



MTA Press Releases

[Select Language](#) | ▼

Press Release

February 11, 1998

[MTA Headquarters](#)

IMMEDIATE

Donald N. Nelson To Leave As President Of MTA Metro-North Railroad

MTA Chairman E. Virgil Conway today announced that Donald N. Nelson, President of MTA Metro-North Railroad, has resigned from his post effective March 5 and will return to private industry.

Chairman Conway said, "Don laid the foundation on which Metro-North's success was built. By focusing the company's efforts on the basics, such as operating and fiscal performance, and customer service, he took the railroad to a first class service. He will be missed."

As the railroad's first Vice President of Operations, Mr. Nelson played a pivotal role in Metro-North's creation in 1983. He was named the railroad's president in 1991. During his fifteen years of leadership, Metro-North was transformed from one of the lowest rated commuter railroads in the nation to one of the best, with a record on-time performance of 96.5 in 1997. Metro-North's on-time performance currently stands at 98.1, and its annual ridership has grown to a record 62.6 million.

"It's been a great run, working with great people," said Mr. Nelson, who began his career 44 years ago as a brakeman. "Together we accomplished a lot. I leave the railroad in good hands, and am confident that our customers will continue to enjoy the high level of service they have come to expect."

Nelson crafted policies that analyzed how the railroad conducted its day-to-day business. The guidelines he implemented dramatically cut expenses, controlled costs, and reduced reliance on subsidies. The result of his efforts was reflected in last year's fare/operating ratio, the amount of expenses covered by fares collected. At 62.1 percent, it is the best of any commuter railroad in the United States.

Mr. Nelson also oversaw the railroad's massive \$2.6 billion capital program, which funded improvements to Metro-North's infrastructure, including the right-of-way, shops, and rolling stock. As Metro-North entered its second decade of existence, Mr. Nelson charted a new course for the railroad, stressing excellent customer service and efficient business processes.