the overtime opportunities on the dates set forth in the claim.

In terms of a remedy, the Claimants shall be made whole for any lost overtime opportunities on the dates set forth in the claim. However, if the Claimants earned overtime on any of the dates set forth in the claim, those amounts shall be offset against the Carrier’s liability.

AWARD

Claim sustained in accordance with the Findings.

ORDER

This Board, after consideration of the dispute identified above, hereby orders that an award favorable to the Claimant(s) be made. The Carrier is ordered to make the Award effective on or before 30 days following the postmark date the Award is transmitted to the parties.

NATIONAL RAILROAD ADJUSTMENT BOARD
By Order of Third Division

Dated at Chicago, Illinois, this 22nd day of February 2012.