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American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association

VIEWS & NEWS

VOLUME 75

NUMBER 8

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Upcoming Events

2008 ASLRRRA Annual
Convention
May 4-6, 2008
San Antonio, TX

ASLRRRA Power Brake
Training Session
May 4-6, 2008
San Antonio, TX

CN Annual Short Line
Conference
May 12-13, 2008
Chicago, IL

CP Annual Short Line
Conference
May 14-16, 2008
Minneapolis, MN

Questions? Comments?
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Security Alert Level
2 is in Effect

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ASLRRA WELCOMES MORE NEW MEMBERS

The American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association welcomes the following new railroad members:

- **Palouse River & Coulee City Railroad:** This railroad operates 202 miles of line in Idaho, Oregon, and Washington State, and is one of the Watco Companies family of railroads. They will utilize reporting marks “PCC” and interchange with BNSF and Union Pacific. Contact them at Phone: (620) 231-2230, Web: www.watcocompanies.com.
- **Plainsman Switching Co., Inc.:** This railroad operates 18 miles of line in Texas, will utilize reporting marks “PSC” and interchange with the BNSF. Basing in Lubbock, TX, they may be contacted at Phone: (806) 744-0118.

SHORT LINE & REGIONAL RAILROADERS LEARN HOW TO HANDLE HAZMAT



(photos by Tom Streicher)

It was hard work, the participants reported, but oh, how worthwhile it was! On Monday, April 14 through Thursday, April 17, 43 employees of short line and regional railroads learned how to best respond to and bring under control hazmat accidents. The training, which was conducted at the Transportation Technology Center's state-of-the-art Emergency Response Training Center in Pueblo, Colorado, was sponsored by Norfolk Southern, and those participating were from short lines and regionals connecting with NS.

Following Sunday arrival, participants spent Monday in the classroom, which included explanation of the various types of valves used on tank cars. On Tuesday, morning classroom training was followed in the afternoon by instruction on how to set up a unified command structure for first responders at an accident scene. Wednesday's training included instruction on how to stop leaks on various kinds of tank cars and how to flare a tank car. And on Thursday, participants put on hazmat suits and self-contained breathing devices to work at a staged wreck scene that included tanks cars with simulated chlorine, LPG and ethanol leaks – an exercise that began with a controlled explosion! ASLRRA's Tom Streicher, who helped organize and oversee the class, reports that training began at 6:45AM on Monday and concluded, with breaks for meals and rest, after Thursday midnight.

ASLRRA congratulates all who participated in the class and sincerely thanks Norfolk Southern for their help in making it possible, include NS VP-Environmental & Safety Chuck Wehrmeister, and also Dave Shoendorfer and John Lehman, also of NS's Environmental & Safety Department.

NEW FRA RULES IN EFFECT TARGETING HUMAN FACTOR ACCIDENTS

New Federal Railroad Administration regulations aimed reducing human factor-caused accidents took effect on April 14. The regulations, Title 49 CFR 217 and 218, address "Railroading Operating Rules: Program of Operational Tests and Inspections" and "Railroad Operating Practices: Handling Equipment, Switches and Fixed Derails."

These new rules establish greater accountability on the part of railroad management for administration of programs for operational tests and inspections, and greater accountability on the part of railroad supervisors and employees for compliance with railroad operating rules that, the FRA says, relate to approximately half of the train accidents caused by human factors. The new rules also provide employees the opportunity to make a "good faith challenge" if they have concerns or questions about the safety of an operation related to shoving equipment, handling switches and derails, and leaving equipment foul of the tracks, as described in Title 49 Part 219 Subpart F. The regulation states that the good faith challenge must immediately be reviewed by an officer of the company. If the employee issuing the challenge and the reviewing officer cannot reach agreement, a second officer who is not a subordinate of the first officer must also review the challenge.

ASLRRA's David Whorton has sent member railroads information on materials that will provide guidance in issuing instructions and training to employees, such as will allow compliance with these new regulations. These materials are accessible and downloadable through the ASLRRA members-only website. Contact Dave at P: (202) 585-3430, E: dwhorton@aslrra.org if you need help accessing them. Contact Tom Streicher at P: (202) 585-3434, E: tstreicher@aslrra.org for questions about the regulations. Please also let Tom know if your railroad receives any notice of exception or violation. Finally, ASLRRA extends its grateful thanks to the members of its Safety Committee, chaired by J.R. Sampson, for their work preparing these materials for the benefit of our railroad members.

FLORIO RECEIVES BEN FRIEDLAND AWARD



(left to right: Steven Friedland, Former Governor James Florio, Bob Bailey. Photo by Kel MacKavanagh.)

