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American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association

VIEWS & NEWS

VOLUME 72

NUMBER 7

APRIL 28, 2005

**Make Plans to
Attend the 2005
ASLRRA Regional
Meetings:**
(Click on the meeting name
for more information)

Central / Pacific
Region Meeting
October 2-4, 2005
Monte Carlo Resort
Las Vegas, NV

Eastern Region
Meeting
October 17-19, 2005
Westin Convention
Center
Pittsburgh, PA

Southern Region
Meeting
Oct. 30-Nov. 1, 2005
Beau Rivage Resort
Biloxi, MS

Questions? Comments?
E-Mail Us.

**Currently, Railroad
Security Alert Level
2 is in Effect**

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ASLRRA thanks the sponsors of this year's

Annual Convention.

Their generous support truly made the meeting possible.

(Click on the company names below to learn more about the products and services they offer.)

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<u>Trus Joist, A Weyerhaeuser Business</u>	



ASLRRRA PAC: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND HOW TO MOVE AHEAD

PLUS! 2005 PAC LEADERS

- I. [A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT](#)
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I. FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

As the enactment of the short line railroad tax credit demonstrates, the short line industry is making steady progress in building an effective government affairs operation due in large measure to the time and effort short line executives are contributing to the cause.

One factor in our success has been our grassroots fundraising program. While nobody likes to talk about money in politics, raising money is part of the political process and our program has put us on the map with many in Congress. In six years grassroots fundraising has moved us from an organization that contributed virtually nothing to congressional candidates to one that raised over \$320,000 in the last two year cycle.

The good news is that 164 short line executives from 70 ASLRRRA member companies contributed to our fundraising efforts. The bad news is that thousands of managers from the remaining 350 ASLRRRA member companies contributed nothing. Even those that did participate rarely reached down into their management ranks to supplement the effort.

My purpose is not to bemoan this fact but to point out the tremendous potential we have to become a much more powerful player in the world of political fundraising.

Congressmen raise money in two ways – through local events and through so-called Political Action Committee (PAC) fundraisers in Washington. PAC's were established by law to allow individual industries or other interest groups to collect money from their individual employees or members and then give up to \$5,000 contributions to individual candidates. While our grassroots efforts raised over a quarter of a million dollars in 2003 and 2004, our PAC fundraising has consistently underperformed in comparison to the rest of the industry.

A well funded PAC is important to ASLRRRA for three reasons; (1) It backstops our local fundraisers so if the event falls short of what the short line promised the PAC can step in with a \$5,000 contribution; (2) Key committee Chairman and other Congressional leaders expect our Washington lobbyists to attend their Washington PAC events; (3) The PAC is the legal mechanism by which we can collect contributions from the over one thousand short line managers who are not regularly attuned to our political programs.

The Class I railroads and the national rail unions have huge PAC's and they accomplish that by encouraging a culture of giving throughout their ranks. Many Class I's have created a payroll deduction system for PAC giving. There are easily over 1,000 short line managers eligible to give to our PAC. If each one gave just \$100 per year, we could have collected well over \$200,000 over the two year cycle. That would put our PAC in league with such interests as the AAR, The International Union of Operating Engineers and the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen.

The failure to monopolize on our large numbers is partly due to the failure to work this problem. I am going to change that and I ask you to help me by taking the following steps.

1. Follow the links in Section IV of this article to see if your company is eligible to participate in the PAC.
2. If your company is not on the list, take the first step: print, sign and return the authorization sheet which by law we must have on file to solicit contributions from you and your managers.

Congressman Dave Camp, the chief Ways & Means sponsor of our tax credit legislation recently told me how impressed he was with the determination and tenacity with which we approached the legislative process. He said unlike many groups with which he works we succeeded because we never took no for an answer and because we used every bit of leverage we had. I want to apply that determination to this issue and I hope that as a leader in the short line industry you will help me.

Sincerely,

Rich Timmons
President
American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association

II. THE ASLRRRA POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Before the ASLRRRA PAC can legally solicit contributions from you or your managers and executives, your company must first authorize ASLRRRA PAC to do so. Instructions for completing the authorization can be found in Part IV below.

The following may address questions and concerns you have about the ASLRRRA PAC. If you need further information, feel free to contact Adam Nordstrom or Sally Johnson at 202-638-7790.

Why is the PAC important to me when I already give to my local Congressman?

In a body of 535 Senators and Representatives just having your Congressman on your side is not enough. We needed 267 co-sponsors for our tax credit legislation, but we also needed the support of key Committee Chairman and the House and Senate Leaders. We may or may not have a local railroad in these Members' districts and under any circumstances these key Members expect us to participate in their PAC fundraising and they do keep score.

