



Spring 2016 MRA RAIL UPDATE

A Publication of the Michigan Railroads Association

Innovation Investments Underpin Remarkable Story Behind Railroad Safety

There has been a sweeping reduction in freight rail accidents and injuries as a direct result of the rail industry's rigorous development of safety innovations and upgrades to the nation's 140,000-mile rail network. As investments in new advances in infrastructure have accrued, accidents and injuries have plummeted.

In part, this is the result of a dedicated team of safety experts who conduct rigorous research, examine problems in new ways and apply technological advances. This ultimately makes a safe system of transportation even safer.

The statistics underscore how innovation has transformed freight rail safety. According to government data, the train accident rate has fallen 43 percent since 2000 and 79 percent since 1980, and the rail employee injury rate has fallen 46 percent since 2000 and 83 percent since 1980.

These dramatic advances in safety are rooted in an era of inspired federal leadership, when Congress and the Carter Administration worked together to strip

away excessive economic regulations. The balanced regulations that resulted allowed railroads to make huge annual private investments in new rail infrastructure, safety research and innovations that continue to benefit millions of Americans. All told, the industry has spent on average some \$25 billion annually over the last five years and a total of \$600 billion since 1980.

“Freight railroads are harnessing the power of data — lots of it — to improve the health of the nation’s rail network.”

In 2016, the freight rail industry continues its highest-priority commitment to safety. One of the key efforts this year is a focus on improving the performance of the rails themselves. Track and infrastructure failure is a leading cause of train derailments in the United States.

As part of this initiative, the industry is testing a sophisticated system that uses multidimensional ultrasonic technology to locate defects in track before they can cause track failure and a derailment.

The industry also is investigating use of unmanned aerial vehicles, or drones, for inspection of track, bridge and other freight rail infrastructure.

To ensure the safe performance of rail cars that carry the nation's goods and commodities, the industry has deployed a range of detection systems across its 140,000-mile national network. These detection systems examine rail car wheels, brakes, axles and more to proactively identify components for repair before an accident can occur.

Intelligent Databases Help Build a Safer Rail Network

Freight railroads are harnessing the power of data — lots of it — to improve the health of the nation's rail network. Working with private sector data partners, railroads are collaborating in an unprecedented way to identify equipment-related problems before they occur, improve the efficiency of repairs and enhance safety across the nation's rail network.

For example, let's say a freight train pulls to a stop on a stretch of track somewhere

(Continued on page 4)

Legislators Visit Training Facility

From The President
Jon Cool
@MI_FreightRail

The Michigan Railroads Association was pleased to host legislators at the Michigan State Police (MSP) Hazardous Materials & Homeland Security training facility just outside of Lansing. (see photo on page 2). State

Police Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman Aaron Miller and Rep. Henry Yanez invited colleagues to gather additional information on railroads and the training first responders are provided.

Legislators took part in an informational briefing on freight rail car safety practices and then went on a walking tour of the facility. First responders were completing live training drills on rail tank cars which gave the legislators a first-hand look at this process.

Scott Karcher with CSX and Greg Palmer with CN joined Michigan State Police personnel in presenting information and answering questions. Railroad companies

(Continued on page 2)

In This Issue:

- Innovation Investments Underpin Remarkable Story Behind Railroad Safety.....pg. 1
- From The President.....pg. 1
- Legislators Tour Hazmat Training Facilitypg. 2
- 4th Annual Michigan Rail Conference.....pg. 2
- Moving Michigan.....pg. 3
- MI Operation Lifesaver News.....pg. 5
- Rail Surface Crossing Cost-Share Program Signed Into Law.....pg. 5
- Rail Insider Spotlight.....pg. 6

Legislators Tour MSP Hazmat Training Facility

The Michigan Railroads Association invited legislators to the Michigan State Police Hazardous Materials/Homeland Security training facility recently for an informational tour and demonstration. The training facility, which freight rail companies helped build in 1991, resides just outside of Lansing.

Legislators received information from MSP instructors, hazmat experts and rail industry subject professionals. We appreciate the legislators' time and participation in the rail hazmat training event. Special thanks to CN's Greg Palmer and CSX's Scott Karcher for participating.



Scott Karcher from CSX talks with legislators about how the railroad industry works with and trains 1st responders.

L to R - Rep. Julie Plawecki (D-Dearborn Heights), Rep. Ben Glardon (R-Owosso), Rep. Roger Victory (R-Hudsonville), Rep. Tom Cochran (D-Mason), Rep. Aaron Miller (R-Sturgis), Rep. Lana Theis (R-Brighton), and Rep. Paul Clemente (D-Lincoln Park) attended the tour.

