
MEETING SUMMARY

SHRP2 *Railroad-Department of Transportation Mitigation Strategies* (R16) Peer Exchange Meeting

TO: Pam Hutton, Kate Kurgan, Kate Hulbert, Jessica Rich, Joe Conway
COPIED: Hal Lindsey, Mike Loehr
PREPARED BY: Carly Dutkiewicz
MEETING DATE: September 13-14, 2018
VENUE: Hilton Miami Downtown, Miami, FL

Purpose of Peer Exchange

The peer exchange is part of the implementation plan for *Railroad-DOT Mitigation Strategies* (R16), developed through the second Strategic Highway Research Program (SHRP2). Members of state departments of transportation (DOTs) and Class 1, Short Line, Regional and Commuter Railroads were invited to participate in a peer exchange to discuss strategies for improved working relationships that would lead to faster and more efficient project delivery. Meeting participants represented 12 state DOTs, three Class 1 railroads, two Short Line and Regional Railroads, one Commuter Rail, the American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association and the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO).

It should be noted that six participants from the FRA, one Class 1 Railroad (CSXT), one Short Line Railroad (RJ Corman), and two state DOT's (NC DOT and SC DOT) had to cancel their participation immediately prior to the meeting due to Hurricane Florence.

Topics discussed included the Section 130 program, short line railroad interfaces and collaboration, best practices for electronic file sharing, and successes and challenges of Master Agreements. The goals for the peer exchange were to enable participants to share best practices, lessons learned, challenges, and accomplishments; learn about potential new processes with railroads and highway agencies; and identify ways to foster a collaborative environment in which to capture the most innovative ideas from all stakeholders for expediting project delivery. The peer exchange agenda is attached as Appendix A and the contact list is attached as Appendix B. The results of the Meeting Evaluation Survey is attached as Appendix C.

Participants

- California Department of Transportation, Teresa McNamara
- Colorado Department of Transportation, Scott Hoftiezer
- Colorado Department of Transportation, Sharon Terranova
- Iowa Department of Transportation, Phillip Meraz
- Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, Allen Rust
- Michigan Department of Transportation, Jim D'Lamater
- Mississippi Department of Transportation, Josh Stubbs
- Ohio Department of Transportation, Matthew Dietrich
- Sound Transit (Commuter Rail), Inderjit Singh
- South Dakota Department of Transportation, Brace Prouty
- Tennessee Department of Transportation, Erik Andersen

- Utah Department of Transportation, Eric Cheng
- Washington Department of Transportation, Connie Raezer
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Lisa Stern
- American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association, JR Gelnar
- Association of American Railroads, Jennifer Macdonald
- BNSF, French Thompson
- Canadian National, John Dinning
- Genesee & Wyoming, Kyle Baker
- Railroads for National Defense, David Dorfman
- Union Pacific, Paul Rathgeber
- Western New York and Pennsylvania Railroad, Carl Belke
- FHWA, Jessica Rich
- AASHTO, Chad Clawson
- AASHTO, Pam Hutton
- AASHTO, Eric Kopinski
- AASHTO, Kate Kurgan
- AASHTO, Glenn Page
- Jacobs, Carly Dutkiewicz
- Jacobs, Hal Lindsey
- Jacobs, Michael Loehr

Executive Summary

This peer exchange is the second of two that are included in the scope of work to implement the SHRP2 *Railroad-DOT Mitigation Strategies* (R16) product. The agenda was designed to share key issues already identified by states and railroads participating in the FHWA/AASHTO Implementation Assistance Program with a broader array of state DOTs and railroads. Presentations on specific topics were followed by lengthy discussion periods so that maximum input from all parties could be achieved.

Throughout the two-day event, several critical points were made and are noted below. The PowerPoint presentations from the meeting will soon be available on the AASHTO SHRP2 website at http://shrp2.transportation.org/Pages/R16_RailroadDOTMitigationStrategies.aspx. Case studies, examples of agreements, operating and training manuals are available at AASHTO's R16 Innovation Library website at http://shrp2.transportation.org/Pages/R16_InnovationLibrary.aspx.

The following are key concepts from the peer exchange that, when taken individually or separately, would improve relationships between DOTs and their railroad partners and speed up project delivery.

