



May 18, 2022



ASLRRRA Celebrates Outstanding Railroaders

The New Orleans Public Belt Railroad Commission has named [Tomeka Watson Bryant](#) general manager of ASLRRRA member New Orleans Public Belt Railroad (NOPB), effective June 1. In taking on this new role, Watson Bryant becomes the first African American woman to lead a U.S. short line railroad.

Watson Bryant is a second-generation railroader who has been with NOPB for five years, overseeing business development and customer service and pioneering a successful safety program. She began her railroad career as a trainmaster for NOPB and Class I railroad CSX. Watson Bryant is also a member of ASLRRRA's Young Professionals Committee.



Tomeka Watson
Bryant

The news of Watson Bryant's achievement is the latest in several announcements recognizing both up-and-coming and established leaders in the railroad industry. *Progressive Railroading* magazine recently named eight ASLRRRA-member employees winners of the publication's [Rising Stars award](#). The Rising Stars award recognizes 25 individuals under the age of 40 who are making a positive impact and are considered an emerging leader in the rail industry.

ASLRRRA congratulates Michelle Bowling of Watco, Kevin Christy of Conrail, Jacquelyne Colvis of Siemens Mobility, Tim Enayati of Jaguar Transport Holdings, Ari Ferrand-Rodgers of New Orleans Public Belt Railroad, Trevor Pusch of Anacostia Rail Holdings, Josh Smith of The Greenbrier Companies and Kelle Williams of Pioneer Lines.

Railway Age magazine also recently honored notable railroaders through its [Readers' Influential Leaders](#) online poll meant to recognize non-retired individuals in the North American railway industry who are committed to service, safety and sustainability. Ten individuals were named Influential Leaders, with five receiving honorable mentions.

ASLRRRA members receiving this recognition include Atlantic Railways President and CEO John Elkin, The Greenbrier Companies Executive Chair and Founder Bill Furman, Genesee & Wyoming Inc. President, North America Michael Miller and Wabtec Corporation Group President, Global Freight Services Pascal Schweitzer.

Siemens Mobility North America President and CEO Marc Buncher and East Chicago Rail Terminal General Manager Alex Engelke received honorable mentions, as did Federal Railroad Administration Deputy Administrator Jennifer Mitchell, who was a keynote speaker at the 2022 ASLRRRA Annual Conference and Exhibition in St. Louis, Missouri.

Help ASLRRRA Improve Its Social Media Outreach by Completing an Online Survey

Social media outreach is an important part of ASLRRRA's communications efforts, and the Association is eager to learn more about its online audience to fine tune its social media approach.

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ASLRRA Communications Team member Mariel Takamura developed a social media survey in part through a University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill master's program and distributed the survey via email to Views & News subscribers last week. The association encourages those who have not already done so to complete the survey using [this link](#).

Having a higher number of survey responses will paint a more complete audience picture for ASLRRA, facilitating development of an improved social media plan. The survey should take approximately 12 minutes. All responses are anonymous and no identifying data is collected. Contact [Takamura](#) with any questions concerning the survey or the overall study.



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ASLRRA Offers More Information Concerning the RIA

During the 2022 Annual Conference in St. Louis, ASLRRA presented a breakout session providing a high-level overview of the Railroad Industry Agreement (RIA).

The RIA is an agreement between the Class I railroads and small railroads, made with the encouragement of the Surface Transportation Board, that was entered into in 1998 to promote a stronger rail industry and increase freight rail business. The

agreement addresses such items as switch charges, heavy axle loads, rate policies, service issues, car supply, and interchange commitments (paper barriers).

For additional information on the RIA and how it may be useful to short lines and regional railroads, click [here](#) to view:

- The original 1998 agreement
- The 2005 amendment to the agreement (which further defines "new traffic", which is relevant for consideration as to when paper barriers may be waived)

Members can also log in [here](#) to view:

- The subscription to the RIA, if your railroad has not yet subscribed to the RIA
- The standard forms to be used if a railroad wishes to make a request under the RIA, including a supplemental form to seek a waiver of a paper barrier and a form a large railroad would need to use to deny such a waiver request.

Please contact either Sarah Yurasko at syurasko@aslrta.org or Mike Ogborn at mogborn@aslrta.org with any questions about the RIA.

CISA Issues Cybersecurity Advisory on Weak Security Controls

The [Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency](#) (CISA) published a joint Cybersecurity Advisory identifying common ways cyber actors are able to compromise a victim's system.

The advisory, titled "[Weak Security Controls and Practices Routinely Exploited for Initial Access](#)," offers organizations technical details and recommendations to help reduce their risk of becoming a cyberattack victim. It was coauthored by cybersecurity officials in the U.S., Canada, New Zealand, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

CISA advises organizations to review the advisory and apply recommended actions to mitigate the risk of malicious cyber activity. Also suggested for review is the agency's [Shields Up website](#), providing resources and recommendations for organizations, corporate leaders and individuals and their families.

