

AUDIT REPORT



CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER
BUREAU OF FINANCIAL AUDIT
WILLIAM C. THOMPSON, JR., COMPTROLLER

Audit Report on the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's Maintenance of Metro-North Railroad Stations Within the City

FN03-075A

April 4, 2003

To the Citizens of the City of New York

Ladies and Gentlemen:

In accordance with Chapter 415, § 1277, of the New York State Public Authorities Law, and the Comptroller's audit responsibilities contained in Chapter 5, § 93, of the New York City Charter, my office has examined the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's maintenance of Metro-North Railroad stations within the City. The New York State Public Authorities Law requires that each local governmental unit reimburse the Metropolitan Transportation Authority for the cost of maintenance, use, and operation of passenger stations (including the costs associated with providing police protection) within each local government's boundaries.

This audit reviewed Metro-North Railroad's maintenance operations and the conditions of its City Stations. The Metropolitan Transportation Authority bill for both Metro North Railroad and Long Island Rail Road City Stations for the period April 1, 2001, through March 31, 2002, totaled \$66,726,002. The results of our audit, which are presented in this report, have been discussed with Metropolitan Transportation Authority and Metro-North Railroad officials, and their comments have been considered in preparing this report. We also conducted an audit of Long Island Rail Road City Stations. The results of that audit are covered in a separate report.

Audits such as this provide a means of ensuring City Stations are properly maintained and are safe for use by the public.

I trust that this report contains information that is of interest to you. If you have any questions concerning this report, please contact my audit bureau at 212-669-8929 or e-mail us at audit@Comptroller.nyc.gov.

Very truly yours,



William C. Thompson, Jr.

WCT/GR

Report: FN03-075A
Filed: April 4, 2003

Table of Contents

AUDIT REPORT IN BRIEF	1
Audit Findings and Conclusions	1
Audit Recommendations	2
INTRODUCTION	2
Background	2
Objectives	3
Scope and Methodology	3
Discussion of Audit Results	3
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	5
Station Conditions	5
Inspection Performed by Metro-North Employees Did Not Result in Correction of Conditions	11
Comparisons of City Station Conditions To Those in Westchester County	11
RECOMMENDATIONS	12
Metro-North Response	12
Appendix I - Photographs of City Stations with Unsafe or Poor Condition	
Appendix II - Photographic Comparison of City Station Conditions with Those in Westchester County	
Addendum - Metro-North Response	

The City of New York
Office of the Comptroller
Bureau of Financial Audit

**Audit Report on the
Metropolitan Transportation Authority's
Maintenance of Metro-North Railroad Stations
Within the City**

FN03-075A

AUDIT REPORT IN BRIEF

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) was created in 1965 by the State of New York to maintain and improve commuter transportation and related services within the Metropolitan Transportation Commuter District—the City of New York as well as Dutchess, Nassau, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Suffolk, and Westchester counties. The New York State Public Authorities Law (NYSPAL) requires that each local governmental unit reimburse the MTA for the cost of maintenance, use, and operation of passenger stations (including the costs associated with providing police protection) within each local government's boundaries.

This audit reviewed Metro-North's maintenance operations and the conditions of its City Stations. The MTA bill for both Metro North Railroad and LIRR City Stations for the period April 1, 2001, through March 31, 2002, totaled \$66,726,002. It should be noted that we are conducting a separate audit—#FN03-074A—of LIRR City Stations. The results of that audit will be covered in a separate report.

Audit Findings and Conclusions

With the exception of the Harlem Line's Tremont, Wakefield, and Fordham stations, Metro-North generally maintained City Stations in a clean and safe condition and corrected the unsafe and unsanitary conditions identified in our prior audit (FN01-191A, issued February 20, 2002). However, these three stations are not properly maintained and have potentially hazardous conditions in need of repair. The conditions, most of which were noted in our prior audit report, included raised metal expansion plates; uneven, cracked and crumbling cement; and deteriorated steps and staircases. Moreover, Metro-North did not correct all of the unsafe conditions noted by its own inspectors at the Tremont and Wakefield stations, and its inspections of the Fordham station were inadequate.

