

# Rail officials in USA and Europe set up task force to help Ukraine

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Rail sector officials from Europe and the USA have banded together to help coordinate technical, mechanical, and policy support for Ukrainian freight and passenger companies.

The multinational “Support Ukraine Rail Task Force” sees Jolene Molitoris, former administrator of the US Federal Railroad Administration, joined by Nick Brooks, secretary general of the Alliance of Rail New Entrants in Europe (ALLRAIL); Ray Chambers, president of the American Association for Innovative Passenger Rail Operations (AIPRO) and Robert VanderClute, former Senior Vice President of the Association of American Railroads (AAR) and former Vice Chair of UIC.

An early objective will be to provide a forum for governmental organisations and passenger and freight rail associations to discuss Russia’s aggressive invasion of Ukraine and the most effective ways in which to support the Ukrainian rail sector.

“We are horrified by the unprovoked invasion of a free and independent country,” said Jolene Molitoris. “The Task Force will coordinate efforts to ensure the Ukrainian rail network has the immediate technical support to continue in service. In the near term, the Task Force will work with lawmakers and regulators to

provide ongoing assistance.”

The taskforce said there needs to be more trains picking up refugees from the Ukrainian border and the other changeover hubs, such as Warsaw, Prague, Vienna and Frankfurt (Oder). Furthermore, contracts to evacuate civilians should be handed out to all rail operators with available rolling stock to do what they can to get people moved westwards.

The Task Force will be meeting with stakeholders in Europe and the United States to discuss these issues. It will also expand its outreach to other industry leaders to further coordinate efforts.