



February 16, 2022



ASLRRRA Awards Nominations Due March 15

Short line railroads are small businesses serving their communities, and delivering on behalf of their customers. ASLRRRA wants to recognize outstanding performance of its members, and one way it does so is through its annual industry awards.

Send in nominations now for ASLRRRA's awards program. The Association recognizes achievements in business, strong support for veterans and military members, stellar safety performance and perfect safety records.

Submissions 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. Follow the links below to learn more about each award and its criteria, and to find nomination forms.

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.

Complete Accident/Incident Reports by Feb. 28 to be Eligible for ASLRRRA Safety Awards

Only 13 days are left to complete Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) accident/incident reports for 2021 and be eligible for ASLRRRA's President's and Jake Awards.

Railroad and switching members must complete the required FRA accident/incident reports for every month of 2021 to be eligible for the awards. Any reports submitted after Feb. 28 will not be considered.

For more information, please contact ASLRRRA's [Fred Oelsner](#).

Railroad Professionals to Convene Next Month for Virtual Railroad Day Discussions with Lawmakers

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Virtual Railroad Days are less than a month away and anticipation is building for the single largest freight railroad advocacy event of the year. This event allows participants to connect with federal lawmakers and their offices through Zoom meetings, communicating the crucial role freight railroads play in local, national and international economies.

Virtual Railroad Days will take place March 9 and 10, and there is no cost for [registration](#).

ASLRRA wants to engage as many federal lawmakers as possible and is looking for participants who do business in specific states and districts to help tell the rail industry story. ASLRRA would like to find participants in:

- Arizona
- Arkansas (3rd District)
- California (20th and 35th Districts)
- Connecticut (1st District)
- Florida (11th District)
- Idaho (2nd District)
- Illinois (13th and 8th Districts)
- Kansas (3rd and 4th District)
- Maine
- Mississippi (4th District)
- New York (11th District)
- Ohio (14th District)
- Pennsylvania (1st, 2nd, and 17th Districts)
- Rhode Island
- Tennessee (3rd and 9th Districts)
- Texas (32nd and 36th Districts)
- Washington (3rd District)
- Wisconsin (8th District)

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. Training in advance of the event will be provided via Zoom on March 3, at 1pm.

Organizations interested in sponsoring the 2022 Virtual Railroad Days can contact ASLRRA's [Amy Westerman](#) for information. ASLRRA thanks its many partner organizations for their support in planning and holding the event.



Save the date!

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





FRA Updates Activation Failure Report and Reporting Procedure

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) has updated its [Activation Failure Report](#) and is changing the procedure for submitting completed paperwork to the FRA.

Railroads can now fill out the form and email a copy to fra.af_fp.reporting@dot.gov, rather than mailing it to the office.

A link to the updated Activation Failure Report is above, or railroads can download a copy directly from the [FRA website](#). Those with questions about how to submit the updated form to the new email address should reach out to their regional office.

The FRA also plans to update the False Proceed Report, which railroads will also submit via email. ASLRRRA will provide a copy of the new False Proceed Report once it becomes available.

Updated Part 219 Model Templates, PATT App and Certain Documents Available on FRA Website

To reflect changes required by the recent addition of certain mechanical employees concerning federal drug and alcohol testing, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) has updated their model templates, Post-Accident Toxicological Testing (PATT) app and certain documents for railroads and contractors.

The new rules are effective on March 4 and require plans be submitted within 60 days. Submissions no longer go directly to Sam Noe. Please use the specific email address linked to the cover page of each program. This updated information, as well as additional details, can be found on the FRA's website [here](#) and will be updated on the ASLRRRA website next week.

Please contact [JR Gelnar](#) or [Jo Strang](#) with any questions about these updates.

Baker Testifies in STB Hearing on Amtrak Plan for Gulf Coast Service

On Feb. 15 ASLRRRA President Chuck Baker testified at a virtual Surface Transportation Board (STB) hearing regarding an [application by Amtrak](#) to be allowed to operate passenger trains on CSX and Norfolk Southern lines between New Orleans, Louisiana and Mobile, Alabama.

In [his testimony](#), Baker offered support for new passenger operations, and offered some strategies to ensure each new opportunity is individually reviewed, rather than having a one-size-fits-all process. He also discussed ways potential impacts to the national freight rail system could be thoroughly explored and addressed before allowing new or expanded passenger services. Such impacts would include infrastructure investments that might be needed to comply with regulations, and to mitigate potential harm to the overall fluidity of the line and service to current freight rail customers.

Watch Baker's testimony on YouTube [here](#).