Why should I become involved with a PAC that is going to contribute to a Congressman who is 1,000 miles removed from my property and with whom I may not agree?

Success in dealing with Congress is not just a matter of influencing one individual. When you ask your Congressman to do a favor for you, he adds your request to a big list and then tries to navigate his way through a complicated maze of committee relationships, jurisdictional issues, negotiations with the Administration and budget trade offs. The Class I railroads for instance spent hundreds of thousands of dollars of their PAC money building relationships with House Ways & Means and Senate Finance Committee members during consideration of the 4.3 cent fuel tax repeal. They created an overall legislative strategy and then directed their resources in a way that could not be done by a single individual.

How can I ask my managers to become involved in an activity most of them don't understand and that is far removed from their area of responsibility?

Government decisions have a profound affect on the economic health of their company. Government regulations affect your operations, government tax policy affects your ability to invest in rehabilitation, and government labor policy affects your ability to manage your contract employees. Soon the Department of Homeland Security will determine what actions you must take with regard to security. Asking your managers to participate in government affairs is no different than telling them they should all understand your marketing objectives even if that is not their direct responsibility.

Isn't asking my managers to become involved in politics is like asking them to go to church? Politics is a very personal thing and it's not my place to force them into it.

You are not telling them how they should vote or making them appear at campaign rallies. You are telling them that government decisions are important to the company's bottom line and like it or not one of the ways most successful companies in America participate in the governmental process is through fundraising.

What are the legal limits with regard to soliciting contributions?

Unlike corporations and labor organizations, trade associations are prohibited from using automatic payroll deductions for PAC contributions. However, once a trade association member company has given permission to the trade association to solicit their employees, the member company may collect checks from eligible employees and transmit them to the trade association. The member company may also use interoffice mail as well as provide envelopes and postage in which contributors could send their contribution to the association. The key to success is for you to lead by example.

What about the fact that my managers don't get paid enough to give?

We are not asking for large contributions. It is likely that most of the managers on your property can afford to contribute between \$50 and \$100 per year to the PAC. Even if some cannot afford that level of giving, it is certainly not true for all and should not be an excuse to ignore the subject for those who can afford it.

III. 2005 PAC LEADERS

ASLRRA WISHES TO THANK THE FOLLOWING FOR THEIR EARLY INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE ASLRRA PAC:

1. John Levine, Pinsky Railroad Company
2. David Perkins, Angelina and Neches River Railroad Company
3. Dick Robey, North Shore Railroad Company
4. Tom Schlosser, California Northern Railroad
5. David Smoot, Georgia Southwestern Railroad
6. Michael E. Wilson, Delta Valley & Southern Railway Company

IV. TAKE THE FIRST STEP

[Click here](#) to see if your company is eligible to participate in the PAC through 2007. If your company is not on the list, download the [ASLRRRA PAC Solicitation Authorization Form](#), complete and return to 50 F Street, Ste. 7020, Washington, DC 20001 or fax to 202-628-6430. If you have questions or would like further information, contact Sally Johnson at 202-638-7790 or sally.johnson@cch-llc.com

V. SOLICITATION AUTHORIZATION DISCLOSURE INFORMATION

- ASLRRRA-PAC is the Political Action Committee of the American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association.
- ASLRRRA may only make political contributions to candidates for federal office using personal, non-corporate funds contributed by eligible employees* and executives of member companies to ASLRRRA-PAC.
- Federal law requires ASLRRRA-PAC to obtain written authorization from an authorized agent of a member company prior to soliciting contributions to ASLRRRA-PAC from eligible employees of that company. This requirement applies to solicitations conducted via mail, electronic mail, and solicitations made during the annual raffle ticket sales at ASLRRRA meetings and conventions.
- If you are the authorized agent for your company, you may fill out the written authorization here to authorize the American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association (ASLRRRA-PAC) to solicit managers and executives of your company for personal contributions to ASLRRRA-PAC.
- IF YOU HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE ABOVE INFORMATION, and you or an authorized agent of your company have executed a written authorization, you are eligible to make a contribution to the PAC. Click [here](#) to complete your authorization form.

* “Eligible employees” refers to “executive or administrative personnel” meaning individuals employed by a corporation who are paid on a salary, rather than hourly, basis and who have policymaking, managerial, professional, or supervisory responsibilities, 2 U.S.C. § 441b(b)(7).

CHANGES ON ASLRRRA’S BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Two new members have joined ASLRRRA’s Board of Directors. Kathy Keeney, Commonwealth Business Media, has taken over the seat vacated by D. Dale Leake, L.B. Foster, as an Associate Board Member. Pete Kleifgen, RMI, is now the Chairman of the Associate Members and Phil Pietrandrea, L.B. Foster, was voted in as the Vice Chairman of the Associate Membership. Effective May 1, 2005, Roger Nelson, North American RailNet, will step down from the Executive Committee. Mike Ogborn, OmniTRAX, will fill his unexpired term. [Click here](#) for a complete list of ASLRRRA’s Board of Directors.

