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Press Release

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LIRR

IMMEDIATE

LIRR Forward: Railroad Revitalization to Transform Customer Experience

Detailed Specialized Actions Focus on Fortifying System Reliability, Safety, Communication, Cleanliness

MTA Long Island Rail Road President Phil Eng today announced LIRR *Forward*, a package of specialized actions designed to transform the efficiency of railroad operations while hardening infrastructure as we continuously strive to provide a world-class customer experience to its travelers, as they deserve nothing less. This set of initiatives mark the beginning of a new way we do business by proactively attacking the root causes of our system's problematic areas.

This framework was developed over the past four weeks, as Eng met with LIRR staff at all levels across each department to learn about its operations, its goals and its needs. Senior staff carefully examined its current employee and equipment levels and identified ways to redeploy existing resources to better serve customers on a daily basis.

Starting on the day his appointment was announced, Eng has met with customers on an ongoing basis while riding the trains on his daily commute, asking them to openly share their experiences and suggestions on how the LIRR can improve its daily service. Eng has taken these comments to appropriate LIRR staff and many of them have been tended to, while others, with more complex, long-term solutions, have been weaved into what is now LIRR *Forward*.

Building an open dialogue with both customers and staff is how LIRR *Forward* has taken its shape. This ever-evolving document takes into consideration LIRR's most pressing infrastructure, reliability, communication, cleanliness, and service needs to help improve customers' overall experience. This new proactive strategy is not merely a "one and done" plan; rather, the LIRR will use this as a new methodology for analyzing its service and how the agency can continue to improve as time goes on and daily and long-term demands evolve.

"LIRR *Forward* is the first formal step in a new direction that will help us anticipate our problems before they arise, set standards on how to quickly and correctly respond to the challenges we face, to deliver what our ridership expects of us – which is safe, reliable service bolstered by timely, accurate and effective communication," LIRR President Phil Eng said.

Keeping the lines of communication open with the public, the LIRR President along with senior staff will hold commuter forums in Suffolk and Nassau counties in the coming weeks.

In LIRR *Forward*, the railroad identifies the root causes of system malfunctions and lays out the groundwork for proactively attacking and solving these issues.

Highlights of LIRR *Forward*:

Reliability and Safety

- Upgrading 10 switches in the next six months that caused 44% of the 205 switch failures we had in 2017.
- Finalizing repairs on a critical switch at Jamaica, which is already near completion.
- Conducting comprehensive joint inspections and upgrades on the 370 track circuits that caused 36% of our track-circuit failures.
- Clearing 180 miles of overgrown vegetation along our right of way to reduce track incidents.
- Weather: Last year, over 2,600 trains were delayed due to weather-related events. We are pulling in timelines on critical tasks to harden our assets now before hurricane season and winter storms.
- Installing 60 snow switch covers two years ahead of schedule.
- Installing 14 additional third rail heaters to better prevent crippling power failures that cause train delays and cancellations during snowfall.
- Insulating critical components located within Atlantic Tunnel manholes before hurricane season.
- In response to the 417 trains that were delayed due to vehicles on tracks in 2017, installing high visibility safety delineators at all 296 grade crossings this year. Also, partnering with GPS service providers like Waze to prevent accidental turns onto grade crossing tracks.
- Ensuring accelerated replacement of 80 utility poles by PSEG LI along LIRR's right of way.
- Replacing M7 door components to reduce door failures during the winter.

Cleanliness

- Expanding our car maintenance program to include car cleaning midway through routes.
- Increasing the frequency of station cleaning at all 124 stations by 30%.

Communications

- Countdown clocks launched at 116 stations; the remaining will be complete by summer.
- Installing GPS equipment on our fleet to push out accurate train locations.
- Revising our communications strategy to get customers the information they need to make travel decisions early.
- New, updated training for customer-facing staff, including ushers, ambassadors and public information officers.