



June 8, 2022



Union Pacific Becomes Seventh Member of Rail Technology Coalition RailPulse

Class I railroad Union Pacific is [the seventh member to join](#) the RailPulse coalition, which supports the development and use of GPS and other telematics technologies across the North American rail industry. RailPulse aims to create an information infrastructure to allow data collection that will improve rail-based supply chains.

Founded in 2020, the coalition's original founders include ASLRRRA members GATX Corporation and Trinity Rail Group, along with ASLRRRA member companies Genesee & Wyoming Inc. and Watco. In December 2021, ASLRRRA member The Greenbrier Companies became the first non-founding-member company to join RailPulse.

The goal of [RailPulse](#) is to develop a technology platform that can generate benefits across the entire rail ecosystem. Such a platform would increase real-time shipment and railcar visibility, enhance the shipper experience, improve safety with better railcar and track monitoring, allow for optimal fleet utilization and apply consistent technology standards.

RailPulse aims to introduce its platform in early 2023 and is currently on track to meet that goal. Coalition members are testing remote monitoring systems on their railcars to gather and analyze data ahead of the platform launch.

FRA Announces CRISI Grant Awards

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) [released](#) its list of CRISI grant recipients and will award nearly \$369 million to 46 projects in 32 states and the District of Columbia. The FRA received 122 eligible applications requesting more than \$1.2 billion, demonstrating the significant industry needs for infrastructure funding. Click [here](#) to view ASLRRRA's press release about the CRISI grant announcement.

"In conversations with short line railroad owners and managers over the last few days, I've heard comments about how these CRISI grants will 'transform the railroad', 'allow us to be good stewards of the railroad for the next generation', and 'are a tremendous win for many stakeholders, most importantly our customers,'" said ASLRRRA President Chuck Baker. "These grants will benefit small businesses nationwide, spurring growth and creating jobs in the manufacturing, agricultural, chemical, and construction industries. With so many challenges facing the country's supply chain, these awards will boost American competitiveness by strengthening weak spots in the rail network and removing bottlenecks. Short line freight railroads look forward to continuing to work with Congress and the FRA to ensure these resources are put to use quickly. And we will continue to work with our state and local partners to make our case in future CRISI funding rounds as to why investing in short line freight rail projects is such an effective method to improving lives and livelihoods."

A notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) for the Fiscal Year 2022 CRISI awards is expected in August 2022, and the amount available will be significantly more than was available in FY21 – nearly \$1.6

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billion – with approximately \$1.3 billion expected to be open to all projects after certain set-asides from the law are honored.

ASLRRA is eager to ensure its members are aware of funding resources such as CRISI, and other funding opportunities made available in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) such as RAISE, INFRA, PIDP, and the new grade separation program, and that its member railroads best position themselves to compete for funding from these programs.

To that end, ASLRRA is hosting a series of webinars in the coming weeks, including ["The New Infrastructure Law: Taking Advantage of New Resources and Grant Programs"](#) on June 14 and ["FRA's CRISI Grant Program: Preparing for FY '22 Funding Round"](#) on June 21. ASLRRA will continue to share additional news and resources on federal grant opportunities in Views and News and social media.



Meet Regulatory Requirements Through ASLRRA's Training Seminars

ASLRRA's summer training seminars focus on important regulatory topics and enable member railroads to comply with federal training requirements.

ASLRRA has again partnered with the Iowa Northern Railway Company (IANR) to offer comprehensive training on [General Code of Operating Rules \(GCOR\)](#). The three-day [GCOR](#) seminar will be held July 26-28 and completing this training allows railroads using

GCOR as their operating rules to meet training requirements mandated by 49 CFR Part 240, 242 and 214 Subpart C.

This seminar will be presented by subject matter experts JR Gelnar, ASLRRA's vice president of safety and compliance, and Mark Vaughn, IANR's assistant general manager. It will be held at the BienVenu Event Center adjacent to the Holiday Inn & Suites in Cedar Falls, Iowa. Click [here](#) to register.

ASLRRA and IANR will also present [Advanced Designated Supervisor of Locomotive Engineers \(DSLE\) Training](#) on August 9-10, also in Cedar Falls. Gelnar and Vaughn will instruct participants on DSLE responsibilities, including application and administration of 49 CFR Part 240 and Part 242 similarities and differences. Click [here](#) to register for DSLE training.