FRA Finds Positive Safety Culture Growth Across Railroads Participating in Safety Culture Assessments

The Short Line Safety Institute (SLSI)'s Safety Culture Assessments (SCAs) have improved safety culture performance on short line railroads, according to an analysis published by the Federal Railroad Administration's Office of Research, Development and Technology. The research paper, "[Implementing SLSI-Provided Opportunities Supports Safety Culture Growth](#)," reports that railroads who have completed a second "Time 2" SCA performed by the SLSI experienced measurable overall improvement in safety culture, and in each of the [ten core elements](#) of a strong safety culture evaluated during an SCA.

The study, completed by Volpe National Transportation Systems Center, analyzed measurements of the ten core elements of safety culture across ten railroads, using the benchmark (Time 1) and the Time 2 SCA reports. The findings included:

- All ten railroads improved their overall safety culture
- Eight out of ten railroads had implemented most of the safety culture opportunities identified in the Time 1 SCA
- Improvements were seen across all ten core elements assessed

The analysis noted that results can be influenced by the number of opportunities identified from the Time 1 assessment that the railroad was able to fully implement, and the complexity of the improvement suggested. Railroads that had more time between the two SCAs had greater success in implementing the opportunities identified.

SCAs are provided at no cost to short line railroads. More information on the process, and how to schedule is available [here](#).

The Short Line Safety Institute also offers [Safety Tips](#), [Safety Posters](#), and [Safety Training Videos](#) on their [website](#), as well as in-person [Leadership Development Training](#) and a robust suite of [Hazardous Materials Training](#) – all at no charge to participating railroads.



Senators Urge Their Colleagues to Fund CRISI at the Maximum Level

Last week, 16 senators [submitted a letter](#) urging their colleagues to provide the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) grant program with "the fully authorized level" of funding, which is tantamount to asking for \$1 billion.

This level of funding is allowed by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and – if enacted -- would come in addition to \$1 billion in funds already guaranteed for CRISI by the IIJA. The senators addressed their letter to the Senate panel responsible for

drafting the Fiscal Year 2023 transportation spending bill.

The letter follows similar letters by members in the House of Representatives to their respective colleagues who are drafting that chamber's transportation spending measure. Many ASLRRA members were instrumental in reaching out to their congressional delegation asking members to sign on to the various letters.

FRA Formalizes Creation of Corridor Identification and Development Program

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, now known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, required the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) [to establish a program](#) focused on creating a "pipeline" of passenger rail projects that the U.S. Department of Transportation ought to prioritize for funding.

Earlier this year, FRA held listening sessions and sought formal comments on the effort. Last week, FRA formally announced the establishment of the program, called the Corridor Identification and Development Program. Over the coming months, FRA is expected to work with possible project sponsors on service development plans and will submit a formal list to Congress within a year. As some short line railroads could be host railroads to new or expanded passenger service, ASLRRA submitted [formal comments](#) to FRA earlier this year urging the agency to ensure that freight impacts be closely considered, especially safety.

USDOT Increases Funding to Port Grant Program

There will be increased funding for grant recipients through the U.S. Department of Transportation's Maritime Administration (MARAD) Port Infrastructure Development Program (PIDP). The original funding notice provided \$450 million but earlier this month, shortly before the window closed for applications, the administration announced an [additional \\$234 million](#) would be available.

MARAD released a funding notice for PIDP earlier this spring. PIDP helps modernize and expand U.S. ports, remove bottlenecks and promote competitiveness, resilience and sustainability. The funding increase was made possible due to the recent Fiscal Year 2022 omnibus spending bill signed into law in March.

COMPLIANCE TEMPLATES

Click here for member-exclusive templates and additional resources.



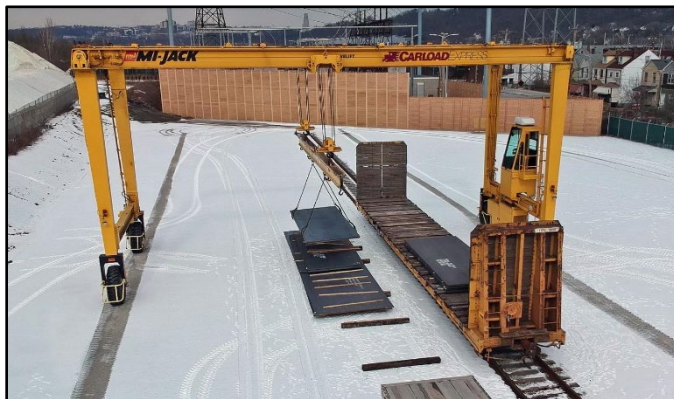
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Products & Services

ASLRRRA Members of Note

At the ASLRRRA Annual Conference and Exhibition, the Association recognized three member railroads as winners of this year's [Business Development Awards](#). Short line and regional railroads are known for their willingness to think outside the box to build their business and better serve customers and ASLRRRA is proud to showcase the accomplishments of this year's honorees.