ASLRRRA Submits Documents to STB in Advance of March Hearing on Reciprocal Switching

ASLRRRA submitted [comments](#) and [written testimony](#) to the Surface Transportation Board (STB) for a pending hearing concerning Docket No. EP 711 (Sub-No. 1), which is a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) on reciprocal switching first introduced in 2016.

The STB will hold a hearing on reciprocal switching on March 15 and 16. Baker will testify at the meeting on behalf of short line railroads. He will be joined by David Clarke, retired director of the Center for Transportation Research at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville, and Doc Claussen, chairman of ASLRRA's Board of Directors and vice president of ASLRRA member Gulf and Ohio Railways.

The speakers will express opposition to the proposed reciprocal switching rules, arguing that such regulations stand to make freight railroading less efficient, complicate routing and decrease rail network infrastructure investments. If the Board does create such a rule, the rule should fully exclude all traffic served by short lines.

Baker will provide an overview of the short line position, Clarke will discuss the unique economics of short lines and explain to the board how mandated reciprocal switching would adversely affect small railroads, while Claussen will provide a first-hand account of the how short lines go above and beyond to achieve success for customers and thus a forced switching rule is not needed.



Congress Inches Closer to Passing Another Stopgap Spending Bill

The House is not in session this week, leaving all legislative activity in the Senate. With the current stopgap funding bill expiring this Friday at midnight, the Senate is working to advance another short-term spending bill by week's end.

The House already passed the measure last week, which keeps the government funded through March 11. Meanwhile, there is cause for optimism for a longer-term, full-year fiscal year 2022 spending deal, as the vague framework that Congressional leaders announced last

week appears to be holding together, and some members of the Senate appropriations committee have announced publicly they are getting further into the weeds of actual dollar amounts that will go to various programs. ASLRRA remains engaged in advocating for robust levels of funding for programs critical to short line freight rail.

Preliminary Funding Information for Freight-Related Port Infrastructure Now Available

One of the key programs that the recent infrastructure bill significantly bolstered is the [Port Infrastructure Development Program \(PIDP\)](#), which is run out of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Maritime Administration (MARAD).

The recent Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) provides \$450 million in guaranteed funding per year, nearly double what has been provided in recent years. This week, MARAD released preliminary funding information for the port grants, which will be available on a competitive basis with applications due May 16. MARAD also states in its funding notice that more information regarding the funding opportunity will be available by Feb. 24.

The program focuses on investing in the modernization and expansion of U.S. ports to remove bottlenecks, ensure long-term competitiveness and promote resilience and sustainability. Rail projects that would facilitate "the movement of goods into, out of, around, or within a port" are eligible for

funding. In the most recent round of PIDP grant awards, [several awards](#) went to rail infrastructure improvements that will directly benefit ASLRRA members.

ASLRRA SAFETY & TRAINING
**Reasonable Suspicion Drug & Alcohol Signs
and Symptoms Training Video**
Visit www.aslrra.org/safety for more info



ASLRRA Announcements

Join ASLRRA's Member Discount Program as a Preferred Provider

The money you save using Preferred Providers from ASLRRA's Member Discount Program could pay your annual dues and then some! ASLRRA's Member Discount Program leverages the buying power of all association members to secure discounted pricing on essential business products and services. ASLRRA members receive exclusive access to programs tailored specifically for the short line railroad industry with discounted pricing, special offers, and guaranteed exceptional service.

Member Discount Program offerings currently include personal protective equipment plus safety eyewear and shoe programs from ORR Safety; tie inspection services from Loram Technologies; grant writing services from Bergmann, GTS and HDR; PTC products and services from GTS and Ayers Electronic Systems; and employee health insurance from HUB International.

Interested in becoming a Preferred Provider? ASLRRA is seeking to add new products and services to its Member Discount Program offerings, and we would like to hear from you! The program is open exclusively to ASLRRA associate members who are committed to providing exceptional service along with volume discounts to short line railroads. Preferred Providers benefit from a broad range of marketing/promotional activities, including visibility on ASLRRA's website and in print and electronic communications. Interested companies may contact [Sabrina Waiss](#) for more information on becoming a Preferred Provider.

ASLRRA Out and About

Railroad Magazines Feature ASLRRA President Chuck Baker

ASLRRA President Chuck Baker appeared in two railroad publications recently, through his [monthly column for *Railway Age* magazine](#) and in a [Progressive Railroading feature piece](#) on the Association's reaction to passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA).

In *Railway Age*, Baker highlighted the resiliency of short line railroads, and their continuing ability to transform and answer the needs of the nation's freight rail system. There are many examples in the short line industry that capture this hallmark of short lines. As examples, Baker highlighted ASLRRA members Pinsky Railroad Company, founded in 1938, and Red River Valley and Western Railroad (RRVW), the history of which goes back to the 1880s.


