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## RSI QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE 2024 LEADERSHIP

Submitted by Sheena Prevette – Railway Supply Institute

RSI is thrilled to announce the QAC leadership for 2024, individuals with a wealth of experience and a shared commitment to advancing quality and innovation in rail transportation.

### **Margaret Zero, Chair**

Margaret Zero brings over a decade of expertise in quality assurance to her role as Chair of the RSI QAC. With a Bachelor of Science degree in Industrial Engineering from the University of Illinois at Chicago and an MBA from Northwestern University –



Kellogg School of Management, Margaret has cultivated a deep understanding of quality principles and methodologies. Currently serving as the Director of Quality Assurance at GATX Corporation, Margaret oversees regulatory compliance, quality auditing, facility certification, and quality management systems across the GATX Rail North America network. Her dedication to excellence and her leadership within the American Society for Quality as a Certified Quality Engineer make her a valuable asset to the committee.

Connect with [Margaret Zero on LinkedIn](#)

### **Michael Ruby, Vice-Chair**

Michael Ruby brings a diverse background and a passion for quality to his role as Vice-Chair of the RSI QAC. With a career spanning roles in automotive technology and rail manufacturing, Michael has honed his skills in quality inspection, problem-solving, and regulatory compliance. As the Director of Quality Assurance at TrinityRail, Inc., Michael is committed to driving excellence and innovation in rail supply. His active involvement in the RSI QAC and his contributions to industry forums make him a respected voice in the field of quality assurance.

Michael holds an Associate's Degree in Applied Sciences in Automotive Technology from Ferris State University and a Bachelor's Degree in Applied Arts and Sciences in Behavior Analysis and Alternative Dispute Resolution from the University of North Texas. Currently pursuing an Executive MBA at Baylor University, Michael exemplifies a dedication to continuous learning and professional development.

As we embark on another year of advancing quality and safety in rail transportation, we are confident in the leadership of Margaret Zero and Michael Ruby. Their vision, expertise, and commitment to excellence will undoubtedly propel the RSI QAC forward in its mission to promote quality and continuous improvement within the industry.

Connect with [Michael Ruby on LinkedIn](#)

## EMPLOYEE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Submitted by Adalia Herrera – TrinityRail

Employee training and development play a crucial role in the railway industry, impacting it in several significant ways. Enhanced Safety is one of them; the railway industry places a high priority on safety. Proper training ensures that employees are well-informed about safety protocols, emergency procedures, and the safe operation of trains and equipment. Quality Assurance ensures that a company's products or services meet or exceed customer expectations.

Employee training enhances operational efficiency by teaching employees how to use equipment, technology, and tools effectively. Properly trained personnel can carry out their tasks more efficiently, reducing delays and improving the overall performance of the railway system.

The railway industry is subject to various Quality Regulations and Standards. Employee training ensures that staff members are aware of and compliant with these regulations, reducing the risk of regulatory violations that can result in fines and legal issues. Regular updates on any changes or revisions to quality standards are necessary to ensure compliance.

Another critical aspect to consider is the training of employees on the organization's Quality Management System, including its policies, procedures, and documentation. Teaching employees how to conduct internal audits to identify and address potential quality issues is a proactive and systematic approach to evaluating and improving an organization's processes, controls, and overall performance, ultimately contributing to its long-term success and sustainability.

Employee training and development are integral to the railway industry, contributing to safety, efficiency, innovation, and regulatory compliance.



## THE BENEFITS OF MANAGING QUALITY DATA WITH A SOFTWARE SYSTEM

Submitted by Pedra Flournoy - TrinityRail

The effective management of quality data and documents has a significant impact on helping companies evolve their business. There are many ways to record and maintain quality data. One way is utilizing a quality management software system. Selecting the correct software and supplier is an intense and overwhelming process. The results, however, are transformative and worth the effort. This article contains some key benefits of managing quality data and documents using a quality management software system.

Standardizing processes or products is essential to build a robust foundation for quality management. The journey begins with a strategic development of how the quality system should operate. During this exercise, the impact of having a standard process becomes evident and may require a reevaluation and standardization of the current processes and/or products.

