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Press Release

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[MTA Headquarters](#)

IMMEDIATE

MTA Honored For Services To Visually Impaired Customers

American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) has announced that it will present a 1997 ³Access Award² to the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) in recognition of its contributions toward improving access to resources, services and information for blind and visually impaired customers.

In announcing the selection, AFB President Carl Augusto noted that the MTA was singled out for its ³numerous efforts to enhance accessibility of the New York metropolitan transit system and for heightening disability awareness among its staff.²

MTA Chairman, E. Virgil Conway said ³I am pleased to accept this award on behalf of the dedicated and hard working professionals throughout the MTA family of agencies. The innovative services we have introduced for our blind and visually impaired customers helps make our transit system easier to navigate and brings us closer to reaching our goal of true accessibility and independence for disabled people.²

Among the MTA's accomplishments cited by AFB are:

- the introduction of a series of raisedline, Braille and large print strip maps for most subway lines, large overview maps of each borough's subway lines and maps of four major subway stations.
- the installation of the prototype of an interactive ³talking directional kiosk² at Penn Station, to help guide thousands of visually impaired customers to the Long Island Rail Road, subway lines, Amtrak and New Jersey Transit, as well as restrooms, police facilities and other essential services in the Penn Station complex.
- the installation of detectable warning strips at 37 subway stations throughout the city and on many Long Island Rail Road and MetroNorth Railroad station platforms.
- the installation of Braille and large text signs in 24 subway stations throughout the five boroughs.
- booklets, audio tapes and Braille material to assist customers in getting instructions for using ticket vending machines on the commuter railroads.
- the introduction of automated telephone systems for schedule, fare and travel information for people with disabilities.
- the installation of elevators and/or ramps at dozens of key subway and commuter rail stations.
- the introduction of the Reduced Fare MetroCard to provide independent access to NYC Transit subways and buses at discounted fares without having to wait on line to buy tokens for each trip.
- The award will be presented during a ceremony at the Washington Marriott Hotel in Washington, DC on Saturday, March 8th. The award will be accepted on behalf of the MTA by Douglas Sussman, Deputy Director of Government and Community Relations.