

MTA Board Remarks 091813
William Henderson

Good morning. I'm here to comment on the M9 procurement that is before the Board today. We recognize that this contract involves design work on these cars as well as a number of options that can be exercised to include specific features in these cars. I want to emphasize the importance of including stakeholders, in particular the commuter rail riders, in the design process as the Long Island Rail Road and Metro-North Railroad and Kawasaki move toward a final design for these cars. We believe that incorporating meaningful input from those who will travel in these cars daily through an open design process can identify issues and opportunities for improvement of the design and in the end substantially improve the final product.

This order for 92 cars represents only a fraction of the total of 676 cars that may be manufactured under the base order and future options. It is important that these future purchases truly be seen as options and, particularly in the case of future cars that may be manufactured for Metro-North, these cars be tailored to the operations of the MTA's commuter railroads and the needs of their riders.

The Long Island Rail Road Commuter Council has held initial discussions with LIRR staff about these cars and have forwarded to the Rail Road a set of features that we recommend be included in any new class of cars. We see these discussions as a starting point of a continuing dialogue leading to an improved product at its end. The riders will be living with these cars for the next forty years, and they know what they value in the equipment that they ride, but the value of their combined experience and wisdom can only be tapped if stakeholders are incorporated into the process.