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Press Release

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IMMEDIATE

MTA Metro-North Railroad Introduces First Set of M-8 Cars on the New Haven Line

A Fleet of 380 New Cars will Transform the Line

On Tuesday, the first set of new M-8 cars rolled out of Stamford at 10:30 a.m. delighting Metro-North's customers with the latest in rail technology and comfort, arriving on time in Grand Central Terminal at 11:36 a.m.

In all, 380 new cars will replace a fleet that is well beyond its useful life and has been plagued with weather-related component failures this winter resulting in crowded trains and below normal on-time performance.

"These cars have successfully completed extensive, systematic tests. The many challenges that were revealed during intensive, real-world operations of the most complex rail car in North America on the continent's busiest rail corridor, have been resolved," said Metro-North President Howard Permut. "This testing took over one year to ensure that the M-8 will provide quality service for its 30 year life. We plan to put more of these cars into service as soon as they complete individual quality assurance testing."

"I am thrilled to be able to introduce a new era of comfort and reliability for New Haven Line riders," said Jeff Parker, Connecticut's Transportation Commissioner. "Even a single eight-car train set will help alleviate crowding and bring hope to our beleaguered New Haven Line customers. These cars are the first of the new breed of technologically advanced trains that will serve us for decades to come."

The New Haven Line's 63,000 daily customers can expect 26 M-8 cars to be in service this spring. By the end of the year, about 80 M-8s will be in service. The roll out will continue at a rate of about 10 cars a month and will continue until all 380 cars are in service in the third quarter of 2013.

The initial 300-car order was placed with Kawasaki Rail Car Inc. in August 2006, at a cost of \$761 million, shared 65% by the State of Connecticut and 35% paid by New York State's Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

The contract contained two options for additional cars. The contract for the first 42-car option was signed February 18, for \$90 million. A second 38-car option was funded at \$81 million on February 24, by the Connecticut Bond Commission and with additional money from the MTA Capital Program. That contract will be signed shortly. The average price per car is \$2.23 million.

The M-8 car has been engineered to replicate closely the advances that were made with the M-7 cars currently in operation in New York State on the Harlem and Hudson Lines and on the Long Island Rail Road. Metro-North's 336 M-7 cars, which were delivered between April 2004 and July 2009, are extremely reliable, and last year operated an average of 727,000 miles without causing delays. By comparison, the old New Haven Line electrical fleet operated just 79,000 miles without delay last year.

In the M-8, critical, solid-state, computer-controlled electrical components are protected within the car body rather than exposed under the car so that inclement weather will not interfere with their operation.

Redundancies are built into the cars to ensure continued operation if a system malfunctions.

For example, as in the M-7s, each car has two, modular air conditioning units so that if one fails, the other will continue to cool the car until the broken one can be removed and replaced with a spare. Older cars such as the M-2s have one AC unit that was integral to the car so that the entire car had to be taken out of service while repairs were made.

While the cars are complex, computer-controlled machines, what customers will notice are roomier, high-back, contoured seats with individual headrests, curved arm rests anchored at both ends in the upholstery. They will see larger windows and better lighting, especially in the vestibules for improved safety. The cars also are equipped with an intercom system that customers can use to contact the crew in emergencies. Other features include LED displays that show the next stop and automated audio announcements. Each seat is outfitted with electrical outlets, grab bars, coat hooks and curvaceous luggage racks. The color scheme is a vibrant red, the historical color of the New Haven Railroad, predecessor to Metro-North.

Outside, customers will see prominent electronic destination signs and external public address speakers. Single leaf doors provide high reliability and less susceptibility to snow intrusion.

The cars are electrically complex with three types of propulsion systems. They have third rail shoes that receive direct current to power the trains between Pelham and Grand Central Terminal. The cars also have the capability to run under two types of alternating current overhead wire, known as catenary. The New Haven main line uses 60 cycle, 12 kilovolt power. The cars also operate at the newer, 60 cycle, 25 kilovolt power, which is used on the Shoreline East route east of New Haven and all the way to Boston.

The cars operate as "married" pairs. The "A" car has 110 seats and the "B" car has 101 seats plus a handicapped-accessible, airline-style vacuum toilet. Each car also has a "cab" from which an engineer can operate the train.

In a related matter, Metro-North is resuming its regular, full New Haven Line schedule on Monday March 7. A reduced schedule was implemented on February 7 to give mechanics time to repair the winter-crippled fleet of older M-2, M-4 and M-6 cars.