

## 2006 MNRCC PRESIDENT'S FORUM

March 15, 2006  
5:00 - 7:00 pm  
MTA Headquarters, 347 Madison Avenue  
New York, N.Y

### SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES EXPRESSED BY RIDERS *(11 members of the public)*

#### Customer Service Relations/ Communication

- Schedules and Timetables
  - The design of timetables makes planning trips between intermediate stops difficult.

#### Station/ Facility Conditions/ Improvements

- Renovations
  - When stations are renovated they should also be made accessible to disabled persons.  
*(President Cannito noted that the Railroad's plan is to make key stations accessible, a strategy that has been approved by the Federal Transit Administration and groups representing disabled riders. Senior Director-Capital Programs Ronald Yutko added that in some cases there are physical limitations on the accessibility improvements that are feasible at a station.)*

#### Service Issues

- Train Capacity
  - There are never any empty seats on AM rush trains when they reach the Fleetwood station. AM peak trains from White Plains are also very crowded.  
*(Mr. Cannito stated that Metro-North monitors ridership to create a schedule designed to result in an 85 percent load factor on each train. If trains are overcrowded the railroad may add cars or additional trips to reduce loads.)*
- Car Maintenance
  - Restrooms on the trains from Wassaic do not work and have an unacceptable odor.

*(Mr. Cannito responded that these bathrooms are serviced every night, but that the true solution to the problem will only come as these cars are rebuilt with vacuum toilet systems. This rebuilding process is currently underway.)*

## **Capital Planning**

- **Cars**

- When will the New Haven Line have modern equipment like the other East of Hudson lines?

*(Mr. Cannito said that the M8 cars are being produced to provide modern equipment for the New Haven line, but that there is a long lead time required for their production. One reason for the lead time is that the cars must be capable of drawing power from both overhead catenaries and third rails. This arrangement is found elsewhere only on trains traveling through the Channel Tunnel between England and France. To cope with the aging of the existing M2 fleet, Metro-North has undertaken a critical systems replacement program, which provides for the renewal of strategic car systems, but is less extensive than rebuilding the M2 cars. The first 100 M8 cars delivered will provide for fleet expansion, with the remainder replacing M2 units.*

- Can the seat design of the M8 be improved over that used in the M7?

*(Mr. Cannito said that the Railroad is using design consultants and rider focus groups to create an improved seat and interior design for the M8.)*

- **Stations**

- The Fleetwood station has no canopy between its elevator and station building. The station also needs more benches.

*(Mr. Cannito said that Metro-North will consider extension of the Fleetwood canopy, but that until recently the Railroad has had to focus its capital improvements to canopies on stations that were in severe need of upgrades. Metro-North will investigate the need for additional benches)*

- When a full train comes into Grand Central Terminal Platform 115, there is extreme crowding because of the narrowness of the platform. Platform 116 on the other side of the train is wider, but is not long enough to accommodate a full consist of cars. Could Platform 116 be used even if some passengers need to walk forward to alight from the train?

*(Mr. Cannito said that his staff would look into the situation.)*

## **Other/ Suggestions**

- **Cellphone Use**

- Metro-North should implement a quiet car where cellular telephone use is prohibited. Amtrak currently has such a policy.

*(Mr. Cannito responded that the nature of Amtrak service, which is based on reserved seating, is very different from commuter railroads like Metro-North. Of commuter railroads, only MARC in Maryland has implemented a quiet car policy, and the ridership on that system is low relative to Metro-North. The differences between Amtrak and commuter rail makes a quiet car policy impractical for Metro-North, particularly with the Railroad's capacity constraints.)*

- Historic Locomotives
  - Could Metro-North preserve and display at a platform in Grand Central Terminal one of the FL9 locomotives?  
*(Mr. Cannito said that the Railroad has donated a number of locomotives to museums in the service area so that they are accessible to the public. He said that these arrangements work better than display at Grand Central.)*
  
- Personal Computer Issues
  - Will the M8s have electrical outlets to recharge personal computers?  
*(Mr. Cannito said that the M8 design will incorporate electrical outlets and that there will be more outlets than in previous cars.)*
  - Will the M8 cars have wireless internet access?  
*(Mr. Cannito said that the Railroad is open to proposals from vendors seeking to provide desired services to its customers.)*
  
- Fares
  - Could Metro-North offer a ticket that allows customers to connect in New York for travel from one line of the Railroad to another?  
*(Mr. Cannito said that there is little demand for these trips and that the trips may be made by purchasing two tickets that jointly cover the route desired.)*