We found that one Harlem Line Station, Woodlawn, was free of problems, and three Harlem Line Stations (Melrose, Botanical Garden, and Williams Bridge), as well as Grand Central Station and the Harlem-125th Street Station, had minor problems. The remaining five City Stations, all on the Hudson Line (Morris Heights, University Heights, Marble Hill, Spuyten Duyvil, and Riverdale) are undergoing capital renovations and therefore have not been cited for any current conditions. Our review also indicated that Metro-North generally followed its standards and procedures for cleaning services and adequately provided police protection at City Stations.

Finally, we found that station conditions were worse, and the quality of repair work was inferior at City Stations when compared to Westchester County Stations. Unlike the Tremont, Wakefield, and

Fordham stations that Metro-North continues to neglect, Metro-North is diligent in maintaining its Harlem Line Westchester County Stations. Our inspections of 26 Westchester County Stations revealed that 25 are properly maintained, with no hazardous conditions evident. Only one Westchester County Station was found to have minor problems. We believe that the residents of New York City are entitled to the same level of service that Metro-North provides to Westchester County residents.

Audit Recommendations

We recommend that the MTA and Metro-North correct all unsafe and dangerous conditions immediately; replace all missing third rail caps and protective sleeve covers immediately; repair the platforms, stairways, and other deteriorated structures identified in this report; clean and remove the graffiti and debris identified in this report; and, ensure that conditions identified by its inspectors are promptly corrected.

Metro-North officials responded that they concur with the report's five recommendations and have addressed the exceptions identified.

INTRODUCTION

Background

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) was created in 1965 by the State of New York to maintain and improve commuter transportation and related services within the Metropolitan Transportation Commuter District. This District encompasses the City of New York as well as Dutchess, Nassau, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Suffolk, and Westchester counties. The New York State Legislature determined that an effective, efficient commuter rail system, reasonably priced, was vital to the continued economic viability of the City and its neighboring counties; and that providing such a service was dependent upon the availability of operating subsidies. Chapter 415, § 1277, of the New York State Public Authorities Law (NYSPAL) of 1966 requires that each local governmental unit reimburse the MTA for the cost of maintenance, use, and operation of passenger stations (including the costs associated with providing police protection) within each local government's boundaries.

Metro-North operates 120 passenger stations, 14 of which are within the City's boundaries (City Stations). After the New York State Legislature amended § 1277 of NYSPAL in June 2000 to establish an annual fixed billing, we reviewed Metro-North's maintenance operations and the condition of its City Stations.¹ Prior to the State fiscal year ending March 31, 2000, we also reviewed the MTA's claim for reimbursement of actual costs associated with the maintenance, use, and operation of Metro-North City Stations to verify whether the costs were reasonable, accurate, and allowed under Chapter 415, § 1277 of NYSPAL. The MTA bill for both Metro-North and the Long Island Rail Road City Stations for the period April 1, 2001, through March 31, 2002, totaled \$66,726,002. It should be noted that we are conducting a separate audit—#FN03-074A—of the Long Island Rail Road City Stations. The results of that audit will be covered in a separate report.

Objectives

The audit's objectives were to determine whether Metro-North:

- Maintained City Stations in a clean and safe condition and whether Metro-North's maintenance efforts at City Stations were equivalent to its efforts at Westchester County Stations;

¹ Under the amendment, the bill is adjusted annually, based on the Consumer Price Index for Wage Earners and Clerical Workers for the New York, Northeastern-New Jersey Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area.

- Corrected unsafe and unsanitary conditions at City Stations identified in the previous report;
- Provided maintenance services for City Stations in accordance with Metro-North's standards and procedures; and,
- Provided adequate police protection at City Stations

Scope and Methodology

This audit covered the period April 1, 2001, through March 31, 2002. We met with Metro-North officials to obtain an understanding of their station maintenance operation. We reviewed Metro-North's standards and procedures for maintaining Grand Central Terminal and its 13 other City Stations, and examined station maintenance and cleaning records to determine Metro-North's compliance with those procedures.

