



The RLPSA Dispatch: May 2026

2026 Conference Recap



The 2026 RLPSA Annual Conference brought together restaurant loss prevention, safety, and risk professionals for three action-packed days in Allen, Texas. Attendees kicked off the event with an engaging pre-conference workshop on incident response and litigation, followed by a welcome reception that set the tone for a week of meaningful connection. Monday's keynote with Clint Emerson challenged attendees to simplify their approach to crisis management, while powerful general sessions and concurrent breakouts tackled timely topics including AI in restaurant security, social media risk, nuclear verdicts, internal theft, worker's compensation, OSHA heat stress compliance, fire safety, and more. Tuesday closed out with an insightful session on distinguishing angry versus dangerous behavior, followed by our awards ceremony and a festive evening networking reception at Vaqueros Texas Bar-B-Q. It was an incredible gathering of some of the brightest minds in the industry, and we are so grateful to everyone who attended, presented, and contributed to making this event a success. We hope to see you next year in August 2027 in Arizona!

2026 Award Winners

New this year, RLPSA introduced an excellence recognition program at our Annual Conference to honor members who go above and beyond in their commitment to the organization. The Board of Directors proudly recognized

two inaugural recipients: Brian Badillo of Domino's, for his dedicated participation in working groups and chapter calls, and Basia Pietrawska of IntelFusion Partners, for her board leadership and impactful contributions to the Crisis Planning Working Group. Congratulations to both, your efforts are helping shape the future of RLPSA!



CONNECT Update

We are still riding the incredible momentum from our massively successful 2026 Conference in March, and we want to make sure every single RLPSA event delivers that exact same level of value and energy!

We've heard from many of you that June is a notoriously difficult travel month. To give everyone a little more breathing room after our spring conference—and to ensure our next gathering is as impactful as possible—we have decided to reschedule our June CONNECT event.

We are already hard at work putting together an amazing lineup of topics and speakers!

Stay tuned for exciting updates and new dates for our upcoming CONNECT events in **August, November, and March**.

If you have any questions in the meantime, please feel free to reach out to us at info@rlpsa.com. We can't wait to see you all again soon!

RLPSA Board Transitions

Meet our new board members!



Ian Hartman

Ian Hartman brings 26 years of experience in Retail Loss Prevention and Security, including 23 years in direct leadership roles. Throughout his career, he has championed a culture built on a “want to” rather than a “have to” mindset—empowering teams to take ownership of loss reduction and safety initiatives through engagement, partnership, and shared purpose. Ian is passionate about maximizing organizational impact by strengthening commitment and awareness, all grounded in collaboration and trust. He leads by example, striving to build best-in-class departments that prioritize respect, diversity, and professional growth. A firm believer that top Loss Prevention professionals operate both within and beyond traditional silos, Ian emphasizes the importance of serving as a true strategic partner—aligning departmental goals with the broader mission and vision of the organization.



Ruben Olivas

Ruben J Olivas has 25 years' Loss Prevention and Asset Protection experience. His career started in the retail industry with Kmart Corporation in El Paso, TX. In 2010, he moved to San Antonio, TX , joined the Whataburger family as an AP Manager and supported efforts across the 14-state footprint. In April 2022, Ruben was promoted to AP Director and now helps support the entire AP team, brand wide AP strategy now in a 17-state footprint. As part of the AP team Ruben focuses on keeping our family members, brand health, and company assets protected. The AP team works directly with unit leadership on safety/loss prevention policies and best practices, with above unit leadership as a consultant on overall business trends that require attention and are connected 24/7. Ruben is known for his proactive leadership and commitment to creating safe environments while supporting restaurant teams and protecting the Whataburger brand. Ruben was awarded Field Director of the year in 2023 and 2025. Ask Ruben what his highest priority is, and you will hear, “faith, his four beautiful girls and his family come first!”

Get To Know the Current RLPSA Board!

The graphic features a dark blue background with a geometric pattern of light blue and green shapes. At the top, the text "2026-2027 Board of Directors" is centered in white. Below this, there are two rows of circular headshots. Each headshot is accompanied by the name of the board member, their title, and their current or former employer. The RLPSA logo is located in the bottom right corner of the graphic.

2026-2027 Board of Directors

Heather Hearn
President
Supervisor of E-Commerce Fraud & Physical Security, Wawa, Inc.