(Continued from page 1) From The President

contributed to the creation of the training facility in 1991 and then turned over the operations to MSP. Railroads also hold specialized training for Michigan's first responders in their local communities.

On the topic of rail training and safety, the AskRail App is available for first responders and emergency personnel. Contact the railroad in your area to talk about the app and the vital information it can provide first responders.

Over a decade ago, the Michigan Railroads Association, Michigan Department of Transportation and Country Roads Association gathered to discuss how to better maintain grade crossing surfaces. The Michigan Railroad Code calls for railroad companies to maintain the

area immediately at the track structure while road agencies are responsible for maintaining the surface outside of that area. It is common for both railroads and local road agencies to partner in moving forward with a project.

@MI_FreightRail

We're happy to report that in November of 2015, Governor Rick Snyder signed into law a bill, which was part of the overall

road funding package, that includes the new grade crossing surface program. The program will allow for \$3 million in funding that reimburses local road agencies as they partner with railroads to fix and maintain the surfaces at grade crossings. This is great news to help railroads and local road agencies repair more crossings each year.

This program received wide support in the legislature, thanks to a small group of lawmakers who led efforts in the House and Senate in tirelessly advocating for this policy. The MRA would like to thank Representatives Dan Lauwers, Paul Muxlow, Peter Petallia and Senators Wayne Schmidt and Tom Casperson for their dedicated work and attention to this issue.

4th Annual Michigan Rail Conference – Aug 17-18



The 4th Annual Michigan Rail Conference will be held in Marquette this year, August 17-18. This year's theme is "Connecting the Dots: Business, Communities and Technology." The Rail Transportation Program at Michigan Technological University (MTU) and MDOT Rail Office lead a planning group in putting together the conference agenda and topics.

The conference will again include field visits – details are being finalized at this time. The tour

will most likely include visits to 4 or 5 locations. The opportunity to visit rail related sites always proves to be educational.

The main conference will feature various plenary sessions in the morning with breakout sessions in the afternoon. The conference agenda will cover current, relevant freight rail industry topics.

Please visit the conference website: www.rail.mtu.edu or call MTU at 906-487-1734 for additional information.

MOVING MICHIGAN



Chris Bagwell
General Manager

Featuring **GLC** Great Lakes Central Railroad



Great Lakes Central Railroad is the largest regional railroad in the great state of Michigan, with 400 miles of track stretching through Central and Northern Michigan. From Ann Arbor to Traverse City, the GLC contributes to a stronger Michigan economy by safely and efficiently serving our freight and commuter customers.

GLC provides dependable, integrated transportation solutions to a growing customer base throughout Michigan. Our financial stability has allowed us to retain and create new positions, as well as offer competitive freight rates in conjunction with our rail partners throughout North America.

GLC's management team is comprised of over 150 years of combined railroad experience including leadership in Class I, Class II, and Class III rail lines throughout the country.

Our operational focus is aimed towards our industry goals. At GLC, we strive to put our

customer's needs before our own. Our diversity has allowed us the opportunity to establish market share in Michigan and throughout the country. Our company has four major departments based on either sustainability or production.

- The GLC transportation department serves 28 customers on 400 miles of track, along with multiple interchange partners including Canadian National Railway, CSX Transportation, Norfolk Southern via Ann Arbor Railroad, and two Genesee and Wyoming short line railroads.

Our internal customer service representatives are responsible for the logistics of moving freight not just on our line, but ensuring the customer has a very comprehensive view of when and where their freight is moving.

- GLC's maintenance-of-way department is tasked with the sustainability of Michigan Department of Transportation and GLC owned tracks. This daunting task is accomplished through cohesion with MDOT inspectors and

administrators to ensure commodities move in and out of the state as safely and efficiently as possible.

- Our passenger division is responsible for building and refurbishing passenger rail equipment for governmental agencies and private owners. The department's technical acumen in engineering and mechanical tasking have proven to be beneficial for GLC and the customers we

(Continued on page 4)



GLC locomotives meet in the Clare yard.
Photo Courtesy of Kyle Korienek



GLC locomotive 385 moving grain through Cohoctah, Michigan.
Photo Courtesy of Kyle Korienek

Employees: 45
Route Miles: 396
Major Commodities: Grain, Chemicals, Petroleum Products, Feed, Lumber, Metals
Headquarters: Owosso, Michigan
Owner: Louis P. Ferris, Chairman of the Board
Michigan Contacts: Chris Bagwell, General Manager
 600 Oakwood Ave.
 Owosso, MI 48867
 Office (p) 989.725.6644
glcrailroad.com

(Continued from page 3)

serve. Our ability to adapt to different equipment and to different designs have been, and is, instrumental to our success.