To determine whether Metro-North's City Stations are properly maintained, we inspected the nine Metro-North City Stations not undergoing capital renovation. We documented our inspection results on a checklist and compared them to the conditions listed on Metro-North's Station Customer Service Exceptions Reports and to its Operation Services Station Inspection Reports for each City Station. We visited the five stations that were being renovated to confirm that renovations were actually under way. In addition, we visited 26 stations in Westchester County, to compare Metro-North's maintenance efforts at those stations, with its efforts at City Stations. We also determined whether unsafe and unsanitary conditions noted in our prior audit (#FN01-191A) were corrected.

To determine whether adequate police protection was provided at City Stations, we reviewed police officers' payroll time sheets, daily blotters, and other MTA records that recorded police patrol time at City Stations.

This audit was conducted in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards (GAGAS) and included tests of the records and other auditing procedures considered necessary. This audit was performed in accordance with Chapter 415, § 1277 of NYSPAL, and pursuant to the audit responsibilities of the City Comptroller, as set forth in Chapter 5, § 93, of the New York City Charter.

Discussion of Audit Results

The matters covered in this report were discussed with Metro-North officials during and at the conclusion of this audit. A preliminary draft report was sent to MTA and Metro-North officials and was discussed at an exit conference on January 23, 2003. On January 28, 2003, we submitted a draft report to MTA and Metro-North officials with a request for comments.

We received a written response from Metro-North officials, forwarded by the MTA on February 26, 2003.

In their response, Metro-North officials stated that they "concur with the recommendations made in the audit and has addressed the exceptions identified in the audit." However, Metro-North officials also stated that "all Metro-North Stations are maintained in a state of good repair and safe conditions" and that "characterizations of differences in standards for station maintenance between New York City Stations and Westchester Stations in the audit are inaccurate."

In addition, Metro-North officials stated:

“Comparisons have been drawn to Westchester Stations, which are significantly newer, or recently rehabilitated. Many other Westchester Stations are in similar condition as some New York City Stations. Further, current maintenance costs for some New York City Stations exceed those of some Westchester Stations because of the poor station condition. Major capital work is scheduled, or underway, in one form or another at these stations.”

“All New York City Stations are being addressed by Metro-North’s Capital Program. On the Hudson Line, Morris Heights, Spuyten Duyvil, and Riverdale are under construction. University Heights and Marble Hill are scheduled for construction beginning in January 2004. On the Harlem Line, Melrose, Tremont, Fordham, and Woodlawn will start design this year with construction beginning in the second quarter of 2004. Wakefield is currently under design with construction in the second quarter of 2004.”

Contrary to Metro-North’s response, City Stations are not always “maintained in a state of good repair and safe conditions.” Clearly, as seen in the pictures in Appendix I, three City Stations are not properly maintained, and have potentially hazardous conditions associated with them. We also find it difficult to believe there is no difference in maintenance standards between Westchester County Stations and City Stations, given the glaring differences in station conditions shown in Appendix II. Furthermore, for Metro-North officials to respond that the Westchester County Stations are significantly newer or recently rehabilitated and are similar in condition to some New York City Stations, does not relieve them of their responsibility to address and correct the conditions at the City Stations. Given that the Westchester County Stations along the Harlem Line were recently rehabilitated, we question why the City Stations were not included. We maintain that New York City is entitled to the same level of service that Metro-North is providing to Westchester County.

Finally, we find Metro-North’s statement that “current maintenance costs for some New York City Stations exceed those of some Westchester Stations because of the poor station condition,” to be the most troubling of all since it was obviously Metro-North that allowed the City Stations to fall into such disrepair.

The full text of the Metro-North response is included as an addendum to this final report.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

With the exception of the Harlem Line's Tremont, Wakefield, and Fordham stations, Metro-North generally maintained City Stations in a clean and safe condition and corrected the unsafe and unsanitary conditions identified in our prior audit (FN01-191A, issued February 20, 2002). However, the three stations are not properly maintained and have potentially hazardous conditions in need of repair. The conditions, most of which were noted in our prior audit report, included raised metal expansion plates; uneven, cracked and crumbling cement; and deteriorated steps and staircases. Moreover, Metro-North did not correct all of the unsafe conditions noted by its own inspectors at the Tremont and Wakefield stations, and its inspections of the Fordham station were inadequate.

