



February 2, 2022



View ASLRRRA's Annual Report Online

ASLRRRA's 2021 [Annual Report](#), detailing the Association's efforts to support and advocate for its members throughout the past year, is now available online.

"This year's Annual Report is a celebration...of the entire short line industry and our suppliers who have continued to deliver for customers and their communities, and of the friendships and the

camaraderie that have pulled us through this difficult period in our history," wrote ASLRRRA President Chuck Baker in the report's opening.

The report reviews the many achievements in 2021, including successful work with federal agencies, results of efforts to shape the new transportation bill, the development of tools and programs to support member operations and regulatory compliance, education provided at virtual and in-person meetings and events, and more. There are also pictures of all those the Association honored at the Annual Conference and Exhibition in Phoenix in November.

Honorees included Short Line Hall of Fame inductees; Safety, Veterans Engagement and Business Development award winners; and the Schlosser Distinguished Service Award winner.

Register Today for Virtual Railroad Days in March

[Registration](#) is now open for 2022 [Virtual Railroad Days](#) on March 9 and 10. Participants will connect with federal lawmakers and their offices through Zoom meetings on both days. Make plans to participate – sharing your story will enable lawmakers to understand the impact of legislation.

Organizers will schedule meetings for participants specific to the congressional offices where the participants do business. Class I, II and III railroad personnel, shippers, rail labor representatives, state and local government representatives, and members from the supplier community are all invited to participate.

Last year's virtual event was a resounding success with more than 260 congressional offices meeting with 475 participants. The virtual format enabled more constituents to participate than ever before, with the elimination of the travel component of an in-person Railroad Day.

Registration for the event is free. Sign up or learn more using the links above. Training in advance of the event will be provided via Zoom.

Organizations interested in sponsoring the event can contact ASLRRRA's [Amy Westerman](#) for information.

ASLRRRA Conducts Site Visit for 2022 Annual Conference and Exhibition

ASLRRA is finalizing plans for May 1-3 and will open registration in early March. See article below in [Out and About](#) for details.



The image shows a promotional banner for Blankrome Government Relations LLC. On the left, the company name 'BLANKROME' is written in a large, bold, sans-serif font, with 'BLANK' in black and 'ROME' in red. Below it, 'Government Relations LLC' is written in a smaller, black, sans-serif font. A horizontal line separates this from the services listed below: 'Federal Funding', 'Grant Writing', and 'Lobbying & Law', each in a bold, black, sans-serif font and separated by vertical lines. At the bottom center, the website 'www.blankromegr.com' is listed. On the right side of the banner is a photograph of railroad tracks receding into the distance under a dramatic, sunset-like sky with orange and yellow light.



Updated Part 217 Template Now Available to Members Online

ASLRRA's Safety and Training Committee, in conjunction with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), has updated the Part 217 Operational Testing Program template.

The committee formed a working group to address the confusion regarding some Part 217 requirements, particularly the stop test vs. banner test. The updated program is available to members on the ASLRRA website in the Compliance Templates section under the

[Safety & Compliance tab](#). Please direct any questions to [JR Gelnar](#).

ASLRRA, AAR, APTA Submit Comments Concerning Proposed OSHA Rule

On Jan. 26 ASLRRA joined the Association of American Railroads (AAR) and the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) in submitting [comments](#) to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRM) addressing heat-related injuries and illnesses.

The parties noted that the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) has long collected and evaluated heat-related injury and illness data and effectively addresses the concerns raised in the ANPRM. Pursuant to longstanding jurisdictional precedents governing the federal safety regulation of railroad operations, the parties ask that OSHA exclude railroads from this proceeding and instead permit FRA to continue to regulate temperature- and weather- related safety considerations unique to railroad operations and occupations.