- Repair strained past relationships and overcome past perceptions
- Establish and/or maintain routine communication
- Address challenges with Section 130, including:
 - 90%/10% versus 100% split
 - Access to congressional reports
- Establish and/or update Master Agreements to expedite project delivery where appropriate
- Share the challenges of and potential to improve Alternative Delivery Processes (e.g. Design/Build)
- Establish and/or improve electronic file management systems to create efficiencies

Day 1 Overview

Day 1 of the meeting began with a joint plenary of the annual meetings of the Council on Rail Transportation, Council on Water Transportation, and R16 Peer Exchange. At the end of the plenary meeting, the R16 Peer

Exchange moved to a dedicated conference room to start its specific meeting program. During a working lunch session, AASHTO provided an overview of the SHRP2 program and *Railroad-DOT Mitigation Strategies* (R16). Participants then introduced themselves and discussed successes and challenges within their agencies and railroads. A Section 130 update and discussion was then presented by FHWA. The final afternoon session included a lively discussion on short line and regional railroad interfaces and collaboration.

Summary of Presentations, Day 1

Session 1: Joint Plenary – Annual Meetings of the Council on Rail Transportation and Council on Water Transportation and R16 Peer Exchange

Presenters:

- Rickey Fitzgerald, Freight and Multimodal Operations Manager, Florida DOT
- Kevin Keller, Vice President, HDR
- Eric Olafson, Director, Global Trade and Business Development, PortMiami
- Stephen O’Connor, Chief, Freight Rail and Policy Division, FRA
- Jessica Rich, Safety Engineer, FHWA
- Laura McNichol, VP, Government and Industry Relations, Watco Companies
- Bobby Landry, VP and Chief Commercial Officer, Port of New Orleans
- Paul Rathgeber, Senior Manager – Industry & Public Projects, Union Pacific Railroad

During the joint plenary of the annual meetings of the Council on Rail Transportation, Council on Water Transportation, and R16 Peer Exchange, industry leaders shared their perspectives on successes and challenges in the freight rail and water transportation industries. Highlights included the following:

Freight Rail:

- Emerging technologies (e.g., drones, LIDAR) can be used to collect data and refine information
- Trespassing challenges exist
- Managing railroad property can be complex and involves several elements, including property monitoring (to manage illegal dumping and encroachment by trespassers), demolition of adjacent structures, and acquisitions
- Monetization of rail corridors can generate revenue
- Multimodal operations create efficiencies
- Infrastructure is the key to success; design capacity for decades into the future

Water Transportation:

- The Port of Miami serves as the “Cruise Capital of the World,” and planned capital improvements will increase the number of passengers served

Session 2: Participant Introductions¹

Following a warm welcome from Jessica Rich of FHWA, Kate Kurgan, AASHTO, presented an overview of the SHRP2 program and *Railroad-DOT Mitigation Strategies* (R16). Railroad-DOT interaction requires a thorough review of the safety, engineering, and operational impacts during construction where highways and railroads intersect or are in close proximity. Rapid highway construction goals require a new approach that eases the project agreement process for both DOTs and Railroads. During the research phase of the SHRP2 program, several

¹ This is a change from the attached agenda.

specific strategies were identified that, if used consistently by transportation agencies and railroads, would improve coordination and speed project delivery. This approach facilitates beneficial relationships between railroads and public transportation agencies and encourages the use of best practices, streamlined processes, and Standardized (Master) Agreements. The benefits of using *Railroad-DOT Mitigation Strategies* (R16) include:

- Expedited project delivery
- Better management of limited resources
- Improved communication, cooperation, and collaboration
- Streamlined processes
- Transparency
- Improved quality
- Win-win solution

Following an overview of the SHRP2 R16 program, participants introduced themselves and shared success and challenges within their agencies. Highlights from the discussion include:

- Communication is key
 - Establishment of a single point of contact is vital for both DOTs and Railroads
 - Coordination during construction is essential
 - Hosting pre-construction meetings with the railroad is a best practice, either just before the contractor meeting or separately
 - It is crucial that DOTs and Railroads overcome past negative perceptions to facilitate better working relationships in the future
 - Challenges exist in delivering Design-Build projects
 - UPRR recently issued a white paper on alternative project delivery; we will share that with the R16 Community of Interest and post to our web page
- There is a need to update old Master Agreements and create new Agreements where appropriate for Section 130 Projects, Flagging and Maintenance as Master Agreements allow for faster project delivery
- Likewise, electronic file management creates efficiencies in all facets of project delivery, shaving weeks and months from traditional file management practices
 - There has been a degradation in the quality of diagnostics, especially for projects that require pre-emption; new practices are emerging in the use of predictive vs. reactive analytics
 - Staffing issues (retirement, attrition and rotation) hinder coordination and project delivery

