



July 28, 2021



ASLRRRA Reports Record New Members for 2021

A record number of companies have joined ASLRRRA as new members in the first seven months of 2021. The total number of new member companies topped 100 this week – a number that is higher than ASLRRRA has ever had on even a full-year basis.

The surge in new members across all membership categories has been driven by several factors, according to Vice President of Membership Kathy Keeney. The resumption of face-to-face meetings after a 15-month hiatus was definitely one factor behind the unprecedented growth.

"Some we can attribute to our FRA training programs, specifically the Part 243 template effort, and some to our federal advocacy work on grants, taxes, and economic and safety regulatory issues," said Keeney. "Some new members are companies that joined after a key executive from a current ASLRRRA member company came on board at a non-member company and internally advocated for joining. Others have joined to take advantage of the networking opportunities at our in-person regional meetings last month in Louisville and Kansas City and the upcoming November 17-19 annual conference in Phoenix."

"In addition, many of our railroad holding companies are bringing on ever more subsidiaries as members as they expand and some of our most-engaged members are encouraging others to join the organization based on their positive experiences," Keeney added. "We are immensely grateful to our membership evangelists – their colleague-to-colleague testimonials are pure gold."

Looking for innovative ways to engage its newest members, the Association launched orientation and welcome sessions on Zoom to "meet" new members that came on in the prior quarter. The informative, informal sessions are led by ASLRRRA President Chuck Baker and Keeney and include a rotation of other staff such as JR Gelnar, Amy Krouse and Jo Strang. A third-quarter Zoom welcome is planned for early October.

"We are beyond grateful for the membership, engagement, and support of our new and longtime members alike. Every company that joins and participates strengthens our industry and our association," said Baker.

Congratulations to Winners of RT&S's 2021 Women in Railway Engineering Awards

Four employees at ASLRRRA-member companies have won *Railway Track & Structures* magazine's inaugural [2021 Women in Railway Engineering](#) award. A total of ten women were recognized for their contributions to their companies, as well as their leadership.

ASLRRRA congratulates Karen Kuivinen, manager, right of way, real estate and contracts at Florida Central Railroad; Louisa Stanlake, consumables technology manager at L.B. Foster Company; Ann

Waters, director, engineering planning and support at Genesee and Wyoming's Railroad Engineering Services; and Julina Corona, structural engineer at RailPros.



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Bentley

The advertisement features a dark blue background on the left with white and green text. On the right, there is a photograph of a modern light rail train in a station, overlaid with a glowing blue grid pattern representing data analytics. The Bentley logo is in the bottom right corner.



FRA Final Rule Makes Changes to PTC Reporting Requirements

On July 27, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) issued a [final rule](#) concerning positive train control (PTC) systems and reporting PTC system performance.

The new rule, which is effective Aug. 26, has several meaningful changes. First, recognizing that the railroad industry intends to enhance FRA-certified PTC systems to continue improving rail safety and PTC technology's reliability and operability, FRA is modifying the process by which a host railroad must submit a request for amendment (RFA) to FRA before making certain changes to its PTC Safety Plan (PTCSP) and FRA-certified PTC system.

Second, to enable more effective FRA oversight, this final rule expands an existing reporting requirement by increasing the frequency from annual to biannual; broadens the reporting requirement to encompass positive performance-related information, including about the technology's positive impact on rail safety, not just failure-related information; requires host railroads to utilize a new, standardized report form; and explicitly requires tenant railroads report their PTC operation data to their host railroads for inclusion in their biennial reports.

ASLRRA generally supports FRA's effort to streamline the existing provisions in 49 C.F.R. § 236.1021 governing the RFA process when material modifications are made to positive train control systems, and to improve the existing annual reporting requirements at § 236.1029(h).

To help its members meet PTC requirements, ASLRRA offers a number of [PTC resources](#) on its website, including products and services offered by Member Discount Program Preferred Providers and links to helpful industry information. There are also [grant-supported products and services](#) for ASLRRA members, such as safety plan templates and training programs.



House to Consider Appropriations Bills, Including Transportation

This week, the House of Representatives is [expected to consider](#) seven appropriations bills, including the Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies (THUD) [funding bill](#).

