



Malski Re-Appointed to Rail Freight Advisory

Governor Edward Rendell recently re-appointed Larry C. Malski, Esquire, to a 3-year term on the Pennsylvania Rail Freight Advisory Committee in Harrisburg. Mr. Malski is currently serving on the Rail Freight Advisory Committee as Chairman after being elected by the 24 public and private sector appointees on the statewide committee. The Committee is charged with providing advice and recommendations to the Legislature, the Governor, and PennDOT on issues related to the rapidly-growing rail freight industry in Pennsylvania and the rest of the country.

The Committee consists of other appointees representing the Class I and regional rail lines and shortline railroads in Pennsylvania, the

rail shippers, and economic development organizations and governmental representatives, such as Secretary of Transportation Allen Biehler, and Acting Secretary of the Office of Economic and Community Development John Blake. The Committee holds public meetings at least four times per year in Harrisburg, and also sponsors an annual Rail Freight Seminar which is the only one of its kind in the country.

The next Rail Freight seminar will be held in Harrisburg on May 13, 14, and 15, 2009, and usually attracts over 200 attendees from all over the country.

The Committee has recommended many major improvements which have led to the growth of the rail

freight industry, such as recommending the public/private match of funding to increase the clearances for doublestack container trains on the east-west mainline between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, and the north-south mainline between Philadelphia, Scranton and Canada. These trains are the fastest-growing sector of the rail freight industry.

Mr. Malski currently serves as the President of the Pennsylvania Northeast Regional Railroad Authority, which is the regional rail freight operator serving Northeastern Pennsylvania through its contract rail freight operator, the Delaware-Lackawanna Railroad. This operator serves over 25 active rail shipping industries between Carbondale and the Delaware Water Gap in Northeastern Pennsylvania.

MPO 2009 Meeting Dates Set

The meeting schedule for the MPO Technical and Coordinating Committees has been set for 2009. The meetings will be held at the PennDOT District 4-0 Building located on the O'Neil Highway in Dunmore. The meetings are held at 10:00 AM in Conference Room 233. The building is

handicapped accessible and accommodations can be made for a TYY telephone line if needed.

The schedule is as follows:

Technical Committee -

February 18 May 26
August 26 November 18

Coordinating Committee -

February 25 June 3
September 2 November 24

All meetings are open to the public. Anyone in need of further information regarding the meetings should contact Nancy Snee at 825-1564.

Lackawanna/Luzerne MPO Receives Stimulus Funds

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) was signed into law by President Obama on February 17, 2009. Part of this bill designated highway/bridge transportation funding to all states. Nationwide, the funding allocation was \$27.5 billion.

Of that total, Pennsylvania received \$1.02 billion. Using the financial guidance formula that determines the amount of funding each MPO/RPO across the state normally receives, the Lackawanna/Luzerne MPO received \$32.7 million in ARRA funds to be used for

eligible projects. To be eligible for ARRA funds, projects must be able to be obligated (assign funds to specific projects) the funds within 120 days upon receipt of the allocation from the state. Bidding generally occurs one to two months after obligation.

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Pennsylvania Northeast Regional Railroad Authority to Purchase Norfolk Southern Rail Line

The Pennsylvania Northeast Regional Railroad Authority (PNRRA) has entered into an agreement to purchase 10.6 miles of mainline railroad trackage owned by the Norfolk Southern between East Stroudsburg and the Delaware Water Gap. This portion of the former Erie-Lackawanna mainline is currently leased by PNRRA as a part of its Pocono Mainline between Scranton and its freight interchange yard with the Norfolk Southern at Slateford, Pennsylvania. The purchase price of this mainline section of track will be \$4.5 million, and the PNRRA will pay this amount through a financing package using its own cash, as well as state and federal grants and loans.

“This acquisition constitutes a critical link in our 100-mile regional rail freight system in northeastern Pennsylvania, and will allow our contract rail operator, Delaware-Lackawanna Railroad, to provide more efficient rail freight service to our existing rail freight dependent industries,” said Mr. Malski, President of the PNRRA.