Session 3: Section 130 Update

Presenter:

- Jessica Rich, Safety Engineer, FHWA

Facilitated by Pam Hutton, SHRP2 Implementation Program Manager, Jessica Rich presented the latest update on the Section 130 Program for Grade Crossing and other Safety Improvements. Highlights from the discussion with the Peer Exchange participants are below:

- It was asked that FHWA address open questions related to the program:
 - 90%/10% versus 100% funding split
 - Provision of congressional reports to state DOTs and railroads
 - The need for face to face dialogue with FHWA leadership
- Develop grade separation criteria
- The obligation rates as presented by year are misleading; Section 130 funds can be spent over four years, during which a state can hold or allocate funds for larger projects

- The benefits of hosting separate preconstruction meetings with the railroad(s) and establishing a mutually agreed agenda
- Grade-separation is costly. An alternative, though less safe option, is to relocate sidings so as to mitigate blocked/occupied crossings

Session 4: Short Line and Regional Railroad Interfaces and Collaboration

Presenters:

- Carl Belke, former President and COO, WNYPRR
- Kyle Baker, Director of Bridge Design and Planning, Genesee & Wyoming

Facilitated by JR Gelnar, VP Safety and Compliance for ASLRRRA, representatives from WNYPRR and Genesee & Wyoming presented on short line and regional railroad interfaces and collaboration. Highlights from the discussion are below:

- A shared goal of all short line and regional railroads is to improve relationships with State DOT's, policy-makers and Class I railroads
- Establish data-driven regulations; regulations can be difficult for short lines to comply with
- Take advantage of new transportation funding (e.g., grant/loan programs)
- Utilize emerging technologies to collect data and refine information
- Road closures for short periods of time are often needed for grade crossing improvement projects; this is often the optimal solution, although there is typically push back from DOTs until they fully understand the cost/benefit scenario
- Repair strained outside party relationships
- Establish a single point of contact; this is often easier for short lines than Class I railroads
- Maintain communication through planning sessions and field meetings
- Establish commonality and consistency across regions
- Facilitate movement and compliance of publicly funded projects
- Lower project cost while increasing quality
- Establish a Public Project Playbook
- Standardize project management and reporting

Day 2 Overview

Day 2 included presentations and engaging discussions on best practices for electronic file sharing and successes and challenges of Master Agreements. The Peer Exchange concluded with a wrap-up and recount of action items taken by the R16 team.

Summary of Presentations, Day 2

Session 5: Best Practices for Electronic File Sharing

Presenter:

- Allen Rust, Rail Coordinator, Kentucky Transportation Cabinet

Facilitated by Mike Loehr, R16 SME, a representative from Kentucky Transportation Cabinet presented best practices for electronic file sharing. Highlights from the discussion are below:

- Prior to the establishment of the Kentucky Utility and Rail Tracking System (KURTS), construction agreements took 6-16 months to complete. As a result of the implementation of KURTS, construction agreements can be completed in 3-12 months.
- Prior to KURTS, Section 130 agreements took 7-14 months to complete. As a result of the implementation of KURTS, construction agreements can be completed in 4-10 months.
- Prior to KURTS, invoices took 30+ days to complete. As a result of the implementation of KURTS, invoices can be completed in 1 week.
- Benefits to DOT/Railroad relationships include: time savings, reduced stress, transparency, and payment tracking. KYTC has experienced the most benefit in emergency situations where both parties have to move very quickly
- There may be potential to share the KURTS software with other DOTs.

