

Minutes of AREMA Committee 28 - Clearances
Fall Meeting, October 23 & 24th, 2003
Held in Fort Worth, Texas

The fall meeting of AREMA Committee 28 - Clearances, was held at the Holiday Inn in Fort Worth, Texas on October 23rd & 24th, 2003.

Tom Hinton, Chairman, called the meeting to order and thanked all those present for attending due to many travel restrictions at the various railroads and companies.

An attendance sheet was then passed around for those present to sign. Each member and guest then introduced themselves stating their name and company affiliation. There was a total of 18 members and 3 guests in attendance. 14 people also signed up for Friday's tour of the BNSF Customer Service and Operations center facilities in Fort Worth TX.

A short briefing of hotel security and fire alarm systems was given by the hotel management staff.

Bill MacKenzie read the minutes from the previous spring meeting in Jacksonville, FL. The minutes were accepted as written. Tom made a motion to accept the minutes as written and Ed Henry seconded.

Tom Hinton introduced himself as new chairman and thanked everyone for their support and phone calls over the recent months during his brief illness. Tom introduced Bill McKenzie, CP rail as his Vice Chairman and Joe Boehle as the new committee Secretary.

Roger Higden then gave an overview of Friday's tour of the BNSF facilities in Fort Worth advising that the tour and automated clearance program would take approximately 2 hours.

Subcommittee (A) and (B) Further Studies & Revisions to the Manual.

Subcommittee (A) – Mike Scott announced that Joe Boehle and Craig Steffey had agreed to co-chair a new subcommittee “High/Wide/Heavy Load Clearing Process”(D-1-03). Joe Boehle commented that he together with Mike Scott had written a FAQ covering many of the same processes that will be outlined and documented by this newly created sub-committee. He also commented that an instruction manual would most likely be the end result for this committee and it would be an email attachment that could be distributed to all new and existing high/wide customers.

Subcommittee (B) – Mike Scott reported there were no revisions / additions to the manual.

C-2-85 (Glossary & Bibliography) Gene Kessler - Gene suggested that since there hasn't been any activity on this sub-committee in the past 2 years that the committee be dropped. He commented that if the members decided to keep the sub-committee alive, he would like to step down and pass it to another person to chair. Tom agreed and announced a motion to drop the sub-committee and all in attendance were in favor.

C-4-85 (Heavy Duty Car Diagrams & Ratings) Tom Hinton - Tom gave out the latest copies of the car diagrams and ratings that he had received. Tom requested that any members that had new diagrams of cars coming on line be submitted to him for addition in the booklet. Joe Boehle commented about UMLER heavy duty car entry errors and the impact they have on computerized clearance systems. He described a situation involving a recent move on a private car over Norfolk Southern whereby the incorrect mid-ordinate swing entry on UMLER caused a problem with a load striking a bridge.

C-6-94 (Clearances on Shortlines) Tom Hinton – Tom commented that he has a Computer CD disk with all the shortline contact information stored. He mentioned that anyone who discovers another short line that is unlisted should email him the Contact and that he would be the “keeper of the shortline address book”.

D-10-97 (Minimum Safe Clearances) Soma Gupta – Soma was not in attendance. Tom took this time to distribute a manual that he and Jim Howell had worked on entitled “ Recommended practice for measuring excess dimension loads”. This manual was described as an 8.5 x 11 inch version (copy) of a pocket size instruction manual that Committee 28 had created many years ago for Mechanical Dept Foreman to carry and use as a reference tool when measuring high-wide loads. He also commented that anyone who had recommendations for changes etc... should do so now or bring them to the Spring Meeting in Charlotte.

RICA – Harry Ketterman - About 20 people attended the previous evening meeting. The financial status is still good and a lot of good work was completed. RICA is still looking for videos/pictures of dimensional shipment accomplishments. The meeting in Tucson will be called

C-6-89 (EDI/WEB) - Joe Boehle - Joe advised that he had received no opposition to the proposed documentation to be added onto the AREMA 28 web page and so he was moving forward to get this done. He would be in touch with the AREMA web master soon. He also questioned the members for suggestions on creating a web link between RICA and AREMA 28 and the correct etiquette. Harry Ketterman suggested he contact the RICA web master and ask if any objections to adding a link on the RICA web page and that he do the same with the AREMA 28.

C-1-62 (State Clearance Requirements) - Bob Korpanty - Bob talked briefly about the Iraqi war and the impact it has had on himself and the hard working service men and women. He spoke about his pending trip in a few months and the preparations he was going through. The members applauded and thanked him and his comrades for their outstanding effort and defense of our country. Bob stated that all of the States had been contacted and only one had any changes in the clearance regulations .

D-12-00 (Maintaining Existing Clearances) Kevin Casey – Kevin was not in attendance. Tom advised that he had contacted Jim Howell to take up this Sub-committee and he had agreed however he could not make the meeting in Fort Worth.

D-11-99 (Handling High CCG Loads) - Paul Williams – Craig Steffey advised that he and Joe Boehle were going to chair this committee due to Paul Williams retirement for CN Rail. Efforts were under way to work with AAR at Pueblo to investigate whether or not any studies on the effect of high CCG loads and super-elevated track had been performed. Craig suggested that this sub-committee be kept alive and announced that more work needs to be done.

There was no unfinished business.

New Business: Mike Scott congratulated Emeritus members Charlie Smoot and Ed Henry who were in attendance and announced that they would be honored at an AREMA Technical Conference in Chicago later this month. Several members advised they would also be in attendance. Tom announced that the spring meeting will be held in Charlotte NC on April 1 & 2, 2004. The hotel site would be announced in February. We will have a tour of the Siemens turbine / generator plant in Pineville NC.

A brief discussion ensued concerning the attendance level and lack of reports from committee chairs. Several comments were made from various members about participation and presentations. Tom commented that if anyone had any suggestions for presentations to contact him prior to the April meeting. Joe Boehle commented that CSXT had an upcoming move of a 1.5 million pound nuclear steam generator out of Charleston that should occur prior to April and will most likely be videod. All members agreed that more presentations involving hands on experience would be welcomed at meetings and draw younger engineers to AREMA. .

The gift exchange was then carried out between those that managed to bring them.

Tom entertained a motion to adjourn for the day. Carried by Joe Boehle, seconded by Charlie Smoot. Tom thanked those in attendance for their ongoing efforts to support Committee 28.

Friday October 24th - Members and spouses met for the tour outside the

hotel at 8:30 and travelled to the BNSF offices in Fort Worth . Ed Isabell and Gary Bennett greeted us at the door and secured our entry passes. We were taken to a large conference room where we also met Jessie McCabe of the BNSF Marketing department. The curtains were opened in front of us and we were amazed to see the entire BN Operations center below us. All of the Dispatchers and support staff who control all the train movements were seen working below us. Gary Bennet described the center and the various postions and responsibilities. After this Roger Higden gave a power point presentation of the BN automatic clearance system and its functionality. There were many questions from the members about the program and its uses. Tom thanked all the BN representatives for a great tour.

Respectfully submitted by:
J.B.Boehle - Secretary