Standardization ensures that all individuals, departments, and facilities operate on the same page. Having standardized processes/products makes it easier to articulate and strategize how the quality management software should function. Also, it illuminates how things are currently performed and helps to see how the new software could enhance and improve the current processes.

A single repository for quality documents is ideal for ease of access and company organization. Quality data, processes, and procedures are often scattered across various platforms, making it challenging to retrieve critical information. A quality management software system consolidates all the information into a single repository. It is a “one-stop shop” for all things quality. So, whether it is recording defects, reviewing procedures, or updating corrective actions, having a centralized location promotes efficiency and consistency for all users. This consolidation significantly aids in employee training and transitions between roles.

Now that all the quality documents are in one space, connecting them and having a consistent look becomes possible. Many quality management software systems are modular, allowing for connectivity between different aspects of quality management. For example, electronically recording a defect and linking it to a corrective action creates a comprehensive and traceable audit trail. This connectivity simplifies internal communication and is invaluable during external audits and customer updates. The consistent look, feel, and connectivity make tracking, articulating, and verifying activities easy.



### Have an Idea for an Article?

Please submit your drafts to Gary Alderson at [alderson@alltranstek.com](mailto:alderson@alltranstek.com), or Alfredo Ricardo at [ricardo@alltranstek.com](mailto:ricardo@alltranstek.com)

### Interested in Joining RSI QAC?

Contact Sheena Prevette at [sprevette@rsiweb.org](mailto:sprevette@rsiweb.org)

### Not Getting the Newsletter and Want to Subscribe?

Contact Sheena Prevette at [sprevette@rsiweb.org](mailto:sprevette@rsiweb.org)



In conclusion, adopting a quality management software system is a strategic move toward operational excellence. The benefits, ranging from standardization and a single repository to connectivity, position organizations for enhanced efficiency and effectiveness in managing quality data. While the selection process may be intense, the outcome is transformative. Embracing this type of system empowers organizations to meet current quality standards and adapt and thrive in a changing business landscape.



## **TRANSFORMING QUALITY ASSURANCE THROUGH TELEMATICS**

Submitted by Sheena Prevette – Railway Supply Institute

In the realm of rail transportation, ensuring safety, reliability, and efficiency is paramount. To achieve these goals, the industry is increasingly turning to innovative technologies such as telematics, and leading the charge is the [RailPulse coalition](#). This collaborative effort aims to revolutionize the rail sector by harnessing the power of data-driven insights, and in doing so, it's reshaping the landscape of quality assurance.

At its core, telematics involves the use of remote monitoring systems installed on locomotives and rolling stock to gather real-time data on various operational parameters. These systems leverage advanced sensors, GPS technology, and communication networks to collect a wealth of information. By analyzing this data, users can gain valuable insights into their assets' health and performance, enabling them to make informed decisions that enhance safety, optimize maintenance schedules, and improve overall operational efficiency.

One of the key advantages of telematics in the rail industry is its ability to enable predictive maintenance. By continuously monitoring equipment condition and performance, operators can detect potential issues before they escalate into costly failures. This proactive approach not only minimizes downtime and maintenance costs but also enhances safety by preventing unexpected malfunctions.

Moreover, telematics facilitates remote diagnostics and troubleshooting, allowing maintenance teams to diagnose problems quickly and accurately without the need for physical inspection. This capability is particularly beneficial in remote or hard-to-reach locations, where accessing equipment for inspection and repair can be challenging and time-consuming.

Additionally, telematics enables asset tracking and utilization monitoring, providing operators with visibility into the movement and usage of their rolling stock. By analyzing utilization patterns, operators can optimize asset deployment, identify opportunities for efficiency improvements, and ensure resources are allocated effectively.

From a quality assurance perspective, the insights generated by telematics data play a crucial role in maintaining and enhancing operational standards. By continuously monitoring performance metrics and compliance with regulatory requirements, operators can identify areas for improvement and implement corrective measures proactively. This proactive approach not only enhances safety and reliability but also helps build trust with regulatory authorities and stakeholders.

