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Communication during Service Disruption Fails to Meet LIRR and MTA Pledges

The Long Island Rail Road Commuter Council (LIRRCC) has consistently stated that one of the most important functions of the LIRR is its communication with its riders. Both the LIRR and the MTA have affirmed the importance of communication in their respective versions of a Pledge to Customers. Communication during this morning's power failure and signal malfunctions clearly failed to meet the standards set forth by the LIRR and MTA.

Both the LIRR and MTA have pledged to provide accurate, timely, and useful information on service conditions through a variety of channels, including email, the MTA website, and station, platform, and onboard announcements. More specifically, the MTA pledge states that when there are service disruptions:

The MTA will respond quickly to provide customers with information concerning alternate routes and means of transportation and make efforts to provide for the comfort of customers experiencing delays. We will make every effort to stop subways, buses and trains at stations and bus stops to allow customers to safely disembark and seek alternate transportation.

While the LIRR pledge promises:

Customers will be given updated information regarding service restoration, including estimates of the time until service resumes. Onboard personnel will walk through trains regularly and provide accurate and timely information to customers.

LIRRCC Chair Mark Epstein states that "these standards were not met this morning. Instead, thousands of riders sat on stopped trains with little indication of the amount of time that they would be delayed, when and where their train would eventually move, or even what they should do to complete their trip. While our Council recognizes that this was a fluid and uncertain situation, the level of information provided was less than the LIRR and MTA promise and was grossly inadequate to allow riders to effectively deal with the delay and inconvenience that they faced."