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Press Release

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LIRR

IMMEDIATE

MTA LIRR Track Program Ahead of Schedule

--23 GRADE CROSSINGS REPLACED ACROSS LONG ISLAND
--79 MILES OF TRACK RESURFACED; 12 SWITCHES AND 35,000 WOOD TIES REPLACED

As part of an ongoing effort to assure a smooth and safe ride, the MTA Long Island Rail Road will have completed 23 grade crossing replacement projects across Nassau, Suffolk and Queens counties by month's end, LIRR President Helena Williams announced today.

In addition, the LIRR replaced 12 switches, resurfaced 79 miles of track and replaced 35,000 wood ties as part of its 2008 track program, which is the LIRR's largest annual capital expenditure. The 2008 Track Program totaled \$52 million and is operating ahead of schedule, Williams said.

"Keeping our 701 miles of track in a state of good repair requires constant vigilance, dedication and investment of time, labor and funding," Williams said. "Refurbishing grade crossings—where local roads meet the LIRR—is particularly important for local communities, motorists and LIRR customers."

"Our track, signal, power and communication crews have done an outstanding job this year," Williams added. "They are the unsung heroes of the LIRR. The work they do—tie and switch replacement and track resurfacing—is often done in off hours, behind the scenes. Most of our commuters are unaware of this work. But it is vital to the smooth and safe operation of the LIRR."

LIRR Engineering (Track, Signal, Power & Communications) Department employees maintain 701 miles of track structure in a state of good repair through cyclical replacement. The LIRR is the busiest commuter railroad in North American, operating around-the-clock.

The 2007 Track Program was awarded the Excellence in Construction Performance Award by the MTA. Major accomplishments for this year's program have surpassed original goals. Following are major areas covered in the 2008 Annual Track Program:

Asset	Goal	Actual	System Totals
Wood Ties (replacement)	29,700	35,000	1.2 million
Switches (replacement)	12	12	593
Grade crossings (replace)	22	23	451
Track Surfacing	49 miles	79 miles	701 miles

Most track ties - the basic support for running rail - are wood, but the LIRR in recent years has installed longer lasting concrete track ties in more heavily traveled areas.

Since trains do not have steering wheels, switches act as direction changers, allowing trains to move to other tracks, and in some cases to other branches. Proper switch maintenance allows quick, safe train movement and a smooth ride for customers. The efficient movement of the LIRR's more than 730 daily passenger trains would not be possible without properly functioning switches.

Track surfacing helps to maintain track alignment as well as track ties and the running rail itself, ensuring a comfortable ride. Part of the track surfacing process includes thermite welding which joins rail ends together, eliminates the track joint, and providing a smooth ride along with reduced maintenance.

The LIRR's regular grade crossing rehabilitation program also is an important part of our Annual Track Program. It maintains this vital interface, assuring safe, smooth rail-highway traffic movement. Grade crossing replacement is a multi-step process that makes the meeting of "two different worlds" smooth and safe when complete. After appropriate highway and rail traffic detours are in place, the old highway and rail surface (tracks and track materials) are removed. New concrete track ties, ballast (stone) and concrete track panels with built-in tracks and, in some locations, rubber track panels are installed on the track crossing area. Asphalt is then applied to smooth over the roadway. The main challenge in this process is to build up the roadway so that it's flush with the top of the rails, but to leave a groove for the train's wheels. In addition, following completion of crossing replacement work, the grade crossing protection systems (bells, lights, gates) are tested to ensure that they are operating as they should.

Work is underway to finalize the \$53.1 million 2009 Track Program. The Annual Track Program is part of the MTA LIRR's five-year capital plan (2005-2009) and funds 158 LIRR employees covering various job titles, including track workers, equipment operators, mechanics, electricians, and communications & signal workers.

Attached electronically are photos of some LIRR Track Program elements including mechanized equipment used as part of the process:



Renovated Glen St., Glen Cove, grade crossing



Installation of concrete crossing panel



Typical concrete track panel used in all crossing rehabilitations



Tripp Machine – Purchased in 2005 removes and installs ties



Rehabilitated Wood Switch with New Timbers/Steel



Stone ballast being dumped in preparation of surfacing



Welding of rail joint in process



High production Unimat Tamper – lifts and aligns track



Stabilizer locks in stone ballast with vibration



Ballast Distribution System – picks up excess stone

MTA LIRR Track Program 2008

Grade Crossing Replacements

LIRR Crossing Name	Branch	Location	Description
Railroad Avenue	Montauk	Sayville	Track 1
Railroad Avenue	Montauk	Sayville	Track 2
Rider Avenue	Montauk	Patchogue	Track 1
Rider Ave. Siding	Montauk	Patchogue	Siding

Station Road	Montauk	Bellport	Track 1
Station Rd. Siding	Montauk	Bellport	Siding
Bay Pointe Road	Montauk	Moriches	Single track
New Highway	Central	East Farmingdale	Single track
Windmill Lane	Port Jefferson	Greenlawn	Single track
Broadway	Port Jefferson	Greenlawn	Track 1
Broadway	Port Jefferson	Greenlawn	Track 2
Cuba Hill Road	Port Jefferson	Greenlawn	Single track
Lawrence Aviation	Port Jefferson	Port Jefferson	Single track
Taylor Avenue	Port Jefferson	Greenlawn	Single track
Glen Street	Oyster Bay	Glen Cove	Track 1
Glen Street	Oyster Bay	Glen Cove	Track 2
Elm Street	Oyster Bay	Glen Cove	Track 1
Elm Street	Oyster Bay	Glen Cove	Track 2
Glen Head Road	Oyster Bay	Glen Head	Track 1
Glen Head Road	Oyster Bay	Glen Head	Track 2
Larabee Avenue	Oyster Bay	Oyster Bay	Single track
Borden Avenue	Main Line	Long Island City	Track 1
Borden Avenue	Main Line	Long Island City	Track 2