The New Jersey Short Line & Regional Railroad Association (NJASLRRRA) has presented former U.S. Congressman and former New Jersey Governor James Florio with its Benjamin Friedland Award. Mr. Florio was recognized for his longtime contributions to rail transportation, which included having co-author the landmark Staggers Act of 1980 while he was a congressman and member of the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee.

Mr. Florio is the ninth recipient of the Friedland Award. Previous recipients have included Robert Kurdock of the New York, Susquehanna & Western Railway, Fred Winkler of the Winchester & Western Railway, and U.S. Congressman William Pascrell. The award is named in honor of the late Benjamin Friedland, a past president of the Morristown & Erie Railway and a former ASLRRRA Eastern Region board member. Nomination and confirmation of the award is voted on by NJSLRRRA membership.

The award was presented to Mr. Florio on April 3 at the New Jersey TransAction conference in Atlantic City, NJ. Announcing the award was NJSLRRRA President Bob Bailey, who presented it along with Steven Friedland, son of the late Mr. Friedland. As reported in the last V&N, Mr. Florio's acceptance remarks including high praise for the short line and regional railroad industry.

JAKE AWARDS AND PRESIDENT'S AWARDS ANNOUNCED

In 2007, short line and regional railroads proved themselves to be at the vanguard of railroad industry safety. Over 200 ASLRRA member railroads had a frequency-severity index (FSI) rating of 0.00, meaning that their employees had no FRA-reportable injuries. This achievement entitles them to receive the Jake Award With Distinction. Also, nearly 100 other member railroads are eligible to receive the Jake Award, having had an FSI below the industry average of 15.65.

Several member railroads will also receive the President's Award, which is presented in recognition of special achievement in the field of railroad safety. This year's recipients of this award are:

- The Delta Valley & Southern Railway, the Hollis & Eastern Railroad, the Louisville, New Albany & Corydon Railroad, and the Omaha Lincoln & Beatrice Railway, all for having been injury-free since 1975.
- The Willamette & Pacific Railroad, for having had the most injury-free employee-hours in 2007.
- The Terminal Railroad Association of St. Louis, for having had the best safety record among those with 250,000 or more employee hours.
- Montana Rail Link, for having had the most employee hours whilst maintaining a safety rate below the industry average.
- The Ventura County Railway, for having made the greatest safety rate improvement 2007 over 2006.

ASLRRA congratulates all Jake Award and President's Award winners. To view the complete list of railroads winning ASLRRA safety awards, [click here](#).

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD REORGANIZES OFFICES

The U.S. Surface Transportation Board has announced that the Board's Office of Compliance & Consumer Assistance and Office of Governmental & Public Affairs have been merged to create a new office: the Office of Public Assistance, Governmental Affairs, & Compliance. In a prepared statement, STB Chairman Charles Nottingham said that one of the main goals of the reorganization is to expand the Board's Rail Consumer Assistance program, which will now seek to reach a much broader audience. Instead of a Rail Consumer Assistance Program and a separate Public Assistance hotline, this new, merged program will address both operational and service issues among all Board stakeholders, as well as questions pertaining to Board procedures.

In addition to the expanded Rail Consumer Assistance program, the Office of Public Assistance, Governmental Affairs, and Compliance will house other external operations, including governmental affairs, communications, and compliance, as well as internal operations, such as rail operations analysis, tariffs, the Board's library, and mediation coordination.

Effective with the reorganization, Matthew Wallen was named as director of this new office. Mel Clemens has assumed the new position of Senior Advisor to the Board.

RAIL ACCOUNTING & AUDITING SEMINAR SCHEDULED

The Association of American Railroads (AAR) will hold training for railroad accounting and auditing personnel on June 11–13, 2008, at The Phoenician in Scottsdale, Arizona.

Participation in the accounting session is open to accounting and auditing personnel of all North American railroads and affiliated organizations, and companies that perform accounting work for railroads, while the audit session is limited to the North American railroads' internal audit staffs and their invited guests.

Detailed information about both training sessions and a link to the online registration system are available through the AAR's website at http://www.aar.org/newsroom/IAD_RAO_2008.asp, or by going to www.aar.org and clicking on Events in the left hand navigation area. All registrations must be made online. For additional information, please call Beth Eagney at P: (202) 639-2327.

RSWC SEEKS COMMENT ON PROPOSED ISS CHANGES

The industry's Revenue Systems Working Committee (RSWC) has announced that it has recently appointed a special committee task force to review the potential benefits to all Interline Settlement System (ISS) participants of a reduction to the 10-day challenge wait period, per RAR Freight Mandatory Rule 64. This reduction would then allow the intermediate or destination railroad to submit a challenge waybill to Central ISS prior to the 11th day.