BIL Requires Railroads to Post Contact Information Online

Section 22426 of the [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#) (BIL) requires all railroads to include certain information on their websites. The section reads,

All railroads shall –

(1) provide railroad contact information for public safety issues, including a telephone number, to the relevant Federal, State, and local oversight agencies; and

(2) post the information described in paragraph (1) on a publicly accessible website.

ASLRRA advises its members to take steps to comply with the stated requirement, noting the BIL does not set a deadline for compliance. Questions? Please contact [JR Gelnar](#).

RRB Discusses Customer Service Performance in Q&A

The Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) has issued its annual customer service performance report, which it discusses in the [January edition](#) of its question and answer series. The report explains how well the RRB has met its goals outlined in its [Customer Service Plan](#).

According to the Q&A, the agency's performance, average processing times and customer service performance goals in fiscal year 2021 met or exceeded that of fiscal year 2020 in almost all areas.



DOT Announces RAISE Grant Funding Availability

On Jan. 28 the U.S. Department of Transportation [announced](#) the release of the notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) for its Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) discretionary grant program. The program authorizes \$1.5 billion in funds to support infrastructure projects that will have significant local or regional impact.

Applications are evaluated and chosen based on how they meet certain criteria concerning such topics as sustainability, quality of life, state of good repair and economic competitiveness. This year, applicants are also encouraged to show how their projects will create jobs and support the local workforce.

The program's funding increased 50 percent under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law passed last year, and is the first discretionary funding program accepting applications under the new law. At least \$15 million will go to projects in historically disadvantaged communities or areas of persistent poverty.

RAISE grant applications are due April 14. Click here to view the [complete NOFO](#). ASLRRA encourages its members to reach out to eligible applicants for potential partnerships. In addition, ASLRRA's [Member Discount Program](#) features three Preferred Providers able to help members submit grant applications for a variety of programs, including RAISE.

White House Issues Guide to Funding

To explain the different funding streams and grant opportunities being implemented through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, previously known as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, the Biden administration has issued a formal [guidebook](#).

Look for information on passenger and freight rail funding starting on page 53 or click on the section directly using links in the table of contents. Included are descriptions of several rail-specific grant

programs and links to federal resources for applicants. Information on RAISE and INFRA grants is found in the guidebook's Roads, Bridges and Major Projects section.

House Legislators Introduce Bill to Streamline Credential Process

Representatives Adam Smith (D-Wash.) and John Katko (R-N.Y.) [have introduced](#) a bill that would streamline the application and renewal process for the multiple Transportation Security Administration (TSA) credentials required of certain transportation workers. The bill would also establish a reduced fee structure for applicants.

Under TSA regulations, certain transportation workers, including some railroad employees, must have multiple TSA credentials, including the Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC), the Hazardous Materials Endorsement (HME), and TSA PreCheck. This bill, the [TSA Security Threat Assessment Application Modernization Act](#), would make it easier for workers to meet these requirements.

ASLRRA joins several transportation industry organizations, including the Association of American Railroads, in support of this bill.

"For some short line freight railroad workers, obtaining security credentials through TSA is a critical but often costly and time-consuming ordeal," said ASLRRA President Chuck Baker. "We congratulate Reps. Smith and Katko for their leadership in advancing this smart, bipartisan bill to lessen unnecessary burdens and streamline the application process. We urge its swift consideration, as we're confident the bill's passage will help short line rail employees have more time to focus on our key mission: serving our customers and ensuring the speed and efficiency of our country's supply chain."

Congress Facing Another Looming Government Shutdown

Key congressional negotiators continue to discuss how to fund federal operations after Feb. 18, when the current stopgap government funding bill expires. While it is unlikely there will be a government shutdown later this month, it is likely that Congress will have to pass yet another short-term funding measure while spending decisions are ironed out.

Stakeholders across a variety of sectors – especially transportation – continue to clamor for the certainty and likely increased funding levels that come from a long-term measure funding operations all the way through the federal fiscal year, which ends in September. ASLRRA also continues to support these efforts.

