

**U.S. Department of Labor**

Employment Standards Administration  
Office of Labor-Management Standards  
Dallas District Office  
525 Griffin Street  
Room 300  
Dallas, TX 75202  
(972)850-2500 Fax: (972)850-2501



February 4, 2008

Mr. James Ussery, Secretary-Treasurer  
Locomotive Engineers AFL-CIO  
Division 834  
121 Woods Street  
Mineola, Texas 75773

LM File Number 023-822  
Case Number: [REDACTED]

Dear Mr. Ussery:

This office has recently completed an audit of Locomotive Engineers Division 834 under the Compliance Audit Program (CAP) to determine your organization's compliance with the provisions of the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act of 1959 (LMRDA). As discussed during the exit interview with you on January 30, 2008, the following problems were disclosed during the CAP. The matters listed below are not an exhaustive list of all possible problem areas since the audit conducted was limited in scope.

Recordkeeping Violations

Title II of the LMRDA establishes certain reporting and recordkeeping requirements. Section 206 requires, among other things, that labor organizations maintain adequate records for at least five years by which each receipt and disbursement of funds, as well as all account balances, can be verified, explained, and clarified. As a general rule, labor organizations must maintain all records used or received in the course of union business.

For disbursements, this includes not only original bills, invoices, receipts, vouchers, and applicable resolutions, but also documentation showing the nature of the union business requiring the disbursement, the goods or services received, and the identity of the recipient(s) of the goods or services. In most instances, this documentation requirement can be satisfied with a sufficiently descriptive expense receipt or invoice. If an expense receipt is not sufficiently descriptive, a union officer or employee should write a note on it providing the additional information. For money it receives, the labor organization must keep at least one record showing the date, amount, purpose, and source of that money. The labor organization must also retain bank records for all accounts.

The audit of Division 834's 2007 records revealed the following recordkeeping violation:

#### Disbursement Recorded Twice

Check number [REDACTED] in the amount of \$62.95 was recorded twice in the union's books. The disbursement was reported in May 2007 and June 2007.

Based on your assurance that Division 834 will retain adequate documentation in the future, OLMS will take no further enforcement action at this time regarding the above violation.

#### Reporting Violations

The audit disclosed a violation of LMRDA Section 201(b), which requires labor organizations to file annual financial reports accurately disclosing their financial condition and operations. The latest filed Labor Organization Annual Report Form LM-3 filed by Division 834 for fiscal year ending December 31, 2006, was deficient in the following area:

#### Disbursements to Officers

Division 834 did not report the names of some officers and the total amounts of payments to them or on their behalf in Item 24 (All Officers and Disbursements to Officers). The union must report in Item 24 all persons who held office during the year, regardless of whether they received any payments from the union.

The union must report most direct disbursements to Division 834 officers and some indirect disbursements made on behalf of its officers in Item 24. A "direct

disbursement" to an officer is a payment made to an officer in the form of cash, property, goods, services, or other things of value. See the instructions for Item 24 for a discussion of certain direct disbursements to officers that do not have to be reported in Item 24. An "indirect disbursement" to an officer is a payment to another party (including a credit card company) for cash, property, goods, services, or other things of value received by or on behalf of an officer. However, indirect disbursements for temporary lodging (such as a union check issued to a hotel) or for transportation by a public carrier (such as an airline) for an officer traveling on union business should be reported in Item 48 (Office and Administrative Expense).

I am not requiring that Division 834 file an amended LM report for 2006 to correct the deficient items, but Division 834 has agreed to properly report the deficient items on all future reports it files with OLMS.

#### Other Issues

##### Signature Stamp

During the audit, you advised that it is Division 834's practice for you to sign all union checks and to stamp the signature of President Mark Grimes on union checks. You indicated that no one reviews the checks before they are issued. Article VIII of Division 834's Articles of Procedure requires that checks be signed by the president and treasurer. The two signature requirement is an effective internal control of union funds. Its purpose is to attest to the authenticity of a completed document already signed. However, the use of a signature stamp for the second signer does not attest to the authenticity of the completed check, and negates the purpose of the two signature requirement. OLMS recommends that Division 834 review these procedures to improve internal control of union funds.

I want to extend my personal appreciation to Locomotive Engineers Division 834 for the cooperation and courtesy extended during this compliance audit. I strongly recommend that you make sure this letter and the compliance assistance materials provided to you are passed on to future officers. If we can provide any additional assistance, please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely,



Investigator

Mr. James Ussery  
February 4, 2008  
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