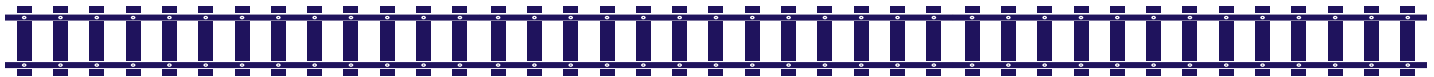


# YEAR IN REVIEW | 2023



## *National Railway Day 2023*

National Railway Day 2023 marked a momentous occasion with insights from distinguished speakers like Mario Péroquin of VIA Rail and Martin Imbleau from VIA HFR – VIA TGF Inc.

The conference embraced themes of safety, innovation, and community engagement, reflecting the industry's commitment to progress.

During the 4th Annual Awards Dinner, CARS honored the four award recipients:

1. Lifetime Achievement Award:
  - Randy Pocrnick, President Leasing, Procor Limited
2. Diversity Award:
  - The Greenbrier Companies
3. Innovation Award:
  - Holland LP
4. Safety Award:
  - Veronneau Solutions

Their outstanding contributions were celebrated, underlining the railway community's dedication to excellence. The event showcased advancements, fostering dialogue among over 200 attendees and setting the stage for future collaboration.

## *CARS' Dynamic Events in 2023*

In 2023, the Canadian Association of Railway Suppliers (CARS) organized a series of impactful events.

The year kicked off with the CN | CARS Breakfast on February 3rd in Montreal, featuring guest speakers from CN and attracting 110 members. Later that day the Montreal Supplier Suite provided a networking opportunity for over 150 attendees on the same day. To finish off the day, Sylvia Newell gave the toast to the Railways on behalf of Suppliers during the Canadian Railway Club Annual Gala Dinner.

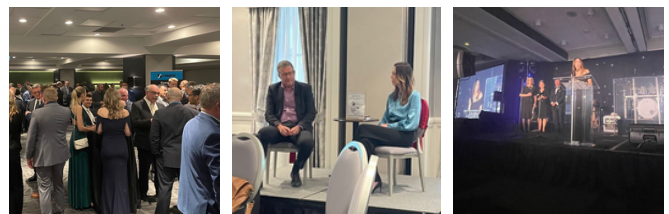
The Metrolinx | CARS Luncheon took place in Toronto, where Phill Verster, CEO of Metrolinx, engaged in a fireside chat with Sylvia Newell, CARS President, drawing over 100 CARS members.

The CPKC | CARS Luncheon in Calgary on July 26th, featuring insights from Matt Foot of CPKC, captivated an exclusive group of 65 members.

The CARS 9th Annual Golf Tournament on August 29th in Beaconsfield, Quebec, witnessed the participation of 140 golfers and raised over \$1,700 for Freedom Dog Rescue.

Sylvia Newell, CARS President, was part of the "International Collaboration to Support a Thriving Rail Supply Chain" panel at the RSI Education Conference during the Railway Interchange in Indianapolis, IN on October 3rd.

The year's events concluded with the Toronto Supplier Suite, hosting more than 180 participants for pre-dinner networking on December 1st at the Fairmont Royal York Hotel.



## Government Relations Activities

Amidst Canada's grappling with inflation, the strain in Indian-Canadian relations leading to a pause in the Free Trade Agreement, Chinese interference in domestic elections, elevated interest rates, and widespread economic challenges, including those stemming from the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict and the recent Middle East turmoil, the concerns intensify.

The economic repercussions of climate change, encompassing damage and destruction, have played a role in preventing a swift return to normalcy. Instead, the national economy remains in a state of unease, heightening stress levels for managers in the manufacturing industries.



## Engagement with MPs: Advocacy & Letter Writing

The CARS GR Staff's initiative to connect with ministers at the federal, provincial, and municipal levels was showcased in the extensive efforts to engage appropriate government officials in addressing crucial issues for CARS members.

The outcomes of our telephone and letter-writing campaign are very exciting resulting in over 11 different meetings, both in person and virtually, taking place throughout the year.

Credit is due to our U.S. experts, the Rail Security Alliance (RSA), for their unwavering support and valuable contributions to the CARS GR strategy, including their participation in visits to MPs and ministers in Ottawa. Their expert briefings on procurement and the risks associated with dealing with a state-backed entity that disregards market economic conditions have been instrumental.

Thank you, Frank Bognar, for your outstanding dedication as Corporate and Government Affairs at CARS. Congratulations on your well-deserved retirement. Your passion will be greatly missed.



## Progress in Canadian Free Trade Negotiations

Global Affairs achieved a milestone last year by conducting a record number of negotiation sessions with potential trade partners, including the U.K. and ASEAN countries.

The most advanced discussions are presently underway with the U.K., aiming to finalize a Free Trade Agreement deal by the end of March 2024. This is unsurprising given the U.K.'s historical position as Canada's third-largest foreign trade partner.

However, negotiations with other potential trade allies are progressing more slowly. Briefers for ASEAN organizations have been reserved in sharing specific details, and negotiators are navigating cultural and political differences to ensure friendly and fruitful discussions.

The challenges involve providing in-depth explanations and coordination on various chapters, aligning with specific countries' regulations related to labor laws, human rights, and more, as seen in established agreements like CUSMA.



In 2023, CARS Government Relations actively engaged with policymakers on crucial issues affecting the rail industry.

Members interested in contributing to this impactful work are encouraged to reach out to the team at [info@railwaysuppliers.ca](mailto:info@railwaysuppliers.ca). Your involvement makes a difference in shaping the future of rail in Canada!

## CARS' Lobbying Goals & Challenges

CARS GR staff strategically identified three key lobbying areas crucial for advancing the association's interests:

1. Briefings on CRRG Activities: Addressing political leaders, CARS aims to highlight potential threats posed by CRRG activities in critical transportation sectors.
2. Capital Cost Allowance (CCA) Disparity: CARS seeks to rectify the substantial differences in CCA rates between Canada and the U.S., impacting financial competitiveness and encouraging the migration of firms. The significant advantage of a 30% U.S. rate compared to Canada's 15% for freight and tanker car depreciation requires urgent attention.
3. Centres of Excellence (CoE): CARS envisions CoEs offering specialized guidance for the establishment of a national agency, assisting municipalities in developing optimal transit systems. Historical evidence supports the need for expert input over well-intentioned political decisions, especially in achieving affordable, efficient, and environmentally friendly public transit.

Despite challenges in contacting the Finance Ministry, CARS remains committed to addressing CCA issues through letters and other means. Additionally, the initiative to establish a CoE for effective transit planning and execution is underscored by the imperative to reduce carbon footprints and enhance urban mobility.

## Thank you!

Dear CARS Members, as 2023 draws to a close, we extend heartfelt thanks for being an integral part of this incredible journey. Your participation in our events, insightful contributions, and unwavering support have fueled the success of CARS throughout the year.

Together, we've achieved milestones, forged connections, and strengthened the rail industry. Your dedication is the driving force behind our accomplishments. As we look forward to the opportunities of the coming year, we express sincere gratitude for your continued commitment.

Wishing you joy, prosperity, and a wonderful holiday season. Here's to another year of collaboration and success!

The CARS Team