Brian E. Gorton Named President and Chief Operating Officer of Conrail

Conrail has announced that its Board of Directors has unanimously named Brian E. Gorton as its President and Chief Operating Officer, effective April 19, 2021. Gorton succeeds Timothy Tierney, who retired after nearly 43 years in the railroad industry.

BRIAN E. GORTON

Gorton brings over thirty years of railroad experience and expertise to his new position. This appointment is also a homecoming for him, as he began his career as a Trainman for Conrail in 1987. He managed to advance to the position of Assistant Terminal Superintendent before departing Conrail prior to CSXT and Norfolk Southern's acquisition of Conrail in 1998.

After his departure from Conrail, Gorton began working at the Union Pacific Railroad where he served in various capacities within their Transportation Department. Most recently, Gorton was the General Manager of UP’s Houston and Gulf Coast Service Units. He was responsible for all aspects of rail operations for a territory that encompassed over 2,000 track miles and close to 1,000 employees.

“Brian has worked in the industry from the ground level up and has proven himself to be a leader with an exceptional commitment to hard work and safety,” said Timothy Tierney, the former President and COO of Conrail. “He brings a wealth of knowledge and experience in the rail industry and will continue to accelerate Conrail’s commitment to our core values of prioritizing people first and providing safe and efficient service. I am very confident that the leadership of Conrail is in good hands.”

Tierney served as a strong leader for Conrail. He was able to guide the company through the difficult circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic and also oversaw the successful implementation of PTC during his tenure. Before being appointed as President and Chief Operating Officer in 2017, Tierney worked in various positions of increasing responsibility within the Engineering Department, before becoming the Chief Engineer for Conrail in 1999 at the time of the NS and CSX acquisition.

“I would like to thank Tim for his 43 years of dedicated service and the positive impact he has made on the railroad industry,” said Gorton. “His contribution to the success of Conrail before and after Shared Assets is unmeasurable. I wish him a long and happy retirement that he has so honorably earned.”
Message from the President

First and foremost, I would like to thank each of you for the warm welcome I have received since re-joining the Conrail Team. I have had the opportunity to see a lot of the railroad and to meet many of you in my travels. I have been thoroughly impressed with the people I have met and the condition of the properties that they serve. I look forward to meeting many more of you in the coming months.

Before I share the rest of my thoughts, I want to bid a very fond farewell to Mr. Timothy Tierney who served as your President for the last 4 years. Tim was instrumental in many projects and endeavors that Conrail went through before and after split date. He was a key player on making Conrail what it is today, and the industry owes him a debt of gratitude for his outstanding service for the last 43 years. Tim has always been a true professional and an asset to the Conrail family. I wish him and his wife Sue the happiest of times as they embark in this next chapter of their lives.

A little bit about my railroad career: I joined Conrail back in 1987 as a Trainman in the Philadelphia area and was eventually promoted to a Locomotive Engineer. Over the years, I was promoted into the management ranks, and I worked in numerous management positions across Conrail’s network. In 1998, I left Conrail and joined the Union Pacific Railroad, where I also held numerous management and executive positions within their organization. When the opportunity arose for me to return to Conrail and lead the Conrail team, I could not believe my good fortune. I am extremely happy to have been presented with this unbelievable opportunity and to have the honor of leading this outstanding team.

There will no doubt be changes with my arrival, and I want these changes to have a positive impact on not only our business and the customers we serve, but also on our employees. I saw an immediate need to improve the quality of life for our Transportation employees and with the implementation of our new Absenteeism Policy, I have no doubt that will help in that endeavor. I also found a very archaic Discipline Policy that needed to be addressed immediately. The new Absenteeism and Discipline Policies are now in effect, and I hope you are already seeing the benefits.

Another change that I am sure you all are seeing is the sense of urgency in which we are operating this railroad. Expectations have never been greater, and we all should welcome these changes as the new normal. We must run the most efficient, cost effective railroad in the Northeast, and I have no doubt that we have all the right people in place to get that done.

Life is slowly returning to normal as the COVID-19 restrictions are being lifted state by state, and more and more of our population is receiving their vaccinations. I truly believe that the worst is behind us now, and we have great opportunities on the horizon. Our customers are also starting to return to normal operation levels, and we are starting to see greater carloads returning to our network. We have continued to hire and train throughout the pandemic, and we are in a great position to take on these carloads and deliver the world-class service to the customers that they have come to expect from the Conrail team.

In closing, I want to thank all of you for the work you have done throughout this unprecedented pandemic. We certainly have brighter days ahead and we are a stronger company due to what we have all gone through. You should all feel a great sense of pride knowing that you were a part of a team that kept this country moving.

