SPEAKING PROGRAM
2023 RAIL TECH CONFERENCE

New England Railroad Club
Founded 1883

EVENT KICK-OFF

Abdellah Chajai
Chief Executive Officer,
Keolis Commuter Services
1:00 - 1:45pm

Transportation veteran Abdellah Chajai was appointed as the Chief Executive Officer of Keolis Commuter Services, the MBTA's operating partner for the nation's sixth largest commuter rail system, in December of 2021. A native of France, he has spent more than 25 years in the industry and transportation sector, speaks six languages, and has multiple master's degrees. Prior to coming to Boston, Abdellah served as CEO of Keolis Amey Docklands (KAD) since 2018. He believes that rail has always been about connecting people with each other and with economic opportunities and going forward it will also be a powerful force for climate resiliency in the face of global warming. Abdellah will join us to discuss how MBTA Commuter Rail is a critical component of the MBTA's transportation network and how it will be key to our region's post-pandemic economic recovery.

DINNER KEYNOTE

Brian Solomon
Manager of Marketing and Events
Conway Scenic Railroad
6:30pm

Brian Solomon is one of today's most accomplished railway historians. He has authored more than thirty books about railroads and locomotive power, and his writing and photography have been featured in the world's top rail publications, including Trains, Railway Age, Passenger Train Journal, and RailNews. Between 1994 to 1996 Brian Solomon worked at Pentrex Publishing as the Editor of Pacific RailNews and as an associate editor for Passenger Train Journal. He also helped launch the magazine Vintage Rails in 1995. His books include *The Railroad Never Sleeps: 24 Hours in the Life of Modern Railroading*, *Streamliners: Locomotives and Trains in the Age of Speed and Style*, *Railway Maintenance: The Men and Machines That Keep the Railroads Running*, *Working on the Railroad*, and *Railroad Signaling*.

In addition to his writing career, Brian also currently works at the Conway Scenic Railroad in New Hampshire as the Manager of Marketing and Events, and his photography work highlighting the daily operations at the railroad can be found online and in social media.

He will join us to give a retrospective of railroad history in New England.

PROFESSIONAL SEMINARS

360 Railroad Project Delivery in Programs - United States and International
Vinay Mudholkar, Transportation Consultant and John Read, P.E.
2:00 - 2:45pm

Engineering companies, suppliers, and contractors throughout the United States need to understand what is now being called "360 Degree Project Delivery". It is a full-viewed approach to defining the scope for solutions to projects that are not only successful, but which also deliver expected results, including bringing the project to a close on time and on-budget. This seminar will focus on exactly what this new term means to our industry and will also highlight how its application could help in the replacement of railroad infrastructure, especially bridges, throughout New England.

Roadbed and Subgrade Inspection and Monitoring Using Geophysical Methods
Oleg Valishin, Sercel
3:00 - 3:45pm

There are a variety of rail and roadbed monitoring technologies. While some of the technologies measure track deformation and alert users to notify of damage that has already occurred, some technologies allow for proactive identification of a potential problem before the changes observed at the track level. Prevention of service interruption requires a proactive, cost-effective and non-intrusive near surface characterization. A geophysical system was developed with French Railways to profile the shear wave velocity of the railbed to identify and predict emergence of danger zones. This passive monitoring is done either using discrete sensors, or special or existing fiber optics. This solution can detect soil changes prior to substantial movements can be observed at surface. This enables a snapshot of the subgrade properties much deeper than conventional GPR, and much deeper and with higher resolution compared to standard MASW techniques.

The presentation will cover the technologies for monitoring track deformation, and technology development in cooperation with French railways, benchmark vs. other technologies, case studies (Europe and USA).

Advances in Railcar Tracking, Fleet Management, and Monitoring Technologies
Bob Pickel
Senior Vice President
National Steel Car N.A. Inc.
4:00 - 4:45pm

The rail industry still relies on AEI tags, transponders, and other dated technology for tracking, fleet management, and monitoring of the 1.6 million railcars currently serving in the North American fleet. However, the development of new, affordable, and reliable monitoring technology in places such as the EV automotive industry is allowing for real-time management & monitoring systems for the rail industry, eliminating the older tech. Like EV vehicles, railcars can be outfitted with battery powered and/or solar power monitoring units to provide real time monitoring via GPS as well as telemetrics to gauge cars real time. Trackside devices reading these systems can also monitor for wheel performance, truck hunting and more. And, of course, with PTC (Positive Train Control) now on much of North America's rail network, we now have the opportunities that system brings to railcar fleet management.