This task force or "TAG" (for technical advisory group) is distributing to all ISS participating railroads a survey for their comments on this proposed change. This survey will be distributed by April 30. The RSWC asks all ISS participants to please comment and return the survey, which will assist them in assessing the impact to the industry and in developing a recommendation which will serve the best interests of ISS participants. If you do not receive this survey, please contact Railinc's Latrell Jefferson at E: latrell.jefferson@railinc.com.

The RSWC is the industry committee whose responsibilities include adapting interline revenue settlement processes to ever-changing industry business practices and requirements. This includes, but is not limited to, EDI systems and technologies, rules and guidelines, best practices, and collaboration with other appropriate industry committees. Claire Barnette of the Canadian National is this year's chair of the committee and Lynn Gibson of the Columbus & Greenville Railway is this year's vice-chair. Also representing shortline and regional railroad interests on this committee are Rowena Dietrich of the Paducah & Louisville, Debbie Ghioto of the Florida East Coast, and Jill Robbins of the Wheeling & Lake Erie Railway.

TRAINS TUBE DEBUTS WITH SHORT LINE ENGINEER

Trains Magazine, an ASLRRA associate member, has debuted Trains Tube on its website.

The inaugural episode of this You Tube-like video features Trains Associate Editor Andy Cummings interviewing Matt Heeren, a locomotive engineer with the Wisconsin & Southern Railroad. During the interview, Mr. Heeren reflects upon the challenges of being a locomotive engineer and of his enjoyment in being a part of that esteemed profession.

In the future, the magazine has said, it hopes to feature interviews with "magazine columnists, correspondents, and friends." Trains Tube may be seen on the Trains Magazine website, www.trains.com/trn/.

MINNESOTA PRAIRIE LINE RECEIVES \$3M STATE GRANT

The Minnesota Prairie Line will receive a \$3 million grant from the state of Minnesota to fix its track. A spokesman for the railroad said that it will allow it raise speeds from 10 mph to 25 mph in some areas, and will allow it to handle some 286,000-pound freight cars.

The MPL operates on a 94-mile route between Norwood Young America and Hanley Falls, MN, over former Minneapolis & St. Louis track. MPL is an affiliate of the Oakes Corporation, whose short line family also includes the Twin Cities & Western and the Red River Valley & Western.

SHORT LINE RAILROAD CHANGES

Atlantic Western Transportation reports that the Georgia Midland Railroad reports recently sold its Ardmore, GA to Sylvania, GA line to the Ogeechee Railway, and that the Ogeechee has now taken over that line's operation. The line totals 20 miles of mainline track and interchanges with Norfolk Southern at Ardmore. Atlantic Western Transportation acquired the Ogeechee's operations in February, 2004, which then comprised four lines in central Georgia. A Midvale, GA to Vidale, GA branch, which was contiguous with the Heart of Georgia Railroad, earlier became part of HOG's operations. The other three segments were reorganized into the Georgia Midland Railroad. Additional to the Ogeechee, the HOG and GMR are also part of AWT's railroad family.

Permian Basin Railways reports that it has recently purchased the Mount Hood Railroad from a group of local and regional investors in Oregon. The 102 year-old MHRR provides freight service over a 22-mile line between Hood River, OR and Parkdale, OR, and also operates several excursion and dinner trains between April and December. In 1987, those investors purchased MHRR from Union Pacific. Permian Basin is a subsidiary of Iowa Pacific Holdings, operator of several short line and regional railroads.

SHORT LINE PERSONNEL CHANGES

Atlantic Western Transportation has appointed Jonathan Lafevers its director of commercial relations. Mr. Lafevers, who will base in Americus, GA, was most recently with Atlanta-based RMI, the railway information systems provider. In his new position, Mr. Lafevers will be responsible for all commercial transactions on the AWT's Heart of Georgia and Georgia Midland Railroads.

Florida East Coast has appointed Wayne Blalock its GM-Intermodal Operations and Tommy Rountree as its GM-Transportation. Mr. Blalock was most recently responsible for FEC's operations in South Florida and Mr. Rountree most recently handled FEC's North Florida business. Mr. Rountree and Mr. Blalock will report to FEC VP Steve Truitt, as will Chief Engineer Bob Stevens and Chief Mechanical Officer Bobby Hatfield.

Twin Cities & Western has appointed Robin Bergeron as its director of sales. Ms. Bergeron was most recently a marketing and sales manager for several RailAmerica family railroads.