Session 6: Successes and Challenges of Master Agreements

Presenters:

- Scott Hoftiezer, Railroad Program Manager, Colorado Department of Transportation
- French Thompson, Director of Public Projects, BNSF

Facilitated by Pam Hutton, SHRP2 Implementation Program Manager, representatives from Colorado DOT and BNSF presented state and railroad perspectives on successes and challenges of Master Agreements. Highlights from the discussion are below:

- Benefits of standardization include:
 - Shorter review timeline
 - Ease of doing business
 - Mitigating the effects of changing workforce
 - Changing priorities
 - Repeatable process
 - Expedited project delivery
- The most challenging item to agree on is indemnification
- There is a balance to achieve relative to level of detail as ideally the agreement must be adaptable to a broad spectrum of situations
- Renewal should be scheduled every 5-10 years to allow for updates and changes in processes

Meeting Closure and Peer Exchange Action Items

Pam Hutton closed the meeting by thanking all of the presenters and participants for their active engagement and transparency. She noted the following action items that the R16 team would take following the meeting:

Action	Responsible	Status as of Oct 17 2018
Post Peer Exchange Meeting Summary on R16 Web Page	HL	Planned for Oct 19 2018
Post powerpoint presentations on R16 web page	CD and MK	Complete
Post UPRR Design-Build Guidelines on R16 web page	CD and MK	Complete
DOT Inventory penalties – Railroads continue to have problems	HL	Continue to carry on our open items list for FHWA and FRA
Consider R16 Emerging Best Practices as subject for final Case Study	HL	Agreed and added to Case Study Schedule

Continue discussion with KY DOT as to potential for sharing their Electronic File Sharing software with other DOTs and Railroads	KK	In process. Add potential to expand R15B Case Study, adding railroads, and also to host an additional webinar pending the answer to “software sharing” question.
Confirm statement in Case Study #1 that “Section 130 does not fund corridor projects”.	HL	FHWA has taken this action. If sentence needs to be clarified, Case Study #1 will be revised and re-issued.
Section 130 funds – 90% fed with 10% local match or 100% fed?	HL	Continue to carry on our open items list for FHWA and FRA. At the time of the Peer Exchange, FHWA was in the process of providing a clarifying letter to all states. Shortly after this meeting the letter was issued. AASHTO may include in its re-authorization issues list.
Encourage senior FHWA and FRA staff, as well as AASHTO leadership, to attend Annual COI meeting in February, 2019	PH	In process
Encourage FHWA to publish state obligation rates for Section 130 funds with caveat that states have 4-year window to spend and other caveats and notes as needed; annual obligation rates do not tell the full story	PH	Continue to carry on our open items list for FHWA and FRA
Railroads are not receiving Bi-Annual Section 130 report that is sent to Congress	PH	Continue to carry on our open items list for FHWA and FRA
Is safety driving process of grade crossing upgrades or is process driving?	PH	Added to open items list for FHWA and FRA
Convey to FHWA the need for a single Point of Contact to address railroad and crossing related issues	PH	Added to open items list for FHWA
Encourage Congress to increase current \$7,500 grade crossing closure incentive	PH	Added to AASHTO re-authorization issues list
Need clarity from FHWA re: upgrading crossing gates with Section 130 funds due to obsolete technology.	PH	Added to open items list for FHWA. AASHTO may add to re-authorization issues list (replacement of functionally obsolete equipment with Section 130 funds).
Continue discussion with potential sponsors so that R16 program can continue beyond April 2019.	PH	In process

Appendix A – Peer Exchange Meeting Agenda



SHRP2 Railroad-DOT Mitigation Strategies (R16) Peer Exchange Meeting Agenda September 13 - 14, 2018

This meeting will be a facilitated discussion in which representatives from state departments of transportation and railroads will share best practices for improving overall project delivery.

Day One – Thursday, September 13, 2018 Hilton Downtown, Miami, FL

Time	Agenda Topic
8:00 – 8:45 AM Concerto A Meeting Room	R16 Peer Exchange Registration
9:00 – 12:00 Noon Symphony 1 Meeting Room	Session 1 - Joint Plenary: Annual Meetings of the Council on Rail Transportation and Council on Water Transportation and R16 Peer Exchange
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderator: Matt Dietrich, Ohio DOT • Florida Perspective <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rickey Fitzgerald, Freight and Multimodal Operations Manager, Florida DOT ○ Eric Olafson, Director, Global Trade and Business Development, PortMiami • USDOT – FRA and FHWA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stephen O’Connor, Chief, Freight Rail Policy Division, FRA ○ Jessica Rich, Safety Engineer, Tennessee Division Office, FHWA • Connections of Freight Rail and Ports: An Intermodal Perspective <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Laura McNichol, VP, Government and Industry Relations, Watco Companies ○ Bobby Landry, VP and Chief Commercial Officer, Port of New Orleans ○ Paul Rathgeber, Senior Manager – Industry & Public Projects, Union Pacific Railroad • Questions and Discussion
12:00 – 1:30 PM Concerto A Meeting Room	Session 2 – Working Lunch: Applying R16 Best Practices in Florida