ROADWAY WORKER PROTECTION TOOLS AVAILABLE

ASLRRA has the following roadway worker protection tools, created by the FRA's Office of Safety Assurance and Compliance, available for members:

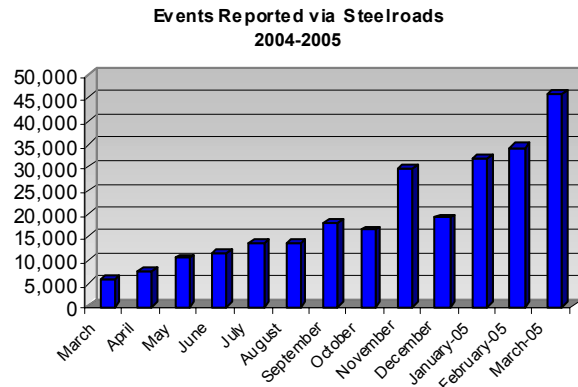
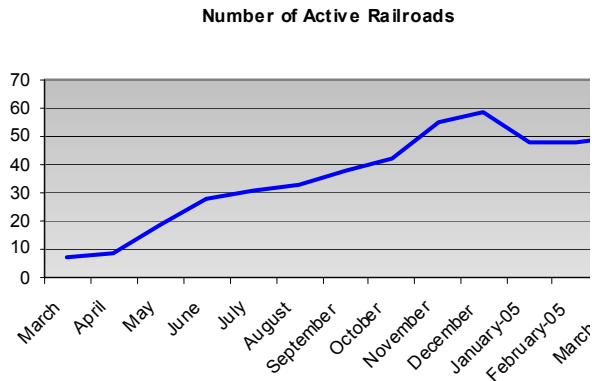
“Roadway Worker Protection Quick Reference” pamphlet. Includes sections on:

- On-Track Safety Tips
- Field Checklists for groups and lone workers
- Railroad Communications Requirements for Roadway Workers
- Train Approach Warning / Individual Train Detection
- RWP Regulation Outline and Defect Codes
- On-Track Safety by Workers and Location
- Training and Qualification Requirements

“Roadway Worker Protection Life Tips” poster.

Contact Steve Sullivan at (202) 585-3432 or Sullivan@aslrro.org to request copies of these items.

STEELROADS® EVENT REPORTING – MARCH 2005



Event Reporting in Steelroads is rising quickly! The number of events reported has increased by over 11,400 between February and March alone.

Steelroads free event reporting service provides increased satisfaction to your customers by supplying them with more information about their shipments. It also allows your company to keep current, accurate records regarding interchanges, releases, arrival and departures, placements, and more!

Once Event Reporters learn how intuitive it is to report using Steelroads, they often wish they had started using the service sooner! Remember, it's free *and* easy to use.

Get started today by logging onto www.steelroads.com and clicking on *Become a Member*.

RAILROAD TRAFFIC

According to the AAR, U.S. carloads were up 0.8 percent in the week ending April 23, 2005, with 344,323 cars originated, compared to 341,734 cars originated in 2004. Carloads for U.S. Non-Class I's that submit data to the AAR were up 0.9 percent for the week and are up 7.0 percent for the year. U.S. intermodal traffic was up 5.7 percent for the week and is up 7.3 percent for the year to date. U.S. and Canadian intermodal traffic is up 5.5 percent for the year. Total volume is up 3.5 percent for the year.

For just the week ending April 16, 2005, U.S. carloads were up 3.1 percent and carloads for U.S. Non-Class I railroads that submit data to the AAR were down 3.3 percent. Carloads were up 5.6 percent in the East and up 1.2 percent in the West. U.S. intermodal traffic was up 6.4 percent for the week and U.S. and Canadian intermodal traffic was up 5.2 percent.

According to RMI's RailConnect Index, which includes traffic summaries for 200 short line and regional railroads, short line carloads were up 7.23 percent for the week ending April 9, 2005. Short lines reporting to RMI moved 93,775 cars for the week, compared with 87,449 cars for the same week in 2004. For the year-to-date, short line traffic was up 10.85 percent, with 1,285,762 cars handled in 2005, compared to 1,159,883 cars handled at the same point in 2004. Intermodal traffic makes up the largest percentage of traffic for a single commodity group, with 220,657 carloads handled for the year-to-date. Stone, Clay & Aggregates make up the fastest growing commodity group, with a 30.53% increase in carload shipments over 2004.

EMBARGO NOTICES & REROUTE ORDERS

A complete listing of embargo notices is available at embargo.railinc.com.

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