

Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers & Trainmen, A Division of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters Rail Conference

The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLET), a Division of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters Rail Conference, was formed on January 1, 2004, as a result of a merger between the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and the 1.4-million member International Brotherhood of Teamsters.

The former Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers (BLE) is the senior national labor organization in the United States. The BLE marked its 140th anniversary in 2003 and was founded in Marshall, Mich. on May 8, 1863, as the Brotherhood of the Footboard; a year later, its name was changed to the BLE.

On December 5, 2003, BLE members overwhelmingly voted to ratify a merger with the Teamsters. The merger took effect on January 1, 2004, creating the IBT Rail Conference and formally changing the name of BLE to BLET. The BLET is the founding member of the IBT Rail Conference.

MEMBERSHIP: After accepting only promoted locomotive engineers in its early years, the BLET opened its membership to trainmen and other rail employees. Active members number 31,000. The BLET's total membership is more than 50,000 and growing, in spite of industry consolidation. Since January 1, 1992, locomotive engineers must be trained and tested to be federally certified to operate trains.

AFFILIATIONS: The BLET is a division within the Teamsters Rail Conference. The BLET is also an affiliate member of Change to Win, and is active in several rail industry-specific groups.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE: Local units of the BLET are known as Divisions. Each Division elects four primary local officers — President, Local Chairman, Secretary-Treasurer and Legislative Representative — each serving three-year terms. The BLET is comprised of more than 600 Divisions.

HEADQUARTERS: The BLET National Division Office is located at: Standard Building Mezzanine, 1370 Ontario St., Cleveland, OH 44113-1702 (built and owned by the BLET). The National Legislative Office is located at the Teamsters headquarters, 25 Louisiana Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20001.

