



MTA Press Releases

[Select Language](#) ▼

Press Release

December 16, 2019

NYC Transit

IMMEDIATE

New Data Showing Trips Taking Less Time on Every Line as Subway Performance & Ridership Continue Months-Long Improvement Trends

Time it Takes for Trains to Go from Terminal to Terminal Has Improved on Every Line from November 2018 to November 2019 – Data Available Thanks to Recent Tech Advancements at NYC Transit

Weekday On-Time Performance in November Reached 81.8%, up 17% from November 2018 – the Sixth Straight Month Over 80%

Subway Ridership on Upswing, by One Measure Breaking a Three-Year Record

MTA New York City Transit today announced new subway statistics showing continued performance improvements thanks to the sustained success of the Subway Action Plan and the Save Safe Seconds campaign, including preliminary November 2019 numbers for on-time performance and a newly discussed metric called 'running times,' which are the time it takes for trains to travel from terminal to terminal. Running times are faster on every line in November 2019 compared to a year ago, meaning trains are getting through the system more quickly, shaving minutes off of many trips. The 'running times' metric uses new technology to better track the locations of trains in large parts of the subway system.

"The data doesn't lie: subway service is demonstrably better, more customers are taking the subways, and the service continues to improve each month thanks to the hard work of our employees and smarter operations," said **MTA Chairman and CEO Patrick J. Foye**. "I am proud of everyone at New York City Transit for their dedication and laser focus in improvements that have yielded these results that prove our subway service has truly turned around."

"This new metric we're talking about today, running times, is yet another meaningful way to quantify what the 50,000 employees of New York City Transit have been working so hard to achieve: months of sustained improvement in service," said **MTA NYC Transit President Andy Byford**. "We have much more work to do to deliver the service that New Yorkers need and deserve; the consistency that we have achieved shows the Subway Action Plan and the Save Safe Seconds campaign laying a strong foundation for the major improvements we expect from upgrades that are part of the next MTA Capital Plan."

"I am hugely encouraged by the consistent and sustained improvements we are seeing across all subway performance metrics, reflecting significantly improved service for our customers," said **Sally Librera, MTA NYC Transit Senior Vice President for Subways**. "By improving our ability to measure service in different ways, we are now able to better pinpoint areas for improvement, as well as identify gains being made, such as the improving run times through the system meaning customers are getting where they need to go faster."

Overall subway performance continued its steady improvement last month, with preliminary data for the month of November 2019 and for the average of the past 12 months showing every weekday metric better than it was in November 2018.

Compared to 2018 and 2017, trains are taking less time to go from terminal to terminal on every line of the subway system today, shaving minutes off of many trips. Overall, 'A' Division trains (the numbered lines) are running close to 4%, or about two and a half minutes, faster than last year, and close to 6%, or about three and a half minutes, faster than in 2017. On the 'B' Division (lettered lines), trains are running about 2%, or about one and a half minutes, faster than 2018, and close to 3%, or about two minutes, faster than in 2017.

The biggest improvement on any line in 2019 is on the 7 and 7 Express, whose running times were, respectively, 9.2% (three and a half minutes) and 10.5% (more than four and a half minutes) faster last month than in November 2018. At the end of 2018, the 7 line was upgraded to modern Communications Based Train Control signaling.

This systemwide analysis of running times was performed for the first time during the past year using new technology that enables officials to better track the locations of trains on the lettered lines, and the analysis of massive amounts of new data by NYC Transit personnel. A Division trains have long been able to be tracked using a computerized train location system. The B Division, largely built by different builders up to a century or more ago, has long had far less data due to the lack of automatic, computerized recording of exact train locations at all times. Over the past two years, NYC Transit has been working in an effort to acquire better data about the movements of B Division trains using various innovations, including wireless sensors and transmitters on tracks and trains. The technology is undergoing an ongoing refinement process for greater and greater accuracy. Even more precise information about train movements is expected with each line that is newly outfitted with modern computer-based signaling systems – a major component of the current and next MTA Capital Plan.

On-time performance (OTP) has registered above 80% for the sixth straight month – the last time this happened was in 2013. November's weekday OTP was 81.8%, a 17% improvement from a year ago when it was 69.9%.

