PRE-OP SETUP

Prior to the actual ops session, trains must be staged and cars distributed to various industries. Paperwork must be printed up and train crews assignments must be pulled.

Even before the actual staging of cars, ops session dates are selected an e-mails are sent to the NCL Operators list notifying operators of upcoming dates for ops sessions. Sessions are limited to a maximum of 10 operators. Any members signing up after the 10 slots are filled are placed on the Extra Board and can participate if a vacancy in any of the 10 filled positions occurs.

Car staging is coordinated through the use of Ship iT freight car routing software. The software keeps tracks of car inventory, train schedules, industries, industry product requests and shipper product production. During Pre-Op, the software compares shippers and consignees with available cars. The software then prepares a list of trains which will route the requested cars to their final destination. Empty cars are routed back to their home yard or to the next industry requesting that particular type of railcar.

The software provides a starting and ending list for each session. Cars are positioned on the layout according to the Starting Location list. Locomotives are assigned to trains manually based upon their last reported location on the layout. Once trains and rail cars are properly staged, train switch lists and yard arrival and departure lists are printed out.

One copy of each switch list is provided for the session. 3 copies of the Yard Arrival and Departure lists are printed, one copy each to the Yardmaster, the Yard Locomotive Engineer and the Yard Engine Brakeman. Samples of these lists are provided in Appendix E.

An Ending Car Location list is printed and filed for reference in order to score each session at the end of the session.

Job assignments are determined by assessing the number of operator hours completed by each member. Members signed up are provided every opportunity to obtain the minimum hours within a specific job over several ops sessions in order to obtain one or more certifications. Estimated hours for each job are used to determine in advance if an operator will meet the minimum hours in a job category at the end of the upcoming session.

Job assignments are recorded on the Formal Call Sheet and posted in the Crew Lounge. A copy of the Formal Call Sheet is provided to the Hostler for use during the ops session. A sample of a Formal Operations Call Sheet is provided in Appendix C.

When operators arrive for each ops session, a 30-minute period immediately prior to each session is provided in order to brief operators on recent changes or allow new operators to become familiar with the railroad. Once the briefing period is over, the formal operations session begins.