We found that one Harlem Line Station, Woodlawn, was free of problems, and three Harlem Line Stations (Melrose, Botanical Garden, and Williams Bridge), as well as Grand Central Station and the Harlem-125th Street Station, had minor problems. The remaining five City Stations, all on the Hudson Line (Morris Heights, University Heights, Marble Hill, Spuyten Duyvil, and Riverdale) are undergoing capital renovations and therefore have not been cited for any current conditions. Our review also indicated that Metro-North generally followed its standards and procedures for cleaning services and adequately provided police protection at City Stations.

Finally, we found that station conditions were worse, and the quality of repair work was inferior at City Stations when compared to Westchester County Stations. Unlike the Tremont, Wakefield, and Fordham stations that Metro-North continues to neglect, Metro-North is diligent in maintaining its Harlem Line Westchester County Stations. Our inspections of 26 Westchester County Stations revealed that 25 are properly maintained, with no hazardous conditions evident. Only one Westchester County Station was found to have minor problems. We believe that the residents of New York City are entitled to the same level of service that Metro-North provides to Westchester County residents.

These issues are discussed in more detail in the following sections of this report.

Station Conditions

The following are the specific conditions identified during our observations of the City Stations and the status of those conditions that were noted during the prior audit.

GRAND CENTRAL TERMINAL - (42nd Street and Park Avenue, Manhattan.)

Prior Conditions :

There was broken concrete on the Track 13 platform. Water leaked from the ceilings onto the platform from above Tracks 11, 13, 15, 17, 21, 23, 25, 27, 28, 35, 38, 42, 102, 111, and 112. An expansion joint on the Track 29 platform was raised, making the platform uneven. There were broken platform edges on Tracks 15, 24, and 29. The north-end staircase near Track 18 had broken tiles, and the Track 115 staircase had worn metal treads. Sections of the banisters on the ramps leading to Tracks 27 and 112 were missing. The entrance gates to both Tracks 32 and 42 had broken windowpanes. There was a large amount of litter by the third rail on Track 14.

Current Status :

Partially corrected. The ceilings above Tracks 15, 23, 42, 102, 111, and 112 no longer leak. The concrete on the Track 13 platform, the expansion joint on Track 29, the platform edges on Tracks 24 and 29, the tiles in the north-end staircase near Track 18, the sections of the

banisters on the ramps leading to Tracks 27 and 112, the windowpanes in entrance gates to both Tracks 32 and 42 were all repaired. The litter by the third rail on Track 14 was removed. However, the worn metal treads on the Track 115 staircase and the broken platform edge on Tracks 15 still exist, and water still leaks from the ceilings above Tracks 11, 13, 17, 21, 25, 27, 28, 35, and 38.

Additional Conditions:

Water leaked from the ceilings onto the Tracks 16, 24, 29, 32, 34, 36, 38, 39, 40, 103, 105, and 116 platforms. There were broken platform edges on Tracks 11 and 32. The Tracks 15 and 24 right-of-way had litter. The top step on the north staircase leading to Track 16-17 was broken, causing a tripping hazard. A hole existed in the concrete on the Track 18 platform. The entrance gates to Tracks 29 and 42 had broken windowpanes. The entrance to Track 20 had a large section of marble tile missing. Areas of broken concrete existed near the expansion joint by the entrance and at the bottom of the ramp leading to Track 38. (See photograph on Page 1 in Appendix I.) A raised expansion joint existed on Track 41. There was a missing tile, water damage, and accumulating calcium deposits above the staircase leading to the Northeast Passage lower level. A third rail cap was missing on Track 109. Broken glass was on the north staircase leading to Track 116.

HARLEM - 125th STREET STATION - (E. 125th Street and Park Avenue, Manhattan.)

Prior Conditions:

Third rail protective caps and sleeve covers were missing.

Current Status:

Corrected.

Additional Conditions:

Different third rail protective caps and sleeve covers were missing on Track 3. (See photograph on Page 1 in Appendix I.)

