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IMMEDIATE

MTA Staten Island Railway Ridership Figures Show Impressive Gains for 2008

Last year, MTA Staten Island Railway (SIR) saw an impressive gain in ridership attributable to a series of factors, including the increase of p.m. rush hour express service and the unprecedented jump in gasoline prices which persuaded many commuters to leave their cars at home.

From 2007, annual ridership climbed 6.1% to 4.38 million in 2008 while the average number of customers using SIR on an average weekday rose 5.1% to 15,713.

"We greet these ridership figures with great enthusiasm," said SIR General Manager John Gaul, who noted that there was no single reason for the increase. "There appear to be several contributing factors for the jump in usage, but we believe one of the leading reasons was our decision to extend the span of p.m. rush-hour express service from 6:31 to 7:50 p.m. at the end of 2007."

Other reasons that commuters chose to use the line, which runs from the St. George Ferry Terminal to Tottenville, included the increase in gasoline prices and roadwork on the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge.

Gaul said that he and his staff will continue to work to make commuting on SIR more attractive to an even greater number of riders, including the refurbishing of the car fleet and continued cooperation with New York City Department of Transportation in creating additional Park-&-Ride facilities.