AAR CLASS I TRAFFIC COUNTS

The Association of American Railroads reports that, for the week ending April 19, 2008, U.S. rail volume grand totaled 34.9 billion ton-miles, up 3.3 percent from the comparable period last year. U.S. carload rail traffic was up 1.5 percent, up 0.3 percent in the East and up 2.5 percent in the West. Notable traffic increases included grain up 17.4 percent, nonmetallic minerals up 8.6 percent, and coal up 8.0 percent; notable traffic decreases included lumber and wood products down 20.8 percent, motor vehicles and equipment down 20.6 percent, and metallic ores down 17.3 percent. Also for the week, U.S. intermodal rail traffic was down 3.2 percent, Canadian carload rail traffic was down 5.0 percent, Canadian intermodal rail traffic was up 2.5 percent, Mexico's Kansas City Southern de Mexico's carload rail traffic was up 0.6 percent, and KCSM's intermodal rail traffic was up 11.7 percent.

For the period January 1 through April 19, 2008, U.S. rail volume grand totaled 534.9 billion ton-miles, up 2.3 percent from the comparable period last year. Also for this period, U.S. carload rail traffic was up 1.0 percent, U.S. intermodal rail traffic was down 3.5 percent, Canadian carload rail traffic was down 3.0 percent, Canadian intermodal rail traffic was up 4.6 percent, KCSM's carload rail traffic was down 3.4 percent, and KCSM's intermodal rail traffic was up 14.2 percent.

RAILINC SHORT LINE TRAFFIC INDEX

ASLRRA is pleased to again include in V & N the Railinc Short Line Index. This index is movement-based, totaling loaded trips originating on all non-Class 1 railroads that have passed movement event records of same to Railinc. In some instances, Railinc is not party to waybill information and so those unknown commodities are represented as "All Other." This index is calculated monthly and the below data is as of March, 2008.

CARLOADS ORIGINATED	MARCH	MARCH	% CHANGE
	2008	2007	
Chemicals	91,085	95,213	-4.3%
Coal	47,467	40,790	16.4%
Crushed Stone, Sand & Gravel	25,404	26,637	-4.6%
Food & Kindred Products	17,114	18,236	-6.2%
Grain	14,960	14,086	6.2%
Grain Mill Products	31,265	31,029	0.8%
Lumber & Wood Products	8,831	8,683	1.7%
Metallic Ores	10,870	15,851	-31.4%
Metals & Metal Products	4,118	3,812	8.0%
Motor Vehicles & Equipment	31,867	28,764	10.8%
Nonmetallic Minerals	10,254	10,172	0.8%
Petroleum Products	2,700	2,562	5.4%
Pulp & Paper Products	2,444	2,019	21.1%
Stone, Clay & Glass Products	23,349	25,594	-8.8%
Trailers & Containers	15,566	16,745	-7.0%
Waste & Scrap Materials	37,393	41,961	-10.9%
All Others	13,360	14,217	-6.0%
TOTAL	388,047	396,371	-2.1%

RMI RAILCONNECT SHORT LINE TRAFFIC INDEX

The RMI Railconnect Index is waybilled-based and totals shipments billed by non-Class 1 railroads using RMI billing products. For this report, this totals 315 such railroads. This index is calculated weekly and the below data is as of the week ending April 12, 2008, the 15th week of the year.

	Week Ending April 12			Year-To-Date		
	2008	2007	% Change	2008	2007	% Change
CARLOADS HANDLED						
Coal	14,289	14,405	-0.81%	225,125	212,784	5.80%
Grain	15,222	13,446	13.21%	217,206	199,430	8.91%
Farm & Food (Exc. Grain)	5,731	4,917	16.55%	80,451	72,243	11.36%
Ores	3,355	3,322	0.99%	45,126	38,542	17.08%
Stone, Clay, Aggregates	11,994	11,103	8.02%	145,190	145,815	-0.43%
Lumber/Forest Prods.	5,055	6,529	-22.58%	71,135	92,189	-22.84%
Paper Products	8,105	8,210	-1.28%	116,909	128,765	-9.21%
Waste & Scrap Materials	6,554	6,680	-1.89%	95,032	93,358	1.14%
Chemicals	17,310	17,687	-2.13%	258,224	250,430	3.11%
Petroleum & Coke	6,041	5,244	15.20%	89,838	81,919	9.67%
Metals & Products	12,116	11,370	6.56%	178,083	163,660	8.81%
Motor Vehicles & Equip.	2,232	1,791	24.62%	28,631	29,461	-2.82%
Intermodal	12,742	12,619	0.97%	204,246	216,889	-5.83%
All Other	3,218	3,122	3.07%	44,314	44,597	-0.63%
Total	123,964	120,445	2.92%	1,799,510	1,770,682	1.63%

EMBARGO NOTICES AND OPSL STATION NOTES

A complete listing of embargo notices and OPSL (Open & Prepay Book) station notes is available at aarembargo.railinc.com.

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