GLC's freight car and locomotive department live by, and adhere to, the strict set of standards set forth by the Federal Railroad Administration and the Association of American Railroads. These employees are responsible for the safety of our equipment and that of other railroads whose cars enter our line. Our locomotive shop is also responsible for the maintenance and performance of our locomotive fleet comprised of 16 units.

Great Lakes Central's business model reflects our core beliefs that we can accomplish any

transportation associated task placed in front of us through dedicated service to the customer. Again, we believe our operational diversity sets us apart from, not just railroads, but from other industries in general.



GLC locomotive 399 leaving the Owosso yard with lumber and agricultural commodities. Photo Courtesy of Kyle Koriemek

(Continued from page 1)

in the Midwest. A possible potential problem with the train is detected. The conductor does an inspection to make sure there is no immediate danger. After a short delay to ensure the train's safety, the locomotive and the cargo it is hauling are back in motion. Even though the service interruption was brief, it is logged in a database, because this one small data point has the potential to improve freight rail operations in a big way.

In today's Information Age, ensuring the safe operation of rail equipment is no longer just about equipment. America's high-tech freight rail industry is going one step further by sharing data among railroads to help predict rail equipment issues before they arise.

In collaboration with industry leaders from the railroads' mechanical and information departments, the freight rail industry launched the Asset Health Strategic Initiative (AHSI). A multi-year program, AHSI compiles and analyzes massive amounts of data being collected and stored by individual railroads and uses it to address the industry's most critical rail equipment challenges.

AHSI brings together and builds upon previous industry-wide and local railroad initiatives that monitor the health of rail cars, including the Component Tracking and Equipment Health Management System (EHMS) programs. The Component Tracking program allows six types of rail car components to be easily tracked and monitored across the nation's 140,000-mile network.

To do this, the manufacturers of the components label them with unique tracking codes. When new rail cars are built, these individual components are assigned to the cars through the program. As these rail cars move across the network, EHMS compiles other information such

as service records and data from trackside monitors to provide an "electronic health record" of rail cars. These systems allow a rail car with a faulty component — such as an out of round wheel — to be identified faster than ever before.

While AHSI is still in its early stages, efforts to identify poorly performing rail cars using this data are estimated to have prevented more than 1,000 service interruptions in 2015. Given the great potential of AHSI, the rail industry is gearing up to expand the program to monitor additional rail car components as well as components on locomotives. Railroads recently incorporated data into AHSI from line-of-road failures — emergency braking of a train due to an

Aerial Drones Provide Rail Safety from the Sky

America's freight railroads are exploring the use of unmanned aerial vehicles for a variety of duties in an effort to further enhance safety on the ground.

Railroads use unmanned aerial vehicles, or drones, mounted with high-definition video cameras to inspect parts of their rail network that are difficult to access from the ground. This includes hard-to-reach areas such as bridge inspection work.

Drone use will be able to do detective work despite dangerous conditions, keep rail employees safe while improving railroads' ability to gather information necessary to help detect problems and to plan and prioritize corrective action.

As drone and associated on-board detector technologies advance, an inspector could use data gathered by the drone to identify defects rather than needing to physically access the track. This adds value to railway safety programs using drones.

As regulatory and operational hurdles to flying drones are overcome, railroads across the United States are making plans to enhance safety programs with these modern eyes in the sky.

The freight railroad industry continuously innovates and promotes advances in technology and safety. From record-setting investments, putting safety data to use, offering first responders instant car information, and utilizing drones for inspections, America's freight railroads are unceasingly making safety advancements.

Source: AAR
AAR.org

RAIL INVESTMENT LEADS TO FEWER TRAIN ACCIDENTS

Train accidents per million train-miles down 79 percent since 1980 and 43 percent since 2000



With more than \$25 billion spent annually in recent years on upgrades to and maintenance of the privately-owned freight rail network and equipment, the train accident rate on America's freight railroads is at an all-time low. In fact, from 1980 through 2015, railroads have spent approximately \$600 billion on infrastructure and equipment while the train accident rate has fallen 79 percent.

unknown factor — and wheel temperature detectors.

Eventually, AHSI will be able to identify problems before they occur. By analyzing new datasets and identifying patterns among rail car usage, equipment problems and repairs, railroads and car owners might be able to predict situations that will lead to excessive wear and tear, and recommend specific repairs or steps to prevent damage.

