



May 5, 2021



ASLRRRA Members Can Benefit by Joining SmartWay as Carrier Partners

As large corporations and significant freight shippers continue to build out their Environment Social and Governance (ESG) plans amid increasing interest from their stakeholders, choosing efficient freight carrier partners can be an effective way to reduce their carbon

footprint and meet their ESG goals.

The EPA's [SmartWay](#) program is a voluntary public-private program meant to help companies advance supply chain sustainability. ASLRRRA recently became an official SmartWay Affiliate, and railroads can become SmartWay Rail Carrier Partners, which we urge our members to consider.

Join members such as Anacostia Rail Holdings, who recently submitted six railroads for participation in the program. Anacostia's Pacific Harbor Lines (PHL) submitted their Rail Carrier Tool back in December. Anacostia and PHL in particular have long been leaders on the environmental front.

Other ASLRRRA members participating in the SmartWay program include New York Susquehanna and Western Railway, Ann Arbor Railroad and Genesee and Wyoming Inc. Join them in participating in this effort!

When a railroad completes the Rail Carrier Tool, their environmental performance can be viewed by SmartWay shippers and/or Logistics Partners deciding which form of transportation to select. Don't leave your railroad out - be visible to shippers making environmentally-aware transportation decisions. Participation in the SmartWay program is free.

ASRRRA has two recorded webinars that will assist railroads in better understanding the benefits:

- In a webinar on Earth Day, ASLRRRA members provided tangible examples of the benefits of shipping by rail to a number of SmartWay Shipper, Logistics and Affiliates, identifying ways that companies could incorporate rail in their transportation plan, including extensive discussion of transloading. The webinar is available [here](#).
- SmartWay and ASLRRRA talked about the benefits of becoming a partner in a webinar recorded on Mar. 25. Members can view the recorded webinar [here](#).

Interested in learning more about what ASLRRRA is doing to advance freight rail's leadership in fuel-efficient surface transportation, and efforts to be a part of the solution to the Biden Administration's environmental goals? Join ASLRRRA's Environmental Committee. Contact committee Chairman Sean P. Strong at sean.strong@watco.com or ASLRRRA staff liaison Jo Strang at jstrang@aslrra.org.

ASLRRRA Invites Members to Submit Pictures for Use in Media, on Website

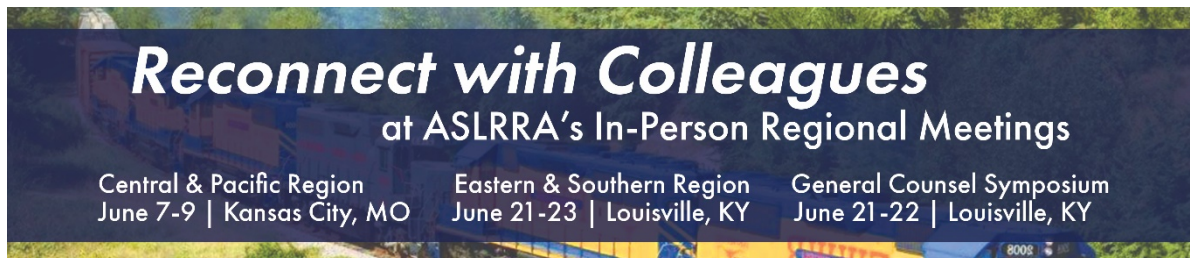
ASLRRRA is updating its website, media and print materials, and invites its members to submit images that can be used to accompany other information in these mediums.

May 5, 2021

The railroad community is rife with photography enthusiasts who have documented all aspects of railroad operations, and the Association would be happy and grateful to share some of those images with a wider audience. As the adage does, a picture is worth a thousand words, and having them would go a long way in communicating the ways short lines operate and the impact they have on local communities.

Photographs of all kinds are welcome, including pictures of employees working onsite, pictures of meetings and safety briefings, and scenic images with locomotives, trains and equipment.

Please load your high-resolution photo files directly to ASLRRRA's [Member Photos Dropbox file](#) or send them to ASLRRRA's Amy Krouse at akrouse@aslrra.org. Please be sure that the owner of the photograph has given the Association permission to use the image.



