



July 21, 2021



ASLRRRA's Continuous Welded Rail Program Receives Approval from FRA

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) has approved ASLRRRA's updated [Continuous Welded Rail \(CWR\) Program](#), which is available to members at the link above.

The FRA [requires](#) railroads to adopt and comply with CWR programs that include installation, adjustment, inspection and maintenance procedures, including joint bar inspection.

ASLRRRA members with previously approved programs do not need to resubmit. However, ASLRRRA recommends member railroads submitting a program for the first time or resubmitting a program use the Association's approved program. Please contact ASLRRRA's [JR Gelnar](#) with questions about the CWR Program.

Eight ASLRRRA-Member Employees Honored as *Progressive Railroading's* Rising Stars in Virtual Ceremony

On July 20, *Progressive Railroading* magazine [honored](#) the 25 winners of its 2021 Rising Stars Award in a virtual ceremony what was also live-streamed on Facebook. Eight of this year's winners are employees at ASLRRRA-member companies.

Rising Stars are honored for being up-and-coming leaders in the rail industry, recognized for having a positive impact on their companies, demonstrating leadership and being involved in professional associations and their communities.

ASLRRRA congratulates this year's Rising Stars, especially:

- [Harrison Armstrong](#), R.J. Corman Railroad Group LLC
- [Troy Banks](#), New Orleans Public Belt Railroad
- [Erika Bruhnke](#), RailPros
- [Kimberly Howe](#), Siemens Mobility
- [Joangelie Lind](#), Florida East Coast Railway
- [Charlie Monte Verde](#), Genesee Valley Transportation
- [Preston Nelson](#), Watco
- [Nick Troutman](#), Pioneer Lines



Save the Date for ASLRRRA's Annual Conference

2021 Phoenix Convention Center Phoenix, AZ November 17-19	2022 St. Louis Convention Center St. Louis, MO May 1-4
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Visit aslrra.org/events to learn more



Government Website Consolidates Information to Help Organizations Defend Against Ransomware Attacks

A new U.S. government website is meant to help public and private organizations defend themselves against the recent rise in ransomware cases.

According to a Department of Homeland Security [press release](#), the website, StopRansomware.gov offers a central location for ransomware resources and alerts using a whole-of-government

approach. Users can now access one central hub to find information that used to be scattered across a number of different websites.

Resources include ransomware protection, detection and response guidance as well as information from the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) and other federal partners.

ASLRRRA strongly recommends that members use these types of resources. Other ways to maintain awareness of cyber attacks is to subscribe to National Cyber Awareness System (NCAS) Alerts from CISA and access the Association of American Railroads' Railway Alert Network (RAN) notices on ASLRRRA's [website](#).

ASLRRRA's On-Demand Webinar library also features a three-part series on cybersecurity, presented and sponsored by Collins Aerospace.

DOT ROUTES Initiative Seeking Two Transportation Specialists

The ROUTES (Rural Opportunities to Use Transportation for Economic Success) Initiative has two open positions in Washington, D.C. for transportation specialists.

Transportation specialists will help gather data, conduct policy research, develop outreach events and more to help support the ROUTES Initiative and incorporate rural considerations into U.S. Department of Transportation activities.

Follow this [link](#) for more information or to apply for the position. Applications are due July 30.



Work Continues in Congress on an Infrastructure Bill and FY22 Funding

There are two important processes happening on Capitol Hill this month, and ASLRRA's Government Affairs Team and members of ASLRRA's Legislative Policy Committee (LPC) are actively engaged in shaping the outcomes of both to ensure short line freight priorities are adequately represented.

The Senate is poised to undertake a procedural vote on Wednesday to begin debate on the bipartisan infrastructure package, which was proposed in late June by a bipartisan group of senators and is supported by President Joe Biden.

This package has been generating a variety of industry and commercial support. A July 13 letter to leaders of both parties in the House and Senate from nearly 370 mayors from all 50 states and the District of Columbia called on Congress to take immediate action on the package, known in DC as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Framework. Many details of the legislation are still being negotiated, but the group has announced that \$66 billion will be provided for the rail network. ASLRRA staff and the LPC are working to ensure that any funding for rail programs include a fair and reasonable portion for short line freight rail efforts, not just passenger rail programs.

In the other chamber, the House Appropriations Committee approved the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Fiscal Year 2022 funding bill last week. The legislation contains several ASLRRA priorities, including \$500 million for the CRISI program (an increase of \$125 million from last year), \$3 million for the Short Line Safety Institute, and some favorable language concerning truck size and weights. The full House is preparing to consider the legislation as early as next week, along with a number of other spending bills.

Transportation Secretary Tours ASLRRA Member Rail Yard as Part of Chicago Visit

U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg's July 16 visit to Chicago included a [tour of rail yards](#) belonging to CSX and ASLRRA member the Belt Railway Company of Chicago.

Buttigieg, along with Illinois Congresswoman Marie Newman, Governor J.B. Pritzker and other representatives, toured the Bedford Park Intermodal Facility as part of an effort to learn more about the Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) Program.

The [CREATE Program](#) is a public-private partnership working to improve Chicago's railroads and make them safer, more efficient and better able to accommodate traffic growth on both passenger and freight networks. Some projects being completed through the program include grade separations for the Belt Railway Company and Indiana Harbor Belt Railroad Company, also an ASLRRA member.

