



March 3, 2014

Commissioner James Redeker  
Bureau of Public Transportation  
State of Connecticut Department of Transportation  
2800 Berlin Turnpike  
P. O. Box 317546  
Newington, CT 06131-7546

Dear Commissioner Redeker:

In the three weeks I have been President of Metro-North, I have spent a considerable amount of time speaking with the people whose lives this railroad affects so deeply – the customers who ride it, the elected officials who support it and the employees who make it run.

Frustration among all these groups is high. Each is eager to see Metro-North service return to what it had been just a year ago.

In our meeting on February 17 with Governor Dannel Malloy, we discussed the importance of restoring the safety and reliability of Metro-North service. As part of that effort, I committed to developing a 100-Day Action Plan. This plan would include measures that would begin or be completed during that timeframe.

This plan requires returning to the basics of good railroading. First and foremost, however, we must rebuild a culture of safety at Metro-North to serve as the railroad's unshakeable foundation.

As we have said, doing so will not be quick, nor will it be easy. Diagnosing all the issues and establishing comprehensive corrective actions will take some time.

There are also three important external reviews currently underway that will inform our efforts:

- A Blue Ribbon Panel on Safety, established by MTA Chairman and CEO Thomas Prendergast, and comprised of five of the most distinguished railroad and transportation experts in the nation.
- A "Deep Dive" review of our safety, operations and training areas conducted by the Federal Railroad Administration.
- The continuing investigations being conducted by the National Transportation Safety Board to determine the cause of each incident last year and provide recommendations for corrective action.

We expect the FRA's Deep Dive and the MTA Blue Ribbon Panel reviews to be completed soon. The NTSB investigations will likely be completed this fall, although a number of specific recommendations have already been issued and either have been addressed or are under evaluation for implementation.

A key effort that was undertaken immediately after the Bridgeport derailment last May, included retaining Transportation Technology Center, Inc.(TTCI)—the internationally-renowned research affiliate of the American Association of Railroads—to assess and improve track maintenance and inspections. Metro-North also undertook a comprehensive right-of-way improvement program to address track conditions on all three lines.

The mere promise of a safer, more reliable service is not enough; Metro-North must develop concrete plans and actions and deliver on them. This 100-Day Action Plan is an important first step. While we continue to develop this plan, as previously stated, I wanted to provide you with a general summary of the key themes and initiatives that we have identified to date.

As you can see, we have already begun the process of restoring the sound operational principles on which this railroad has always been run as well as how we communicate with our customers and other stakeholders. We have included in this plan many suggestions we received from customers, elected officials and employees. The plan also includes many organizational challenges, but also emphasizes the need for urgent progress.

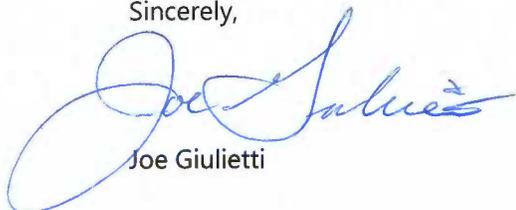
Our priorities are simple. We need to operate safely. We need to start communicating better. We need to bring back Metro-North's legendary on-time performance.

I commit here my efforts and the efforts of the men and women of this railroad to finding and fixing the underlying problems that caused such a series of failures in 2013. But I expect to accomplish more than that.

Just one year ago, Metro-North was almost universally considered the best railroad in the United States.- My goal is to restore that reputation by providing excellent service delivered on a solid foundation of safety. It's what our customers deserve. It's what this region deserves. I won't settle for less.

I understand that this summary does not include scope, schedule and budget. I can commit to those elements of the plan after we receive the results of the MTA Blue Ribbon Panel and FRA Deep Dive reviews. As I indicated earlier, those reviews should be completed shortly and the recommendations provided to us will be incorporated into this plan at that time.

Sincerely,



Joe Giulietti

cc: T. Prendergast

# Metro-North Railroad 100-Day Action Plan

Summary version pending final input from Federal Railroad Administration and MTA Blue Ribbon Panel

## Overview

Each initiative must support one or more of four areas of intense focus. These areas are:

- Promoting a Culture of Safety – To create a culture in which safety is embedded in all decisions, actions and initiatives.
- Adopting Concrete Safety Enhancements – To develop and implement programs that guarantee safe operations and safe work practices
- Restoring Reliable Service – To provide customers with train service that is not only safe but reliable and of a high quality.
- Improving Communications – To ensure that customers are kept fully informed as to the railroad's goals, operations and policies so that they can make informed choices when riding our service. To ensure that employees are fully informed as to the railroad's goals, operations and policies so that they can provide the best customer service possible.

We continue to develop key initiatives in support of these areas. Select initiatives and their implementation dates follow.

## Promoting a Culture of Safety

- Recreate the Safety Department so that its sole focus is developing, implementing and enforcing safety policy and initiatives. This reorganization will be completed by June 1 and will include further development of the following new units:
  - A Data Analysis Unit to support decision making. Negative trends can be identified and improved and positive trends can be expanded.
  - An Incident Investigation Unit to lead investigations into the root causes of accidents/incidents and monitor corrective actions/status of recommendations. This group will work closely with subject matter experts from the Operations Division.
- Develop a new Corporate Safety Policy clearly articulating the importance of Safety and identifying the roles of each department in reestablishing Safety as Priority One.
- Review and completely overhaul MNR's System Safety Program Plan (SSPP) by June 1. Develop and implement a communication and training program for all employees on the SSPP by the end of the year.
- Conduct "Safety Stand Downs" every quarter. These conversations about safety encompass employees at all levels of the organization at every work location, during every tour of duty. The next Safety Stand Down is scheduled for the end of March.
- Review and improve programs to train and test employees on their application and knowledge of operating safely. This effort has already begun and will be completed by the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter.
- Continue to work with the FRA and Metro-North's labor organizations to set up a Confidential Close Call Reporting System, a measure that allows employees to anonymously report safety concerns without fear of reprisal. Metro-North is the first railroad to agree to implement this program throughout its operation and anticipates successfully negotiating the required Implementing Memorandum of Understanding (IMOU) with the FRA and at least one labor organization by June 1.