HARLEM LINE

TREMONT STATION - (East Tremont Avenue and Park Avenue, Bronx.)

Prior Conditions:

The northbound entrance and stairway was rusted and had peeling paint. The platform edge on the northbound side had a hole. There were temporary beams supporting the staircases. There was litter on the platform and the surrounding area and graffiti on the station's walls and platform. The northbound and southbound staircases had broken steps. The southbound platform had a loose edge-board and broken concrete. Third rails on the southbound track were exposed and their protective sleeve covers were missing.

Current Status:

Partially corrected. The graffiti was removed, the hole in the platform edge on the northbound platform was repaired, the broken concrete on the southbound platform was patched, protected sleeve covers were

added to the uncovered third rails on the southbound track, and the broken steps on the northbound and southbound staircases were repaired. However, the northbound entrance and stairway were still rusted and the paint was still peeling. The temporary beams were still supporting the staircases. (See photographs on Page 2 in Appendix I.) The edge-board on the southbound platform was still loose. There was still litter on the southbound platform and the surrounding area.

Additional Conditions:

The edge-boards on the northbound track were cracked and splintered. New graffiti exists on the walls of the southbound track. A rusted nail protruded from the bottom step of the southbound staircase.

WAKEFIELD STATION - (East 241st Street, between Bronx River Road and Bronx Boulevard, Bronx.)

Prior Conditions:

Both platforms had large areas of cracked and crumbling cement and broken and loose concrete. The southbound platform had a rusted metal rod protruding from the broken concrete. Paint peeled from the station's canopy and staircases, and there was a hole in the Plexiglas on the southbound staircase. There was graffiti on the platform, the canopy, and the surrounding area.

Current Status:

Partially corrected. The Plexiglas with the hole on the southbound staircase had been replaced, the rusted metal rod protruding from the broken concrete was fixed, and some cement patchwork was completed on both platforms. However, there were still large areas of cracked and crumbling cement on both platforms. (See photographs on Page 3 in Appendix I.) The paint was still peeling from the canopy and the staircases, and the graffiti on the platform, the canopy, and the surrounding area had not been removed.

Additional Conditions:

There was a broken edge-board on the northbound platform and the wood on the northbound and southbound staircases was cracked and split. The southbound track had exposed third rails. (See photograph on Page 4 in Appendix I.)

FORDHAM STATION - (Fordham Road and Webster Avenue, Bronx.)

Prior Conditions:

Third rails were missing protective caps and sleeves. Loose and crumbling concrete under the passenger overpass caused a potentially hazardous condition for passengers. A metal rod protruded from a broken concrete wall on the northbound platform. There was crumbling plaster from the rear wall of the northbound platform. A large area of fallen berries on the southbound platform created an unclean and slippery condition for passengers. There was broken concrete by the edge on the southbound platform, and broken edges that exposed rusted metal rods on the southbound platform.

Current Status :

Partially corrected. Third rail protective caps and sleeves were installed. The large area of fallen berries on the southbound platform was cleaned. The broken concrete by the edge on the southbound platform, and the broken edges on the southbound platform were repaired. However, the loose and crumbling concrete under the passenger overpass still posed a hazardous condition for passengers. The metal rod still protruded from the broken concrete wall on the northbound platform. The plaster on the rear wall of the northbound platform was still crumbling.

Additional Conditions :

Although third rail covers were replaced, there were different third rail caps and sleeves missing. (See photographs on Pages 4 and 5 in Appendix I.) The northbound shelter lacked three Plexiglas panels. There was extensive litter behind the shelter on the northbound platform. An edge-board on the northbound platform was rotted. Water leaked from the ticket office building onto the front of the southbound platform. Paint was peeling from the ticket office ceiling above the Ticket Vending Machine.

MELROSE STATION - (East 162nd Street and Park Avenue, Bronx.)

Prior Conditions :

The ceiling over the southbound platform leaked. There was broken concrete on the northbound and southbound platforms. Broken edges on the northbound platform left metal rods exposed. Litter and broken glass were on the northbound platform.

