
**RAILROAD-SHIPPER TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, DC**

2021 ANNUAL REPORT

Pursuant to Section 1325 of the ICC Termination Act (ICCTA), the Chair of the Surface Transportation Board (STB) in mid-1996 announced the formation of the Railroad-Shipper Transportation Advisory Council (RSTAC). As required by Section 1325(f)(4) of the ICCTA, RSTAC submits its Annual Report for 2021.

1. Membership

The following individuals were the appointed members of the 15-member RSTAC for 2021:

Small Shippers (Four Voting Members):

Mr. Kevin Murray, Red Gold, Inc.
Mr. Mathew Brainerd, Brainerd Chemical Co., Inc.
Mr. W. Paul Delp, Lansdale Warehouse Co.
Mr. Ben Abrams, Consolidated Scrap Resources, Inc.

Small Railroads (Four Voting Members):

Mr. Mark Wegner, Twin Cities & Western Railroad and Red River Valley & Western Railroad
Mr. Michael Peters, Genesee & Wyoming Railroad Services, Inc.
Mr. Don Itzkoff, Patriot Rail Company LLC
Mr. Eric Jakubowski, Anacostia Rail Holdings Co.

Large Shippers (Three Non-Voting Members):

Ms. Holly Pixler, Ardent Mills
Mr. Robert McRae, Univar Solutions
Mr. Terrence McDermott, Bunge North America

Large Railroads (Three Non-Voting Members):

Mr. Arthur Adams, Jr., CSX Corporation
Mr. Mike Bilovesky, Kansas City Southern Railway Co.
Ms. Kari Kirchhoefer, Union Pacific Railroad Co.

At-Large (One Voting Member):

Ms. Brandy Christian, Port of New Orleans

Ex-Officio Members:

Martin Oberman, Chairman, Surface Transportation Board

Robert Primus, Vice Chairman, Surface Transportation Board

Ann Begeman, Member, Surface Transportation Board¹

Patrick Fuchs, Member, Surface Transportation Board

Michelle Schultz, Member, Surface Transportation Board

Stephen O'Connor, Federal Railroad Administration, representing The Honorable Pete Buttigieg, Secretary U.S. Department of Transportation.

RSTAC Officers for 2021, effective at the February 2021 meeting:

Mathew Brainerd, Chairman

Mark Wegner, Vice Chairman

Robert McRae, Secretary/Treasurer

2. RSTAC Meetings

Due to the national COVID epidemic emergency, the Council did not meet in-person in 2021. Meetings were held virtually on a weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly basis, as needed, with updates on railroad and shipper activities.

Field reports traditionally allowing thirty minutes per report were abbreviated to five-plus minutes per report. This made for a limited amount of data points. However, RSTAC Members made good use of the time and the information presented was valuable.

3. RSTAC Member Briefing

At the April 7, 2021 meeting, STB Staff provided an overview of the RSTAC Statute and Ethics and Ex Parte communication rules.

4. RSTAC Discussion Points during Meetings

- How the pandemic situation is affecting employees, operations, suppliers, and customers
- Dynamics related to transportation services

¹ Ann Begeman departed from the STB on December 17, 2021, following Senate confirmation of her replacement, Karen Hedlund.

- Percentage of workforce having been vaccinated
- Percentage or numeric representation of workforce unable to work due to quarantine or having contracted the virus
- Effects of work-from-home policies on business and eventual return-to-work policies
- Service segment performance during pandemic (i.e., autos, coal, raw material shortages)
- U.S. seaport challenges
- Management of challenges relating to bullets above

5. RSTAC Accomplishments

During the 2021 meetings, RSTAC gave STB Members guidance and information on the health of the transportation industry. Insight was shared in a candid and open forum.

On March 25, 2021, RSTAC submitted a letter to the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure urging Congress to include short line railroads fully in new infrastructure spending legislation.

6. Future Plans

RSTAC is comprised of a diverse membership of professionals whose daily lives involve understanding and managing the challenges of transportation services. RSTAC is charged with the duty of conveying their knowledge and expertise to Ex-Officio Members so that the Surface Transportation Board might fulfill its charge of supporting “an efficient, competitive, and economically viable surface transportation network that meets the needs of its users.”

RSTAC Members welcome this challenge and will continue to support the RSTAC Mission Statement: “To work together as a council of rail advocates on a common goal to strengthen the national rail industry, improve service levels and foster mutually beneficial relationships between large and small railroads and shippers, across all commodity groups. To that end, we will address improvements in the primary issues of capacity constraints and the evolution of merchandise carload network including the elements that impact them and bring forth recommendations for improvement.”

Each RSTAC Member hopes to return to traditional face-to-face meetings and a future devoid of concerns for human engagement.

Additional RSTAC information is available at:

<https://www.stb.gov/resources/stakeholder-committees/rstac/>