12:00 – 12:15 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buffet Lunch sponsored by CSXT
12:15 – 12:30 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome and Overview of SHRP2 Program and Railroad-DOT Mitigation Strategies (R16) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Jessica Rich, Safety Engineer, Tennessee Division Office, FHWA ○ Kate Kurgan, Associate Program Manager, SHRP2 Implementation, AASHTO
12:30 – 1:30 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderator: Mike Loehr, PE, R16 SME • Speaker: Troy Creasy, Project Manager II, CSX Capital & Public Projects • Questions and Discussion
1:30 – 3:00 PM	Session 3 – Section 130 Update
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderator: Pam Hutton, AASHTO SHRP2 Implementation Manager • Speaker: FHWA Safety Engineer Jessica Rich presents latest update on the Section 130 Program for Grade Crossing and other Safety Improvements • Questions and Discussion
3:00 – 3:15 PM	Break
3:15 – 4:30 PM	Session 4 – Short Line and Regional Railroad Interfaces and Collaboration
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderator: JR Gelnar, VP Safety and Compliance for American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association • Speakers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Carl Belke, former President and COO, Western New York Pennsylvania Railroad ○ Kyle Baker, Director of Bridge Design and Planning, Genesee & Wyoming • Ed Quillian, Chief Engineer for R.J. Corman Railroad Company will join the panelists for Questions and Discussion
4:30 – 4:45 PM	R16 Achievements and Wrap-up
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderator: Pam Hutton, SHRP2 Implementation Program Manager • R16: Past, Present and Future • Wrap Up and Questions • Plan for Tomorrow's Meeting • Proposed Changes to Day 2 Meeting Agenda
4:45 PM	Adjourn
5:00 – 6:30 PM	Optional Group Dinner at Brisa Bistro, Hilton Downtown Hotel (on your own)



SHRP2 Railroad-DOT Mitigation Strategies (R16) Peer Exchange Meeting Agenda

September 13 - 14, 2018

This meeting is a facilitated discussion in which representatives from state departments of transportation and railroads will share best practices for improving overall project delivery.

Day Two – Friday, September 14, 2018

Hilton Downtown, Miami, FL

Time	Agenda Topic
8:30 – 8:45 AM Concerto A Meeting Room	Recap of Day 1; Agenda Overview
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kate Kurgan of AASHTO
8:45 – 10:15 AM	Session 5 – Best Practices for Electronic File Sharing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderator: Mike Loehr, PE, R16 SME • Speakers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Kentucky Utilities and Rail Tracking System (KURTS) – Allen Rust, PE, Rail Coordinator for Kentucky Transportation Cabinet shares its current solution for Electronic File Sharing ○ Troy Creasy of CSXT shares how his team interaces with and benefits from KURTS • Questions and Discussion
10:15 – 10:30 AM	Break
10:30 – 12:00 PM	Session 6 – Successes and Challenges of Master Agreements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderator: Pam Hutton, SHRP2 Implementation Program Manager • Speakers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Scott Hoftiezer, PE, Railroad and Utility Program Manager for Colorado DOT shares successes and challenges related to the applicability of Master Agreements

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ French Thompson, III, Director, Public Projects and System Design for BNSF presents the Class I Railroad perspective, as BNSF has been working closely with CDOT through the development of its Master Agreements ● Questions and discussion
12:00 – 12:15 PM	Wrap-Up
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Moderator: Pam Hutton, SHRP2 Implementation Manager ● Agreed Actions and Follow-Up ● Upcoming R16 Events and Opportunities ● Adjourn at 12:15 pm

