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Press Release

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LIRR

IMMEDIATE

LIRR Helps Train Paramedic Students from CUNY's LaGuardia Community College at Railroad's Long Island City Train Yard

Mock Mass Casualty Incident Staged to Give CUNY Students Hands on Experience

Paramedic students from CUNY's LaGuardia Community College trained side-by-side with emergency service professionals from MTA Long Island Rail Road at a mock mass casualty drill staged recently at the LIRR's Long Island City Yard.

"The LIRR Fire Marshal's Office was contacted by Meghan Williams, Paramedic Program Coordinator at LaGuardia, requesting our Emergency Responder Training for their current class of paramedic trainees," said Assistant Fire Marshal Alfred Loiacono of LIRR Corporate Safety & Training. "Ms. Williams recently attended our training as a member of the St. James, L.I. Volunteer Fire Department and felt the paramedic trainees would benefit greatly from a simulated "MCI" (Mass Casualty Incident) type of training."

Since the college is also located on Thomson Ave. in Long Island City, the LIRR offered to stage the drill at its facility on Borden Avenue, where an out-of-service platform would be available and rail equipment could be used safely out of the way of regular Railroad operations.

The drill was scheduled for 10:30 AM on Friday, June 14. But first, LIRR personnel joined the paramedic trainees for an 8 AM classroom session at LaGuardia, located on Thomson Ave., also attended by Williams and other instructor's in the college's paramedic program. LIRR Corporate Safety & Training gave a safety presentation, addressing hazards commonly found when responding to an emergency situation at or near Railroad property.

Among the key points discussed were the importance of staying in communication with the LIRR train crews and the Rail Operations Control Center at Jamaica Station, a review LIRR property and equipment and potential third rail hazards. After the classroom session, the group moved on to the Long Island City Yard for some hands on training.

The Emergency Scenario

The drill set up by the LIRR's Fire Marshals involved an M7 train consist in a mock collision that occurs while the train is entering the Long Island City Yard. The students are faced with mass casualties involving multiple victims suffering a range of injuries. Following procedures established by the National Incident Management System (NIMS), the first responder units were assigned to locate the scene of the accident, find victims on board the train and begin administering to most seriously injured. Backup teams set up a command post, a triage area and treatment/transport area.

LIRR employees from Corporate Safety and Training, Maintenance of Equipment, Engineering and Transportation Departments participated in the drill. Besides Loiacono, also present were, Ken Klein, Manager Security & Emergency Responder Training; Chris Hanley, Safety Officer; John Thomas, Training Specialist - all from Corporate Safety and Training; and Assistant Trainmaster Scott Federman of the Transportation Department.

"At the end of the training, we held a debriefing and Q&A session," said Loiacono. "The program instructors appreciated the opportunity to use our expertise to help provide some key training points concerning the specific hazards encountered while responding to a railroad incident. The most common feedback from the participants was that underestimated how challenging it was to gain access to the train and assess victims and control the large amount of injured, initially with limited resources."