Popular Webinar Discussing Railroad Obligations with Contractors Now Available On-Demand

Last week's webinar with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), "Part 243 Railroad Obligations with Contractors," was extremely popular, drawing over 200 participants. For those who were unable to

attend the session live, a recording is now available in the On-Demand Webinars library on ASLRRA's website, along with slides from the session. ASLRRA members can access the recording and presentation for free by logging in at aslrta.org/webinars.

Presented by FRA Staff Director Rob Castiglione, Track Specialist Lance Hawks and Railroad Safety Partnerships Specialist Cory Johnson, the webinar helped attendees understand their obligations as a railroad when engaging with contractors under Part 243, including roadway worker protection elements. The webinar's many attendees provided a very engaging Q&A session at the end of the presentation.



Meeting Lawmakers Builds Bridges Without Construction Materials

U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg [traveled](#) to ASLRRA member Lake State Railway Company's Michigan headquarters last week to announce the recipients of Fiscal Year 2021 Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) grants. Michigan Congressman Dan Kildee [joined](#) Buttigieg for the ceremony, which included a tour of Lake State Railway facilities.

Lake State Railway has received two CRISI grants since 2019, providing over \$15 million to help the company improve operational

safety and reliability.

A visit by a congressional lawmaker is invaluable for the connections it helps build and the excitement it generates. Giving representatives a first-hand look at the small railroads in their districts helps them better understand the vital role these businesses play in local, state and national economies. Lawmakers also come to know more about the issues affecting short lines and how they can make policy decisions that bolster railroad operations.

ASLRRA's Government Affairs Team can help Association members connect with members of their congressional delegation and can assist with scheduling a visit to your facility. Contact ASLRRA's [Zach Radford](#) or [Crystal Gitchell](#) for more information.

Scholarships Available for Industry-Specific Training
Scholarships available for training in track/structures/signal maintenance and locomotive/freight maintenance.
Click to learn more!

A horizontal banner with a colorful, abstract background of purple, blue, and green. The background features various white icons: a lightbulb, a graduation cap, a play button, a pencil, and a book. The text is centered and uses a mix of bold and italicized fonts.

ASLRRA New Members

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

ASLRRA Welcomes Two New Associate Business Members



[Tunnel Radio of America Inc.](#), based in Corvallis, Oregon, was founded in 1988 to meet the demand for better wireless communications in hard-to-reach places and launched its first railroad system five years later. Today it provides communications enabling PTC (Positive Train Control) in tunnels and other remote locations, as well as enabling uninterrupted Distributive Power and Voice Communications. Rail Solutions Executive [Eric Ballenger](#) is our primary contact and can be reached on (541) 760-4458.



[Vista Consulting Group, Inc.](#), based in North Attleboro, Massachusetts, provides valuation, research, inspection, remarketing and advisory services for the rail industry. Our primary contact is President [William Carlson](#), who can be reached on (508) 618-1288.

ASLRRA Announcements

ASLRRA Welcomes Two Summer Interns

Two interns will join ASLRRA's team this summer. For six weeks, Eva Lennuk and Kevin Wang will work with the Association's legislative, regulatory and legal teams with research, outreach and covering events. They come to ASLRRA through The Fund for American Studies, which places its summer program participants in professional internships with Washington, D.C. organizations.

Lennuk is currently a graduate student at the University of Tartu School of Law in Tartu, Estonia. She hopes to apply the knowledge and skills she gains through her internship in her hometown.



Interns Kevin Wang (left) and Eva Lennuk will work with ASLRRRA's regulatory, legislative and legal teams this summer.

"I am excited about getting to know the current challenges faced by the stakeholders of short lines and regional railways. I am also interested in contributing to finding and implementing the solutions thereto," said Lennuk.

Wang is a rising sophomore at Temple University, where he is studying economics. Aside from economics, he is interested in topics like political science, transportation and urban planning.

"I am most excited in learning in-depth the workings of the freight rail industry, developing professional skills, and connecting with people in the industry through this position," said Wang.

