

SPECIAL BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT 1110

Award No. 103  
Case No. 103

PARTIES TO DISPUTE:

Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees

and

CSX Transportation, Inc. (Former Louisville and  
Nashville Railroad Company)

STATEMENT OF CLAIM:

Claim of the System Committee of the Brotherhood that:

1. The Agreement was violated when the Carrier assigned two (2) Mechanical Department employees to paint handrails (January 30 and 31, 1997) in the roundhouse in Radnor Yard and to paint safety lines in front of the new car shop and lunch room at Radnor Yard, Nashville, Tennessee [System File **4(14)(97)/12(97-1468)** LNR].
2. As a consequence of the afore-stated violation, furloughed Carpenter Charles W. Gay and Carpenter Helper R. C. Robinson shall each be allowed twenty (20) hours of pay at their respective straight time rates.

FINDINGS:

This Board, upon the whole record and all of the evidence, finds and holds as follows:

1. That the Carrier and the Employees involved in this dispute are, respectively, Carrier and Employees within the meaning of the Railway Labor Act, as amended,; and
2. That the Board has jurisdiction over this dispute.

OPINION OF THE BOARD:

Rule 1, Scope, provides, in pertinent part, that:

Subject to the exceptions in Rule 2, the rules

contained herein shall govern the hours of service, working conditions, and rates of pay for all employees in any and all subdepartments of the Maintenance of Way and Structures Department, represented by the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees, and such employees shall perform all work in the maintenance of way and structures department.

Rule 2 contains certain exceptions to Rule 1:

(d) Work of a character properly belonging to classes of employees covered by other agreements . . . .

Rule 3 groups employees in different subdepartments such as the Bridge and Building Subdepartment. Rule 4, Rule 5, and Rule 6 contain certain provisions concerning seniority.

Rule 41 provides, in relevant part, that:

(a) All Work which is done by Company forces in the construction, maintenance, repair, or dismantling of bridges, buildings, tunnels, wharves, docks, water tanks, turntables, platforms, walks, and other structures, build of brick, tile, concrete, wood, or steel, the painting of bridges, buildings, docks, platforms, walks, turntables, tanks and other structures, hand rails in buildings and on bridges, and the erection and maintenance of signs attached to buildings or other structures, shall be performed by employees of the bridge and building subdepartment.

. . . .

(g) Paint gangs shall consist of foreman, assistant foreman (when required by the management), painters, helpers and repairmen. Repairmen in a gang shall not be more than one-third of the total number of painters and helpers. Neither shall there be more helpers than painters.

In the context of the referenced Rules, the record proves that the Bridge and Building Subdepartment exists, in relevant part, for the purpose of establishing a group of employees to paint buildings. The present dispute, which the Organization progressed in a timely manner, involves a relatively limited painting assignment performed by Mechanical Department employees (Carmen) instead of by furloughed members of the Bridge and Building Subdepartment. In accordance with the referenced Rules, the disputed painting constitutes core work typically performed by bargaining unit members such as the Claimants. Such work falls explicitly within the scope provision of the Agreement. As

such, the present parties constitute the only parties necessary to resolve this disagreement. No basis exists to warrant the organization that represents the Mechanical Department employees to be treated as an indispensable party in the present dispute.

The record omits any persuasive evidence that the use of bargaining unit members to perform the disputed painting function would have in any way complicated, disturbed, or undermined any key function of the Mechanical Department employees. In contrast to painting rolling stock and in the absence of any other material information, the record fails to prove that the disputed work under these particular circumstances constitutes the core work of the Mechanical Department employees or arose as necessary incidental work that the Mechanical Department employees had an entitlement to perform to the exclusion of the Claimants. The record omits any suggestion that an emergency situation had existed regarding the painting.

The Organization's decision not to progress to arbitration different cases under different circumstances involving this particular subject did not preclude the Organization from progressing the present dispute to arbitration. As a result of such different prior circumstances, the approach of the Organization did not establish acquiescence or constructive acceptance by the Organization of the Carrier's position. In the absence of any such type of an estoppel, the Organization retained the right to enforce the clear, explicit, unambiguous, and mandatory provisions of the Agreement in the context of the present matter.

Due to the clarity of the Agreement regarding the disputed work, any arguable past practice lacks relevance because a past practice becomes significant when an agreement is ambiguous, imprecise, or unclear. A past practice lacks relevance to change a clear provision of an agreement. Any change to the meaning and proper application of a clear provision of the Agreement is a matter for collective bargaining, not arbitration.

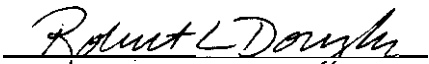
In summary, the record omits any basis for deviating from the presumptive validity and integrity of the jurisdictional arrangement developed by the parties. The assignment of the disputed work under the circumstances of the present controversy therefore violated the fundamental jurisdictional arrangement inherent in the scheme developed by the parties over an extended period of time. As a result, the Carrier's actions in the present case constituted a violation of the Agreement.

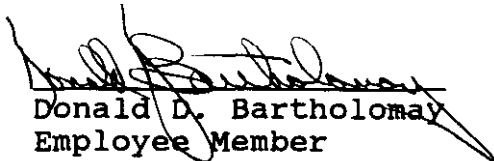
The record substantiates that the Mechanical Department employees worked eight (8) hours per day performing the disputed work for a total of thirty-two (32) hours. The Claimants therefore shall be allowed a total of thirty-two (32) hours of pay to be allocated on a proportionate basis at their respective straight time rates

of pay.

AWARD:

The Claim is sustained in accordance with the Opinion of the Board. The Carrier shall make the Award effective on or before 30 days following the date of this Award.

  
**Robert L. Douglas**  
Chairman and Neutral Member

  
**Donald D. Bartholomay**  
Employee Member

  
**Mark D. Selbert**  
Carrier Member

Dated: 5/14/01