



MEMORANDUM

TO: Railroad Neutrals

FROM: Roland Watkins *Roland Watkins*
Director, Office of Arbitration Services

DATE: December 16, 2009

RE: Compensation for Web Based Hearings – Pilot Project

Pursuant to its fiscal authority under the Railway Labor Act, the National Mediation Board (NMB) will exercise its discretion over funding in order to help ensure that there is an efficient use of the limited taxpayers' monies available for Section 3 activities. The following pilot project is effective immediately and will remain in effect for Fiscal Year 2010.

It is the policy of the NMB to promote the use of web-based video conferencing for hearing cases. Priority in the authorizing of days for hearings will generally be given to arbitrators who use NMB web-based video conferencing. Arbitrators are encouraged to use the NMB web-based video conferencing for hearing cases.

The NMB will train you and the parties on the use of web-based video conferencing. This training as well as the actual conferences will be handled by Donald West, the web-video coordinator. Please contact either Carol Conrad or Darrell Dancer for the correct procedure to request video conferencing. The telephone number is 202-692-5055. Ms. Conrad or Mr. Dancer will have Mr. West contact you once you have indicated your desire. The NMB will loan the arbitrator and the parties a camera, if necessary.

In order to encourage the use of web-based conferencing, the NMB will compensate the arbitrator at the rate of \$600.00 per day for hearing cases using web-based video conferencing. The web-based conferencing must be done from the arbitrator's home or office. The arbitrator will be able to use the facilities at the National Railroad Adjustment Board or the NMB's headquarters in Washington, D.C. The arbitrator must hear a minimum of five (5) cases that day. This compensation covers only the hearing day and by accepting payment at this rate the arbitrator understands that no travel will be authorized associated with those cases. In all other matters, the arbitrator will be compensated at the rate of \$300.00 per day. No travel will be authorized for any executive conferences or subsequent hearings on these cases.

This is not a permanent increase in compensation but will be reviewed by the NMB at the end of the fiscal year.

Any questions should be directed to either Carol Conrad or Darrell Dancer at (202) 692-5055 or at arb@nmb.gov.