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Press Release

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LIRR

IMMEDIATE

### Sports Fans Are Helping to Push MTA Long Island Rail Road Ridership Higher

#### *Mets' Postseason & Islanders' Move to Brooklyn Paying Dividends*

MTA Long Island Rail Road President Patrick A. Nowakowski said today that the Mets' trip to the World Series and the New York Islanders' move to Brooklyn have been a boon for ridership on the LIRR, already the busiest commuter line in the nation.

"The Long Island Rail Road carried 7,000 fans to each of the National League playoff games at Citi Field and I expect we'll do the same for each of the World Series games played here," said Nowakowski. "Meanwhile, ridership numbers Islanders games at Barclays Center so far show that 41% of the gate is arriving via the LIRR. Even Islander players are doing their commuting on the LIRR."

Nowakowski was referring to published reports that Islanders defenseman Johnny Boychuk, center John Tavares and right winger Kyle Okposo are among the players who have been seen riding the LIRR to Atlantic Terminal located right across the street from Barclays Center in Brooklyn. "We were ready with enhanced train service to Brooklyn for Islander games and that move is paying off," Nowakowski added.

#### **Extra Trains to Mets-Willets Point Station during World Series**

The Long Island Rail Road is providing convenient service to and from Citi Field for the World Series via the Port Washington Branch, with extra trains running if the games go into extra innings. The LIRR's Mets-Willets Point Station is just 19 minutes from Penn Station and 27 minutes from Port Washington. Fans traveling from Long Island on other branches can reach Citi Field by changing to Port Washington Branch trains at Woodside, just a five-minute ride.

For Friday night's game, trains will depart Penn Station starting at 2:52 p.m. Ten trains will depart Penn Station during rush hour, between 4-8 p.m. Returning from the game, and going to and from games on Saturday and Sunday, trains will run every 30 minutes. The LIRR recommends customers buy round-trip tickets in advance to avoid waiting on lines after the game. The full timetable for game service is available at this link: <http://web.mta.info/lirr/Timetable/Branch/Mets-Willets.pdf>

#### **A Note to Ronkonkoma Branch Customers Traveling This Weekend**

To avoid busing and delays caused by scheduled track work between Ronkonkoma and Hicksville, customers are encouraged to avoid the Ronkonkoma Branch this weekend and use other LIRR branches, if possible. If traveling on Saturday, October 31 or Sunday, November 1, consider taking the Babylon, Far Rockaway, Hempstead, Long Beach, Montauk, Oyster Bay, Port Jefferson, Port Washington or West Hempstead Branches – which will have normal weekend schedules.

#### **The Islanders & Barclays Center**

The Islanders' arrival in Brooklyn is providing the latest boost in LIRR ridership to Atlantic Terminal, which has more than tripled since the opening of Barclays Center in 2013 as a top-shelf entertainment venue and new home of the NBA Brooklyn Nets. Overall, the Railroad has transported an average of 41% of the fans attending, the high point coming Thursday, October 15, when 48% rode the rails. So far, the LIRR has carried over 37,000 fans to Islanders' games at Barclays.

"With so much of the Islanders fan base living on Long Island, some feared fans would not follow the team to Brooklyn," Nowakowski said. "It's clear to me that ridership for the first four Islander home games puts that concern to rest."

#### **LIRR Ridership Trending Up in 2015**

Through September, overall ridership on the LIRR was up nearly 2% over the same period in 2014, a year in which the Railroad carried 85.9 million riders. If the trend continues, the LIRR could approach or possibly surpass the 87.5 million rides it provided in 2008, just before the Great Recession.

"Ridership continues to be a good news story for the Long Island Rail Road and in this case we can point to the popularity of our sports franchises as one reason. To the Mets and the Islanders and all of their fans we say: We are at your service."

In fact, the LIRR is the easiest and most convenient way for Long Islanders to catch the home games of all its professional teams, a point the Railroad is making in a new promotional campaign titled

**Your Sport. Your Team. Your LIRR.**

**Take the Train to the Game.**

Nets and Islanders fans arriving at Atlantic Terminal can walk across the street to Barclays Center, it's just a walk up the the stairs from Penn Station to Madison Square Garden to see the Rangers and Knicks. Even Jets and Giants fans can get to MetLife Stadium with a single-ticket ride that is valid on both the LIRR and NJ Transit. There's direct service for Mets fans to Citi Field and Cosmos fans can grab a ticket to Mineola Station and a short shuttle ride to Hofstra Stadium. For more information, visit [www.mta.info/lirr](http://www.mta.info/lirr).