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Press Release

September 21, 2012

[NYC Transit](#)

IMMEDIATE

Help Points Coming to 102 Subway Stations

For Customers, Assistance will be Only a Button Push Away

After the completion of a successful pilot at two Manhattan subway stations along the Lexington Avenue Line, MTA New York City Transit will be bringing Help Points to 102 stations as part of the current 2010-2014 Capital Program. Designed to be both highly visible and easy-to use, these digital, instant communications devices will offer customers 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. When approaching the Help Points, customers will be greeted by two buttons, a green button which connects riders to the booth and a red button, linked directly to the Rail Control Center and to be used in the event of emergency.

"The Help Points are, figuratively speaking, light years ahead of the current units that customers see in subway stations," said NYC Transit President Thomas F. Prendergast. "They will be available to access both information and assistance during emergencies. When coupled with countdown clocks, they add up to the most significant customer communications improvements to be installed in the station environment in a generation."

The eventual plan calls for the installation of the Help Points in all of the system's 468 subway stations, replacing the Customer Assistance Intercoms (CAI) units currently in use.

The pilot was conducted at the 23rd Street and Brooklyn Bridge Stations on the Lexington Avenue Line and served to determine not only the usefulness of the units but also to evaluate the benefits of both hard-wired and wireless installations. Nine Help Points were installed at 23rd Street and another 10 at the Brooklyn Bridge Station. There is a second pilot currently underway at Rector Street on the Broadway Line and Burnside Avenue on the Jerome Line, in the Bronx.

Each Help Point is 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.

Along with the Help Points, the contract pending board approval next week, also includes the installation of the Passenger Station Local Area Network (PSLAN), the digital communications network which will provide connectivity for advanced-technology devices located within the station environment. Importantly, PSLAN will support the Help Points, the New Fare Payment System, On-The-Go screens, and new security initiatives. Both projects are estimated to have a combined value of \$100 million, with Help Points valued at approximately \$40 million and PSLAN at \$60 million.