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Press Release

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[NYC Transit](#)

IMMEDIATE

MTA New York City Transit Names New Head of Subways

Wynton Habersham, the Acting Senior Vice President of the Department of Subways, has been appointed to fill the role permanently. The Senior Vice President of Subways is responsible for planning, directing and controlling the subway and its safe operation.

Habersham, a 33-year veteran of NYC Transit, filled the vacancy after Joseph Leader retired in December 2015. Previously, Habersham was Vice President and Chief Officer for Service Delivery. His diverse background in NYC Transit includes a stint as the Vice President of the Maintenance of Way division, which saw a significant decrease in fires and employee accidents during his tenure, and work in subway operations and capital programs. The son of a retired Transit subway conductor, Habersham began his career at Transit in the signals division.

“Wynton knows this system inside and out, and his expertise and guidance helped get us through a major snowstorm in January 2016, when we shut down outdoor portions of the system for a snowstorm for the first time,” said NYC Transit President Veronique “Ronnie” Hakim. “He effectively managed the partial shutdown and the quick resumption of service, which helped protect our fleet and equipment, but most important, our employees and customers. He knows the system and as a native son of the Bronx, Wynton understands the needs of our customers.”

Habersham’s appointment comes as NYC Transit prepares for the opening of the Second Avenue Subway in December 2016 and sweeping changes to upgrade a century-old subway system that is experiencing record ridership. These improvements include hundreds of new subway cars, the replacement of antiquated signal equipment with Communication-Based Train Control (CBTC), and new technology such as underground cell phone service and Wi-Fi connectivity. All of these improvements are being implemented against a backlog of repairs and fortification projects necessitated by Superstorm Sandy-related damage.

“The challenge before me is looking at ways we can do better,” Habersham said. “Our record ridership shows we are doing things right, but it is also putting a strain on our resources. We must find ways to make improvements, whether it’s getting information on service changes out faster and in more ways that are accessible to our increasingly tech-savvy customers, or accelerating our fleet maintenance schedule to ensure the equipment is keeping up with this increase in wear-and-tear. I am excited to take on this challenge.”

“This is the job of a lifetime and my initial goals are the ones that I will carry with me during my entire tenure -- to meet or exceed the demands and expectations of the nearly six million customers who ride the subway each day,” Habersham added. “Our most important asset to achieve these goals is our employees, and you can’t put a value on who they are or what they do. Despite the age of the system, they go out every day and make this work. More than any other time, more is expected of us and we are all excited about meeting these new challenges.”

Habersham’s appointment is effective immediately marking the first African-American to lead the subway division.