Michigan Operation Lifesaver News



Sam Crowl with Operation Lifesaver and MSP Tpr. Mike Harger conducted snowmobile enforcement in Northern Michigan with Lake State Railway.
Photo courtesy of David Murringer

Michigan Operation Lifesaver has recently completed the updating and reprinting of the eleven-year-old Enforcement Guide. The handy new book has virtually every law that affects railroad operations in the State of Michigan. The reprinting costs for the new booklets were covered by a generous grant from Operation Lifesaver, Inc. and donations from CN, Lake State, Conrail, NS, Grand Elk, and CSX railroads.

The guide is being distributed to law enforcement officers, judges, prosecutors, railroad employees and Operation Lifesaver Authorized Volunteers (OLAV). There is no charge for the book.

OLAV's attended several events over the past year making contact with over 13,000 people. Some of the events included "The A Train" show in Auburn Hills and The Henry Ford museum for "A

Day Out With Thomas," where over 6,000 people attended our booth at the roundhouse.

MI-OL volunteers also interacted with adults and children at the Ann Arbor Train Show, Royal Oak Safety Days, and Huckleberry Railroad's Rail Fan Days in Flint.

Home Depot now invites Operation Lifesaver to its Fall Safety event at several of its stores. MI-OL is now a member of the Michigan Association of the Chiefs of Police and we attended its conference in Grand Rapids where 180 chiefs and officers are contacted about enforcing railroad laws.

MI-OL participated in a snowmobile enforcement detail between Grayling and Gaylord. The safety program is to educate and inform snowmobilers about safety and trespassing near rail property. Michigan State Police and Department of Natural Resources observed over 200 snowmobilers during the "Officer on the Train" event. MI-OL is grateful to the Lake State Railroad for providing a crew and locomotive for this enforcement work.

There are now 48 OLAV's in Michigan trained in the updated OLI program that began in 2014. Additional classes for new volunteers will be held as applications are received.

Federal Railroad statistics for 2015 indicate a decrease in train/vehicle crashes nationwide down 10% from 2,291 in 2014 to 2059 in 2015, while Michigan collisions were down from 80 in 2014 to 50 in 2015, a 37% improvement.

Michigan Operation Lifesaver will hold meetings

on April 8, 2016 at Durand Union Station, on August 12 at the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office in Ann Arbor and on November 11th in Durand.

Contact Sam Crowl - State Coordinator for more information at samcrowl@comcast.net or 248-823-7037.



Ernest "Leon" Jackson (L), Manager Grade Crossing Safety for NS, with OL State Coordinator, Sam Crowl. Mr. Jackson spoke on crossing/trespasser incidents at the November OL meeting in Durand.
Photo courtesy of Rahn Stokes



Independence Twp. Fire Dept. Sgt./EMT Michael Petrie (L) receives a "Life Saving Award" from OL State Coordinator Sam Crowl. Sgt. Petrie assisted in removing a man from the CN tracks moments before a freight train would have struck him.
Photo Courtesy of Rahn Stokes

FOLLOW US
@MI_FreightRail

Rail Surface Crossing Cost-Share Program Signed Into Law

On November 10, 2015, Governor Rick Snyder signed into law a \$1.2 billion transportation road funding program. As part of the overall legislation, there is a new \$3 million rail grade crossing surface cost share program which will be administered by MDOT. The new program will assist local road jurisdictions in repairing more rail surface crossings annually – in collaboration with the railroads.



(L to R) Speaker Kevin Cotter, Gov. Rick Snyder, Sen. Majority Leader Arlan Meekhof, MRA President Jon Cool, Rep. Dan Lauwers, and Lt. Gov. Brian Calley.
Photo Courtesy of Mike Quillinan

Rail Insider Spotlight



William Hamilton, Fiscal Analyst
House Fiscal Agency

At HFA most analysts work on specific budget areas – I work on both Transportation and Agriculture subject areas. HFA assists House members – in particular, Appropriations members – in their deliberations on the annual state budget.

Q: What is the favorite part of your job working at the Capitol?

I'm naturally a bit of an introvert. And working as an auditor at MDOT didn't help. Working for HFA really got me out of my shell. The legislative world is full of interesting people. And it's hard not to learn something new and interesting every day. Most people think working on the budget is mostly about numbers. It's mostly about communicating and working with people.

Q: Share a funny story or interesting anecdote relating to your job in the House.

Because I work on the Agriculture budget, I know more about feral hogs than the average person. I think that's why my colleagues used to call me "Swine Man." At least I hope that's why!

Q: Tell us something we don't know about the state's budget process.

It's not primarily about money. The budget is the way the legislative branch exercises oversight of the executive branch. It is the separation of powers in action.