The bill provides \$84.1 billion in funding, an 11 percent increase over 2021 levels, with \$4.1 billion for the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). As discussed in last week's Views and News, the bill includes several ASLRRRA priorities. There is increased funding for

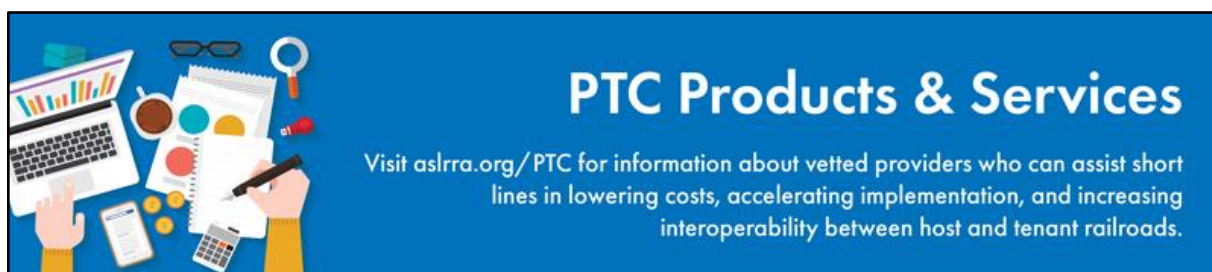
Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) grants and money for the Short Line Safety Institute (SLSI).

The bill also provides \$1.2 billion for National Infrastructure Investments (RAISE/TIGER/BUILD) programs, an increase of \$200 million from last year.

Senate Could Move Forward Tonight on Infrastructure Deal

A bipartisan group of 22 senators remains engaged in efforts to write the text for a major, multi-year infrastructure bill, announcing they have come to agreement on key issues. While legislative text is not yet available, Senate Majority Leader Charles Schumer (D-NY) said the chamber could still vote to proceed with considering the plan as soon as tonight. The White House remains closely engaged in these efforts as well.

Still, it could take several days or even weeks for the Senate to formally debate the measure before additional consideration by the U.S. House of Representatives. ASLRRRA staff and Legislative Policy Committee members are in active contact with key Senate offices to ensure short line freight rail priorities are reflected in the text of any measure.



PTC Products & Services

Visit aslrta.org/PTC for information about vetted providers who can assist short lines in lowering costs, accelerating implementation, and increasing interoperability between host and tenant railroads.

ASLRRA New Members

Know a company that would benefit from joining and participating in ASLRRA? Please contact ASLRRA's Vice President of Membership and Business Development [Kathy Keeney](#) via email or on (202) 585-3439.

ASLRRA Welcomes a New Associate Business Member



[Superior Grouting Services, Inc.](#), based in Houston, Texas and serving Texas and surrounding states for the past 38 years, is a premier provider of geotechnical poly, compaction and line grouting solutions for soil stabilization and lifting applications. The company serves a wide range of market sectors providing remedial services to railroad maintenance and construction, oil and gas pipeline, utility, geotechnical, structural engineering and commercial-industrial property management firms. It has earned the reputation as the "go-to" for

demanding applications where quality, safety, responsiveness and reliability are an absolute necessity. Our primary contact is [Vice President Erica Disney](#), who can be reached on (281) 894-4175.

ASLRRA Announcements

Reserve a Booth at the 2021 ASLRRA Annual Conference and Exposition in Phoenix

Round two of exhibit sales opened this week for all ASLRRA members for our 2021 Conference and Exhibition, which will be held Nov. 17-19 at the Phoenix Convention Center in Phoenix, Ariz. The first round of sales included those companies that had reserved booth space for our 2020 show at the Gaylord Texan in Grapevine, Texas.

Please contact ASLRRA's [Kathy Keeney](#) for more information, to reserve a space or to access the digital floorplan. As a reminder, booths are only available to ASLRRA member companies in good standing.

PennDOT Accepting Applications for Rail Grants, ASLRRA Discount Program Features Grant Writing Services

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) is [accepting applications](#) for its [rail grant programs](#), the Rail Transportation Assistance Program (RTAP) and the Rail Freight Assistance Program (RFAP).

RFAP provides funding for rail freight infrastructure projects to help preserve essential freight service and preserve or stimulate economic development through rail freight service, while RTAP is available to applicants with line items in a Capital Budget Act.

Applications are available on the [dotGrants website](#) and must be submitted by Aug. 20. In 2020, PennDOT awarded \$31 million to 26 rail freight projects, with 11 ASLRRRA members receiving funding.