Hedlund Nominated to Replace Begeman on STB

President Joe Biden has [nominated](#) Karen Hedlund to [become a member](#) of the Surface Transportation Board (STB). She would replace Ann Begeman, whose term expired Dec. 31, 2020.

Hedlund is currently vice president and national rail strategy advisor at WSP USA, and was formerly deputy administrator of the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA).

At the FRA, Hedlund helped oversee the \$12 billion high-speed rail grant program and supervised the Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing (RRIF) program.

AAR RAN Security Note Concerning Track-Shunting Incidents Available on ASLRRRA Website

A new Association of American Railroads (AAR) Rail Alert Network (RAN) Security Awareness Note is available to members on ASLRRRA's [website](#). The RAN explores how U.S. intelligence has analyzed track-shunting incidents reported by railroads.

Analyses by federal agencies allows for the detection of trends or patterns in these incidents, as well as potential underlying motivations. The information can further support cooperative investigative efforts and guide preventative and protective measures for enhanced security and worker and public safety.

Transportation Research Board Opens IDEA Research Grant Program

The Transportation Research Board (TRB) announced the opening of its [Innovations Deserving Exploratory Analysis \(IDEA\) research grant program](#) for fiscal year 2021.

The rail safety portion of the program, funded by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), awards grants up to \$100,000 for new proposals for innovative approaches to improve railroad safety or performance. Proposals can apply to any type of railroad and are due Sept. 15.

TRB Freight Rail Committee Requests Suggestions for Rail Research Ideas

The Transportation Research Board's (TRB) Committee on Freight Rail Transportation is seeking specific research ideas related to six topics identified as top research needs areas.

The six topics are:

- Impacts of truck automation, electrification and regulations to the rail industry
- Rail service and psr impacts on first mile / last mile customers and urban areas
- Environmental impact studies and ways to improve the rail industry's carbon footprint
- Passenger rail service on shared corridors with freight
- Rail yard and line capacity, resiliency and disruption management
- Safety technologies, rail automation and risk management

Contributors are asked to describe their research needs surveys (RNS) using a [template](#) and submit them to committee member Rapik Saat at rapik@aar.org by May 28. Some guidelines for completing a research statement can be found [here](#).



New Bill Would Fund Grants to Remove At-Grade Rail Crossings

U.S. Senators Maria Cantwell (D-Wash.) and Roy Blunt (R-Mo.) introduced a new bill to help fund projects reducing the number of at-grade railroad crossings across the country.

The bill would provide \$500 million a year for five years to fund grants to eliminate at-grade crossing conflicts, improving safety and helping reduce congestion at crossings.

In a statement made in the Senate Commerce Committee's [press release](#), ASLRRRA President Chuck Baker supported the legislation, saying, "We welcome Senator Cantwell and Senator Blunt's introduction of the Railroad Crossing Elimination Act. While short line railroads strive to work closely with our communities and customers to avoid causing any unwelcome impacts, there are many opportunities throughout the country to eliminate highway-rail grade crossings to improve the mobility of people and goods and improve the health and safety of communities. If passed, this legislation will help provide funds to our government and tribal partners to allow them to work with us to close, relocate, or improve many challenging crossings, and we look forward to doing so whenever and wherever possible."

Rail Passenger Fairness Act Would Allow Amtrak to Take Freight Railroads to Court Over Rail Access

A [new bill](#) introduced by Senator Dick Durbin (D-Ill.), Representative Donald Payne (D-N.J.) and Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.) would help improve Amtrak on-time performance around the country.

May 5, 2021

The bill, called the Rail Passenger Fairness Act, allows Amtrak to take freight railroads to court to enforce the current law, which gives passenger rail preference over freight railroads on shared rail lines.

ASLRRA's legislative team will keep track of the proposed legislation and its effect on the Association's member railroads.



ASLRRA Announcements

Education Sessions at the 2021 Regional Meetings Will Explore FRA, TSA Training Rules

Information concerning federal regulations and compliance are some of the consistently popular topics for ASLRRA members, and this year's [regional meetings](#) will offer several sessions focused on different regulatory provisions.

