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Office of Proceedings
January 16, 2023
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01/14/2024

Surface Transportation Board
Attn: Docket No. EP 774 (Sub-No. 1)
395 E. Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423

Subject: Re: Docket Number EP-774 (Sub-No. 1)

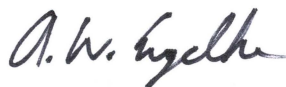
Dear Chairman Oberman:

I am writing to convey self-nomination for membership on the Passenger Rail Advisory Committee (PRAC) as either the Class III shortline or an at-large representative. My name is Alex Engelke and I believe my demonstrated well-rounded experience in the freight rail sector at a Class 1 railroad, shortline-conglomerate, and a shortline railroad coupled with my experience as a freight railroad consultant would add significant value to the committee and its stakeholders.

Currently serving as both owner at Engelke Consulting, LLC and General Manager of East Chicago Rail Terminal (a Class 3 common carrier), I am well versed in the requirements and contributions of all stakeholders such as the public, shippers, railroads, and government. I currently hold certifications as a track inspector (49 CFR 213), freight conductor (49 CF 242), and freight locomotive engineer (49 CFR 240). I have also written the various 49 CFR 200-399 parts for approval as necessary by the FRA. My deep understanding of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to freight and passenger rail in the United States would be of value to the committee. My commitment to local communities, clean energy, diversity, equity, and inclusion is strong.

I have provided a copy of my CV below. I respectfully request the Surface Transportation Board consider my self-nomination for membership to the PRAC.

Thank You



Alex Engelke

Curriculum Vitae

Alex Engelke
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EDUCATION

Grand Canyon University

Doctorate, Business Administration and Management, General

2020 – Current

Dissertation Title: "A Study to Determine the Best Predictor of Net Income in the Railroad Industry".

Doctoral level coursework in finance, marketing, management theory, human resources, business law, statistical analysis, and dissertation development.

Southern Utah University

Master of Business Administration (MBA)

Master's Capstone Project: "Federal Employers Liability Act: Implications for Supervisors and Managers".

Master's level coursework in marketing, business law, finance, entrepreneurship, human resource management, conflict/negotiation, and accounting.

University of Illinois at Chicago

Bachelor of Science – Business Management / Bachelor of Science in Marketing (Dual Degrees)

Honors Project: Develop and administer a lecture on freight railroad management to undergraduate students.

Undergraduate coursework in operations management, transportation management, business law, accounting, finance, statistics, and general business.

Northern Illinois University

Industrial Safety Coursework

Coursework in ergonomics, industrial hygiene, process safety management, transportation safety, OSHA 40-hour certification, human factors in accident prevention, design and administration of safety programs, disaster preparedness, legal aspects of safety, and risk management.

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Engelke Consulting, LLC

Owner

1999-Present

General railroad management. New railroad feasibility and planning. New rail project planning and development. Existing rail project evaluation and auditing. Shortline feasibility, development, and operation. Locomotive, railcar, and other capital asset management. Maintenance of way / track repair management. Existing railroad operations and safety auditing. Industrial spur feasibility and development. Employee safety training: engineer, conductor, maintenance of way/track, locomotive, and railcar. Safety, health, and environmental program management. Talent recruitment and development. Federal and State railroad regulation compliance. Truckload, LTL, and intermodal freight brokerage. Past projects include shortline railroad start-ups, expert services in legal matters, implementation of AI in the railroad industry, industrial development, consulting to institutional investors, and consulting to railroad shippers.

East Chicago Rail Terminal, LLC
Superintendent and General Manager
2021-Current

Founded, planned, financed, formed, manage, and direct all aspects of a start-up/new Class 3 Common Carrier railroad, transload, and SIT yard on a greenfield site located in East Chicago, Indiana. Develop and manage railroad plans for: 49 CFR Parts 213 (Track Safety Standards), 214 (Railroad Workplace Safety), 215 (Railroad Freight Car Safety Standards), 217 (Railroad Operating Rules), 218 (Railroad Operating Practices), 219 (Alcohol and Drug Policy), 225 (Accident Investigation/Reporting), 228 (Hours of Service Reporting), 229 (Locomotive Safety Standards), and 240 (Qualifications of Locomotive Engineers), Complete budgets and financial projections for all aspects of the railroad operation including staffing, operations, track, locomotives, and railcars. Write and implement all required 49 CFR 200-399 programs. Complete all FRA required reports and data requests.

San Joaquin Valley Railroad
Trainmaster
2015-2019

Managed and executed the safety and operational plan for a 400+ mile Class 3 railroad with previously systemic financial, operational, morale, organizational effectiveness, communication, safety, and performance hurdles. Interfaced with all departments (locomotive maintenance, track/MOW, etc.) to overcome these hurdles. Developed highly profitable proven marketing and operational solutions to shipper transportation needs. Applied lean management techniques to the railroad industry. Developed and managed financial plans and projections. Improved morale, communication, and overall business performance through team building, training, communication, accountability, openness, and fairness. Investigate grade crossing accidents, employee injuries, rules violations, and derailments.

