



August 25, 2021



Register Now for ASLRRRA's Annual Conference

[Registration](#) is now open for the [2021 ASLRRRA Annual Conference and Exhibition](#), which will be held in-person Nov. 17 to 19 in Phoenix, Ariz.

In addition to featuring over 30 breakout education sessions and nearly 100 subject-matter experts speaking on industry-specific topics, which are hallmarks of the Association's yearly event, this year's convention will also feature a [golf tournament](#) at the JW Marriott Camelback Golf Club, a Jason Straka-designed course. Registration for the golf tournament, which is separate from convention registration, will cover greens fees, a golf cart, a boxed breakfast and lunch and three drink tickets. Golf clubs and shoes can also be rented.

ASLRRRA will also be recognizing industry award honorees at the convention, including winners of the Business Development Awards and Veterans Engagement Awards, and the inaugural class of the Short Line Hall of Fame. And, the return of an in-person event means a return to an in-person exhibit hall, where convention attendees can meet with representatives from ASLRRRA supplier members and view the latest in rail technology and other products.

ASLRRRA is still accepting sponsors for the 2021 convention, and there are a limited number of booths available in the exhibit hall. There is also advertising space available in the convention program. Contact ASLRRRA's [Kathy Keeney](#) with any questions about sponsors, booths or advertising.





TSA Extends Mask Mandate to January 2022

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) [extended](#) the face mask requirement for individuals across all transportation networks throughout the United States through Jan. 18, 2022. This includes at airports, onboard commercial aircraft, on over-the-road buses, and on commuter bus and rail systems.

The TSA's [update](#) does not affect the Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) [Emergency Order Requiring Face Mask Use in Railroad Operations](#) (EO 32), which has remained in effect since it was issued on March 1, 2021. FRA states that EO 32 is in effect until:

- (1) The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [order](#) is modified in relevant part or rescinded based on specific public health or other considerations;
- (2) The U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services rescinds the determination that a public health emergency exists; or
- (3) it is rescinded by FRA.

As a reminder, the U. S. Department of Transportation has published [responses to FAQs](#) pertaining to the applicability of the EO on its website. Any additional questions on EO 32 can be directed to the FRA at RailroadsMaskup@dot.gov.

FRA Technical Bulletin Clarifies Establishment of Blue Signal Protection

A recent [Technical Bulletin](#) from the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) discusses what functions may be performed by a member of a train or yard crew, or a utility employee properly attached to a train or yard crew, without establishing blue signal protection (BSP).

According to the bulletin, shifts in the railroad industry have led to tasks previously completed by railroad car inspectors being assigned to train or yard crews or utility employees, without protection of an attached locomotive or BSP. Incidents resulting from these changes, including an amputation and fatality, have prompted the FRA to issue this guidance.

The FRA reminds railroads of its position, which is codified in 49 CFR Section 218.22, that "BSP exclusions apply only to tasks involving equipment that is part of the train to which a crewmember or utility employee is assigned."



House Members Return to Discuss Key Bills

Members of the U.S. House of Representatives returned to Washington, D.C. for a short interruption to their August recess to establish a timeline for future votes on the Senate-passed Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and a Budget Reconciliation law to spend as much as \$3.5 trillion on "human infrastructure."

The IIJA includes key rail policy and spending, such as an annual \$1 billion guarantee for the CRISI program, while not including concerns such as crew size or blocked crossings language. ASLRRRA has supported the IIJA as it has moved through Congress to date.

By a vote of 220-212, the House signaled its intention to vote for final passage of the IIJA by September 27th. The vote is non-binding, so the September 27th is not written in stone, but it does signify House Democrats' intention to finalize the infrastructure bill by the end of September.

ASLRRRA's government affairs team is closely following these actions.



ASLRRRA Announcements

The Start of a New School Year Brings New ASLRRRA Webinars Presented by Subject-Matter Experts

Summer is winding down, and it's not only the kids who are heading back to school. ASLRRRA is hosting a new [webinar series](#) based on popular topics originally presented at this year's General Counsel Symposium in June. The Association is extending these educational opportunities beyond railroad-industry legal professionals, allowing all railroad professionals to hear from experts about issues related to the Surface Transportation Board (STB), National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigations and more.

Here are three webinars scheduled for September. Follow the links to register.

- [Sept. 9 – STB, Hot, Hot, Hot!!!](#)
 - Stinson LLP Partner David Rifkind will cover new STB members, new dynamics, and old merger rules. This webinar will examine some of the Board's key decisions this past year and a look forward to what is likely on the agenda for the coming year.
- [Sept. 21 – National Transportation Safety Board \(NTSB\) Investigations](#)
 - The National Transportation Safety Board investigates only approximately 20 rail calamities each year. Tom Tobin and Dan Braude of the Wilson Elser Law Firm have

represented railroads and other transportation providers in dozens of NTSB investigations and will take some of the mystery out of the process. Their presentation will provide insight to questions concerning which rail accidents the NTSB is most likely to investigate; what happens in the days the NTSB is on scene at an accident; how long NTSB investigations typically take; and more.