To help members looking to apply for various grants, ASLRRRA's [Member Discount Program](#) features grant-writing services offered by Preferred Providers at competitive pricing. These experts can help members write and submit grant applications for federal, state and other programs.

Jake Award Winners Will Receive Email with Link to Online Certificates

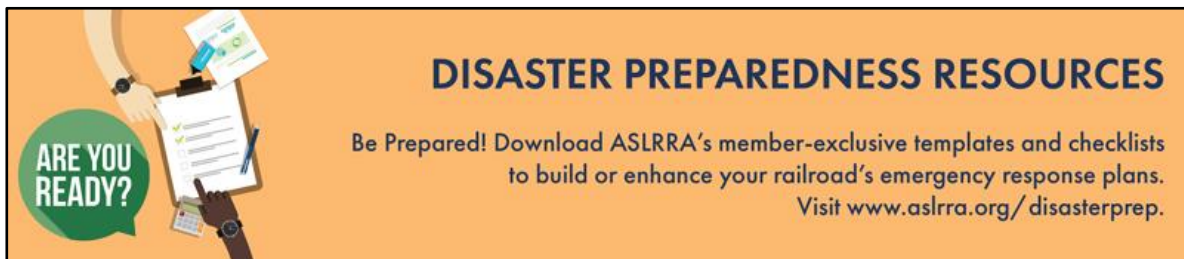
ASLRRRA members who have earned a Jake Award will be receiving an e-mail this week with a link to download and print their certificates. Congratulations to [this year's winners!](#)

ASLRRRA Out and About

Lynch, Oelsner Participate Virtually in ARDA Annual Meeting

ASLRRRA's Tom Lynch and Fred Oelsner took part in Tuesday's Virtual Annual Meeting of the American Railway Development Association (ARDA).

Lynch joined the Association of American Railroads' (AAR) Adrian Arnakis to discuss the current legislative outlook in Washington, D.C. with ARDA's railroad real estate and economic development focused audience. Oelsner, who is currently serving as ARDA's Technology Section Chair, hosted BNSF's Hark Braren to discuss BNSF's Motes program, which is focused on developing improved sensors and GPS visibility on railcars serving the North American rail market.

A graphic with an orange background. On the left, there is an illustration of a hand holding a clipboard with a checklist, a pen, and a smartphone. A green speech bubble with the text "ARE YOU READY?" is positioned near the clipboard. On the right, the text reads: "DISASTER PREPAREDNESS RESOURCES", "Be Prepared! Download ASLRRRA's member-exclusive templates and checklists to build or enhance your railroad's emergency response plans.", and "Visit www.aslrra.org/disasterprep."/>

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS RESOURCES

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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.

ASLRRRA's Recorded Webinars Discuss Issues Related to Railroad Retirement

ASLRRRA's on-demand webinars include recordings covering important details railroaders should know as they prepare for retirement.

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 Unemployment and Sickness Benefits
- Railroad Retirement Tips & Tricks: What We've Learned the Hard Way
- The Road to Retirement

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. Access is free to ASLRRRA members, and by subscription for non-members.

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

Industry Events and Announcements

August 12: Diesel Technology Forum's Powering the Future for Freight and Passenger Rail Webinar

The Diesel Technology Forum will host a [webinar](#) on Aug. 12 to discuss ways to improve efficiency and reduce emissions in freight and passenger rail. Speakers include Regina Barringer from ASLRRRA

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member Cummins, who will talk about the current state of rail technology and opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas and other emissions.

Registration for this event, the latest in the Beyond the Highway – Virtual Event Series, is free, but required. Space is limited. Follow this [link](#) to learn more or to register.

University of Wisconsin Offers Various Railroad Courses Online and In-Person

The University of Wisconsin – Madison's Interdisciplinary Professional Programs will offer a number of in-person and online training events in the fall, in addition to asynchronous online courses that are available to users at any time. Follow each link for more information or to register.

[Introduction to Railroad Engineering and Operations](#) – Online course, Sept. 7, 9, 14, 16

[Fundamentals of Railway Train Control and Signaling](#) – Online course, Oct. 12, 14, 19, 21

[Fundamentals of Railway Bridge Engineering and Management](#) – In-person training, Nov. 2-3

Asynchronous online courses:

[Emergency Railroad Bridge Inspections](#)

[Propulsion for Light Rail Vehicles](#)

[Introduction to Traction Power and OCS Systems](#)

[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.