Apply for a Scholarship to Ease the Burden of Training Costs

ASLRRRA's [scholarship program](#) helps fund training for small-railroad employees wanting to attend courses in track, bridge and signal inspection and maintenance and/or locomotive and freight car inspection and maintenance.

A generous donation from former ASLRRRA board member and retired Carolina Coastal Railway President Doug Golden's Douglas Golden-Mary Cullen Charitable Fund has allowed the Association to award \$1,200 scholarships to help eligible recipients offset training, travel and lodging costs for certain types of courses. View profiles of some of ASLRRRA's previous scholarship recipients at the Association's Industry Scholarships website [here](#).

This year, ASLRRRA hopes to award more scholarships to eligible recipients who are employees of short line and regional railroads, defined as small railroads earning \$10 million or less in annual revenues. The Association is in the process of developing, but does not currently offer, courses on scholarship-eligible topics. Some organizations that offer applicable railroad industry training include the [University of Tennessee Center for Transportation Research](#) and the [American Railway Engineering and Maintenance-Of-Way Association \(AREMA\)](#), among others.

Individuals can apply for scholarships by completing an [online application](#), and scholarships will be awarded to qualified candidates on a rolling basis until all funds are distributed. Questions may be directed to ASLRRRA's operations manager [Julie Duriga](#).

Discuss Important Short Line Topics at Joint Committee Meeting, Regional Meetings

ASLRRRA's [Joint Committee Meeting](#) offers ASLRRRA members, especially members on the Association's constituent committees, a chance to gather and discuss important issues affecting the short line railroad industry.

This year's Joint Committee Meeting takes place in Boston, Massachusetts on Aug. 2 and 3. MassRobotics will host the first day of events in the company's Boston office. Click [here](#) to view meeting details, or [here](#) to register for the event.

Then in the fall, ASLRRA's [regional meetings](#) will take place, with the General Counsel Symposium and Finance and Administration Seminar to be held in conjunction with the Central and Pacific Region Meeting.

The Eastern and Southern Region Meeting will take place Sept. 26 to 28 in Atlanta, Georgia, while the Central and Pacific Region Meeting will take place Oct. 25 to 27 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The symposium and seminar will also be held Oct. 25 to 27. Registration for regional meetings will open soon.

Severe Summer Weather Necessitates Proper Preparation

Hurricane season is underway. While improvements funded through CRISI and other grant programs can help strengthen railroad infrastructure against natural disasters, companies still need to have a plan for dealing with severe weather events that could disrupt operations.

ASLRRA's [disaster preparedness website](#) features numerous resources to help railroads plan for adverse events like summer storms and recover from them when they occur.

The Association has updated its disaster preparedness site to include some financial assistance resources for small business owners and individuals living within a designated natural disaster area. This [link](#) identifies different types of financial disaster relief for which some companies and their employees may be eligible.

Other resources on ASLRRA's page include templates and checklists members can use to develop emergency plans, which can also be utilized as training tools. There are also instructions for filing emergency dockets, direct links to [Ready.gov](#), the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's disaster preparedness website, and links to ASLRRA's [On-Demand Webinar library](#) featuring recordings that discuss topics such as crisis communications and hazardous materials incident reporting.

ASLRRA Out and About

Strang Participates in International Rail-Crossing Safety Conference

ASLRRA's Senior Vice President of Safety, Regulatory, and Environmental Policy Jo Strang and Senior Advisor Mike Ogborn traveled to the University of Denver in Denver, Colorado to participate in [International Level Crossing Awareness Day](#) (ILCAD), a worldwide initiative to bring attention to rail crossing safety that brings its annual conference to the U.S. for the first time.

Today, Strang participated in a trespass and suicide prevention special session. Tomorrow, she will help open the official conference as a keynote speaker. Strang was also involved with the conference through her role as chair of the Board of Directors at rail safety organization Operation Lifesaver (OLI), which is part of the ILCAD host committee. Ogborn volunteered to assist with preparations for the conference opening.

ASLRRA Staff Meets with German Rail Delegation in D.C.

A group of representatives from the German Railway Industry Association, Verband der Bahnindustrie in Deutschland (VDB), visited ASLRRA's Washington, D.C. office on June 7 to discuss innovative technologies, climate-friendly mobility and global competition.

