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Press Release

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LIRR

IMMEDIATE

New LIRR Schedules In Effect June 16; Major Switch And Signal Project Impacts Customers This Summer

New Technology Will Bring A Smoother Ride And Fewer Maintenance-Related Track Outages In Critical Area Of Railroad

On June 16, new MTA Long Island Rail Road schedules take effect to allow work to be performed on this summer's major Queens Interlocking Switch and Signal Improvement project - upgrading the LIRR's switch technology at a critical track point between Queens Village and Bellerose. This work will involve significant schedule changes while the project is underway, including AM and PM Peak train cancellations on the Hempstead, Port Jefferson and Ronkonkoma branches - and schedule adjustments throughout the system.

"By installing state-of-the-art technology and switches in this essential section of the Railroad, our customers will enjoy a smoother ride and fewer maintenance-related track outages," said LIRR President Williams. "During construction, we ask for our customers' patience and for them to stay alert to the schedule changes."

During the work, the LIRR wants to make sure that all of our customers - our partners in improving the MTA system - are kept abreast of the status of the work and how it will improve the commute in the future. Mounting a major public information campaign to ensure LIRR customers are prepared for the summer timetable changes made necessary by the project, the LIRR has issued a new brochure and video about the upcoming Queens Interlocking improvement program.

The eight-page brochure describes the impact for customers on all branches. It is being distributed on trains and will remain available at stations and terminals throughout the project, which is scheduled for completion on September 1.

The three and a half minute video, produced in-house by the LIRR, can be seen on the Railroad's website www.mta.info/lirr. It can also be viewed on monitors in the waiting rooms at Penn Station, Hicksville, Babylon, Ronkonkoma and Huntington.

The upgrade of the Queens Interlocking will replace the current signal system with microprocessor technology and replace the current track switches with high-speed crossovers at a cost of \$60.4 million. Schedule changes are necessary because Queens Interlocking is located where the busy Main Line merges with the Hempstead Branch.

There will be AM and PM Peak train cancellations on the Hempstead, Port Jefferson and Ronkonkoma branches as well as other peak and off-peak schedule adjustments throughout the system. Reverse peak customers on the Hempstead Branch will be provided with buses between Queens Village and Hempstead in the AM and between Hempstead and Bellerose to Jamaica in the PM. New timetables dated June 16 include these changes and are available at LIRR terminals and stations and on the LIRR's website at www.mta.info/lirr.

The project will begin and end with two major weekends of service changes. The first will be on the Hempstead Branch on the weekend of June 21-22. During this weekend, there will be a 48-hour shutdown of the Hempstead Branch with buses replacing trains between Hempstead and Jamaica. A second 48-hour shutdown will occur on the weekend of Saturday, August 23, and Sunday, August 24, when work will require the shutdown of the entire Main Line with buses replacing trains between Jamaica and Mineola - affecting the Hempstead, Oyster Bay and Port Jefferson Branches. The work on this weekend will also affect the Ronkonkoma Branch.

In addition to the new brochure and video, the LIRR's outreach campaign includes press advisories, letters to local public officials, newspaper ads, coverage in "TrainTalk," the Railroad's customer newsletter, and regular station announcements, message board updates and customer e-mails.

"I want to thank our customers in advance for their patience and understanding while we complete this important project," Williams added. "The LIRR - already the largest commuter railroad in North America - is striving to be the best as well and is committed to completing this work as safely and quickly as possible while limiting its impact on your commute and the communities we serve."

For additional travel information, customers can contact the LIRR's 24-hour Travel Information Center in Suffolk County at 631-231-LIRR, in Nassau County at 516-822-LIRR or in New York City at 718-217-LIRR. The Travel Information Center's TDD telephone number for the hearing impaired is 718-558-3022. Customers can also consult the LIRR's website at www.mta.info/lirr.