

Even the NY Post Praises Transit Workers for Sandy Response

Maybe one of these days, the MTA will recognize the value of its own workforce.



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Back on Track

Take a bow, Joe Lhota.

You, too, John Samuelson.

The chairman of the MTA and the boss of Transport Workers Local 100 pretty much performed a miracle — and New York noticed.

It was scarcely two weeks ago that much of New York's 108-year-old subway system was submerged by Superstorm Sandy — the worst storm in its history.

Predictions were dire — understandably so.

But quick as a wink, the system was back, with nearly all lines back to pre-storm quality — which, on most days, is pretty damned good, no matter what the professional MTA whingers say.

Soon enough there will be performance postmortems. By and large, though, competence seems to have predominated.

Lhota, however, has been magnificent.

Also Samuelson — as surrogate for the subway system's 70,000 workers.

When New Yorkers saw seawater gushing into the tunnels two Mondays ago, all expected the worst.

For a while, it seemed those fears were realized — seven tunnels under the East River were inundated; decades-old equipment was destroyed.

Fears that the entire system might be down for a week or longer spread.

But that's not what happened.

Three pump trains almost immediately drained the flooded tunnels.

Services connecting Queens and The Bronx to Midtown Manhattan's 34th street were restored in three days.

By last Monday, service was running between Brooklyn and Manhattan via the critical Lexington Avenue (4, 5, 6) line.

The 2 and 3 followed shortly after that.

Last Thursday, the L train — which connects Williamsburg (and points east) to Manhattan — was partially restored.

Meanwhile, Lhota also made sure his organization kept riders in the loop.

Once the subways restarted, all the details were online; commuters could plan accordingly.

Now, we've had our beefs with Local 100 before — and no doubt we will again. Contract talks are under way, and the union is one of New York's most obstreperous.

But that's for the future.

For now, congratulations to Lhota, Samuelson — and the men and women who made the trains run on time, despite desperate circumstances.

Well done to all involved.



Joe Lhota