

*The union's role "is to make sure that nobody's rights get abridged, that everybody gets what they're entitled to."*

– Bob Dean

System Operators met at Weakley Hall on April 20 to air their concerns about PG&E's consolidation of operations.

Business Manager Tom Dalzell and Business Rep. Bob Dean listened to members' views and sorted through some of the issues raised by the company's action, which ultimately will reduce 30 control centers to just four.

One major concern is that switching functions that have been traditionally performed by transmission operators are being turned over to electricians. Another concern is that operators—who have had intimate knowledge of their individual jurisdictions—will now have operational responsibilities that span virtually the entire state.

"There are worries about discipline involved with mistakes, lack of training, the fact that these guys are never going to physically see the jurisdiction they're operating anymore, they'll just be on computers," said Dean. Operators will have "a lot more responsibility on them individually."

The impact on employees in some cases could be drastic. Some will have to uproot and live near the new Grid Control

Center in Vacaville, perhaps relocating from as far away as Burney and Humboldt in the north and Bakersfield in the south.

This will mean "major disruptions to individuals' lives," said Dean. This could include leaving communities where they have roots, moving their families, their children having to adjust to new schools.

Presumably most employees will want to avoid these impacts to the extent that they can, and a considerable amount of time at the Weakley Hall meeting was spent discussing members' rights under Title 206 of the labor agreement as well as benefits spelled out in relevant letter agreements.

### Common Misconception

There is a common misconception, said Dean, that the union could stop the consolidation. But in fact, PG&E has a contractual right to run its company, and to consolidate operations if it chooses to do so.

"At the end of the day we're coming in and trying to miti-

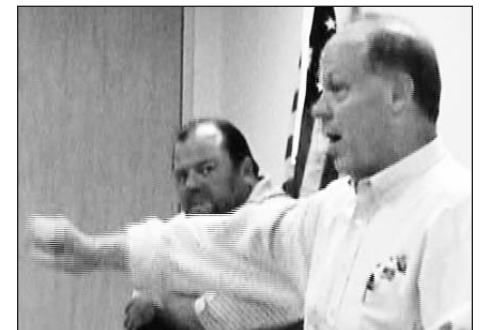
gate or lessen the effect of the move on people's lives—financially where we can do that, opening jobs where we can do that," said Dean. The union's role "is to make sure that nobody's rights get abridged, that everybody gets what they're entitled to."

That includes assuring that Title 206—the demotion and layoff procedure spelled out in the labor agreement—is conducted in a way that is "fair and transparent, that everyone understands that if anybody got a job it was done fairly."

The union was also involved in getting 14 switchman positions opened up so that 14 people can avoid being uprooted, said Dean. "They'll be able to work close to home."

The union has also negotiated letters of agreement providing for commute allowances and commitment allowances for people that relocate, and is seeking enhanced severance benefits for employees who decide to leave the company.

"A lot of guys are leaving. We have a lot of guys



Business Manager Tom Dalzell responds to concerns—and there were plenty of them—raised by PG&E System Operators at the April 20 meeting at Weakley Hall.

who are going to become electricians, a lot of young guys who have become linemen. People are doing different things to avoid having to leave, to stay close to home," Dean said, while other employees look at going to the GCC as a new career path.

### Attendees:

- |                 |                  |
|-----------------|------------------|
| John Bell       | Keith Loudermilk |
| Boris Chavez    | Paul Mackin      |
| Kelton Crawford | Juan Mangual     |
| John Edwards    | Dave Montoya     |
| Todd Gracyk     | Steve Newbill    |
| Scott Grunhofer | Jim Norwood      |
| Ken Gutierrez   | Steve Palesch    |
| Brent Hamilton  | Brienden Realph  |
| Mark Hedlund    | Brian Richards   |
|                 | Dave Sankey      |
|                 | Daryl Turner     |
|                 | Ryan Unon        |



## Operators Speak Up



David Montoya



Darryl Turner



Brienden Realph



Mark Headland



Scott Grundhofer



Business Rep. Bob Dean, standing right with back to camera, fields questions from System Operators.