American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association.

Short Line Carloads Report – October 2025

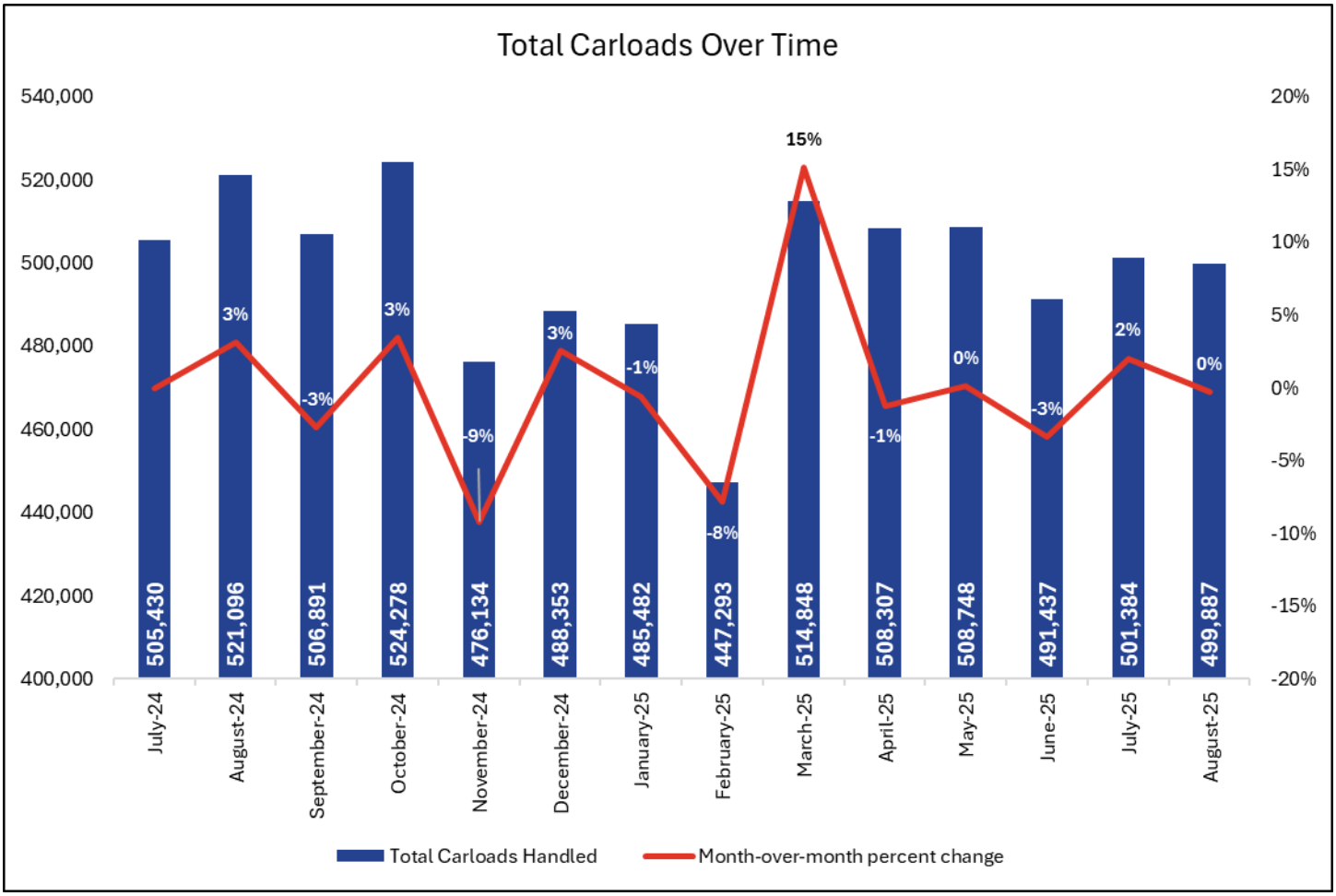
ASLRRA Launches New Short Line Carloads Report

ASLRRA is excited to share a new offering for its members – a monthly carload index. While Railinc and Railway Age used to produce a similar report, they recently stopped production.

Using data sourced from Railinc, ASLRRA's new Short Line Carload Report will include all three of the ways that a carload can travel in the U.S. on a short line: originated, bridged, and terminated. ASLRRA has also included the new category of 'total carloads handled' which is each carload handled by a U.S. short line at least once, whether that occurs as an origination, bridge, or termination event.

