

Program Letter

United States Railroad Retirement Board



Office of Programs
Quality Reporting Service Center

Chicago, IL 60611-2092
(312) 751-4992

CONTACT: Quality Reporting Service Center

Letter No. 2015-03

TO: Certification Contact Officials

Release: May 27, 2015

SUBJECT: **NATIONAL RAIL EMPLOYER TRAINING SEMINAR**

This letter provides all the information you need to register for the Tenth National Rail Employer Training Seminar (NRETS) which will be held August 26, 27, and 28, 2015 at the Hyatt Regency Chicago, 151 East Wacker, Chicago, Illinois. There is a registration fee of **\$30.00** to help cover the costs of refreshments and other incidentals. You are responsible for your own transportation, meals, and lodging expenses.

This seminar is designed for those persons who work in, or manage, the subject areas of service, compensation, and contributions reported to the RRB, and related areas. This includes, but is not limited to, payroll personnel, accountants, controllers, claims agents, benefit administrators, auditors, and executives of employers covered under the Railroad Retirement Act. **Please share this information with all the appropriate parties within your organization.**

THE SEMINAR IN BRIEF

The seminar begins with a general session for all attendees at 1:30 p.m. Wednesday and ends at 11:30 a.m. Friday. The Management Member of the Board, Steven J. Anthony, will open the seminar, followed by the Director of Policy and Systems. The topics include information on the agency's direction in this era of social media and automation, customer service improvements and new initiatives in the way we do business with our constituents in the rail industry.

The plenary session is followed by two breakout sessions. Five breakout sessions are scheduled for Thursday and three on Friday. Each attendee chooses the particular breakout sessions that meet his or her needs. We have a few new sessions, including an introductory course on Internet reporting, new programs offered through our Bureau of Field Service and a session from our Chief Information Officer.

Eric O'Neill, Accounting Manager from the American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association will again host a discussion along with a representative from the RRB on changes that affect Short Line employers.

Breakout Sessions

A description of each breakout session is enclosed and we have a variety of topics from which to choose. This includes basic topics which provide general information in all areas of compensation reporting for attendees who are new; sessions covering advanced compensation and related tax issues; and sessions that provide information on our automation efforts. So, attendees should simply sign up for the sessions they want to attend. Also, if there are any other topics you would like to see covered during our seminar, please let us know. Add your comments on the registration form and we will try to insure that those topics get covered and let you know which session you should attend. If the classes you select fill to capacity, we will notify you of any changes we make to your schedule. So register early!

Luncheon General Session

In combination with the luncheon you will receive an informative presentation on industry related issues. (Speaker to be announced).

HOW TO REGISTER

You have several options for registering and paying for the seminar. You can register and pay on-line at www.rrb.gov. Look for the link to NRETS on the home page (which will be available at the beginning of June).

Or you can:

- Print a copy of your registration and fax it to the RRB to the number shown below and mail your payment separately;
- Print a copy of your registration and mail it to the RRB with your payment; or
- Use the printed form enclosed with this letter and mail it to the RRB with your payment.

You can send a check or money order to the address shown below and indicate whether the original registration was faxed. Please complete one form for each person attending the seminar. Photocopies are acceptable.

Mail your registration to: U.S. Railroad Retirement Board
Quality Reporting Service Center
844 North Rush Street
Chicago, IL 60611-2092

Fax your registration to: (312) 751-7123

Please register as soon as possible, and no later than, July 29. We will accommodate reservations received after that date, but we require a count of attendees by July 29 for meeting room and contract purposes. Confirmations of registration and payment will be sent by e-mail beginning mid -June and every 2 weeks thereafter. Confirmations will include directions to the hotel. If you do not receive your confirmation after two weeks, contact the Quality Reporting Service Center by telephone at (312) 751-4992 or e-mail to QRSC@rrb.gov.

HOTEL RESERVATIONS

The seminar is being held at the Hyatt Regency Chicago in the heart of Chicago's business, dining and shopping district with many activities available within walking distance. The guest rooms have dual-line telephones, and Internet access. Arrangements have been made with the hotel to give attendees a discounted government room rate of \$159 per day plus 16.4% tax. A limited number of rooms are being held for check-in the day before the seminar. If you plan to arrive on Tuesday, August 25, please make your reservations early.

To make reservations by phone, call the Hyatt Regency Chicago at **(312) 239-4414** and identify the group as the US Railroad Retirement Board. To make reservations on the Internet, go to <https://resweb.passkey.com/go/USRailroadRetirementBoard2015> enter your dates and preferences and click "check availability" at the bottom of the form. **Reservations must be received by July 29 to receive the discounted rate.** Do not delay.