ASLRRA SAFETY & TRAINING

Post-Accident Toxicological Testing Video

Visit www.aslrra.org/safety for more info



ASLRRA Announcements

Joint Committee Meeting to be Held in Montana in August

ASLRRA will hold its [Joint Committee Meeting](#) Aug. 11-12 at the Northern Pacific Billings Depot in Billings, Mont.

Any ASLRRA member can attend the meetings, which offer a good opportunity to learn more about the Association's committees, their responsibilities and how they operate. Follow the link above for more information and to register for the event.

Updated Environmental Impact Page Talks About Benefits of Rail

The Association has updated the [Environmental Impact](#) page on its website, which can now be found by clicking on the Environment tab at the top of the ASLRRA site.

The Environmental Impact page brings together information and different ASLRRA resources to both communicate the environmental benefits of rail and help members learn more about working toward sustainability. There are also [stories](#) about ways ASLRRA members have already reduced their carbon emissions, increased fuel efficiency and worked to replace truck shipments with rail.

Also included is a link to the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) SmartWay page. SmartWay is a free program allowing shipping companies to become more sustainable by helping them measure their efficiency and set benchmarks for further improvement. ASLRRA strongly encourages its members to join SmartWay as a Rail Affiliate. This way, shippers can evaluate the benefits of adding short line rail to their transportation mix.

Follow the link above to learn more about short lines and the environment. Members who would like to share stories about how they have adopted environmentally-friendly practices can [email](#) their stories to be featured on the Environmental Impact page.

Loram Offers Preferred Pricing on its Track Inspection Technology to ASLRRA Members

As an ASLRRA Member Discount Program Preferred Provider, Loram's Aurora Track Inspection Technology is available to ASLRRA members with preferred pricing. Features of Aurora Track Inspection Technology include:

- state-of-the-art imaging technology (Aurora scans track to reveal the exact condition of every tie along the way);
- pinpoints potential problems and marks their exact location;
- helps railroad to plan repairs in the most efficient way possible;
- provides detailed report that enables railroad to streamline capital maintenance programs; and
- helps ensure railroad is in line with industry regulations with compliance reports.

Members can turn tie inspections into savings and safety with four-scale tie grading 1-4; GPS coordinates for all ties; tie grade summaries per mile; 39' FRA tie condition report; joint bar location report; and joint tie condition report. Visit <http://www.aslrra.org/discounts> to learn how Loram's Aurora Track Inspection Technology can make your operations safer and more efficient.



As an ASLRRRA Preferred Provider, Loram offers Discounts on Tie and Track Inspection Services to ASLRRRA Members.

Click to learn more!



ASLRRRA Webinars – Live or On-Demand

Upcoming Webinars

[Hours of Service Pilot Program](#) - July 29, 2021

This webinar, which is only open to ASLRRRA members, is a discussion of the pilot program being developed by ASLRRRA, which would allow train employees to initiate on-duty periods between the hours of midnight and 6 am, on six consecutive days followed by 24 hours of rest before returning to work. ASLRRRA is seeking interested railroads to participate in a fatigue study approved by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). This informational webinar will help you to decide if this waiver is right for your railroad.

Recorded Webinars Presented by RRB Representatives Explain Railroad Retirement Benefits

One of ASLRRRA's most popular webinar series discusses railroad retirement benefits. The three-part series, presented by representatives from the Railroad Retirement Board, explains eligibility requirements for retirement and disability benefits and spouse and survivor benefits, post-retirement work limits and more.

All recordings are available on demand at the click of a mouse at ASLRRRA's [webinars page](#). Check out the sessions featured below, which can be found in the Finance and Administration category:

- RRB General Eligibility and Employee Benefits
- RRB Spouse Benefits and Working After Retirement
- RRB Survivor Benefits and General Information

ASLRRRA's [online resource library](#) offers more than 150 webinar recordings on a variety of topics. From industry-specific finance, human resources and legal issues to business development and regulatory compliance, there is a session to meets the needs of every member of your team.

Visit aslrra.org/webinars and select the On Demand Webinars button to view a complete list of all available recordings.

[Click here](#) for more ASLRRRA events.

Industry Events and Announcements

August 3 to 5 – RRB’s Triennial National Rail Employer Training Seminar to be Presented Online

The Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) will use its new conference virtual platform to hold its National Rail Employer Training Seminar Aug. 3-5.

The seminar, which is held once every three years, is meant for railroad officials who interact with the RRB, preparing and filing reports of service, compensation, contributions and conducting other business. Event sessions will include agency updates from RRB executives, presentations on RRB issues from subject-matter experts and an RRB Virtual Information Booth allowing attendees to update employee information and employer contact information and post job vacancies.

Follow this [link](#) to register for the event, or to find more information.

New SLSI Safety Tip Discusses Emergency Response Guidebook

The Short Line Safety Institute (SLSI) has posted a [new Hazardous Materials Safety Tip](#) on its website. The tip discusses the [2020 Emergency Response Guidebook](#) (ERG) and gives a brief overview of the ERG’s five sections.

Several other Safety Tips discussing hazardous materials can be found on the [SLSI’s site](#), along with tips that discuss different ways to promote a safe work environment.

[Click here](#) for more industry events.

Views & News is published by American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association. Please contact [Amy Krouse](#), editor, with questions or comments.