Comstock Mountain Lion Railroad
General Manager
2012-2015

Upon arrival, brought a new Class 3 railroad up to industry standards with respect to financial management, operating management, asset management, and safety. Designed and spearheaded the development of track, railcar, and locomotive maintenance programs that allowed the operation to run as a "lean railroad", with an operating ratio in the low 60's. Managed the safety plan, operation, locomotive maintenance, railcar maintenance, railcar repair, and track repair/ track inspection of a 15 mile 2.5 MGT Class III railroad shipping over 15,000 railcars a year. These shipments generated in excess of \$250 million dollars for the holding company. Investigated grade crossing accidents, employee injuries, rules violations, and derailments. Managed contract negotiations with class one railroad partners, including unit train rates, individual car rates, and foreign line railcar repairs. Cut foreign-line railcar repairs by nearly 80% by instituting quality and accountability processes. Developed and managed railroad plans for: 49 CFR Parts 213 (Track Safety Standards), 214 (Railroad Workplace Safety), 215 (Railroad Freight Car Safety Standards), 217 (Railroad Operating Rules), 218 (Railroad Operating Practices), 219 (Alcohol and Drug Policy), 225 (Accident Investigation/Reporting), 228 (Hours of Service Reporting), 229 (Locomotive Safety Standards), 240 (Qualifications of Locomotive Engineers), and most other portions of 49 CFR 200-399 applicable to freight railroads.. Lead a staff of twelve (12) locomotive engineers, conductors, railcar repair, track repair, locomotive mechanics, and locomotive electricians. Completed budgets and financial projections for all aspects of the railroad operation including staffing, operations, track, locomotives, and railcars. Certified DSLE, locomotive engineer, and conductor. Completed AAR car repair billing, FRA required reports, railcar repair reporting. Instituted the use of asset management software such as ExpressYard.

Carman / Railcar Repair Person
The Andersons, Inc.
2011-2012

Inspected and repaired railcars in compliance with FRA and AAR regulations. Input inspection and repair data into ExpressYard system. Led site safety initiatives. I took the job with the sole purpose of learning a new aspect of the railroad industry, mainly railcar repair. It was enjoyable to get my boots back on the ground and learn what folks in the field were accomplishing.

Operations Manager (Rail)
Savage Services
2010-2011

Coordinated with Business Unit Managers and Directors to compile and analyze financial and operational reports. Supported Business Units with the preparation and improvement of annual business plans and budgets. Drove improvement in the Savage S7 Delivery System throughout the operation. Provided hands-on operational support. Advised and consulted models and economics of new business projects, developed proforma models, and analyzed operating plans and costs. Used and interpreted Daily Operational Business Intelligence (DOBI) reports and KPI reports and help stakeholders understand how the tools can improve day-to-day business. Spearheaded hiring activities that meet the needs of operations. Developed presentations and communications for customers and Senior Leadership.

Union Pacific Railroad
Manager of Yard Operations / Operations Manager
2005-2010

Manage employees and transportation operations. Work with transportation crews in the field to ensure safety and operational compliance. Analyze data to improve yard and road operations, with a focus on providing excellent service to customers. Interact with executives and other leadership on a regular basis to address critical business needs. Monitor resources to ensure efficient operations in a safe environment. Coordinate railroad operations with other UP departments (engineering, mechanical, etc.). Investigate, report, and reduce safety incidents. Conduct regular employee performance evaluations.

RESEARCH INTERESTS

- Railroad management theory
- Best practices in railroad management
- Railroad safety data analysis
- Evolution of railroad laws, acts, and regulations
- Analysis of complex railroad track ownership and lease agreements.
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CERTIFICATIONS AND TRAINING

- Designated Supervisor of Locomotive Engineers
- Track Inspector (49 CFR Part 213) up to and including FRA Class 2 Track
- Certified Locomotive Engineer
- Certified Conductor (Expires 08/2024)
- Railroad Roadway Worker Protection and On-Track Safety Certification
- Railcar Repair Person / Carman / Inspector
- Railroad Derailment Investigation Course
- Designated Supervisor of Remotely Controlled Locomotives (Past)

HONORS, AWARDS, AND MEMBERSHIPS

Member, National Association of Rail Shippers

Member, Chicago Traffic Club

Honorable Mention, Railway Age 2022 Readers' Most Influential Leaders - Railway Age Magazine
Apr 2022

Graduated with Honors (Cum Laude) - University of Illinois at Chicago