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Press Release

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Metro-North

IMMEDIATE

Metro-North Marks First Year of Accomplishments in Way Ahead Plan to Transform the Railroad

Railroad Meets Key Benchmarks in Enhancing Safety, Service, Infrastructure, and Customer Communication

MTA Metro-North Railroad President Catherine Rinaldi today announced a series of key accomplishments since implementing its *Way Ahead* plan a year ago as a proactive response to growing ridership, changing demographics and the evolving needs of customers. *Way Ahead* is a roadmap that details actions to enhance safety, service, infrastructure, communications, and transform customers' day-to-day commuting experience.

Metro-North has realized key aspects of its vision, and that means customers can expect safety upgrades, improved communications, reinvigorated stations, renewed infrastructure, which all translates to an overall more positive commuting experience.

"Thanks to the hard work and dedication of Metro-North employees, we are successfully transforming the railroad," said Catherine Rinaldi, President of Metro-North Railroad. "Over the past year, we've met key milestones, setting the highest standards for safety, reliability and innovation in the delivery of excellent customer service. I'm proud to report that we're developing an even stronger Metro-North, and we remain focused on continuing to enhance our system."

Highlights of Way Ahead Accomplishments:

Safety

- Expanded Positive Train Control to almost 90% of the Hudson Line. 90 Route Miles of the railroad's territory now have the safety technology.
- Continued the expansion of TRACKS, Metro-North's award-winning free community outreach program designed to educate and promote rail safety. Since launching in 2016, TRACKS has reached over 336,500 people. The program has already reached its 2019 goal of 105,000.
- Launched a new safety initiative, the Rail Safety Passport, which promote rail safety to Metro-North's youngest customers.
- Launched a new suicide prevention training program called Question, Persuade, Refer Gatekeeper Training.
- Enhanced 78 grade crossings with LED lights.
- Installing luminescent safety signs every hundred feet on all four tracks from 59th to 97th Streets.
- Improved emergency exits in the Park Avenue Tunnel.
- Expanded Safety Critical Communications skills training for Operations Employees, with over 2,881 operations employees trained thus far.

Customer Service

- Delivered major station improvements to White Plains, Riverdale, Crestwood, Port Chester, and Harlem-125th Street.
- Continued to focus on improving the customer experience at White Plains station. Recent improvements include: additional cooled and heated interior space on the platform, upgrades to bathrooms, and a renewed, expanded island platform with a newly opened Tim Horton's to serve waiting customers.
- eTix is now used for one third of all ticket sales and 78 percent of one-way tickets, saving Metro-North \$250,000 in ticket stock costs.
- Opened a new lactation room at Grand Central Terminal for nursing moms on-the-go.
- Completed the rehabilitation of the Middletown station parking facility. At the Fleetwood Station, the railroad now controls of the 109 existing spaces, with a new layout plan to add 12 more spaces.
- Completed accessibility improvements at Port Chester and Crestwood. 60 stations in New York State, including Grand Central Terminal, are now accessible.
- Replaced Connecticut's Atlantic Street Railroad Bridge and delivered Old Greenwich Railroad Station improvements including lengthening the station platform.
- Rolled out a new Rail Reward\$ program, which gives customers added value and savings to their train ticket by offering exclusive offers and discounts at Grand Central Terminal shops and restaurants.

Communications

- Completed the installation of new state-of-the-art "big boards" at Grand Central Terminal that are brighter, easier read, can be nimbly updated in response to service changes, and do not compromise the Terminal's historical integrity.
- To date, replaced 30 out of 96 departure boards at Grand Central Terminal.
- Replaced the antiquated public-address system in Grand Central Terminal and at outlying stations with a new state-of-the-art system.
- Hosted fifteen "Connect with Us" forums for customers to ask questions and address concerns with Metro-North leadership. Two more "Connect with Us" forums are slated in 2019.
- An additional 38 stations now have real-time information monitors.

- installed a total of 29 Customer Information Displays at Metro-North stations.
- Installed a total of 138 Advertising screens at Metro-North stations including Grand Central Terminal, and installed a total of 29 Customer Information Displays at Metro-North stations.

Infrastructure

- Continued to focus on our SMARTRACK Program in which crews are undertaking critical infrastructure work by strategically shutting down continuous segments of track, giving multiple work groups uninterrupted access to maintain and improve the system.
- Work taking place as part of SMARTRACK includes track and drainage improvements, installation of new ties, rail, replaced insulated joints, welded track and general cleanup of the track area.
- Completed work most recently along a seven-mile stretch between Melrose and Woodlawn stations, where we have installed over 1,400 new rail ties, 2,000 feet of new rail, welded track, installed a crossover switch, insulated joints, cleaned up the right of way & much more.
- Completed Grand Central Terminal track rehabilitation, including replacing and laying new rail, bracket ties, and block ties at Track 14, 18, 23, 112 and 200.
- Completed new 14th Avenue Mt. Vernon overhead bridge with benches, planters and fencing comprised of artwork panels. We, along with our contractor, have now turned our focus on beginning the demolition phase to replace 6th and 10th Avenue bridges in the city.
- Opened newly constructed Harmon Shop EMU Annex and Consist Shop Facilities. The EMU Annex is a 74,000-square foot building containing support and wheel shops, while the Consist Shop is a 119,000-square foot, 2 track, 10 car length facility for inspection and unscheduled repairs
- Continue to proactively minimize delays and inconvenience for our customers due to slippery rail conditions through several established processes including building a tandem Wheel Truing Lathe in Harmon Shop which helps us return cars to service more quickly so we have enough cars available for our customers and enhancing our computerized train-tracking system to allow for automatic reporting of slip-slide incidents and conditions.
- Metro-North became the first commuter railroad in the U.S. to successfully apply heat reflective paint to reduce the incidence of "kinks" in rails, - - that dangerous condition when rails heat up and actually change shape.
- Began significant tie replacement project work replacing ties on the Moodna Viaduct, south of the Salisbury Mills station, (averaging over 500 railroad ties a day) as well as installing surface track, renewing turnouts that allow trains to move from one track to another, and extending the cab signal system up to Otisville.

Focusing on the Future, What's Next in the *Way Ahead Plan*:

- Completing the installation of Positive Train Control in 2020.
- Delivering 2020-2024 Capital Program
- Arrival of more M-8 railcars on the New Haven line in 2020.
- Completion of the White Plains station renovation.
- Continuation of SMARTRACK program, including trackside clean-up and trimming efforts.
- Installing Help Points and security cameras.