Delaware Lackawanna loaded freight cars on the PNRRA Pocono Mainline

With the energy efficiencies that are inherent in the rail freight industry, more and more freight is being diverted to rail freight as is evidenced by the 7% rise in rail freight carloads handled over the 100-mile PNRRA regional system for the first 6 months of 2008.

“This acquisition will also allow the PNRRA to work closely with the local economic development agencies and Chambers of Commerce to attract new rail-dependent industries and jobs to our regional rail system to the economic benefit of all of Northeastern Pennsyl-

vania,” said Bob Hay, Chairman of the PNRRA.

The PNRRA regional rail stem currently serves over 25 rail-dependent industries which employ thousands of workers in Northeastern Pennsylvania, and with the recent shift and emphasis on rail freight shipping, numerous additional industries are inquiring about rail-accessible land sites that are located along the Authority’s rail infrastructure. In just the last three years, the PNRRA has assisted two new industries in obtaining PennDOT grants to actu-

ally build new track into their facilities for the shipment of inbound and outbound commodities at much lower transportation costs than they were paying.

In addition to the rapidly-growing rail freight traffic and economic development opportunities on this line, this purchase will also secure the long-term operations of the Steamtown passenger trains which use this trackage for their popular excursions to the Delaware Water Gap and East Stroudsburg.

Submitted by Larry C. Malski, President, PNRRA

Lackawanna County Coordinated Transportation Service Providing Reduced Fares for the Disabled

The Lackawanna County Coordinated Transportation Service has begun a program to provide reduced fares to disabled individuals in rural areas of Lackawanna County. The program called, “Transportation for Persons with Disabilities”, began in July 2008, and is sponsored by PENNDOT under the Shared Ride Program. The service is for persons 18-64 years of age who are not eligible for other services provided by Lackawanna County.

According to the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), “Disability means, with respect to an individual, a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such an individual, a record of such an impairment or being regarded as having such an impairment.”

“Major life activities” refers to functions, such as caring for one’s self, performing

manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and work.

Applications to the program are available by mail from Lackawanna County Coordinated Transportation System, and can be obtained by calling the office at 570-963-6795.

For more information, contact John Tomcho at the number listed above.

Local Technical Assistance Program Classes Set

The Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance (NEPA) has set the dates for the classes that will be held as part of PennDOT's Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP). LTAP is designed to help municipalities make the best use of their roadway maintenance funding by providing technical information and technologies that have been proven to work to deal with roadway maintenance and safety issues.

The following courses will be held throughout Northeastern Pennsylvania over the next several months:

Asphalt Roads-Common Maintenance Problems:

April 8, 2009—8:30 AM to 12:00 PM

Pike County Office of Community Planning; 556 Route 402, Suite 2, Hawley, PA

This program will also be presented on April 9, 2009—8:30 AM to 12:30 PM at the Lehighon Borough Annex Building; 110 North Third Street, Lehighon.

Roadside Safety Features:

May 5, 2009— 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Monroe County Public Safety Center
219 Laurel Drive, Tobyhanna, PA;

Stormwater Management:

May 12, 2009 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM

NEPA Alliance Office, 1151 Oak Street, Pittston Township, PA;

Equipment & Worker Safety:

June 10, 2009— 8:30 AM to 12:30 PM

Wayne County Chamber of Commerce Building; 32 Commercial Street, Suite 200, Honesdale, PA

For more information on LTAP and the classes, contact Kurt Bauman, Government Services Manager, NEPA-Alliance, at 655-5581.

Snowy Winter Means High Maintenance Costs

So far this winter, the area has been ravaged by numerous storms of varying magnitude and characteristics which have contributed to high road maintenance costs.

Many storms have begun in one form of precipitation and then turned into another as temperatures changed. The different forms of precipitation require different road treatments. Storms that start out as snow usually require the use of brine as a pre-treatment to prevent snow from bonding to the road surface. When a storm begins as rain but is expected to turn into freezing rain, an anti-skid material is used and remains on the road.