Q: Do you have any railroad stories from growing up?

My grandmother lived in Fennville Michigan. When I was a child, Fennville still had passenger service. My folks used to take me down to the station just to see the train come in. It was a big deal. I distinctly remember the train whistle as incredibly loud and frightening. I also remember the dining car.

Q: How can readers follow the budget process?

The HFA budget analysis documents are posted to the HFA website. Some of the documents are focused on specific budget proposals. Some are in-depth papers.

Q: How many years have you been with the HFA?

I started in September 1998 – after working a few years as an auditor for MDOT. Among other things, I audited some of the short-line railroads that received operating subsidies.

Q: How does your position interact with freight rail?

Mostly in that I try and keep up with the industry and with state and federal policy affecting the industry. I interact with the MRA on rail budget and policy topics. I wish I had time to do more study and research.

Q: Tell us about your position.

I'm a fiscal analyst for the House Fiscal Agency.



Michigan Rail Update is a publication of the Michigan Railroads Association, 120 N. Washington Square, Suite 601, Lansing, Michigan 48933. President: Jon Cool. (P) 517.482.9413. Members of the Michigan Railroads Association are: Adrian & Blissfield Rail Road Co., Ann Arbor Railroad, Canadian Pacific Railway, Charlotte Southern Railroad Co., CN, Consolidated Rail Corp. (Conrail), CSX Transportation, Detroit Connecting Railroad Co., Escanaba & Lake Superior Railroad Co., Grand Elk Railroad, Grand Rapids Eastern Railroad Co., Great Lakes Central Railroad Co., Huron & Eastern Railway Co., Jackson & Lansing Railroad Co., Lake State Railway Co., Lake Superior & Ishpeming Railroad Co., Lapeer Industrial Railroad Co., Marquette Rail LLC, Michigan Shore Railroad Co., Mid-Michigan Railroad Co., Norfolk Southern Corp.



RETURN REQUESTED

mra@michiganrailroadsassociation.com
michiganrailroadsassociation.com
@MI_FreightRail

120 N. Washington Square
Suite 601
Lansing, Michigan 48933



PRST STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
LANSING, MI
PERMIT NO 718

The AskRail™ app is a safety tool for first responders



Through AskRail's easy-to-use mobile interface, emergency responders can:

Use a simple railcar ID search to see whether a railcar on a train is carrying hazardous materials

View the contents of the entire train*

View emergency contact information for all Class I railroads and Amtrak

*the availability of this feature depends on the role of the responder and permissions granted by each individual Class 1

“AskRail gives first responders immediate information about railcars carrying hazardous materials and is an invaluable tool for helping prepare those on the front line should a rail incident occur. Coupled with emergency training and response planning, AskRail augments the flow of information and specifics between freight railroads and emergency first responders in communities along the nation’s 140,000-mile freight rail network.”

The AskRail app gives those working the incident a unique level of detail with the push of a button. That information helps first responders craft an action plan and mitigate a dangerous situation as quickly as possible.

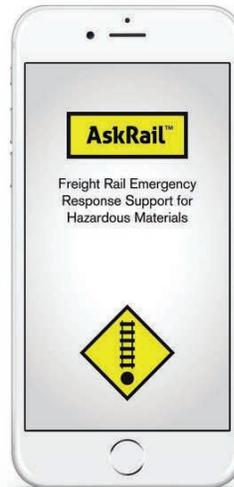
Obtaining the AskRail app is a great new tool for first responders because the information needed in an emergency is right at your fingertips. You don't need to get information from third parties or rely upon UN classification numbers. AskRail tells you if the rail cars are full - what's inside or if they're empty — vital pieces of information that can be critical.

Request the App

For security reasons, only qualified emergency responders who have completed rail emergency training sponsored by one of the Class I freight railroads or at the Security and Emergency Response Training Center (SERTC) can download and use the AskRail app. In addition, railroads can offer the app to known emergency responders along their routes.

HOW TO REQUEST THE APP

- 1 You must email a request to download the app to the railroad that traverses your communities (see contact information to the right).
- 2 The railroad will verify that you are a first responder who is eligible to access the app.
- 3 The railroad will grant you access by forwarding your request to Railinc.
- 4 Railinc will send you an email invitation to formally register, sign a user agreement, and download the app.



CONTACT INFORMATION

Select a railroad 

CN

askrail@cn.ca

[Email Now >](#)

[View Terms of Use](#)

Please do not send any other communication to these email addresses other than requests to use the AskRail app. Please note that Amtrak is not included on the contact list because they do not approve access to the app.