VDB's Managing Director Dr. Ben Möbius and Head of Public Affairs Pauline Maitre met with ASLRRA President Chuck Baker, Vice President, Data and Technology Fred Oelsner and Assistant Vice President, Legislative and Regulatory Crystal Gitchell, as well as ASLRRA's summer interns Kevin Wang and Eva Lennuk.



Dr. Ben Möbius (far left) and Pauline Maitre (second from left) of the German Railway Industry Association spoke with ASLRRA staff and interns during a visit to ASLRRA's Washington, D.C. office.

Gitchell and Baker Speak to University Students About Legislative, Regulatory Issues

Today, ASLRRA Assistant Vice President, Legislative and Regulatory Crystal Gitchell and President Chuck Baker spoke to students in Michigan State University's Railway Management Program. The students traveled to Washington, D.C. this week to meet with several industry groups.

Gitchell and Baker's presentation focused on legislative and regulatory issues concerning the short line railroad industry.

Weiss, Gelnar Hold Part 219 Training Seminar in Nashville

This week, ASLRRA Senior Vice President of Education and Business Sabrina Weiss and Vice President of Safety and Compliance JR Gelnar traveled to Nashville, Tennessee to present ASLRRA's FRA Drug and Alcohol (Part 219) Training Seminar.

Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) Drug and Alcohol Program Specialist Sam Noe joined Gelnar to cover all sections of the Part 219 rule and requirements for railroads and contractors. The training seminar is one of four ASLRRA is offering this summer. [General Code of Operating Rules \(GCOR\) Training](#) will take place July 26-28, while [Advanced Designated Supervisor of Locomotive Engineers \(DSLE\) Training](#) will take place August 9-10. Follow the links for more details.



DISASTER PREPAREDNESS RESOURCES

Be Prepared! Download ASLRRA's member-exclusive templates and checklists to build or enhance your railroad's emergency response plans. Visit www.aslrra.org/disasterprep.

ARE YOU READY?

The banner features an illustration of a hand holding a clipboard with a checklist, a pen, and a calculator. A green speech bubble with the text 'ARE YOU READY?' is positioned on the left. The background is a solid orange color.



ASLRRA Webinars – Live or On-Demand

Upcoming Webinars

[The New Infrastructure Law: Taking Advantage of New Resources and Grant Programs](#) – June 14, 2022

Blank Rome Government Relations Senior Advisor Richard Sherman and Bergmann Associates Senior Program Manager Lucas Brewer will provide an in-depth presentation covering new grant programs and resources available to short line railroads as a result of the new Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA).

The webinar is free for members and \$25 for non-members.

[FRA's CRISI Grant Program: Preparing for FY '22 Funding Round](#) – June 21, 2022

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is likely to release the Fiscal Year 2022 CRISI grant funding notice as soon as this August. Kevin Keller, vice president and senior professional associate at HDR, Inc., and Eileen Reilly, CEO of Global Train Services (GTS), will join ASLRRA's Tom Lynch and Zach Radford to talk about how to be ready for the next round of CRISI funding, which at about \$1.3 billion will be significantly more than before.

The webinar is free for members and \$25 for non-members.

Part 225 Webinars Available at Any Time in ASLRRA's On-Demand Library

Regulatory webinars are some of ASLRRA's most popular. They help members understand the requirements of various federal regulations, which are often lengthy and complicated. Recordings of ASLRRA's regulatory webinars can be found in the Association's On-Demand Webinar library, including a three-part series on 49 CFR Part 225, Railroad Accidents and Incidents. Look for:

- Part 225 Back to Basics, Part 1: Injuries
- Part 225 Back to Basics, Part 2: Rail Equipment
- Part 225 Back to Basics, Part 3: Highway-Rail Grade Crossing

These webinars are only a few of the over 170 recordings available on a wide variety of topics including finance, human resources, communications and business development. ASLRRA members can access the On-Demand Webinar for free while non-members can purchase a subscription. Follow the link above to access the webinar library today.

Click [here](#) to learn more about ASLRRRA's education offerings.

Industry Events and Announcements

Click [here](#) for a calendar of industry events.

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