Current Status :

Partially corrected. The ceiling over the southbound platform no longer leaked. The concrete on the northbound and southbound platforms and the broken edges on the northbound platform were repaired. However, litter and broken glass remained on the northbound platform.

Additional Conditions :

There was broken concrete at the bottom of the northbound staircase causing the stairway banister to become loose, and the edge-boards on the southbound platform were broken. (See photographs on Pages 5 and 6 in Appendix I.) An area on the southbound platform was not cleaned. There was broken glass on both of the station's Customer Information Displays.

BOTANICAL GARDEN STATION - (Southern Blvd. and Bedford Park Blvd., Bronx.)

Prior Conditions :

Third rails lacked protective sleeves and caps. There was a cracked window on the southbound pedestrian overpass. Graffiti was on the southbound platform.

Current Status :

Partially corrected. The third rail sleeves and caps were replaced, and the cracked window in the southbound pedestrian overpass was replaced. However, graffiti was still on the southbound platform.

Additional Conditions: The northbound shelter had a broken window. (See photograph on Page 6 in Appendix I.) There was graffiti below the southbound platform.

WILLIAMS BRIDGE STATION - (Gun Hill Road and Webster Avenue, Bronx.)

Prior Conditions: There were exposed third rails on both the northbound and southbound tracks. The northbound platform shelter had two broken windows. There was litter at the rear of the northbound platform and graffiti on the platform, the canopy, and the adjacent wall.

Current Status: Corrected.

Additional Conditions: The northbound shelter had a cracked window. Paint was peeling from the southbound canopy. Graffiti was noted on the edge-boards at the rear of the southbound platform and on the ramp at the rear of the northbound platform.

WOODLAWN STATION - (East 233rd Street, between Webster Avenue and Bronx Boulevard, Bronx.)

Prior Conditions: None.

Current Status: No problems were found at this station at the time of our observations.

HUDSON LINE

MORRIS HEIGHTS STATION - (West 177th Street and Sedgwick Avenue, Bronx.)

Prior Conditions: A raised metal expansion plate at the entrance posed a possible tripping hazard. There were exposed third rails without caps on the northbound and southbound tracks. The southbound side of the platform had loose, splintered, and missing sections of its edge-boards. There was loose concrete on the northbound side of the platform.

Current Status: This station is currently undergoing capital renovations, and, therefore, has not been cited for any current conditions.

UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS STATION - (West Fordham Road and Major Deegan Expressway, Bronx.)

Prior Conditions: The platform had cracked and crumbling cement. Sections of the platform had several large holes that exposed rusted metal rods. The northbound and southbound tracks had exposed sections of third rails.

Current Status: This station is currently undergoing capital renovations, and, therefore, has not been cited for any current conditions.

MARBLE HILL STATION - (West 225th Street, west of Broadway, Bronx.)

Prior Conditions: There were exposed sections of third rails on the northbound track. Broken concrete created several holes on the northbound side of the platform. Broken concrete left exposed metal at the rear area of the southbound side of the platform. The southbound side of the platform had missing edge-board sections. There was broken glass on the northbound side of the platform.

Current Status: This station is currently undergoing capital renovations, and, therefore, has not been cited for any current conditions.

SPUYTEN DUYVIL STATION - (Edsell Avenue, off Johnson Avenue, Bronx.)

Prior Conditions: The northbound platform had cracked and broken edge-boards.

Current Status: This station is currently undergoing capital renovations, and, therefore, has not been cited for any current conditions.

RIVERDALE STATION - (West 254th Street, near the Hudson River, Bronx.)

Prior Conditions: The southbound and northbound platforms had cracked and crumbling cement. The stairway railing was rusted, pipes in the waiting area

canopy and the overhead staircase had peeling paint, and there was graffiti on the walls of the northbound platform. Portions of the station's third rails still lacked caps and sleeves. A metal tread plate on the southbound platform staircase was loose.

Current Status: This station is currently undergoing capital renovations, and, therefore, has not been cited for any current conditions.

Inspections Performed by Metro-North Employees Did Not Result in Correction of Conditions

Metro-North did not correct all of the unsafe conditions noted by its own inspectors at the Tremont and Wakefield stations. For example, inspectors from the Customer Service Department stated in their May 2001 inspection report that the Tremont Station's platform edge-boards were cracked and worn. We observed these same conditions more than a year later, in August 2002.

