

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

GOVERNOR PHIL MURPHY

## GOVERNOR MURPHY ANNOUNCES PLAN TO JUMP START NJ TRANSIT TURNAROUND

*Initial commuter relief plan addresses rail car shortages, increases replacement parts availability and accelerates hiring*

**Trenton** – Governor Phil Murphy and Acting Department of Transportation Commissioner Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti today announced a plan to provide NJ TRANSIT commuters both short and long-term relief from rail car shortages and overcrowded conditions.

Last month, Governor Murphy directed an audit and performance review of NJ TRANSIT but since those changes cannot be executed until the review is complete, Governor Murphy also directed Commissioner Gutierrez-Scaccetti to find and begin implementing immediate improvements to NJ TRANSIT. These short-term changes will be enacted before long-term improvements and audit recommendations can be phased in.

“These are the changes that we can take today to begin to alleviate the constant stress and anxiety experienced by NJ TRANSIT riders associated with catching their trains,” Governor Murphy said. “While the audit is a vital step toward ensuring that NJ TRANSIT becomes a world-class transportation agency, these changes will start to help riders in the short and long term and provide relief for the hundreds of thousands of New Jerseyans who use NJ TRANSIT every day.”

NJ TRANSIT has experienced shortages of rail equipment due to a number of issues including the availability of long-lead and custom manufactured replacement parts, and the ongoing installation of Positive Train Control (PTC). This has resulted in trains operating with fewer cars than usual with commuters experiencing overcrowded conditions.

“We understand the increased frustrations rail commuters have been feeling the past several weeks and this plan will start providing them with some relief in the short term,” said Acting Department of Transportation Commissioner and Chairwoman of NJ TRANSIT’s Board of Directors Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti. “I want to assure customers that this is just the beginning of our effort to restore NJ TRANSIT to the national transportation leader it has been in the past.”

**The Initial Commuter Relief Plan will implement the following changes at NJ TRANSIT within the coming weeks:**

- Twenty cars awaiting PTC equipment will be returned to revenue service as passenger cars only (not as engine control cab cars) to provide additional seating capacity. Five cars have returned to service as of Monday, 2/5/18, with the remaining fifteen cars returning within the coming weeks.
- NJ TRANSIT is finalizing an agreement to lease rail cars from regional transit providers to immediately reduce equipment shortages.
- Regular rolling stock inspections by agency maintenance crews will be accelerated by outsourcing repair work to be performed by the vendor. Inspection scheduling is under review to maximize the available fleet for daily service.
- NJ TRANSIT is meeting with parts suppliers to explore incentives and other options to reduce ordering lead times, while NJ TRANSIT will also increase its inventory of known long-lead parts, such as rail car couplers. New processes will be pursued to ensure parts are delivered before they are needed to avoid rail cars being taken out of revenue service and not being able to meet scheduled service.
- Hiring will be accelerated, pre-employment tests will be held more frequently, and candidate pool sizes will be increased for electricians and other skilled maintenance and operations employees, who are critical to

railyard logistics and equipment maintenance. Human Resources recently held a successful “speed-hiring” event for rail electricians on Saturday, 2/3/18 at Bergen Community College. The event attracted approximately 400 applicants – 232 were immediately tested for the positions of Electrician/Lineman, Signal Maintainers and Communications Trainees. Tests will be scored quickly with personal interviews scheduled and offers extended within the coming days.

NJ TRANSIT will retain outside professional services to assist Rail Operations in evaluating internal processes to monitor and manage equipment levels needed for service.

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