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American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association

# VIEWS & NEWS

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## IN THIS ISSUE

1. [Thank You to Our Annual Meeting Sponsors](#)
2. [Railroads Celebrate Safest Year in History at Awards Presentation](#)
3. [FRA Issues Positive Report on RCL Operations](#)
4. [Crossing Incidents Down in 2003](#)
5. [Delray Connecting Railroad Celebrates 100 Years](#)
6. [CSX Institutes Use of Price Lists](#)
7. [Rep. Pitts Pays a Visit to LNVT](#)
8. [RMI Introduces m-Crew Application](#)
9. [Ricketts New Manager of Sales & Marketing for AWT](#)
10. [Railroad Traffic](#)
11. [Embargo Notices and Reroute Orders](#)



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## **RAILROADS CELEBRATE SAFEST YEAR IN HISTORY AT AWARDS PRESENTATION**

On May 6, 2004, the E.H. Harriman and Harold F. Hammond Memorial Safety Awards were presented at the Washington Court Hotel in Washington, DC. The celebration was particularly significant this year, as the railroad industry experienced the safest year in its history in 2003.

The Harriman Awards, which are presented to the railroads with the top employee safety records for the preceding year, are given to three groups of line-haul carriers and a fourth group of switching and terminal companies. Gold, silver and bronze awards are presented in each group. Norfolk Southern Corporation took the gold award in Group A, consisting of line haul railroads with 15 million or more employee hours during the award year, for the fifteenth straight year. The Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway took the silver award, while Union Pacific Railroad was given the bronze award.

Several ASLRRA members were presented with Harriman Awards, with the Iowa Interstate Railroad taking the gold medal in Group C, consisting of line-haul railroads with fewer than 4 million employee-hours. Lake Superior & Ishpeming Railroad Company took the silver medal and Florida East Coast Railway took bronze in the category. In the switching and terminal group, the Terminal Railroad Association of St. Louis won the gold medal. Conrail was presented the silver medal and The Belt Railway Company of Chicago was awarded the bronze medal. Lake Superior and Ishpeming Railroad, Alaska Railroad and Texas Mexican Railway were all awarded Certificates of Commendation for continuous improvements in employee safety.

The Harold F. Hammond Award is presented to an individual railroad employee who has demonstrated outstanding safety achievement during the previous year. The 2003 Hammond Award winner was Dennis Robinson, a Carman with BNSF. ASLRRA's Safety Person of the Year, David Roth from Montana Rail Link, Inc. was also a Hammond Award nominee.

## **FRA ISSUES POSITIVE REPORT ON RCL OPERATIONS**

On Thursday May 13, 2004 the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) issued a preliminary report which gave a very positive outlook and strong support for remote control locomotive operations (RCL). The FRA issued this preliminary report in response to a letter from the United States Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, with concerns about RCL operations and employee safety.

With increased concerns about safety and technology with RCL operations Senators John McCain and Ernest Hollings, requested the FRA to conduct an assessment of RCL operations and its potential impact on the safety of the railroad employees and the general public. The report indicated that all of the accidents or incidents have been the result of human error and that the technology has performed better than anticipated and is constantly improving. FRA Administrator Allan Rutter summed up the concerns of the Committee and supported the FRA report by saying, "This data shows that RCL technology has great potential to reduce train accidents and dramatically increase work safety."

"This preliminary report certainly indicates that RCL operations are here to stay", stated Richard F. Timmons, President ASLRRA, "and I'm proud that our members were an important part of pioneering this new technology and doing it safely." ASLRRA member railroads have been using RCL technology safely for a number of years and have been instrumental in working with RCL manufacturers to continually improve the technology for efficiency, and more importantly, to ensure employee safety.

To download a copy of the preliminary report, go to the FRA web site at [www.fra.dot.gov](http://www.fra.dot.gov).

## **CROSSING INCIDENTS DOWN IN 2003**

According to data from the FRA, highway-rail grade crossing incidents were down for 2003. The total number of incidents for 2003 was 2,924, down 5.0 percent from 2002 and 9.7 percent lower than 2001.

[Click here](#) to view statistics on grade crossing incidents by state, region, railroad, and / or road type.