The RailPulse coalition represents a significant step forward in leveraging telematics to drive innovation and excellence in the rail industry. By harnessing the power of data-driven insights, operators can enhance safety,

**Enhanced Safety**  
**Shipment and Railcar Visibility**  
**Unified Technology Standards**  
**Simplified Shipper Experience**  
**Accelerated Adoption**  
**Lower Operational Costs**

reliability, and efficiency while transforming quality assurance practices. As the industry continues to embrace digitalization, telematics will undoubtedly play a central role in shaping the future of rail transportation.

## EQUAL REPRESENTATION FOR THE ENTIRE RAIL ECOSYSTEM

RailPulse is being created for the benefit of all constituents in the rail ecosystem to drive carload growth. The new telematics platform will support the entire rail industry: shippers, Class I railroads, short lines, regional railroads, switching carriers, and railcar operating lessors, all while enhancing the safety and security of proprietary car-owner data.



“RailPulse is a new coalition of forward-thinking railcar owners who have joined together to create a neutral, open-architecture, industry-wide railcar telematics platform that will help transform rail shipping by bringing it into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.” Image by RailPulse via <https://www.railpulse.com/about/>.

## RSI QAC EDUCATION TAG SHARES EXPERTISE AT AAR QUALITY ASSURANCE & INDUSTRY CONFERENCE

Submitted by Jim Dinell – AllTranstek

The Railway Supply Institute's QAC recently had the privilege of participating in the 36<sup>th</sup> Annual AAR Quality Assurance & Industry Conference in Phoenix, and we couldn't be more excited to share the highlights with you.

At the event, the RSI QAC Education TAG hosted two hands-on workshops that delved into critical aspects of quality assurance in rail operations. The first workshop focused on Thermographic/Infrared Inspection techniques, shedding light on innovative methods to enhance inspection processes and detect potential issues early on. The second workshop explored Visual Inspection beyond Weld Inspection, providing attendees with valuable insights into expanding their inspection capabilities to ensure the highest standards of safety and reliability.



We are immensely grateful to the AAR QAC for welcoming us and providing a platform to share our expertise with industry peers. The spirit of collaboration and knowledge-sharing that permeated the conference is a testament to the strength of our industry partnerships, and we look forward to continued collaboration in the future.

But the excitement doesn't stop there! Stay tuned for more enriching education content from RSI throughout the year, including at the highly anticipated [2024 RSI Expo and Conference](#).

## RSI VOLUNTEERS MAKING STRIDES

Submitted by Sheena Prevette – Railway Supply Institute

At RSI, collaboration is more than just a buzzword—it's a fundamental aspect of our mission to drive progress within the rail industry. Our committees, including the American Railway Car Institute (ARCI), Equipment Leasing Committee, Exhibitor Advisory Committee, Government & Public Affairs Committee (GPAC), Quality Assurance Committee, Standard Coupler Manufacturers Committee, State Taxation Committee, and Committee on Tank Cars, exemplify this spirit of collaboration. By working together, these committees harness their diverse expertise and perspectives to tackle complex challenges, advocate for industry-wide initiatives, and drive meaningful change.

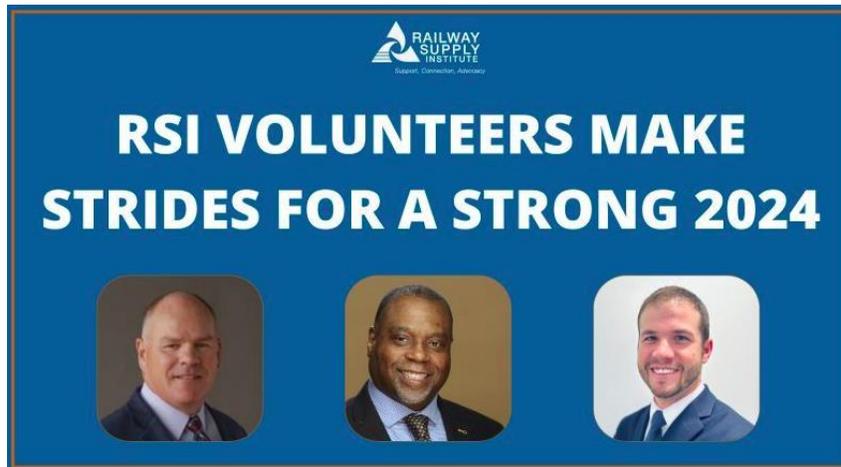


Last year, RSI and the rail community experienced its fair share of challenges and successes. Notable among the highs were strides made by RSI committees to educate the public and advocate for greater industry safety.