Brian Gorton,
President and Chief Operating Officer
Conrail Supervisor of Structures Ed Statzer recently passed the rigorous Principles and Practice of Engineering exam to earn the distinction of being a Licensed Professional Engineer (PE). Statzer graduated from Michigan Tech. University with a degree in Civil Engineering with a focus on rail transportation.

Statzer joined Conrail in 2012 as a Track Supervisor and transferred to B&B in 2013. Working in the field made Statzer eligible to take the PE license exam. “You have to get a four-year degree in Engineering, and then spend four years in the field to qualify for the exam. Once I completed the field training, I took the exam in April,” said Statzer.

In addition to the four years of post-graduate full-time work experience, prepping for the exam requires as much as 200 hours of study. Statzer accomplished the demands necessary to pass the exam, all while fulfilling his daily responsibilities at Conrail. “I studied around 6 hours everyday for 3 months and I can’t even remember the number of practices exams I took, but it was a lot,” said Statzer.

The PE license gives Statzer more credibility in his field and now authorizes him to review and sign off on any construction projects that Conrail may want to conduct in the future, as well as approve requests from outside parties. “I work along side a lot of Engineers that are PEs in the industry, and now that I am one as well, it definitely is a confidence booster for me and gives me a lot more credibility among them. I am proud of myself for accomplishing this and I’m extremely grateful for all the encouragement and support from everyone here at Conrail,” he added.
When the weather heats up so does the work. This past Spring Conrail’s engineering departments were out in full force at the Oak Island Hump yard in North Jersey for the first of many “maximum planned outages” of their busy production season. The objective was to install a new intermediate retarder, install a new/fit switch in group 2, as well as installing new timbers and ties in various areas during the shutdown. During the outage, the Signal Department was also able to address multiple issues brought to light by the recently upgraded hump system. This included adjusting the DTC (distance to couple) as well as re-shoeing the group 4 retarder. Re-shoeing is the process of replacing worn brake shoes that are used to slow cars down as they roll down the hump.

In preparation for the vast amount of work that needed to be done in a short amount of time, the department set out to delegate tasks to ensure productivity. Coordination fell to more than just the 50 Conrail employees who were working and managing the outage. The Track and Signal Departments came together working with multiple outside contractors to accomplish planned work safely and on schedule. The work completed is essential to providing a good track structure that is needed to maintain track speeds for our Transportation Department.

There were various challenges during the project that have made coordination and preparation a delicate task to manage. With the current health crisis and ever fluid mandates for protection of employees, COVID-19 has proven to be one of the more challenging components when planning for outages and projects. The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) had released a mask mandate for all employees. During the outage, a FRA inspector made an unannounced safety inspection. From this, Conrail received a very generous compliment from the inspector stating, “It’s really admirable to see supervisors and managers work together along with their respective gang members to see projects through from conception to completion on these large-scale projects and work safely while completing the job”.

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RYAN WAGNER, named one of RT&S inauguaral Top 10 Under 40

Railway Track & Structures magazine has formed its inaugural 10 under 40 list honoring young engineers. Each winner was nominated and evaluated by the editorial staff at RT&S, and the goal was to select a slate of winners that best exemplify the engineering industry.

Conrail’s Supervisor of Structures Ryan Wagner was selected by RT&S magazine’s inaugural recipients. Wagner began his career in 2014 as North Jersey’s Bridge and Building Department Supervisor. He oversaw the department’s daily maintenance operations as well as extensive capital improvement projects.

In 2019, he was promoted and expanded his responsibility to Conrail’s B&B Department system wide. He currently manages Conrail’s bridge inspection and capital maintenance programs in all three subdivisions and focuses primarily on the planning and execution of the inspection and maintenance of Conrail’s bridges and culverts.

One of Wagner’s landmark accomplishments was implementing an electronic inspection reporting system for the Engineering Department. This was a tremendous challenge considering Conrail has been utilizing a handwritten reporting system. In just over a year, Wagner had designed and implemented a new electronic bridge inspection system.

We would like to congratulate Ryan on this great accomplishment. This is only the beginning of what promises to be a long and successful career with Conrail.

Detroit Family Picnic
STEPHEN MCGINNIS | Communications Coordinator

Conrail strives to not only set the bar for safety and service performance, but to also recognize employees for their contributions toward Conrail’s success. Conrail believes it’s important that employees realize their hard work and dedication does not go unnoticed. The company hosts recognition events as a way of thanking their employees and families for their commitment and devotion to the railroad.