Appendix B – Participant Contact List

Name	Organization/Agency	Job Title	Email Address
Erik Andersen	Tennessee DOT	Rail Crossing Safety Manager	erik.anderson@tn.gov
Kyle Baker	Genesee & Wyoming	Director of Bridge Design and Planning	kyle.baker@gwrr.com
Carl Belke	WNYPRR	Former President & COO	cpbelke@outlook.com
Eric Cheng	Utah DOT	Chief Railroad Engineer	echeng@utah.gov
Chad Clawson	AASHTO	Engineering Fellow	cclawson@ashto.org
Matthew Dietrich	Ohio DOT	Executive Director	matt.dietrich@dot.ohio.gov
John Dinning	Canadian National	Manager of Public Works	john.dinning@cn.ca
Jim D'Lamater	Michigan DOT	Freight Infrastructure Engineering Manager	dlamaterj@michigan.gov
David Dorfman	Railroads for National Defense	Senior Civil Engineer	david.p.dorfman.civ@mail.mil
Carly Dutkiewicz	Jacobs	Transportation Planner	carly.dutkiewicz@jacobs.com
JR Gelnar	ASLRRRA	Vice President, Safety and Compliance	jrgelnar@aslrra.org
Scott Hoftiezer	Colorado DOT	Railroad Program Manager	scott.hoftiezer@state.co.us
Kathleen Hulbert	FHWA	R16 Liaison	kathleen.hulbert@dot.gov
Pam Hutton	AASHTO	SHRP2 Program Manager	phutton@ashto.org
Eric Kopinski	AASHTO	Engineering and Policy Fellow	ekopinski@ashto.org
Kate Kurgan	AASHTO	Associate Program Manager, SHRP2	kkurgan@ashto.org
Hal Lindsey	Jacobs	R16 Project Manager	hal.lindsey@jacobs.com
Michael Loehr	Jacobs	R16 SME	michael.loehr@jacobs.com
Jennifer Macdonald	AAR	AVP, Government Affairs	jmacdonald@aar.org
Teresa McNamara	Caltrans	State Railroad Coordinator	teresa.mcnamara@dot.ca.gov
Phillip Meraz	Iowa DOT	Rails Regulation and Analysis Coordinator	Phillip.meraz@iowadot.us
Glenn Page	AASHTO	Associate Program Director, Project Delivery	gpage@ashto.org

Brace Prouty	South Dakota DOT	Engineering Supervisor	brace.prouty@state.sd.us
Connie Raezer	Washington DOT	Railroad Liaison	raezerc@wsdot.wa.gov
Paul Rathgeber	Union Pacific	Director of Industry and Public Projects	paulrathgeber@up.com
Jessica Rich	FHWA	Safety Engineer	jessica.rich@dot.gov
Allen Rust	Kentucky DOT	Rail Coordinator	allen.rust@ky.gov
Inderjit Singh	Sound Transit	Senior Systems Engineer	inderjit.singh@soundtransit.org
Lisa Stern	Wisconsin DOT	Railroad & Safety Engineering Supervisor	lisa.stern@dot.wi.gov
Josh Stubbs	Mississippi DOT	Rails Engineer	jstubbs@mdot.ms.gov
Sharon Terranova	Colorado DOT	Senior Planner, Transit and Rail	sharon.terranova@state.co.us
French Thompson	BNSF	Director of Public Projects	french.thompson@bnsf.com

Appendix C – Evaluation Report Results

Eleven evaluations were provided to staff following the two-day meeting; six of these were signed by the evaluator. With a total attendance of 31, less AASHTO, FHWA, and Jacobs/CH2M staff, we received evaluations from 50% (11 of 22) of the registered participants. Of those who self-identified, two represented state departments of transportation (DOTs) and four represented railroads.

The following are some highlights of the feedback.

- The evaluators gave high marks to the overall Peer Exchange meeting, with an average of 9.18 (with 10 as the highest rating) that it “met expectations” and 9.18 that it presented “clear information.”
- Evaluators rated the overall discussion content with an average 8.9 (with 10 as the highest rating). The highest rated session was on the Short Line Railroad Interfaces and Collaboration discussion, with a rating of 9.18. The lowest was on the Joint Plenary discussion with 8.36.
- Comments regarding the “most important ideas” from the exchange generally focused on electronic file sharing, mentioned by five of the respondents, and Section 130, referenced by four.
- As to questions or issues not addressed and suggestions for future topics, participants mentioned the 90%/10% versus 100% split of Section 130 funds, FHWA senior representation at to address questions on Section 130, DOT and Railroad coordination on design-build projects, and getting the Railroads to acknowledge special circumstances DOTs have to deal with.
- Additional comments mentioned the positive value of the Peer Exchange, Participants described the meeting as a “learning experience,” “valuable resource,” and “excellent opportunity.” Two participants were in favor of the forum continuing in future years.