

Volume 24, 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2026

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## DONNA JACOBI RETIREMENT ANNOUNCEMENT

By Gary Alderson – AllTranstek, LLC

Donna Jacobi, formerly of Amsted Rail, announced her retirement at the end of October 2025. Donna played a key role in RSI as the former Chair of the RSI Quality Assurance Committee. She also coordinated meetings with the AAR Quality Assurance Committee and participated in presentations at the annual QA Conference. In addition, she volunteered her time to help with the RSI QA Newsletter and contributed countless hours of help with formatting and planning content for the newsletter. I would like to personally thank her for the help she provided when we were trying to put a newsletter together each quarter for the last eight years. We will miss her and the valuable work she provided to RSI. We extend our best wishes to Donna for a well-deserved and fulfilling retirement.

## 38<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL AAR QUALITY ASSURANCE INDUSTRY CONFERENCE

By RSI QA Committee

The annual AAR Quality Assurance Industry Conference was held February 17-19, 2026 in St. Petersburg, Florida. The total number of attendees was 325 which tied the 2024 meetings attendance. The location for the conference was a big hit with most of the attendees, especially those from the northern states where temps were about 60 degrees colder prior to arrival.

### Highlights

Gordana Halvadjija of CPKC was introduced as the new Chairperson of the AAR Quality Assurance Committee. She replaced Sanjay Varma who had held the position the previous two-year term. Sanjay is the current Chair of the RSI Quality Assurance Committee along with Gary Alderson as Vice Chair.

Acting President of RSI, Ashley Shelton, provided an update about RSI membership to all conference attendees and included some Washington, DC information about the latest actions on rail proposals on the hill. The other presentations and keynote speakers were well received, and the workshops coordinated by RSI's QAC on Thursday were quite popular.



Carrie Wall of RSI helped coordinate a much-needed meeting with the RSI QAC. While it was a very brief meeting, we accomplished a starting point for future meetings. Carrie also organized a dinner for the RSI QA Committee. Carrie Wall along with RSI representatives also staffed a dedicated outreach desk in the hallway, engaging with industry professionals to share information about membership benefits and opportunities for contributing to industry standards development.

The AAR QA Industry Conference will be held in St. Petersburg, FL at the same location next year, February 8-11, 2027.



## STAYING ORGANIZED

By Gary Alderson – AllTranstek, LLC

When you are given the job of Quality Assurance Manager – or a similar title – you may be surprised that you were selected for the position and feel unprepared for some of the skills required. One of the most important lessons I learned as a QA Manager is the ability to organize both your day and the many different files associated with a quality assurance program. These include procedures, forms, measuring and test equipment records, personnel certifications, standards and regulations, internal and external audits, customer requirements, supplier requirements, and many other essential documents.

If you can establish an effective organization system and maintain it, you have a strong chance of being a successful QA Manager.

One area to consider first is your daily list of items that must be verified in your shop or facility. In a large facility you can delegate someone to complete these items on a checklist you prepare. For example, this may include in-process inspection areas, measuring and test equipment that requires tagging, preventive maintenance items that require data collection, final inspection files that need review prior to product release, and other routine checks. If a corrective or preventive action requires weekly verification, you will need documentation to show compliance. Some people use Outlook or another calendar to track important dates.

Another area to consider is how to organize files on your computer. Some folks like to post the folders on their desktop so they can quickly access them. Personally, I prefer using folders and subfolders, but not too many subfolders. If you have too many directories, you can get lost in the number of clicks it takes to get to the document and make it difficult to stay focused on the file you want to retrieve.

It is suggested that you organize files based on major titles such as Training, Measuring and Test Equipment, NDT, Preventive Maintenance, Customer Approval, QA Manual and procedures and forms, Suppliers, Nonconformance, Contract Review, and then maintain subfolders with documents that are easily retrievable for both you and the auditor.

During external audits, I find the process is much smoother when the auditee has a monitor or screen in the conference room and a laptop with most of the required files ready to display as objective evidence. Documents can then be emailed or printed as needed. This approach is far more efficient than relying on hard copies from file cabinets or shelves in the QA Manager's office. If you are still using paper copies, it may be time to consider a date to begin using electronic files. Some scanning of documents will be required to get started, but once you are in the habit of using electronic files, you will be surprised how quickly the process can be adopted.

## **2026 MANDATORY ELEMENTS**

The AAR QAC announced the following elements as mandatory.

2.5 – Production Inspection and Test Planning

2.6 – Corrective and Preventive Actions

2.11 – In-process Inspection

2.12 – Final Inspection

## 2026 AAR M-1003 QUALITY ASSURANCE TRAINING SCHEDULE

COURSE	DATE	LOCATION
BASIC AUDITOR TRAINING CLASS	MARCH 24-26	SAN DIEGO, CA
	APRIL 14-16	MEXICO CITY, MX (SPANISH)
	JUNE 2-4	KANSAS CITY, KS
	JULY 21-23	CALGARY, CA
	SEPTEMBER 15-17	VIRGINIA BEACH, VA
	OCTOBER 27-29	NASHVILLE, TN
ADVANCED AUDITOR TRAINING CLASS	MARCH 10-12	MIRA LOMA, CA
	MAY 19-21	KANSAS CITY, MO
	SEPTEMBER 29 – OCTOBER 1	MARMADUKE, AR
	OCTOBER 13-15	MONCLOVA, MX (SPANISH)

### 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:**

Gary Alderson – AllTranstek

Alfredo Ricardo – AllTranstek

Carrie Wall – RSI

Sanjay Varma – Progress Rail

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