### **DELRAY CONNECTING RAILROAD CELEBRATES 100 YEARS**

The Delray Connecting Railroad Company, located in Detroit, Michigan, will celebrate its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary on May 21, 2004. The railroad will celebrate the centennial with its employees, their families, customers and business associates. In a statement about the celebration H.J. “Sonny” Sebastian, General Manager of the Delray Connecting Railroad, wrote, “Since 1904, the Delray Connecting Railroad has taken pride in providing quality service to all our customers. Throughout the Delray’s history the employees have set the standard with customer satisfaction.”

To find out more about the Delray Connecting Railroad, visit [www.delrayconnectingrailroad.com](http://www.delrayconnectingrailroad.com).

### **CSX INSTITUTES USE OF PRICE LISTS**

In response to customer requests for faster and easier pricing, CSX has recently initiated a system using electronic CSX Price Lists on 110 commodity markets, enabling their customers to access market prices over the internet. Through the use of this system, CSX hopes to win new business by providing potential customers with fast, truck-competitive rates. Of the 110 markets covered by the CSX Price Lists, 80 have short line participation and only 15 of CSX’s short line partners have not participated in any CSX Price Lists to date.

A significant percentage of traffic is already moving under Price Lists, and CSX anticipates that the trend will continue to accelerate. They intend to eventually use Price Lists for all moves where customers project volumes of two cars/ week or less, saving considerable amounts of time on quoting prices for small volume moves. In a letter recently sent to their short line connections, CSX has asked for their participation in the near future on the continuing development of price lists.

### **REP. PITTS PAYS A VISIT TO THE LNVT**



**Pictured above (from left): Doug Golden, President LNVT; Rep. Joseph Pitts; Harry Sauder, engineer; Mark Shipe, operations supervisor**

Rep. Joseph Pitts (R-Pennsylvania) visited with employees and customers of the Landisville Terminal & Transfer Co., Inc. in Landisville, Pennsylvania on Monday, May 3. The Congressman is a co-sponsor of HR 876 and he spoke with his audience about the importance of maintaining freight rail transportation options for communities across Pennsylvania.

## **RMI INTRODUCES M-CREW APPLICATION**

RMI recently announced the availability of the industry's first remote computing application for short line train crews. m-Crew is a new, powerful mobile computing tool that enables train crews to receive real-time information while on the train and provide updated work orders and other train event information to the railroad's Transportation Management System. Using a touch-screen tablet PC and satellite or cellular communications, train crews are able to provide up-to-the-minute information about their location and current switching activities as work is completed in the field.

The m-Crew application contains several remote computing functions, which synchronize and integrate with all of the capabilities included in RMI's RailConnect TMS system. These include functions to report Train Arrivals and Departures, Industry Switching Activity, Setouts and Pickups, Inventory Updates and other operational information. By reporting this information in near real-time, railroads are able to provide their customers with better visibility of their shipments.

## **RICKETTS NEW MANAGER OF SALES & MARKETING FOR AWT**

Atlantic Western Transportation Inc. (AWT), the parent of the Heart of Georgia Railroad and Georgia Midland Railroads recently announced the addition of Chris Ricketts as Manager of Sales and Marketing for AWT's rail operations. Mr. Ricketts has been employed with the Heart of Georgia Railroad since its inception in 2000 and has worked in the company's transportation division.

Brad Lafavers, President and CEO of AWT said, "Chris has been an outstanding employee and brings a strong understanding of the railroad's operations, as related to customer needs, to this new position."

## **RAILROAD TRAFFIC**

According to the AAR, U.S. carloads were up 3.9 percent in the week ending May 8, 2004. For the year to date, carloadings are up 3.3 percent compared to 2003. Carloads for U.S. Non-Class I's that submit data to the AAR were down 18.3 percent for the week, and are down 5.8 percent for the year. Carloads for Week 18 were up 4.4 percent in the East and up 3.5 percent in the West. U.S. intermodal traffic was up 7.7 percent for the week and is up 7.9 percent for the year. U.S. and Canadian intermodal traffic was up 6.4 percent for the week and is up 6.4 percent for the year. Total volume for the week was up 6.2 percent from 2003 and total volume for the year is up 4.8 percent through the 18th week of 2004.

For just the week ending May 1, 2004, U.S. carloads were up 4.4 percent and carloads for U.S. Non-Class I railroads that submit data to the AAR were down 10.3 percent. Carloads were up 2.7 percent in the East and up 9.1 percent in the West. U.S. intermodal traffic was up 6.8 percent for the week and U.S. and Canadian intermodal traffic was up 6.1 percent from the prior year.

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