Overall Short Line Carloads Volumes

Over the past year you can see the overall carload trends and their month-over-month percent change. This data series begins with July 2024 carloads, hence there is no data for a month to month change in that field.

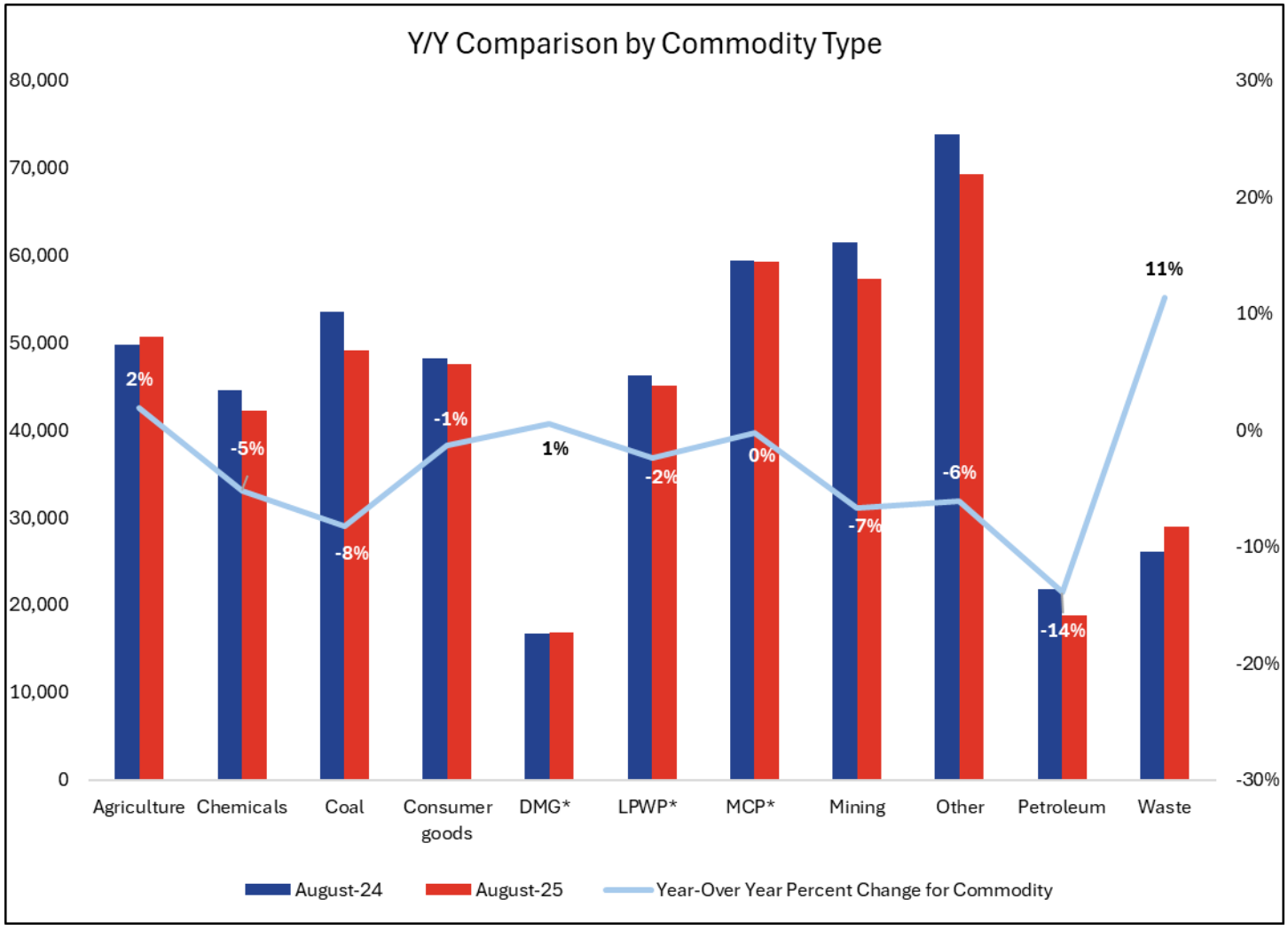


Short Line Carload Trends

Comparing overall carloads handled, as well as by movement-type, shows August 2025 figures contracting across the board compared to August 2024 volumes. Bridged movements suffered the greatest contraction while both originations and terminations were only modestly down. Total carload trips that were touched by a short line decreased by 3%.