From April 2001 through October 2001, Metro-North's Operations Services Department reported that the staircases needed to be replaced at the Wakefield station. Furthermore, a March 2002 inspection by the Customer Service Department reported that the staircase and the station's platform were deteriorating, and that paint was peeling from the roof over the stairway. In their inspection reports, both Departments continually commented on the deterioration of the platform's concrete, and stated that the patchwork repairs were "not holding." As with the Tremont station, we observed these same conditions during our inspections of the Wakefield station in August 2002. (See photographs on pages 5 and 6 in Appendix I and pages 1, 2, and 3 in Appendix II.)

Finally, of particular concern is that the Metro-North inspection reports did not reflect the poor and potentially hazardous conditions that we found at the Fordham station. Metro-North inspectors reported in May 2001 and June 2002 that the Fordham station had only minor conditions in need of repair. However, we found during both the current and prior year's inspections: loose and crumbling concrete under the passenger overpass; a metal rod protruding from a broken concrete wall on the northbound platform; and, crumbling plaster on the rear wall of the northbound platform. Obviously, these conditions are not minor.

Comparison of City Stations To Those in Westchester County

We found that the majority of Harlem Line stations located in Westchester County are newly renovated and 25 of the 26 stations are properly maintained, with no hazardous conditions evident. The remaining station—Greystone—had only a hole in the overpass. We visited the 26 Harlem Line stations in Westchester to compare Metro-North's maintenance efforts at those stations with its efforts at City Stations. By comparison, three of the seven Harlem Line stations located within the City have, as previously stated, potentially hazardous conditions that are in need of repair. Only one City Station on the Harlem Line (Woodlawn) had no reportable conditions because this station had been fully renovated in 2000.

Moreover, it appears that the quality of repairs in Westchester County is much better than the quality of repairs made at City Stations. We found numerous instances where concrete patchwork on the platforms of the City Stations was irregularly patched, uneven, and where the patchwork did not adhere to the surfaces and was cracking and crumbling. In contrast, platform repairs for the Westchester County Stations were consistently smooth and uniform, and were evenly matched with the

exiting concrete structure. (See photographs on pages 1, 2, and 6 in Appendix II.)

Also, there were explicit differences between the stairways at the Westchester Harlem Line Stations and those at four City Harlem Line Stations—Tremont, Fordham (see photographs on pages 3 and 4 in Appendix II), Melrose, and Wakefield. Finally, all the station shelters along the Harlem Line in Westchester County were clean and in perfect condition, while shelters at three City Stations—Fordham (see photographs on page 5 in Appendix II), Botanical Garden, and Williams Bridge—are damaged, with missing or broken panels and cracked or broken glass.

As discussed throughout this report, Metro-North has not addressed many of the conditions cited in previous reports and continues to neglect certain City Stations. We are perplexed as to why Metro-North is so diligent in maintaining Westchester County Stations while ignoring the ongoing problems at City Stations. We believe that the residents of New York City are entitled to the same level of service that Metro-North provides to Westchester County residents.

Since the City pays the MTA based on a fixed bill, the Comptroller's Office does not have the right to review the amounts spent on maintaining City Stations. Thus, we could not evaluate whether Metro-North spent comparable amounts maintaining City and Westchester County Stations.

Recommendations

MTA and Metro-North should:

1. Correct all unsafe and hazardous station conditions immediately.
2. Replace all missing third rail caps and protective sleeve covers immediately.
3. Repair the platforms, stairways, and other deteriorated structures identified in this report.
4. Clean and remove the graffiti and debris identified in this report.
5. Ensure that conditions identified by its inspectors are promptly corrected.

Metro-North Response: Metro-North officials agreed with the report's recommendations. As part of Metro-North's response, its Structures, Power, and Operations Departments described the actions that they have taken in response to the station conditions cited in this report. These actions included replacing third rail covers and caps; repairing platform concrete, staircases, and walkways; removing graffiti; and replacing broken glass.