## Adopting Concrete Safety Enhancements

- Implement the findings and recommendations from external reviews: the FRA Deep Dive, the MTA Blue Ribbon Panel and the NTSB Investigations.
- Work with the NTSB to comply with recently issued recommendations to install inward and outward facing cameras in train cabs, to more closely monitor both train speeds and engineers.
- Complete implementation of the Enhanced Employee Protection System (EEPS). This industry-leading system developed in-house significantly increases the safety of workers on the tracks. It involves issuing a random, confidential, computer-generated code to a worker on the tracks. When it is time for the tracks to be returned to service, this code must be communicated by the track worker to the train dispatcher and correctly entered into a computer system before trains can enter the area. This program will be completed by May 1.
- Complete Maintenance of Way Department Reorganization; hire and train sufficient personnel at all levels to ensure proper management oversight as well as sufficient staffing to perform the work.
- Develop a corrective action plan to implement recommendations that are identified in the final report from TTCI. The action plan shall indicate all required actions, schedule to implement and personnel responsible for implementation. Plan to be developed within 4 - 6 weeks of receipt of Final Report.
- Complete implementation of the requirements of the FRA's Emergency Order 29, issued on December 8, 2018. These requirements include:
  - Completion of signal system modifications at critical locations to enable systems on-board the train to enforce speed limits automatically. Five critical curves are located in Spuyten Duyvil, Yonkers, White Plains, Bridgeport, and Port Chester. Signal system modifications for these curves were all completed by February 8, one month ahead of schedule. Signal modifications have also been identified for the five moveable bridges on the New Haven Line located in Cos Cob, South Norwalk, Westport, Bridgeport and Milford in Connecticut. "Peck" Bridge in Bridgeport is completed. The remaining four modifications will be completed by May 1, four months ahead of schedule.
  - Installation of "alserter" devices on the M-3 and coach fleets by the 4th Quarter. Alerters are designed to ensure that engineers remain responsive. These two older fleets are equipped with a feature requiring an engineer to apply constant pressure to a hand- or foot-activated switch. By the end of this year, all older equipment without alerters will be either retrofitted to include them, or replaced with new equipment that includes alerters.
- Begin to institute procedures to identify and mitigate operational risks associated before beginning projects. This effort will include contracting with a consultant to assist in developing a decision-making framework.
- Ensure independent third-party review of plans for crucial maintenance projects so as to minimize risk to Metro-North's ability to serve its customers.

## **Restoring Reliable Service**

- Conduct a detailed study of New Haven Line train performance and running times to develop a dependable schedule. This study will take into account the impact of condition of the infrastructure and the impact of additional measures to improve safety. It will also look at train performance at key intermediate stations and adjust train schedules as needed to improve mid-line reliability. Adjustments will also be made to the Harlem and Hudson Line schedules for proper sequencing at key junctions and at Grand Central Terminal. Phase one of the review will be completed in time for the May 11 schedule change. Additional studies and modeling will be completed in time for subsequent schedule changes.
- Finalize the 2014 track maintenance program, including a plan to complete ongoing track work in the Bronx by March 31
- Implement a “back to basics” plan to improve train reliability and the quality of train service delivery. Every aspect of our operation -- from how we maintain infrastructure and railcars to how we operate each train – will be reviewed and will have targets for improvement.
- In conjunction with ConnDOT, establish a technical working group to identify and implement a fix for malfunctioning grade crossings on the Danbury Branch. The working group has begun its review and, once corrective actions are identified, they will be implemented as soon as possible.

## **Improving Communications**

- Create additional opportunities for two-way dialogue between MNR and its customers. Hold a minimum of 6 informal meetings in outlying stations and in Grand Central Terminal during the 100-day period.
- We have already made the “Contact Us” buttons on the Metro-North web site easier to find and use.
- Improve availability of real time train information at stations. LCD monitors will be installed that will utilize the in-house developed Train Time System to display the next nine trains to arrive at that station, what stops the train will make, train status (whether it’s on time or late and if it’s late, how late) and what track it will be on. In 2014, nine stations will be added to this program (Marble Hill, Ossining, Southeast, Hartsdale, Bronxville, Mount Vernon East, Harrison, Spuyten Duyvil, Pelham) and four existing stations will see monitors (Rye, Mount Vernon West, Scarsdale, and Crestwood). Currently, this program provides for Metro-North to continue to install monitors at New York State stations through 2020.
- Develop a project plan with ConnDOT by June to install similar LCD monitors at New Haven Line stations in Connecticut.
- Provide additional information to customers and legislators on the status of Metro-North programs through any and all means (both printed and electronic), especially those programs that affect service delivery.
- Implement a comprehensive service disruption operations plan in Grand Central Terminal to improve communication to our customers during service disruptions. This plan includes re-establishing the Management Emergency Response Team – Metro-North employees who are available and clearly identified so that customers can get ready answers to questions. Program will be implemented by April 1.