	August 2024	August 2025	Percent change
Bridged	117,094	92,340	**-21%**
Originating	238,269	226,798	**-5%**
Terminating	263,263	258,543	**-2%**
Total	**501,532**	**485,341**	**-3%**

The following chart provides the Year-Over-Year monthly comparison by commodity, identifying the drivers of overall carload volume.



DMG – Durable Manufactured Goods
LPWP – Lumber, Paper and Wood Products
MCP – Manufacturing and Construction Products

For August, short line carloads movements were led by Waste (11%), Agriculture (2%), and Durable Manufactured Goods (1%) as the only commodity categories with growth compared to August 2024. Petroleum products led the yearly comparative contractions at -14%. The largest net losses at the individual carload level were Coal, Other, and Mining with each commodity group experiencing over 4,000 carloads lost compared to August 2024.

Carloads Table

Commodity Group	Trip Type	Aug-24	Aug-25	Percent change
Agriculture	Originated	28,100	26,659	-5%
	Bridged	4,152	2,918	-30%
	Terminated	21,647	24,032	11%
	Total Handled	46,810	47,094	1%
Chemicals	Originated	13,562	12,306	-9%
	Bridged	15,049	13,649	-9%
	Terminated	30,991	29,931	-3%
	Total Handled	53,115	50,694	-5%
Coal	Originated	26,272	22,235	-15%
	Bridged	9,053	5,189	-43%
	Terminated	27,269	26,880	-1%
	Total Handled	50,088	47,351	-5%
Consumer Goods	Originated	20,710	21,723	5%
	Bridged	13,068	11,817	-10%
	Terminated	27,463	25,823	-6%
	Total Handled	53,346	52,907	-1%
Durable Manufactured Goods	Originated	8,783	9,364	7%
	Bridged	33,161	30,206	-9%
	Terminated	7,964	7,484	-6%
	Total Handled	37,486	35,684	-5%
Lumber, Paper, and Wood Products	Originated	23,365	22,174	-5%
	Bridged	3,643	3,130	-14%
	Terminated	22,889	22,980	0%
	Total Handled	44,156	43,262	-2%
Manufacturing or Construction Products	Originated	33,090	33,343	1%
	Bridged	6,461	5,714	-12%
	Terminated	26,315	25,935	-1%
	Total Handled	57,912	57,627	0%
Mining	Originated	28,125	24,894	-11%
	Bridged	1,384	1,121	-19%
	Terminated	33,316	32,474	-3%
	Total Handled	52,263	47,530	-9%

Commodity Group	Trip Type	Aug-24	Aug-25	Percent change
Petroleum Products	Originated	8,427	7,374	-12%
	Bridged	1,642	1,237	-25%
	Terminated	13,380	11,399	-15%
	Total Handled	19,406	16,273	-16%
Other *Includes but not limited to misc. freight shipments; mail, express or other contract traffic; freight forwarder traffic; misc. mixed shipments, etc.*	Originated	35,309	32,484	-8%
	Bridged	26,470	14,136	-47%
	Terminated	38,513	36,846	-4%
	Total Handled	81,491	74,437	-9%
Waste	Originated	12,526	14,242	14%
	Bridged	3,011	3,223	7%
	Terminated	13,516	14,759	9%
	Total Handled	25,023	27,028	8%
Total	Originated	238,269	226,798	-5%
	Bridged	117,094	92,340	-21%
	Terminated	263,263	258,543	-2%
	Total Handled	501,532	499,887	0%

Definitions

- **Originated**- A carload's initial point of shipment.
- **Bridged** - A carload shipment that originates on one railroad, is transported by a bridge railroad, and then transferred to another railroad for its final destination.
- **Terminated** - A carload shipment of a commodity that originated on one railroad but was unloaded from the receiving railroad at its final destination, with no further rail transportation planned.
- **Total handled** – Total number of individual carloads that were either an origination, termination, or a bridge movement, moved by at least one short line. This total will generally be smaller than the sum of originated, bridged and terminated movements as adding those together results in double (or triple) counting of the same carload.

Carload data is based on a custom short line carload report created in cooperation between ASLRRA and Railinc based on Waybill data submitted by railroads.