	<p>FREIGHT MANAGER \$151,674 - \$184,371 ANNUAL RECRUITMENT CLOSING 2/14/22 https://www.sonomamarintrain.org/employment MORE INFO: jobs@sonomamarintrain EOE</p>
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ASLRRA Members of Note

Ohio Short Line Celebrates Rail Safety Organization with Special Locomotives



ASLRRA member Wheeling & Lake Erie Railway Company (W&LE) is joining the year-long 50th anniversary celebration of rail safety organization Operation Lifesaver (OLI) by putting a special decal on several of its locomotives.



The special decals feature the 50th anniversary OLI logo. W&LE has worked with the Ohio branch of Operation Lifesaver for many years to teach the public about rail crossing awareness and safety.

Photos Courtesy of Wheeling & Lake Erie Railway

Save the date!
ASLRRA ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION
MAY 1-3, 2022
AMERICA'S CENTER | ST. LOUIS, MO

ST. LOUIS

ASLRRRA Announcements

Deena Beshir Joins ASLRRRA as Accounting Manager



ASLRRRA welcomes Deena Beshir, the Association's new accounting manager. She will manage the overall accounting processes for ASLRRRA and the Short Line Safety Institute (SLSI). Beshir can be reached at dbeshir@aslrra.org.

Beshir, a graduate of George Mason University, is a certified public accountant (CPA) who started her career in public accounting as an auditor with the accounting firm Rubino and Company. She later joined the Association of American Railroads (AAR) in its accounting department and then became senior manager of statistical information before returning to Rubino and Company.

Nominate Noteworthy ASLRRRA Members for the Association's Annual Awards

The nomination period for ASLRRRA's annual industry awards is now open. The Association is accepting nominations for its Business Development Awards, Veterans Engagement Award and Safety Person and Safety Professional of the Year Awards.

The [Business Development Awards](#) recognize railroads that have designed and enacted the most innovative and successful business-building initiatives in the small railroad industry. Award criteria can be found [here](#), and railroads can submit nominations or questions to ASLRRRA's [Amy Krouse](#).

The [Veterans Engagement Award](#) honors industry employers who demonstrate positive policies toward U.S. veterans and who implement unique programs and practices to hire, recognize, support, and engage with veterans in the workplace and the broader community. Review award criteria [here](#), and access the application form [here](#). Please send any questions to ASLRRRA's [Sabrina Waiss](#).

The [Safety Person of the Year](#) award recognizes a non-management employee of a member railroad who works with management on effective safety programs, exhibits a high degree of safety awareness and contributes off-duty time to activities promoting safety awareness in the community. Find award criteria [here](#), and fill out a nomination form [here](#).

The [Safety Professional of the Year](#) recognizes a railroad management employee of an ASLRRRA member railroad who is responsible for safety programs, training and the overall management of safe behavior and actions on their railroad(s) and demonstrates these [criteria](#). Find a nomination form [here](#).

Contact ASLRRRA's [Crystal Gitchell](#) with any questions regarding either safety award.

Nominations are due March 15. ASLRRRA will recognize the winners at the 2022 Annual Conference and Exhibition, which will be held May 1-3 in St. Louis, Missouri.

Second Donation to Education Fund Will Finance More Training Scholarships for Short Line Employees

Thanks to a second \$12,000 donation from the Doug Golden-Mary Cullen Charitable Fund to the ASLRRRA Short Line Education Fund, the Association will award additional scholarships this year to short line railroad employees looking to attend industry-specific training in track, bridge, and signal inspection and maintenance and/or locomotive and freight car inspection and maintenance.

Scholarship recipients can receive up to \$1,200 to offset training-related expenses, such as registration fees and travel and lodging costs. Eligible applicants include small-railroad employees, with small railroads defined as those earning \$10 million or less in annual revenue.

ASLRRRA 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.

