



New York City Transit

January 17, 2013

Mr. John Samuelson
President
Transport Workers Union, Local 100
1700 Broadway, 2nd Floor
New York, New York 10019

Dear Mr.  Samuelson:

Thank you for your January 9, 2013 letter and accompanying suggestions to enhance customer safety in the subway system and your letter of January 14, 2013. The MTA and the Authority share the concerns you expressed in your letter regarding the two recent shoving incidents, as well as the overall concern of platform edge safety.

The issue of subway deaths and injuries that result from individuals being struck by trains has long been a problem for which the Authority has continuously explored opportunities for prevention. Recently, the Authority has implemented several measures to improve customer awareness and to address incident prevention, and there are others in the planning phase. For example, the Authority is in the process of expanding the Help Point Intercom Pilot Program to several additional stations. These intercoms, which will be located at key areas on platforms, allow customers to communicate with either the Station Agent or Station Command at the Rail Control Center.

Additionally, customer communications have been enhanced and will continue to be aggressively improved throughout 2013. These initiatives include station announcements urging customers to stand clear of the platform edge as trains enter the station. This message will also be included in print advertising in English and non-English language newspapers, brochures, posters, metrocards, subway car cards, Public Service Announcements, You Tube Videos, and podcasts via the MTA Website.

The Authority is reviewing the operational and safety impacts to determine if a platform screen door pilot program on the "L" line is feasible. Also being considered is an expansion of the "see something, say something" program to ask the public to be on the lookout for customers acting erratically.

The Authority values input from the Union and will evaluate the suggestions that are included in your letter. However, it is also important to understand that implementing possible solutions to improving safety rashly and without proper evaluation can potentially create hazards that may result in serious injury and/or death. For example, slowing down trains entering into stations, although sounding reasonable on its face, could result in less

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train throughput and fewer trains overall to carry the same number of people. This could result in more crowded platform conditions and a higher probability of customer "space cases," individuals being struck by trains on platforms and possible drag incidents. Therefore, simply instructing employees to reduce speed entering into a station without analyzing the operational impact would not be the prudent course of action.

With respect to your statement that you are advising operators to enter stations with extreme caution to protect the riders and to protect themselves, the Authority has always maintained that employees are expected to operate with caution and strictly adhere to NYCT rules and regulations governing compliance with the allowable speed entering a station. These rules and regulations were promulgated in the first place for the safety of the public and our employees. While the Authority is always open to exploring new ideas to improve public and employee safety, it is not helpful when the Union unilaterally disseminates information and instructions to its members, such as the recent flyer where the Union advises operators to enter every station as if there is a pair of yellow lantern at the entrance. This directive of the Union, however well intended it might be, is contrary to established procedures and may potentially lead to an exacerbation of the risk to our customers. Without sounding combative and taking into consideration our shared concern for the safety of our customers, I cannot emphasize more strongly that these type of actions may actually result in even worse safety conditions occurring and the unintentional consequences that would likely result. For that reason they must not be taken.

The Union and the Authority share similar goals when it comes to safety. I believe we both would agree that it is much more productive when the parties work together. The Authority looks forward to working collaboratively with the Union in the future to improve public and employee safety and to address the important issue of platform safety.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'T. F. Prendergast', with a horizontal line extending to the left.

Thomas F. Prendergast
President

cc: C. Bianco
C. Kennedy
C. Johnson
A. Miller