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Press Release

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[NYC Transit](#)

IMMEDIATE

Help Points to Make Subway Safer, Easier to Use

Pilot Kicks Off at Two Stations

MTA New York City Transit's new Help Point station communications system has begun pilot testing at two Manhattan subway stations along the Lexington Avenue Line. Designed to be both highly visible and easy-to use, these instant communications devices offer immediate access to assistance and information with the touch of a button.

For the first time, customers on the platform level of subway stations will have immediate access to the station booth and personnel at the Rail Control Center. Units will be positioned and spaced for easy access and high visibility. Created specifically for the subway environment, the Help Point is designed to be an easily recognizable communications tool for customers who need to either report an emergency or ask for travel directions. The units will be easy to spot with a bright blue beacon light that will pulse when the unit is in action. This feature will help alert first responders in case there is an injured or sick customer at that location.

The pilot is being conducted at the 23rd Street and Brooklyn Bridge Stations on the Lexington Avenue Line and will serve to determine not only the usefulness of the units but also to evaluate which system of installation, wireless or hard-wired systems, is best. Nine Help Points will be installed at 23rd Street and another 10 at the Brooklyn Bridge station.

"These Help Points will make our subway system safer and easier to use, expanding access to assistance throughout stations in a way that wasn't possible before," MTA Chairman & CEO Jay H. Walder said. "This is just another step in our efforts to bring new technology to customers in ways that make using the transit system better every day."

Each Help Point will be individually addressable, so that in the case of an emergency, personnel at the Rail Control Center will be able to pinpoint exactly where in the station the call originated. Not only will the new Help Point units improve response times, but the digital audio will provide much clearer sound than is available from the customer assistance intercoms used in subways now.

"These units have a fresh new appearance that will make the Help Points easy to identify. The sound will be crisp, clear and easy to understand which is an important feature especially in the subway environment," said NYC Transit President Thomas F. Prendergast. "As designed, the Help Points are major step beyond the Customer Assistance Intercoms now in our stations."

The control panel contains a red emergency button and a green information button along with a speaker and microphone. Emergency calls are routed to the subway Rail Control Center while information calls are sent to the station agent.

Of course, the design of the unit, conceived in 2006, was an important part of the Help Point initiative and the goal was to create a unit that would be attractive, eye-pleasing and carry on the stainless-steel theme introduced by our new technology subway cars, turnstiles and fare media vending equipment. That goal was met by Antenna Design which created a modular design which can be easily installed either on a wall or station column. Easy to use, the Help Point is ADA compliant, vandal resistant and easy to maintain. The unit's design has won it a place in the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art.

If the pilot goes well, the plan calls for the installation of the Help Points in all of the system's 468 subway stations, replacing the CAI units.