As we move into 2024 with renewed momentum, RSI is shining a light on a few volunteers and their committees that contributed to last year's progress.

What follows are interviews with Mark Brecht, senior vice president of industry relations at Wells Fargo Rail and member of the RSI Equipment Leasing Committee (ELC); Chauncey Fallen, director of transportation and utilization-based leasing at GATX Rail and member of the ELC; and Ben Miller, director of tank car engineering at The Greenbrier Companies and member of the RSI Committee on Tank Cars (CTC).

[Click the Image Below to Read Access the Full Interviews](#)



## **RSI QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE – 2023 YEAR END REVIEW**

Submitted by Donna Jacobi – Amsted Rail

2023 was another busy year for the RSI Quality Assurance Committee (QAC). The RSI QAC advocated for increased collaboration with the Association of American Railroads' Quality Assurance Committee (AAR QAC), created and delivered meaningful education content, and published quarterly newsletters in both English and Spanish.

In preparation for the 2024 AAR MSRP Section J, Specification for Quality Assurance (M-1003) update, the RSI QAC crafted and submitted proposed revisions. While some changes gained acceptance, not all did. RSI QAC members were not included on the task force overseeing the update, which was a change from the previous update. Nevertheless, the RSI QAC remains dedicated to collaboration, optimistic that open cooperation will ultimately enhance the rail supply community as a whole.

The RSI QAC's Education TAG continued its tradition of delivering top-notch industry content. This included conducting two hands-on workshops at the AAR's Quality Assurance & Industry Conference, focusing on Ultrasonic Testing & Auditing Best Practices and Bubble Leak Testing of Tank Car Service Equipment. Additionally, the TAG organized a panel at Railway Interchange titled, "Coating Technology to Drive Rail Modal Share." The panelists brought a wealth of knowledge, offering invaluable perspectives and insights that have the potential to catalyze a significant shift towards rail modal share.

Furthermore, the RSI QAC Newsletter TAG successfully published quarterly newsletters throughout the year, providing content in both Spanish and English. These newsletters featured a range of topics including the response to East Palestine, RSI education at the AAR Quality Assurance & Industry Conference, the significance of mentoring in the railcar industry, updates on RSI GPAC activities, progress on RSI-100 initiatives, insights on PITP, and discussions regarding the incorporation of M-1002 Elements and railroad regulations and rules.

Moving into 2024, RSI QAC is planning on another year of continued advocacy, collaboration, education, and information sharing.

## 2024 AAR QUALITY ASSURANCE TRAINING SCHEDULE

Course	Date	Location
Basic Auditor Training Class	March 19-21	Guadalajara, Mexico (Spanish)
	May 21-23	San Diego, CA
	July 16-18	New Orleans, LA
	October 22-24	Nashville, TN
Advanced Auditor Training Class	June 4-6	Indianapolis, IN
	June 18-20	Saltillo, Mexico (Spanish)
	August 6-8	Pueblo, Colorado
	November 5-7	Lincoln, Nebraska
Root Cause Analysis Class	August 27-28	Guadalajara, Mexico (Spanish)
	November 19-20	Pueblo, Colorado

## USEFUL LINKS

[Railway Supply Institute](#)

[RSI QAC & Previous Newsletters](#)

[RSI Tank Car Resource Center](#)

[Registry of M-1003 Certified Companies](#)

[M-1003 Frequently Asked Questions](#)

[American Society for Quality - Training](#)

[RSI 100](#)

[AAR M-1003 Certification on-line Application](#)

[AAR M1003, Section J Specification for Quality Assurance](#)

[AAR Training Schedule](#)

[AAR Circulars](#)

[MSRP Publication Current Revision Status](#)

[AAR Online Material Nonconformance Reporting System \(Chapter 7\)](#)

[AAR FAQ Page includes QAPE](#)

**THE FOLLOWING RSI QAC TEAM MEMBERS WORKED ON THIS NEWSLETTER:**

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