At both the [Central & Pacific](#) and [Eastern & Southern](#) Region meetings, ASLRRA's JR Gelnar will discuss the Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) Part 243 training rule with Spark Training Solutions' Katie Inouye. The Association of American Railroads' Tom Farmer will join Gelnar for a different session discussing the Transportation Security Administration's new training rule. Representatives from the FRA will also be on hand to provide a Part 214 railroad workplace safety review.

Click on the individual links above to view an agenda and read session descriptions for each region's meeting.

Both regional meetings will also offer networking opportunities in a number of settings, from meals and breaks with sponsors to golf outings. Register now to take advantage of early-bird pricing for both the meetings and golf. Discounted registration rates for all events ends after May 15.

[Central & Pacific Region Meeting](#) - June 7-9, 2021 - Kansas City, Mo. ([Kansas City Marriott](#) discounted room rates available until May 12)

[Eastern & Southern Region Meeting](#) - June 21-23, 2021 - Louisville, Ky. ([The Galt House Hotel](#) discounted room rates available until May 19)

[General Counsel Symposium](#) - June 21-22, 2021 - Louisville, Ky.

ASLRRA Preferred Provider ORR Safety Offers PPE, Other Services

[ORR Safety](#) is the [newest preferred provider](#) to join ASLRRA's Member Discount Program. ORR Safety is an ISO 9001-registered distributor of personal protective equipment (PPE) and related services to the industrial market.

May 5, 2021

In addition to its PPE products, ORR Safety offers a variety of services including life safety system installation and maintenance; product rationalization and consolidation; and field audits and recommendations. Visit the ASLRRRA [Member Discount Program website](#) and click on the ORR Safety logo to start saving today.

The Member Discount Program enables railroads to save money on products and services many already use. Offerings from ASLRRRA's other preferred providers pertain to topics like payment processing, track maintenance, employee health insurance, positive train control and grant writing. Follow the Member Discount Program link above to see all that is available to program members.

A yellow banner with white and black text. On the right side, there is an illustration of a laptop with a person's head and shoulders on the screen, a mouse cursor pointing at a red button, a desk lamp, and a coffee cup with steam. The text on the banner reads: "ASLRRRA SAFETY & TRAINING", "Reasonable Suspicion Drug & Alcohol Signs and Symptoms Training Video", and "Visit www.aslrrra.org/safety for more info".

ASLRRRA SAFETY & TRAINING
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ASLRRRA Webinars – Live or On-Demand

Discussions of FRA Part 243, 240 and 242 Available in Webinar Library

Those who cannot wait to learn more about federal regulations and regulatory compliance at ASLRRRA's [regional meetings](#) can find important information in ASLRRRA's [On-Demand Webinar](#) library.

Included in the library are several recordings exploring the Federal Railroad Administration's Part 243 training requirements for safety-related railroad employees. There is also a webinar discussing Part 240 and 242 concerning certification for locomotive engineers and conductors.

In addition to these titles, ASLRRRA offers more than 100 recordings covering a variety of railroad topics, from human resources to crisis communications. Recordings are free to members and available by subscription to non-members. Follow the link above to learn more.

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

Industry Events and Announcements

May 10 and 12: Railinc Hosts Webinar for All Embargo Customers

Railinc will hold an "Introduction to Embargo Webinar" on May 10 and May 12. The webinars give an overview of the embargo application and cover other important topics including industry standards and TD-1 circular, application access and roles and requesting permits.

May 5, 2021

These webinars are open to the public at no cost, but registration is required. Railinc recommends the webinar to all embargo customers. Click [here](#) to register for the May 10 webinar, or [here](#) to register for the May 12 webinar.

May 13: FRA Webinar Will Discuss Research Funding

The Federal Railroad Administration will hold a webinar for stakeholders to discuss several research funding programs offering financial assistance to government organizations, industry and academia for applied technology research.

The webinar will discuss programs such as the FRA's Broad Agency Announcement (BAA), Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI), and Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR). Click [here](#) to register for the webinar.

May 20: SmartWay Webinar Helps Shippers Maximize Program Membership

SmartWay is holding a webinar geared toward Way 2, Way 3 and Way 4 Shipper Partners to help them maximize resources available to them through the SmartWay program.

The webinar explains how shippers can access useful reports and data, view shipper performance reports and use SmartWay data to make better mode decisions. Use this [link](#) to register for the webinar.

[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.