Follow links in each article to view videos documenting each railroad's award-winning efforts.

Allegheny Valley Railroad Identifies and Fills Need for Steel Transload Facility in Pennsylvania



An 80,000-pound capacity MI-JACK Travelift gantry crane was a key part of Allegheny Valley Railroad's steel transload facility, which moved 500 carloads in its first year of operation.

The Allegheny Valley Railroad (AVR) identified an opportunity for a transload facility in the Pittsburgh area to serve the local steel industry. A portion of their Glenwood Yard was available to be developed for this purpose, and the team went to work in early 2020 to scope the project, seeking customers that would require a facility that included an overhead gantry crane. After identifying a key partner, work began to engineer the site and the sidetrack that would serve it. Shipments started in 2021 and AVR moved 500 carloads into the facility that year. In 2022, AVR is working to grow their carload business at this facility by focusing on other non-rail served companies, taking trucks off the road, and diversifying the commodity mix served by the Glenwood Yard facility.

Click [here](#) to view AVR's video.

CRANDIC Invests in Assets During COVID Pandemic to Position Itself for More Business



CRANDIC opened a new logistics park in Cedar Rapids, Iowa and acquired more boxcars while others were exiting the market, positioning the railroad to capitalize on shifts in the shipping industry and take on a significant portion of business from trucks.

The COVID pandemic and its supply chain disruptions were viewed as an opportunity by CRANDIC Rail. The company focused on the 750-mile shipment of goods via truck into Cedar Rapids, and used its Logistics Park Cedar Rapids facility, which opened in 2021, to execute its plan. Rail could compete favorably with this typically long-haul truck route. CRANDIC next took a hard look at the 500-mile market and held a fleet of boxcars ready to capture this business from trucking. In 2021, CRANDIC moved a record amount of boxcar traffic. Key shippers increased shipments 28 percent year-over-year, and 42 percent over levels seen 10 years ago. Despite having 350 cars in its current pool, CRANDIC is actively pursuing another 100 boxcars for its customers. CRANDIC looks forward to continued growth in these target markets in 2022.

Click [here](#) to view CRANDIC's video.

Union County Industrial Railroad Works to Meet and Exceed Customer Expectations



One of Union County Industrial Railroad's accomplishments included reopening its Delta Place transload siding location to handle railcars for a new customer. Here crews complete the first railcar delivery and unloading at the railroad's Delta Place site.

The Union County Industrial Railroad (UCIR) drives growth by creating new, innovative methods of providing customer service. They customize business processes to meet the needs of each of their customers, fostering trust and deepening customer relationships. This relentless drive to be a better partner has opened the doors to a variety of new opportunities including reopening their Delta Place transload siding to service agricultural customers during the

pandemic, rehabilitating an unused siding to match new growth at customer Winfield Storage, and working with two new customers to locate along the UCIR line. The UCIR is also an integral part of the community, donating passenger excursions to nonprofits and assisting customers that are new to the area with hiring and connections to area services and businesses.

Click [here](#) to view UCIR's video.

ASLRRA Announcements

Save the Date for Association Meetings, 2023 Annual Conference

ASLRRA is planning several events for later this year and early 2023, including the Joint Committee Meeting, regional meetings and the next Annual Conference and Exhibition.

The Association will hold its [2022 Joint Committee Meeting](#) Aug. 2 to 3 in Boston, Massachusetts. This meeting offers a chance for ASLRRA members, particularly those who serve on the Association's constituent committees, to discuss important short line industry issues.

Then in the fall, ASLRRA's [regional meetings](#) will take place, with the General Counsel Symposium and Finance and Administration Seminar to be held in conjunction with the Central and Pacific Region Meeting.

The Eastern and Southern Region Meeting will take place Sept. 26 to 28 in Atlanta, Georgia, while the Central and Pacific Region Meeting will take place Oct. 25 to 27 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The symposium and seminar will also be held Oct. 25 to 27. Registration for regional meetings will open soon.

The date for next year's ASLRRA Annual Conference and Exhibition has also been set. Short line industry representatives and stakeholders will gather April 2 to 4 at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center in New Orleans.

Compliance Program Templates Help Members Meet Regulatory Requirements

ASLRRA is dedicated to railroad safety and strives to assist members with industry best practices and compliance throughout their operations by offering a wealth of [safety and compliance](#) resources.