LUNCHEON SESSION

Thursday's luncheon session starts at 12:30 p.m., and includes a cash bar, lunch, and a general session. The cost of the luncheon is **\$55.00** and advance reservations and payment are required. Attendance at the luncheon is optional. Entrée includes choice of Chicken, Fish or Vegetarian with soup or salad, two sides and desert.

If you choose to attend the luncheon, please complete **Part C** of the registration form.

CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDIT

Many licensing boards and professional organizations will grant Continuing Education credit for attendance at our workshops when you submit the course outline and a certificate of attendance. Contact your own board or organization to find out what is required. If you want a certificate of attendance, sign up at the registration table and your certificate should be available on Friday.

QUESTIONS

If you have any questions about the seminar, or you require a special lunch meal or accommodations, please address them to any of the staff at (312) 751-4992. We are looking forward to seeing you in August.

Enclosures: Descriptions of Breakout Sessions
Schedule of Sessions
Seminar Registration Form

BREAKOUT SESSION DESCRIPTIONS 2015
(In alphabetical order by title.)

No.	Topic
1.	<p>Audits of Employers</p> <p>This session will address both audits conducted by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and the Audit and Compliance division of the Railroad Retirement Board (RRB). You will receive advice on how to prepare for, and survive, an audit, as well as information on audit authority, objectives, and scope. Coordination of information between the RRB and IRS will be covered, along with disclosure, confidentiality considerations, and other issues which cross agency lines. The session will discuss some common findings and how you can be confident that you are in compliance.</p> <p>Presentation by: Cynthia J. Carter, Audit and Compliance Division, RRB Laird MacMillan, Internal Revenue Service Representative</p>
2.	<p>BIS Goals</p> <p>This session will provide the new CIO an opportunity to discuss his goals related to RRB computer/automation initiatives relevant to the railroad industry.</p> <p>Presentation by: Ram Murthy, Chief Information Officer, RRB</p>
3.	<p>CT-1 Tax Issues</p> <p>This session will address Form CT-1 reporting issues and the correction Form CT-1X. The session will also discuss the year-end reconciliation of tax deposits. Common CT-1 questions and errors will be addressed.</p> <p>Presentation by: Rosemary Kincade, Internal Revenue Service</p>
4.	<p>Debt Recovery Initiatives</p> <p>The Bureau of Fiscal Operations will provide information on the agency's debt collection initiatives. RRB staff will also introduce the new on-line processes the RRB implements to recover unemployment and sickness benefits under Sections 2(f) and 12(o) of the RUIA.</p> <p>Presentation by: Andrea Harris, Bureau of Fiscal Operations, RRB Rick Easterday, Sickness & Unemployment Bureau, RRB</p>
5.	<p>Employer Coverage Issues</p> <p>Do you wonder why some railroads are not covered under the Railroad Retirement Act or why some employers segregate their railroad business from their non-railroad business? This session will provide the answers to these and many more coverage questions. The session will discuss what constitutes coverage under the RRA and RUIA for employers and individual employees, the use of contract services, and how decisions are coordinated between RRB, IRS, and SSA.</p> <p>Presentation by: Robert Perbohner, Management Member's Office, RRB</p>

6.	<p>Executive Session</p> <p>The Management Member of the Board along with his staff and with the Director of Programs will share their perspective on current issues facing the Railroad Retirement Board.</p> <p>Presentation by: Steven J. Anthony, Management Member Natasha Marx, Management Member’s Office Dr. Michael A. Tyllas, Director of Programs</p>
7.	<p>Experience Rating and Pre-payment Verification</p> <p>This session will give you an overview of the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act (RUIA) claims process and a complete look at the Experience Rating system from A to Z. You will learn how your contribution rate is calculated and how the payment and recovery of benefits impacts your rate. Finally, you will see what actions you can take to improve your contribution rate.</p> <p>Presentation by: Michele Andrey, Rebecca Streed & George Murphy, Policy and Systems, RRB Matt Carlyle, Field Service, RRB</p>
8.	<p>Field Service Initiatives & RRB Internet for Employees <i>(New)</i></p> <p>This session will provide information on changes in the programs and services available to employees and employers through our Bureau of Field Service. This session will also provide an overview of employee applications and services currently available. Your input and ideas will be welcome!</p> <p>Presentation by: Michael Petry, Associate Director of Field Service, RRB Jackie Hill, Jason Strohm & William Roysdon, Policy and Systems, RRB</p>
9.	<p>Future Internet Services for Employers</p> <p>This session will briefly cover all the current services available to employers on the Employer Reporting System (ERSNet) Internet site. The session will also highlight the benefits to employers in using this system; demonstrate new services and discuss future services that will be available to employers via the site.</p> <p>Presentation by: Laretta Earls, Policy and Systems, RRB</p>
10.	<p>Introduction to Internet Reporting for Employers</p> <p>This session will demonstrate the process for registering your employees for the various on-line reporting forms and services that are available in the Employer Reporting System (ERSNet). You will receive information on the services available; adding and removing users; access levels; and where to find instructions and receive help to navigate the system.</p> <p>Presentation by: Melodi Sapyta, Policy and Systems, RRB</p>

