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News

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News Digest

Virginia Railway Express Receives FRA RRIF Loan for New Railcars

The Virginia Railway Express (VRE) commuter railroad is receiving a \$72.5 million loan from the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to finance a portion of the cost of acquiring 50 new bi-level passenger railcars. The new equipment will allow VRE to replace old railcars, increase the size of its fleet, add seating capacity to each railcar, and improve service for its riders. The State of Virginia is providing an additional \$20 million for this purpose. VRE is the first commuter rail operator to receive a loan under FRA's Railroad Rehabilitation & Improvement Financing (RRIF) loan program. Contact: Steve Kulm 202-493-6024

FRA Sends Model Legislation to Governors to Protect Against Scam Railroads

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) sent model State legislation to the nation's Governors, which if enacted, would ensure that only individuals employed by actual railroad carriers, as defined by Federal rail safety laws and confirmed in writing by the FRA Administrator, are commissioned by state authorities to serve as railroad police officers. In addition, the model state law sets forth minimum qualifications required for a person to be commissioned as a railroad police officer including passing a criminal background investigation and submitting fingerprints to the FBI for clearance. Contact: Warren Flatau 202-493-6024.

FRA Publishes Collision Hazard Analysis Guide for Passenger Rail Operators

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) has published a step-by-step guidebook on how to identify and analyze potential hazards along a rail corridor for use in developing effective risk reduction strategies that will improve the safety of commuter and intercity passenger rail operations. The analysis provides a foundation for ensuring that hazards such as highway-rail grade crossings, overhead and trackside structures, or bridge abutments are evaluated and addressed. The FRA publication supports the American Public Transportation Association's (APTA) ongoing Commuter Rail System Safety Program Plan initiative. Contact: Steve Kulm 202-493-6024

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