Among the most often accessed and downloaded tools are compliance program templates, including ASLRRA's Roadway Worker and Bridge Maintenance Programs. Approved by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), the Roadway Worker Program not only contains the requirements for roadway workers, but also includes safety rules required for bridge workers and on-track equipment.

ASLRRA's Bridge Maintenance Program was developed with FRA input for Part 237 compliance. This program requires the railroad to insert specific information regarding their operations, physical infrastructure and geographic location, and multiple appendices are included with the program to cover many of the documentation requirements regarding inspections and operating instructions.

With a simple [login](#), ASLRRA members may download these and more than a dozen additional program templates designed specifically to assist short line railroads with compliance. While all templates are available at no cost to railroad members, select templates are available free to Associate members and for a fee to non-member railroads. Visit the ASLRRA website to view a complete collection of safety and compliance tools, resources and information available from the ASLRRA.

Register Today for GCOR and DSLE Training Seminars

Two popular training seminars will take place this summer, offering a chance for participants to receive instruction on crucial topics. Individuals can now register for the [Comprehensive General Code](#)

[of Operating Rules \(GCOR\) Training Seminar](#) and the [Advanced Designated Supervisor of Locomotive Engineers \(DSLE\) Training Seminar](#).

ASLRRA works with Iowa Northern Railway to develop and present these seminars, which take place in Cedar Falls, Iowa. The GCOR seminar is scheduled for July 26 to 28, while the DSLE seminar will be held August 9 and 10. Space in each seminar is limited, so those who are interested in attending should register as soon as possible.

ASLRRA Out and About

Baker Attends STB Hearing

ASLRRA President Chuck Baker attended the May 12 hearing titled "Board Member Views on Surface Transportation Board Reauthorization," during which all five members of the Surface Transportation Board (STB) appeared before the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

The hearing focused on many of the issues currently making headlines in the rail industry, including freight rail service problems and reciprocal switching. A recording of the hearing can be viewed [here](#).

ASLRRA President Discusses Government Funding Opportunities in Video Interview

In a recent video interview with *Progressive Railroading* magazine Managing Editor Jeff Stagl, ASLRRA President Chuck Baker discussed federal, state and local government funding opportunities for short lines. The [video](#) is available on Rail Prime, the subscription arm of *Progressive Railroading's* website.

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With nearly 200 recordings available, there's a webinar to meet the needs of everyone on your team. Visit aslrra.org/webinars to view a complete list of available recordings.





ASLRRRA Webinars – Live or On-Demand

Upcoming Webinars

[Part 243 Railroad Obligations with Contractors](#) – June 1, 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.

Get a Complete Overview of Railroad Retirement Benefits and Eligibility Through On-Demand Webinars

ASLRRRA's On Demand Webinars library offers more than 170 webinar recordings on a variety of topics, from industry-specific finance, human resources and legal issues to business development, strategic communications and more.

One popular webinar series is a three-part discussion of issues related to railroad retirement benefits, produced in partnership with the Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) and presented by RRB District Manager Jodi Huskey:

- RRB General Eligibility and Employee Benefits – provides a review of general eligibility requirements and employee retirement and disability benefits
- RRB Spouse Benefits and Working After Retirement – discusses eligibility requirements for spouses and divorced spouses and reviews work limits after retirement
- RRB Survivor Benefits and General Information – covers survivor eligibility requirements and additional information relating to all benefits

Visit aslr.org/webinars and select the On-Demand Webinars button to find these recordings and view a complete list of titles. Recorded webinars are free for ASLRRRA members, while non-members can access the library by purchasing a subscription.

Click [here](#) to learn more about ASLRRRA's education offerings.

Industry Events and Announcements

June 23: *Railway Age* Will Hold Its Rail Insights Conference Online

The [Eighth Annual Rail Insights Conference](#), hosted by *Railway Age* magazine, will be held virtually on June 23.

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The event's keynote speaker is Union Pacific President and CEO Lance Fritz. Other speakers include Watco CEO Dan Smith; GATX Executive Vice President and President, Rail North America Paul Titterton; and Surface Transportation Board Chairman Martin Oberman, who will participate in a fireside chat with Patriot Rail Chief Policy Officer Don Itzkoff. Follow the link above for more information or to register for the event.

August 16-18: Summerail '22 to Take Place in Michigan City

The Transportation Research Board Freight Rail Committee AR 040 presents [Summerail '22](#), its fifteenth annual meeting. The meeting takes place Aug. 16 to 18 in Michigan City, Indiana.

Summerail is geared to anyone interested in a career in freight logistics or rail, including graduate and college students. It includes presentations on top industry issues, an opportunity to present research work, and tours of freight and passenger operations and museums in the Michigan City area. Presentations will include discussions of positive train control (PTC), precision scheduled railroading (PSR) and more. Registration for the event is expected to open in early June. 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.