



ABF CONTRACT UPDATE

DECEMBER 20, 2012

TEAMSTERS, ABF EXCHANGE CONTRACT PROPOSALS

The Teamsters National Freight Industry Negotiating Committee (TNFINC) exchanged national and supplemental contract proposals with ABF on Wednesday, December 19, and the union will fight the company's attempts to harm ABF Teamsters' livelihoods. In its initial contract proposals, ABF is proposing to slash workers' benefits and gut working conditions.

"ABF and its lawyers have cherry-picked language from a handful of first-time truckload and regional LTL (less-than-truckload) agreements and substituted that for virtually all of the language in the existing NMFA and its supplements," said Gordon Sweeton, Co-Chairman of the National ABF Negotiating Committee for TNFINC. "To say the least, this initial proposal from ABF is a real non-starter and will do nothing to advance the dialogue between the parties. We know the company needs some relief but this strategy is going nowhere fast with our Committee."

"We do not and will not negotiate in the press but this document is so far off-base we have to let our members employed

at ABF know what's gone on so far," Sweeton said.

Teamster leaders took issue with the company's assertion that the union released incorrect statements prior to this week's negotiations.

"The company is misguided when it blames labor costs primarily for its losses," Sweeton said. "The poor state of the economy over the past four years created losses at all large LTL companies and the labor-intensive type of freight operations ABF conducts are issues as well. As for pensions, the company's pension costs in its largest fund, Central States, have been frozen for the last two years with health and welfare costs only seeing modest increases during that time as well."

"Instead of labeling our statements 'misconceptions,' ABF should use its energy to take a more balanced approach for the company to find the savings it needs," Sweeton said. "Fortunately, we have a handle on those management costs and will remind ABF that we will not accept any proposals that are made solely on the backs of our members. Teamsters have worked hard to make ABF successful. Management needs to understand this and respect our members' efforts, not denigrate those efforts."



In its initial proposals, ABF wants to:

- Eliminate Supplemental Agreements and white-paper agreements;
- Reduce paid time-off;
- Eliminate the present grievance procedure that has been in effect for 50 years and replace it with arbitration;
- Expand the use of subcontractors;
- Expand the use of surveillance and computer-tracking devices, and
- Create part-time positions in most job classifications.

The Teamsters will be ready to counter the company's opening salvo during the week of January 7, when negotiations begin in earnest. Negotiations are scheduled to run into March.

The current contract expires March 31 for the 7,500 drivers, dockworkers, mechanics and clerical staff. On November 29, leaders from local ABF unions unanimously approved the Teamster's contract proposals.

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