11.	<p>Master the Basics I - Creditable Compensation and Service</p> <p>Master the Basics is for anyone who is getting started in the world of railroad retirement. This session will give you a working knowledge of railroad retirement terminology and concepts and cover the various types of creditable compensation (i.e. back pay, separation allowances, pay-for-time-lost). It will also provide you with the foundational knowledge needed to better understand Railroad Retirement Board's (RRB) annual reporting requirements. No question is considered too elementary.</p> <p>Presentation by: Michael Wietecha, Policy and Systems, RRB</p>
12.	<p>Master the Basics II – Filing Reports via ERSNet</p> <p>This session covers how to effectively complete and file the service and compensation reports (BA-3, Annual Report; BA-6a, Address Report; BA-9, Separation Report; and BA-11 Gross Earnings Report) via the Employer Reporting System (ERSNet) and how to prepare a prior year adjustment (BA-4, Adjustment report). In addition, alternate filing methods for reports will be discussed, including FTP and secure e-mail.</p> <p>Presentation by: Patrick Keenan, Policy and Systems, RRB</p>
13.	<p>Retirement and Survivor Annuities I & II</p> <p>This session is intended for those individuals covered under the Railroad Retirement Act, and for individuals who work in the human resources area and handle employee questions about benefits. The session will discuss eligibility for RRB annuities, calculation of retirement and survivor benefits, and factors that affect benefits. Educate yourself before making the all-important retirement decision!</p> <p>Presentation by: Joseph Waechter, Management Member's Office, RRB</p>
14.	<p>Short Line and Regional Railroad Issues</p> <p>This session is facilitated by Eric O'Neill from the American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association. This session is an informal discussion which offers attendees a chance to voice their opinions and make suggestions for changes they would like to see. Attendees will also learn about new payroll accounting and reporting opportunities available to Short Line employers.</p> <p>Presentation by: Eric O'Neill, American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association</p>
15.	<p>SSA Reporting Issues</p> <p>This session will highlight new services for employers available through the Internet, common errors in filing Forms W-2 and W-3 and how to avoid them, and how discrepancies between taxes and earnings are reconciled. The session will explain the options for employers to verify social security numbers of their employees and other enumeration issues.</p> <p>Presentation by, Paul Dieterlie, Social Security Administration</p>

16.	<p>Verdicts and Liens</p> <p>This session will discuss the structure of FELA awards and the issues and effect these awards will have on covered employees.</p> <p>Presentation by: Debra Chesnin, Office of General Counsel, RRB</p>
17.	<p>Watching Out for the RRB Trust Funds</p> <p>Learn the role that RRB's IG has in investigating fraud and abuse and hear about some of the schemes they have encountered, and cases they have pursued in the interest of protecting the RRB's trust fund resources.</p> <p>Presentation by: William Fergus, Office of the Inspector General, RRB</p>

SEMINAR REGISTRATION

PART A: General Registration

Name: _____ Title: _____

(Please print clearly. This form is used to create name badges and labels.)

Employer: _____ BA Number: _ _ _ _

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____ e-mail _____

(If you register on-line and provide an e-mail address, check the e-mail box above and your confirmation will be sent via e-mail: otherwise, confirmations will be sent by facsimile.)

For networking purposes, the conference material will include a list of attendees along with their employer name, e-mail and telephone number. If you **do not** want to be included, check this box.

PART B: Breakout Session Registration

Choose 10 breakout sessions you would like to attend from the enclosed schedule. Please indicate the number and the title. If the classes you select fill to capacity we will notify you of any changes we make to your schedule. **If there are any other topics you would like to see covered during the seminar add your comments below on this registration form.**

Wednesday, August 26

2:30 _____

3:30 _____

Friday, August 28

8:30 _____

9:30 _____

10:30 _____

Thursday, August 27

8:30 _____

9:30 _____

10:30 _____

11:30 _____

2:30 _____

3:30 _____

Other Topics _____

PART C: LUNCHEON REGISTRATION

Register me for the luncheon (\$55).

My entree choice is (check one):

Short Ribs Herb Roasted Chicken Breast

Grilled Salmon Vegetarian

I will not attend the luncheon

PART D: PAYMENT

My payment of \$30 (conference only) \$85 (conference and luncheon) was submitted through PayPal.

My check or money order for \$30 (conference only) \$85 (conference and luncheon)

payable to "National Rail Employer Seminar"

is enclosed.

is being mailed with a copy of the registration. Payment must be received by July 29.

***** **Please return this form no later than July 29** *****

Mail, fax, and web addresses are located on page 2 of the letter