Weekday Major Incidents decreased 49.3% from November 2018, dropping from 67 to 34 in November 2019. Furthermore, weekday train delays decreased 42.5% from last November, from 51,964 to 29,863.

Positive numbers were also realized in NYC Transit's other customer-focused metrics, including Service Delivered, Additional Platform Time, Additional Train Time, and Customer Journey Time Performance, as all metrics were better than one year ago and better than their average performance over the past 12 months. Highlights for November included:

- Additional platform time, which measures the average added time customers wait for trains compared to the schedule: Time savings of 8 seconds, or a 10.3% drop from last year
- Additional train time, which measures the average added time customers spend on a train compared to the schedule: Time savings of 21 seconds, or a drop of 27.3% from last year
- Customer journey time: More than 83% of customers completed their journeys within five minutes of the scheduled time, compared to 79.2% last year.

A contributing factor to the reduction in delays has been the significant progress made in reducing track debris fires, which are significantly down since NYC Transit started attacking this problem with new equipment in 2017. This has included clearing debris at an unprecedented rate using new platform-based mobile vacs, and vacuum trains that move around the system picking up trash. Year to date, track debris fires are down 83, from 321 to 238, and they are down 119 for the previous 12 months, from 377 to 258.

There are signs that the recent trend in improving performance is attracting customers back to the subway system. October 2019 – the most recent month with confirmed data – had six days with more than 6,000,000 customers on the subway, the first time that has happened since December 2016. October was the fifth consecutive month of year-over-year weekday ridership increases, which also occurred in eight of the past 10 months. October was also the third consecutive month of year-over-year weekend ridership increases, which also occurred in five of the past six months.

In terms of customer satisfaction, NYC Transit's Customers Count survey saw a 13.1 percentage point improvement in satisfaction for the 3rd quarter of 2019 compared to the same period last year, with the greatest improvements in waiting time, travel time, and unexpected delays.

ABOUT THE SUBWAY ACTION PLAN

The Subway Action Plan launched at the direction of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo in July 2017, and was funded by the Governor, Legislature and the City. With the goal of stabilizing and improving the 115-year old subway system, the plan's extraordinary measures have been critical to recent performance improvements. Since the Subway Action Plan launched, MTA workers and contractors have:

- Cleared more than 80,000 street grates to prevent ingress of litter and leaves that build up on the tracks, causing fires and clogging drains.
- Sealed more than 7,900 leaks to prevent water ingress that causes power and signal problems, deterioration of track and other equipment resulting in unplanned service changes, delays and track fires.
- Installed 54 miles of Continuous Welded Rail (CWR) across the system, replacing jointed rail, which is more prone to rail defects that delay trains.
- Repaired more than 27,000 minor track defects that if not repaired can cause delays.
- Performed more than 180 miles of track rail grinding to improve ride quality and reduce defects
- Completed more than 1,500 priority maintenance and repair tasks to improve reliability of signal and switch equipment.
- Rebuilt and modernized more than 430 signal stops to be moisture proof and avoid service interruption
- Repaired door control units on over 1,000 cars in our oldest fleets to improve reliability of this critical component that cause 40 percent of car breakdowns
- Completed a deep cleaning initiative of more than 100 subway stations.
- Enhanced 217 stations via a focused cleaning and repair campaign led by Group Station Managers

ABOUT THE SAVE SAFE SECONDS CAMPAIGN

The Save Safe Seconds Campaign was launched in 2018 as part of NYC Transit President Andy Byford's Fast Forward Plan directive to improve subway service, particularly by focusing on the root causes of delays. Personnel have been engaged to help come up with ways to immediately improve subway performance and reduce delays, simply and affordably (or even at no cost) through better operating and service practices. The campaign has led to the intelligent and focused management of day to day train operations, including the repair of faulty speed-regulating signals, increase of speed limits and new instructions to train operators, in such a manner that allows for the safe increase of train speeds and, in turn, safely making subway trips take less time for customers. The campaign is led by NYC Transit's Department of Subways Senior VP Sally Librera, in a partnership with NYC Transit's labor partners, with the efforts of thousands train crew members and other front-line NYC Transit employees.