

## February Forums help manufacturers build next generation railroads.

**January 30, 2012** - Next Generation Rail Supply Chain Connectivity Forums - February 8 in Sacramento, CA and February 14 in Chicago, IL - will help U.S. manufacturers prepare for upcoming opportunities to become suppliers for next generation of railcars and locomotives. By bringing together large railcar builders and OEMs with smaller, capable, and interested U.S. manufacturers, forms will help latter learn what products are needed and what investments should be considered when entering rail industry.

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Original Press release

### **National Institute of Standards & Technology**

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## February Forums Help Manufacturers Get on Track to Build Next Generation Rail

The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) and the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) will host two forums in February 2012 to help U.S. manufacturers prepare for upcoming opportunities to become suppliers for the next generation of railcars and locomotives. The first forum will be held Feb. 8 in Sacramento, Calif., and the second will be Feb. 14 in Chicago.

The Next Generation Rail Supply Chain Connectivity Forums will bring together large railcar builders and original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) with smaller, capable and interested U.S. manufacturers. Smaller manufacturers will have the chance to learn what products are needed and what investments they should consider when entering the rail industry. The idea is to identify a broader domestic supply base that includes both traditional and non-traditional rail suppliers, with the goal of 100 percent domestic content in railcars that will be funded by state and federal dollars.

NIST will help coordinate the meetings through its Hollings Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP), a nationwide network of centers that work with small and mid-sized U.S. manufacturers to help them create and retain jobs, increase profits, and save time and money. "Through these forums, U.S. manufacturers will learn more about concrete opportunities that can grow and diversify their business into this exciting emerging market," says Roger Kilmer, director of NIST MEP. The forums are the outgrowth of a partnership formed in October 2011 between the U.S. Department of Commerce and DOT to join efforts in promoting the development of a domestic supply base to support transportation in the United States. (See the Commerce Department's Oct. 18, 2011, news announcement, "Commerce and Transportation Departments Forge Partnership to Boost Domestic Manufacturing Across America" at <http://www.commerce.gov/blog/2011/10/18/commerce-and-transportation-departments-forge-partnership-boost-domestic-manufacturi.>)

Each one-day forum will include representatives from federal and state agencies, local economic development agencies, rail service operators, rail car builders and associated OEMs, and U.S. manufacturers who can potentially be suppliers.

For the Sacramento event, NIST MEP and DOT are partnering with California MEP affiliates Manex and California Manufacturing Technology Center (CMTC). The Illinois MEP affiliate Illinois Manufacturing Extension Center (IMEC) is a partner for the Chicago event.

An initial national webinar on Dec. 15, 2011, attracted more than 150 attendees and provided an opportunity for the large car builders and OEMs to introduce themselves to manufacturers who currently serve as rail suppliers, as well as those who do not, but are interested in the opportunity.

Visit [www.nist.gov/mep/rail.cfm](http://www.nist.gov/mep/rail.cfm) to learn more about the Next Generation Rail Supply Chain Connectivity Initiative, to register for upcoming forums, and to access the recorded audio and slides from the December webinar.

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