- [Sept. 23 – Utility Crossings and Broadband Deployment](#)
 - David Drach of Railroad Real Estate Consulting, LLC and Matthew Hammer of Daley Mohan Groble, PC will examine the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) Broadband Deployment Advisory Committee's State Model Code for Accelerating Broadband Deployment and existing state statutes governing utility crossings.

ASLRRRA Members Save on Personal Protective Equipment with Orr Safety

The COVID-19 pandemic, summer heat waves and other hazards have made it even more important for companies to provide the personal protective equipment (PPE) necessary to ensure workplace safety. ASLRRRA's newest preferred provider, ORR Safety, can help the Association's members protect their employees with a wide variety of products and services.

ORR Safety is an ISO 9001-registered distributor of PPE and related services to the industrial market. For over 70 years, ORR Safety has worked with over 20,000 companies, helping to protect hundreds of thousands of workers. With more than 40 years of railroad experience, ORR Safety has worked with customers and suppliers to provide innovative solutions to many of the unique challenges inherent in this complex and demanding industry.

ASLRRRA members benefit from exceptional, personalized service and discounted pricing on a huge assortment of products and equipment needed to implement an effective and efficient safety program, including foot and leg protection, signs, ergonomic products, hearing protection, clothing protection, eye protection, lighting & electrical products, hand protection, respiratory protection, storage containment and environmental spill cleanup, traffic control, head protection and more.

Visit aslrra.org/discount to view ORR Safety's online e-catalog and start saving today!

ASLRRRA Extends Condolences in Passing of Sierra Northern Railway Vice President Lambert

ASLRRRA expresses its heartfelt sympathy to the family, friends and colleagues of [Alan Lambert](#), who passed away at the age of 59. He was vice president of sales and marketing at ASLRRRA member Sierra Northern Railway.

Lambert served at Sierra Northern for almost 16 years also did contract work for Norfolk Southern. He was a former member of ASLRRRA's Pacific Region board and previously served on the board of the California Short Line Railroad Association.

Memorial services, in-person and online, were held for Lambert today. He is survived by his brothers David and Jack.

ASLRRA Out and About

Chuck Baker Represents ASLRRA and Short Lines at Three Recent Events

ASLRRA President Chuck Baker participated in a trio of events recently: the Short Line Safety Institute's (SLSI) August meeting in Washington, D.C., the Keystone State Railroad Association's Rail Freight Conference and a virtual SummerRail event for college students and railroad industry professionals.

At the Keystone Rail Freight Conference Baker participated in a panel titled "How Short Lines Manage PSR Class I Connections." Charlie Monte Verde of Genesee Valley Transportation moderated the panel, while Brian McClain of Genesee & Wyoming Railroad Services Inc. was a fellow participant.

During the virtual SummerRail event, which offers college students preparing for a career in logistics a chance to speak with industry experts, Baker shared the road ahead for short line railroads, and the ways short lines are rising to meet those challenges - driving innovation, offering exceptional customer service and supporting the communities they serve.



As an ASLRRA Preferred Provider, ORR Safety offers Discounts on Personal Protective Equipment and Related Services to ASLRRA Members.

Click to learn more!



ASLRRA Webinars – Live or On-Demand

Upcoming Webinars

ASLRRA has scheduled [several new webinars](#) for September. Please see the article in the ASLRRA Announcements section for a complete description of each webinar, or follow the links for more information and to register.

- [Sept. 9 – STB. Hot, Hot, Hot!!!](#)
- [Sept. 21 – National Transportation Safety Board \(NTSB\) Investigations](#)
- [Sept. 23 – Utility Crossings and Broadband Deployment](#)

Recorded Webinars Cover Issues Related to Railcar Warnings and Maintenance

CarLogix sponsored several popular ASLRRA webinars, and recordings can be found in the Operations and Safety category of ASLRRA's [On-Demand Webinar](#) library.

Look for these titles:

- Common CRB Data Exchange Errors and How to Avoid Them
- Alerts, Early Warnings and Maintenance Advisories
- Repair Reporting for Cars with Alerts and Early Warnings

ASLRRA's online resource library offers more than 150 webinar recordings on a variety of topics. Visit aslrta.org/webinars and select the On Demand Webinars button to view a complete list of all available recordings. Access is free to ASLRRA members, and by subscription for non-members.

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

Industry Events and Announcements

Railway Age Magazine Soliciting Nominations for Women in Rail Awards

Railway Age magazine is now accepting [nominations](#) for the 2021 Women in Rail Awards. The magazine will honor 25 women who are considered outstanding leaders in the North American rail industry, and winners will be recognized in its November issue.

Nominees can work in any area of the railroad industry, and must be located in the United States, Canada or Mexico. They will be judged on their experience, leadership skills and contributions to the industry and their communities. Nominations are due Sept. 30.

Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation Seeking Comment on Title VI Plan

Virginia residents and companies are being invited by the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) to [provide comments](#) on a draft Title VI Plan, which is created in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

The plan explains how Title VI principles are implemented and monitored at the DRPT. Comments are due by Sept. 24. Follow the link above to view the draft plan and submit a comment.

[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.