Baker focused on the challenges each railroad has overcome, such as the Great New England Hurricane of 1938 that almost shuttered the Pinsky Railroad Company before founder Sam Pinsky had even finished his initial revitalization efforts. Only three years later, Pinsky had his railroad operating in the black for the first time in over a decade.


The *Progressive Railroading* article shares reactions from the rail industry to the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), with Baker's enthusiasm for the newly passed law unabashed.


"We're really, really, really pleased," said Baker in the article. "It is a fantastic result for short lines."


The article also presented thoughts from the Association of American Railroads, the Rail Passengers Association, Railway Supply Institute and National Railroad Construction and Maintenance Association. Overall, the organizations expressed excitement for the increased funding offered their members through IIJA.

Save Money with ASLRRA's Member Discount Program Partners


HUB


BERGMANN
ARCHITECTS ENGINEERS PLANNERS


LORAM


ORR Safety



ASLRRA Webinars – Live or On-Demand

Upcoming Webinars

[Overview on the Expanded Scope of Part 219](#) – Feb. 24, 2022

Join representatives from the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) for a comprehensive overview of the Feb. 2 final rule expanding the scope of Part 219 to include mechanical employees. Presenters include FRA Drug and Alcohol Staff Director Jerry Powers, FRA Drug and Alcohol Program Specialist Sam Noe and FRA attorney Patty Sun.

This webinar is free for both ASLRRA members and non-members.

[Part 243 Railroad Obligations with Contractors](#) – March 8, 2022

Join FRA Staff Director Rob Castiglione to understand what your obligations are as a railroad when engaging with contractors under Part 243, including Roadway Worker Protection (RWP). Attendees

will have an opportunity to participate in Q&A at the end of the presentation. Presenters include Castiglione and ASLRRRA's Jo Strang and JR Gelnar.

This webinar is free for both ASLRRRA members and non-members.

Industry Events and Announcements

Feb. 28 – Aon to Host TSA Cybersecurity Webinar

ASLRRRA member Aon will host a webinar on Feb. 28 addressing the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) Cybersecurity Requirements for Freight and Passenger Rail and the Cyber Insurance Market. Presenters are Aon's Scott Swanson and Shane Moylan.

The discussion will provide an overview of the new security requirements and the deliverables related to the TSA directive for freight rail, passenger rail, and rail transit systems. Specific attention will be on the process of completing the required cyber vulnerability assessment and development of a cyber incident response. In addition, Aon will offer a brief overview of the cyber risk transfer/insurance environment for freight railroads, passenger railroads, and transit systems with a highlight of any critical factors to be considered when transferring risks. [Register Here](#)

May, June – University of Tennessee Offers Three Railroad Courses

The University of Tennessee-Knoxville's Tennessee Transportation Assistance Program (TTAP) will hold [three rail-related courses](#) in Knoxville this May and June.

[Basic Railroad Track Maintenance](#) will take place May 16-17. The course emphasizes maintenance practices for short line, branch line and industrial freight track of Class I or II railroads.

[Railroad Track Design](#) takes place May 18-20 and will look at track design while incorporating applicable American Railway Engineering and Maintenance-of-Way Association (AREMA) recommendations and general industry practices.

[Railroad Bridge Inspection](#) will be held June 27-29. It explores the construction and behavior of timber, steel and concrete bridges and covers all aspects of bridge superstructure and substructure.

Those interested in attending the track maintenance and bridge inspection courses can apply for a training scholarship through ASLRRRA's Short Line Education Fund by completing this [online application](#). Scholarships will be awarded to qualified candidates on a rolling basis until all funds are distributed. Please direct any questions to ASLRRRA Operations Manager [Julie Duriga](#).

June 9 – International Level Crossing Awareness Day Event to be Held in Denver

The International Level Crossing Awareness Day (ILCAD) campaign will [kick off](#) on June 9 in Denver, Colorado. Taking place the day before the campaign kickoff conference is a special session titled "Trespass and Suicide Prevention," while a technical visit will occur on June 10.

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The [event](#) is organized by the International Union of Railways (UIC), Association of American Railroads (AAR), Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and Operation Lifesaver, Inc. (OLI). ILCAD is a worldwide initiative to increase awareness of safety at level crossings, or highway-rail grade crossings as they are called in the U.S.

This is the fourteenth year of ILCAD campaigns, which are held annually in a different partner country. Railroad industry professionals, road authorities, academics and others from around the world attend the event to discuss crossing safety. Follow the links above to learn more or register.

Views & News is published by American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association. Please contact [Amy Krouse](#), editor, with questions or comments.