On August 22nd, our Detroit employees and their families were invited to experience firsthand the sights, sounds and sensations of America’s fascinating formation, 300 years of American perseverance at the Henry Ford Greenfield Village. Employees could step foot in the lab where Thomas Edison had his lightbulb moment or the Wright brothers’ workshop. They were also able to enjoy a ride in a real Model T, and a steam locomotive or just enjoy a walk through four working farms.

Everyone in attendance received a t-shirt and employees received a plethora of Conrail swag. They also had the chance to win one of the many items raffled off throughout the day; the grand prizes were a Yeti Tundra Cooler and Hopper Flip Cooler. Jake Dunn was the lucky winner of the Tundra Cooler and Donnie Howell took home the Hopper Cooler!

We would like to thank all who participated in making this event so enjoyable.

We hope everyone who was able to make it had a great time and we encourage everyone to join us next year.
Every Week is Rail Safety Week

Here are some tips to stay safe:

• Always expect a train; freight trains don’t follow published schedules.
• A typical freight train can take more than a mile to stop.
• The train you see is likely closer and faster-moving than you think.
• The only safe place to cross the tracks is at a designated crossing.
• Being on railroad tracks and property is not only dangerous – it’s illegal!

We would like to recognize all of our employees who have reached injury free milestones. Thank you for your dedication to safety.

Injury Free

DETROIT

Danny Burby, Conductor, 10 Years of service
Aaron Dobbs, Yardmaster, 10 Years of service
Justin Lavalle, Conductor, 10 Years of service
Christopher Neys, Conductor, 10 Years of service
Derek Deman, Car Inspector, 15 Years of service
Gary Ennis, Car Inspector, 15 Years of service

MOUNT LAUREL / PHILADELPHIA

Joseph Callandrillo, Customer Service Rep., 5 Years of service
Steven Magourik, Project & Planning Coord., 5 Years of service
Robert Baylor, Asst. Chief Eng. Structures, 10 Years of service
Donald Cannon, Crew Dispatcher, 10 Years of service
Brett Fenton, Asst Real Estate Mgr., 10 Years of service
Brian Obermeier, Supervisor C&S, 10 Years of service
Daniel Carle, Asset Engineer, 10 Years of service
Steven Scullin, Manager-Eng. Contracts, 10 Years of service
Robert Winegrad, Sr. Director Real Estate, 10 Years of service

NORTH JERSEY

Rinor Marku, Stevedore, 5 Years of service
Frank Eorio, Foreman, 10 Years of service
Michael Escrivao, Welder Foreman, 10 Years of service
Edward Havet, Conductor, 10 Years of service
David Jose, Engineer, 10 Years of service
Ehren Roberts, Trainmaster, 10 Years of service
George Wolf, Conductor, 10 Years of service
Mark Brooks, Stevedore, 15 Years of service
Michael Bucci, Welder, 15 Years of service
Edwin Rojas, Stevedore, 15 Years of service
Sean Sowers, Welder Foreman, 15 Years of service

SOUTH JERSEY

Jared Little, Maintainer/Repairman, 5 Years of service
Michael Gaul, Engineer, 10 Years of service
Zachary Gaul, Engineer, 10 Years of service
Albert Swartz, Track Supervisor, 10 Years of service
Casey Taylor, Trainmaster, 10 Years of service
Patrick McWilliams, Dir. Mechanical Ops, 15 Years of service
Ice Cream Safety Days

During the months of July and August Conrail hosted Ice Cream Safety Days at various yards and offices system wide. Employees got to enjoy a sweet treat, received bottles of sunscreen, safety rules were reinforced, and employees were reminded of the challenges faced when working in the summer months.

Team Conrail

Simply put, teamwork is efficient work.

Healthy collaboration between departments is a sign of a positive work culture which promotes strong working relationships. Cross-departmental collaboration is essential in the rail industry as most projects require input from various departments to be successful.

This is the case in the above photo when time sensitive correspondence needed to be distributed to all Conrail employees. Team Conrail banded together joining employees from Operations, Law, Employee Relations, Finance and Risk Departments to coordinate the mass mailing. Each group established a unique system and within no time, the job was done. A big thank you for everyone's help, great teamwork!
SAVE THE DATE!

Saturday, Sept. 11, 2021
12:00 P.M. – 5:00 P.M.

Employee Appreciation Day
Conrail Company Family Picnic
at
Frogbridge Picnics and Special
Events Venue
Millstone Township, New Jersey

RSVP to njpartyrsvp@conrail.com