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Press Release

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LIRR

IMMEDIATE

LIRR Expects Normal Weekday Service Monday Following Successful Completion of Weekend Switch & Signal Work

State-of-the-Art Computerized Centralized Signal and Switch Control System installed at busy Jamaica Station Complex

MTA Long Island Rail Road customers should expect normal weekday service Monday following the successful weekend testing of a new computerized switch and signal control system at Jamaica Station.

The new state-of-the-art, microprocessor-based control system replaces three antiquated signal towers just east and west of Jamaica Station, offering greater flexibility for train movement through the Jamaica complex, better backup systems and more reliability for LIRR customers. As of late Sunday afternoon, more than 95 percent of the testing scheduled for the final cutover to the new system had been completed, paving the way for normal Monday AM rush hour service.

"The successful completion of this weekend's testing signals a new era of switch control for the LIRR at a critical junction. It means better reliability for our customers," said LIRR President Helena E. Williams. "Once again, we greatly appreciate the cooperation and understanding of customers who traveled the LIRR in the face of significantly reduced train service into and out of New York City in this the second, and final, weekend of testing to successfully cutover to our new signal and switch control system. Customers heeded our advice about planning their trips before heading out and that paved the way for us to perform our battery of federally-mandated tests at Jamaica to bring this 21st century technology to one of the busiest rail hubs in the nation."

"I would also recognize the hundreds of dedicated, professional LIRR employees who worked around the clock on Saturday and Sunday to complete this critical task," Williams added. "In addition to the testing being performed, hundreds of employees were deployed throughout the LIRR system helping customers navigate the modified schedule this weekend."

Trains from 10 of the LIRR's 11 branches travel through Jamaica each day with weekday ridership exceeding 200,000 customers.

According to westbound customer counts conducted between 6 AM and Noon, LIRR ridership on Saturday was down about 45 percent compared to a normal Saturday during this period, while ridership on the Port Washington branch - the only one not impacted by the weekend work and running with added AM westbound and PM eastbound service - increased by about 63 percent. On Sunday for this same 6 AM to Noon period for westbound travel, ridership was about 21 percent lower than a regular Sunday, with a 104 percent increase on the Port Washington Branch, which translated into approximately 2,200 additional customers.

The \$56 million Jamaica modernization project upgraded the control of LIRR's switches and signals at Jamaica Station from electro-mechanical to state-of-the-art computerized microprocessor technology. The new more reliable system will increase operational flexibility for the large volume of trains that pass through this area, helping to reduce customer delays. The new system also will provide redundant signal control systems and will allow for quicker recovery time in the event of a power surge, or lightning storm or fire-related service disruption. The new system consolidates three tower operations into one, centralized control facility at Jamaica.

Right-of-Way (ROW) Clean-up at Jamaica

With the reduced train movement through Jamaica Station during this second cutover weekend, the LIRR used this time to perform right-of-way (ROW) clean-up in the area surrounding Jay Tower (to the west of Jamaica). Throughout the day Saturday, LIRR track crews, used specialized track equipment, heavy machinery, dumpsters, rakes and other tools to perform a clean-up of the Jamaica Station tracks and surrounding areas in Jamaica. A total of 101.75 cubic yards of debris and 79 scrap railroad ties were removed in the clean-up effort.

During the first cutover weekend, October 23-24, in a similar effort on the east side of Jamaica and at the Jamaica Station tracks, LIRR employees hauled away 85 cubic yards of debris and removed 350 old railroad ties as well as old running rail, track gauge plates, pipe, spikes, 3rd rail brackets and running rail fasteners.

The clean-up effort for the combined weekends netted 186.75 cubic yards of debris and 429 scrap railroad ties.

Limited LIRR Service through Sunday

Information on the LIRR's limited weekend service that will continue to operate through midnight Sunday when the cutover work is expected to be completed is available on the MTA/LIRR website at www.mta.info. Project and service information is also available on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/mtalirr?ref=nf> and on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/lirralerts>. Customers can also obtain schedule information via the CooCoo text messaging service by texting 266-266, typing in their departure and destination stations.

Customers should pick up copies of the Jamaica Cutover Brochure and the special November 6-7 Jamaica Cutover weekend timetable for their branches at terminals or their local stations. For additional information, customers can also contact the LIRR's Travel Information Center at 718-217-5477 (718-217-LIRR) or visit the LIRR's website at www.mta.info. If you are deaf or hard of hearing, use your preferred relay service provider or the free 711 relay to reach LIRR at 718-217-5477.