



Office of the MTA Inspector General
Daniel G. Cort



mtaig.ny.gov
Release #04-2025

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
THURSDAY, MAY 1, 2025**

**CONTACT: ERIC LENKOWITZ
DANIKA FEARS
press@mtaig.org
212.878.0000**

DESPITE DANGERS, SUBWAY PASSENGERS SELF-EVACUATING DURING EMERGENCIES; TRAIN CREW ANNOUNCEMENTS CAN BE IMPROVED

MTA Inspector General Daniel G. Cort announced today the results of an audit that found that subway passengers are endangering themselves by self-evacuating onto the tracks — sometimes as soon as two minutes into delays — and that such incidents could be reduced with better communication by train crews and better public messaging by New York City Transit (NYC Transit).

The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) audit found 46 instances of subway self-evacuations from 2015 to 2024 — including during delays after a collision and derailment on the 1/2/3 line in Manhattan on January 4, 2024. During that incident, some passengers on one of the derailed trains and two other trains that were stuck between stations chose to self-evacuate onto the tracks without any instructions from the crew or emergency responders to do so.

The audit found that during emergency incidents, crew members should make better announcements about the dangers of walking along the tracks and that passengers should remain on board for their safety and to prevent further service delays.

“It’s alarming that passengers are going onto the tracks, where they risk electrocution or getting hit by trains,” said IG Daniel Cort. “Evacuation between stations should be an absolute last resort and only after receiving instructions and guidance from New York City Transit personnel or first responders.”

OIG’s audit began following the January 4, 2024 derailment. The purpose was to learn the extent of self-evacuations from subway trains and the adequacy of NYC Transit’s onboard emergency communications to passengers.

Among the findings:

- From 2015 to 2024, there were 46 self-evacuation incidents, with approximately one-third occurring on the 4/5/6 lines.

Self-Evacuation Incidents by Line Group (January 2015 to December 2024)

Line Group	No. of Self-Evacuation Incidents	Percent of Total
4 5 6	15	33%
A C E	10	22%
1 2 3	7	15%
N Q R W	4	9%
L	3	7%
J Z	3	7%
B D F M	3	7%
7	1	2%
Grand Total	46	100%

- Passengers risk electrocution or being struck by a moving train by going onto the railbed without instruction. Such action also leads to increased service delays, as NYC Transit personnel must ensure those passengers are no longer on the tracks.
- Passengers who self-evacuated often did so soon after the delay began. In 18 of the reviewed incidents, passengers self-evacuated within 30 minutes of the start of the delay. The shortest interval before self-evacuation was *two minutes*.
- Train crew members did not always remind passengers to remain on board during emergencies or warn passengers of the dangers of self-evacuating.
- Most NYC Transit train personnel with whom OIG spoke were not aware of the requirement that during emergencies a train operator must make passenger announcements when the conductor is unavailable to do so.

OIG made six recommendations to NYC Transit to help reduce self-evacuations and improve communications with customers. They include how NYC Transit should make better use of its incident data to monitor self-evacuation patterns and increase efforts to educate the riding public about the dangers of exiting a train onto the railbed.

NYC Transit accepted four of the recommendations and is reviewing the other two.

[Read the full report here.](#)

The MTA Inspector General encourages all members of the public to reach out to report suspected fraud, waste, or abuse at any of the MTA agencies.

Online: <https://mtaig.ny.gov/Pages/ComplaintForm.aspx>

Phone: 1-800.MTA.IG4U (1.800.682.4448)

Email: complaints@mtaig.org