A "plowing storm" is characterized primarily by snowfall amounts; a "spreading



storm" utilizes brine, anti-skid material and salt to fight compaction and increase traction. Any combination of treatments can be used over the course of a storm depending on the type of precipitation falling.

For the six counties covered by PennDOT District 4-0 (Luzerne, Lackawanna, Pike, Wayne, Wyoming, and Susquehanna), PennDOT has used about 72% of the 90,000 tons of salt that was purchased, leaving the District with 43,000 tons for the remainder of the winter.

91,000 tons of anti-skid material have been used to date, along with 1 million gallons of brine.

For the winter season ending on January 31, the total snow removal cost for Luzerne County was \$5.1 million and \$3.7 million for Lackawanna County. District-wide, the total snow removal cost was \$11.7 million.

Submitted by Karen Dussinger, CRC/Press Officer, PennDOT District 4-0

511 Pennsylvania System to Debut in June

The plans for the deployment of the 511 Pennsylvania project is progressing on schedule and is slated to be available to the public by June of this year.

511 Pennsylvania will serve as an important communications service that will provide Pennsylvania travelers up-to-the minute traffic and road conditions, including construction sites that might cause delays, incidents, road closures, transit, weather and tourism information

via telephone, website, and mobile devices, 24 hours per day, 365 days per year.

PennDOT applied to the Pennsylvania Utility Commission on August 15, 2008 to be the sole administrator of the 511 PA system

PennDOT hopes that the system will benefit the citizens of the Commonwealth by providing a simple, universal, easy-to-

remember number to access road travel information. The Department also hopes to reduce pollution and congestion by alerting travelers to roadways experiencing delays, and giving them an opportunity to find an alternate route.

MPOs and RPOs across the state are being encouraged to help publicize the program, and PennDOT Central Office will be scheduling various activities over the next several months that will help in this effort.



**LACKAWANNA/LUZERNE METROPOLITAN
PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

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organization***



PennDOT District 4-0
www.neparoads.com

Lackawanna/Luzerne MPO Receives Economic Stimulus Funds (continued from page 1)

In addition, projects must be on the Federal-Aid System, and bridges must be at least 20 feet in length. Because it is not unusual for projects to take a year or several years to be designed, clear Right-of-Way (ROW) hurdles, and go out for bid, ARRA candidate projects must already be designed or must be ones that can be designed within a few months in order to meet the 120-day obligation timeline.

Eligible projects must require minimal or no ROW since ROW acquisition compensation negotiations often take a long period of time.

Although the ARRA funds are to be used as quickly as possible, the legislation did not waive any of the regular federal regulations, so each ARRA candidate project must go through all the normal project development stages such as scoping, and environmental clearance. All these factors have to be taken into consideration when selecting projects for the ARRA funding.

Another point being considered in the project selection process is that Penn-

sylvania's priority is to preserve and maintain existing roads and bridges before building new roads or expanding existing facilities, largely because of the number of structurally-deficient bridges throughout the state.

Therefore, the project priority selection criteria for the stimulus funds are the same as those for the TIP - (1) bridges, (2) existing roadway improvements, (3) safety projects

and (4) capacity-adding projects.

The following five bridge projects have been selected to use ARRA funds in the MPO: John S. Fine, Nanticoke; Cleveland St., Plains Township; Hartman Road over Hunlock Creek, Plymouth Township; TR 29 over the Sans Souci Parkway; SR 4016 (Harveyville Rd.) over Marsh Creek, Huntington Township; The following three resurfacing projects will be done with ARRA funds: 3 miles of PA 924 in Hazle Township; 4 miles of PA 315 in Dupont and Avoca Boroughs; and 4 miles of US 11 in the City of Scranton.

Pennsylvania intends to obligate 100% of its ARRA funding within 120 days in order to put people to work as quickly as possible, and to capture any additional funding that may become available if other areas of the state or country cannot meet the 120-day obligation deadline.

Submitted by George Roberts, District Executive,
PADOT District 4-0



Site of the washed-away Cleveland St. Bridge