Thomas Stein
Vice President
Director, Asset Protection & Safety, Paradies Lagardère

Basia Pietrawska
Secretary
Senior Industry Advisor, Lowers & Associates
Founder & CEO, IntelFusion Partners

Lyndon Richardson
Treasurer Emeritus
Chief Risk Officer, Whataburger

Ruben Olivas
Director of Asset Protection, Whataburger

Rocco Prate
Loss Prevention & Global Security, Wendy's

Daniel Thomas
US Security Manager, McDonald's Corporation

John Kasproicz
Corporate Security Manager, Darden Restaurants

Paig Parish
Vice President of Business Development, Blue Dot Safes

Ian Hartman
Director of Loss Prevention, Domino's Pizza LLC

RLPSA

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Heather Hearn | President

Supervisor of E-Commerce Fraud & Physical Security, Wawa, Inc.

Thomas Stein | Vice President

Director, Asset Protection & Safety, Paradies Lagardère

Basia Pietrawska | Secretary

Founder and CEO, IntelFusion Partners

Lyndon Richardson | Treasurer Emeritus

Chief Risk Officer, Whataburger

Rocco Prate

Loss Prevention and Global Security, Wendy's Company

Daniel Thomas

US Security Manager, McDonald's Corporation

John Kasproicz

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Ruben Olivas

Director of Asset Protection, Whataburger

Ian Hartman

Director of Loss Prevention, Domino's Pizza LLC

Paig Parish

VP of Business Development, Blue Dot Safes



Loss Prevention Research Council (LPRC) Announces Strategic Partnership with RLPSA

GAINESVILLE, Fla. — May 18, 2026 — The Loss Prevention Research Council (LPRC) is proud to announce a new strategic partnership with the Restaurant Loss Prevention & Security Association (RLPSA), bringing together two leading organizations committed to advancing safety, security, and loss prevention across retail and restaurant environments.

By aligning efforts, LPRC and RLPSA aim to strengthen connections between professionals facing many of the same operational and security challenges across today's evolving consumer environments.

Together, the organizations will work to provide enhanced educational programming, thought leadership opportunities, collaborative research initiatives, and increased engagement between retail and restaurant industry professionals.

Both organizations can expect new opportunities to participate in joint events, access cross-industry perspectives, and engage in conversations focused on emerging trends, technologies, and evidence-based strategies that improve safety and operational resilience.

“This partnership reflects the growing importance of collaboration across industries, and in local real-world retail-restaurant ecosystems,” said Read Hayes, PhD, Executive Director and Founder of the LPRC. “Retail and restaurant organizations are navigating many similar risks and challenges, and by working together, we can create greater opportunities for learning, innovation, and meaningful impact for our members.”

The strategic relationship will also support stronger networking and visibility opportunities for solution providers, practitioners, and industry leaders participating within both organizations' communities.

RLPSA President Heather Hearn added, “We are excited to partner with the LPRC to further connect our members with valuable research, expertise, and industry collaboration opportunities. This partnership helps expand the conversation around safety and loss prevention while creating additional value for both communities.”

The collaboration represents a continued commitment from both organizations to foster innovation, encourage knowledge sharing, and support professionals working to create safer environments across retail and restaurant industries. For more information about the Loss Prevention Research Council, visit <https://lpresearch.org>.

About the Loss Prevention Research Council (LPRC)

The Loss Prevention Research Council is a worldwide network of retailers, solution partners, law enforcement professionals, and academic experts working together to reduce theft, fraud, and violence through research-driven strategies and innovation. LPRC conducts real-world research and collaborates with industry leaders to develop evidence-based solutions that improve safety, security, and profitability.

Who To Contact

Questions? Reach out to us at info@rlpsa.org

Alternatively, you can contact our Executive Staff for more specific questions:

Emily Culella

Executive Director

Jessica Livas

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Karen Howe

Event Manager

Alan Jeemon

Accountant

Mason Deyo

Coordinator

Jack Paley

Social Media Coordinator

Bridget Pistorius

Event Coordinator

Industry Updates



Stay informed with industry news and insights that professionals in food safety, security, and loss prevention are finding valuable in their day-to-day careers.

Recent topics include “The Biggest News in Loss Prevention: May 2–8,” reflections on “COVID: 5 Years Later,” and strategies for reducing food waste and protecting restaurant margins through improved perishable inventory visibility.

May 2026 Articles

- [The Biggest News in Loss Prevention: May 2 – 8](#)
- [COVID: 5 Years Later](#)
- [How Perishable Inventory Visibility Reduces Food Loss and Protects Restaurant Margins](#)
- [Why Smart QSR Brands Are Turning Food Safety Into a Growth Strategy](#)

Member Job Board

Are you looking to fill a role at your company, or hoping to connect with the talented professionals right here in our industry? Introducing RLPSA's new members-only Job Board! This exclusive resource allows members to post open positions, browse opportunities, and share roles directly with a network of trusted peers, making it easier than ever to find the right fit. Log in today to explore this exciting new member benefit!

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE RLPSA JOB BOARD](#)

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