Previous scholarship recipients have used their awards to attend the University of Tennessee's Railroad Track Inspection and Safety Standards course. Another such course [will be held March 7 to 11](#), so eligible railroad employees who want to attend the course are encouraged to apply for a scholarship.

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. Any questions may be directed to ASLRRRA's operations manager, [Julie Duriga](#).

ASLRRRA Out and About

Events Team Conducts St. Louis Conference Site Inspection

ASLRRRA's Amy Westerman and Kathy Keeney were in St. Louis last week finalizing last details for our May annual conference. The visit included a review of meeting space with managers from America's Center and from Heritage, the Association's long-time convention services/show contractor. The site visit also included visits to hotels, golf courses and to ASLRRRA member, Terminal Railroad Association of St. Louis.

The annual conference returns this year to its traditional spring time slot and Sunday-Tuesday day pattern. The event officially starts Sunday, May 1 with some committee meetings and the Welcome Reception in the expo hall. Monday will feature a morning general session (including honoring the new Hall of Fame class and Safety Person and Professional of the Year, Business Development and Distinguished Service award winners), lunch in the bustling expo hall, and an afternoon of breakout track workshops with an evening reception. After morning breakout tracks, a golf outing is planned for Tuesday afternoon, followed by an after-dinner closing reception with a DJ and a beautiful view of St. Louis.

Hotel room block and attendee registration will open March 1. Exhibit sales have already started to renewals using a priority placement process and sponsorship sales start this week. The ASLRRRA team is excited about the location and the events organized, and hopes you'll make plans to meet us in St. Louis, May 1-3.



ASLRRRA Webinars – Live or On-Demand

Upcoming Webinars

[TSA Security Directive 1582-21-01 Compliance](#) – Feb. 8, 2022

Rick Holmes of Union Pacific Railroad and Seenu Chundru of PS Technology will talk about approaches short lines can take toward fulfilling the Transportation Security Administration's Directive 1580/1582-21-01. The deadline for compliance is March 31. Holmes will explain what short lines can do to meet this new requirement and prepare for probable legislation surrounding this directive.

This webinar is free for ASLRRRA members.

Thank you to sponsor



ENTERPRISE DETAILS DONE WELL ■

[Freight Emissions, Carbon Accounting and Sustainability](#) – Feb. 9, 2022

In this webinar, EPA's SmartWay program will give an overview of the accounting tools and metrics it provides freight carriers, including railroads, to measure and track their greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. SmartWay's metrics and reports are used and accepted by several leading climate reporting platforms, including the World Resources Institute's GHG protocol, CDP, and the Global Logistics Council. Railroads can use these tools to help support and develop their sustainability plans, as well as the plans of their shipper partners, suppliers, and other stakeholders.

This webinar is free for ASLRRRA members.

Find Recorded Webinars by ASLRRRA's Experts Online, On Demand

ASLRRRA's in-house subject-matter experts have presented several webinars on important railroad regulatory issues, and recordings of these webinars can be found in ASLRRRA's [On-Demand Webinar library](#).

Some such webinars available in the library's Regulatory category include

- Emergency Docket Waivers
- FRA Penalties and Violations
- FRA Regulatory and Program Requirements for Short Lines, Parts 1 and 2

ASLRRRA members can view these and over 150 other webinars covering diverse topics like communications, legal issues, business development and environmental sustainability. Access is free and available at any time for members, while non-members can purchase subscriptions.

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

Industry Events and Announcements

June 13-16 –Damage Prevention and Freight Claim Conference to Meet in Kentucky

The Transportation Technology Center, Inc. (TTCI), a subsidiary of the Association of American Railroads (AAR), is hosting its [129th Annual Damage Prevention and Freight Claim Conference](#) June 13 to 16 in Louisville, Kentucky.

The conference will be held in person and includes presentations from rail industry keynote speakers, open committee meetings and discussions of damage prevention topics focused on automobile, roll paper, baled pulp and intermodal shipments. Registration is expected to open soon. Follow the link above for more information.

[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.