

2025 NARR CONFERENCE & ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

WEDNESDAY EVENING

Welcome Reception 5:00-7

It's that time of year to reconnect with colleagues, meet new peers, and set the stage for an engaging conference. In addition to great conversations, attendees will have the unique opportunity to view special exhibits from the Pullman National Historic Park and the Illinois Railway Museum. Enjoy refreshments, explore the exhibits, and kick off the conference with an evening of camaraderie and connection.

THURSDAY MORNING

Opening 9-9:30

Opening Remarks

Session 1 9:30-10:15

Navigating Collective Bargaining in the Passenger Railroad Industry, Statutory Processes under the RLA, Pattern Bargaining, Me-Too Clauses and the Recent Recommendations in PEB 251 & 252

Representatives from Carriers and Unions at passenger railroads will provide feedback and insights on the distinctions in collective bargaining for their industry. Topics covered by the panelists will include the Carriers' challenges with funding and financial constraints in collective bargaining and their approach to addressing those challenges, Unions' reasoning for or reaction to me-too clauses, both parties' perspectives on pattern bargaining, and discussion regarding the recommendations and findings in the recent Presidential Emergency Boards 251 and 252 between New Jersey Transit and the BLE&T.

Break 10:15-10:30

Session 2 10:30-11:45

Resolving Craft-Based Disputes: A Guide for Railroad Referees

Work practices and procedures in the railroad industry are a function of federal rail safety regulations, collective bargaining agreements, time-tested experience, and the industry's craft-based structure. This panel of expert advocates will delve into the unique characteristics of craft distinctions within the railroad industry, exploring how job classifications, work jurisdiction, regulatory mandates, and historical practices influence grievance outcomes. Panelists will enlighten referees on how to weigh these factors in resolving disputes before them for arbitral resolution.

Lunch Noon



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THURSDAY AFTERNOON

Session 1 1:00-2:00

Case Law Updates in Rail Arbitration

This session will provide an in-depth analysis of recent case law developments impacting rail arbitration. Panelists will review key arbitration decisions and judicial rulings that have shaped the interpretation of collective bargaining agreements, disciplinary actions, and claims resolution. Attendees will learn how these rulings may influence future dispute resolution strategies and arbitration outcomes in the railroad industry.

Session 2 2:00-3:00

Best Practices in Arbitration: Adapting to a Changing Landscape

Experienced arbitrators and advocates address the challenges and opportunities arising from the shift from in-person arbitration sessions to predominantly remote hearings, including the technology, procedures, and practices that have evolved to meet those changes.

Break 3:00-3:15

Session 3 3:15-4:30


Ethics for Railroad Appellate Arbitration

Ethical conduct ensures fairness, integrity, and confidence in the railroad appellate arbitration process. This session will explore the ethical responsibilities of both arbitrators and advocates in this unique setting. For arbitrators, key topics will include impartiality, conflicts of interest, ex parte communications, and adherence to just cause principles. For advocates, the discussion will focus on ethical advocacy, including the duty of candor, the responsible use of the record, avoiding misrepresentation, and maintaining professionalism in argumentation.

Social 5:00-7:00

Social Reception - Sponsored by Rail Management and Labor

Unwind and connect at the Thursday Evening Reception, where good company, great conversations, and complimentary food and drinks set the tone for a relaxed and enjoyable evening to round out the day. This reception is the perfect opportunity to network with colleagues, exchange insights from the day's sessions, and strengthen professional relationships in an informal setting.





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FRIDAY MORNING

Session 1 9:00- 9:30

National Mediation Board Updates

Join the National Mediation Board (NMB) for an informative session providing key updates on the agency's activities and initiatives. Meet the Director of Arbitration as she shares the latest arbitration, and labor-management relations developments. This session will also cover statistical insights on arbitration caseloads and funding, offering a comprehensive overview of the Board's role in supporting the railroad industry..

Session 2 9:30 -10:15

Fireside Chat with Douglas Davidson, Pullman Historical Museum, Director.

Session 3 10:15-11:30

Sustain, Deny, or Modify? Arbitrators Decide

This interactive session will present case scenarios involving disciplinary actions in the railroad industry. Attendees will review the facts and arguments and hear from experienced arbitrators as they render their rulings—sustaining, denying, or modifying the discipline. This session provides valuable insight into the decision-making process, key factors arbitrators consider, and how different record interpretations can impact the outcome.

SEE YOU NEXT YEAR

11:45-1:00 Annual Business Meeting (Members Only)

***METRA Commuter Grievance Training begins at 1:00 pm and concludes at 4:00pm
(Open to Everyone)***

