

Reasons for having the Ergonomics Committee:

1. The Ergonomics Committee acts as a clearing house for engineers to identify design deficiencies, in locomotive cabs specifically, that are systemic and adversely affect the health and safety of engineers which, with the cooperation of the Mechanical Department, leads to changes and upgrades that improve the safety for both engineers and mechanical department personnel (including but not limited to cab overhead ventilators, excessive and pervasive high noise levels, toilet odors and cleanliness, improper and unauthorized engineer seats, window shades and glazing, door latch defects, security locks, improper A/C drains, loud alarms, cab housecleaning concerns, windshield wiper and bell controls).
2. The Ergonomics Committee, when closely involved early in the design phase of locomotive and control car cabs, can identify ergonomic problems so corrections can be made before the sheet metal is stamped and the problems become expensive makeovers or impediments to the safe operation of trains (example: poorly thought out switchology, legroom, proper position of cab appliances/radios, horn and brake valves, seats, ventilation, unwanted reflections, and vision obstructions).
3. Based on the longevity of the Comet I, GP-40 PH, and F-40 locomotives the cabs designed today will be occupied by engineers who have not yet been born so the cabs designed today must be the best, most efficient, and comfortable cabs possible.
4. The Ergonomics Committee learns from past mistakes in locomotive cab design and therefore is able to improve future cab design whereas manufacturers and outside consultants provide no continuity in locomotive cab design (this is exemplified by the Comet V hand brake and wheel slip alarms which were excessively loud to the point of annoyance and became a safety issue. Even the manufacturer [Quantum] was not aware of the problem, Toilet size, placement, and ventilation). Design problems created in initial construction and identified by the Ergonomics Committee can be corrected during normally scheduled locomotive and cab car maintenance periods or in rebuild programs when they are due.
5. The Ergonomics Committee can pickup design errors that conflict with FRA regulations and recommendations that outside contractors may miss (SDU washout, ventilation system defects, cab seat design, toilet placement, lighting, and ventilation, ditch light controls).
6. The proper and early implementation of cab design improvements, government requirements, and recommendations, and safety related aspects of cab design can prevent mental and physical irritations which will, over time, become distractions detrimental to the engineers performance and therefore become safety concerns as the engineer is hindered in his/her ability to fully concentrate on the safe completion of their assignments. (Noncompliance with FRA requirements and recommendations and problems which affect the ability of the engineer to perform his/her job safely can lead to expensive and lengthy retrofits of equipment after the has arrived on the property and is in service)
7. We are the only organized committee on New Jersey Transit that speaks solely for the craft of engineer in the design of locomotive cabs. No other organization is as concerned for the health, welfare, and safe performance of the engineer in day-to-day engine service. With engineers spending more and more time in the seat of locomotives and control cars cabs must be designed to be clean, quiet, and safe with the fewest number of distraction possible.
8. Meetings of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen's Ergonomics Committee and the New Jersey Transit Mechanical Department is a practical obligation committed to by both New Jersey Transit and the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers that requires both parties to meet to discuss and correct ergonomic issues with the result that improved locomotive and control car cabs improve the safety of train operation system wide.