

Case Study - Commuter Railway

The Customer

Long Island Rail Road (L.I.R.R.), part of New York's Metropolitan Transportation Authority, is the largest commuter railway in North America. They have over 700 miles (1130 km) of track, with 11 different branches and 126 stations.

The Problem

Since L.I.R.R. serves the New York area, the “city that never sleeps,” it cannot afford to have any of its lines down for any appreciable time. As a result, they are regularly conducting track maintenance operations on “live track” with trains still running on it. As you can imagine, this presents the potential for a very serious safety risk to track maintenance crews.

Traditionally, each crew has included a pair of spotters who stand on either side of the track being worked on to watch for oncoming trains. To notify the crew of an oncoming train, they have historically used a disposable gas air horn. These air horns use a compressed gas and last approximately 60-90 seconds before they have to be replaced—and that is under ideal conditions. In less than ideal conditions, especially in the winter, the compressed gas air horns will last far less than 60 seconds or will not work at all.

The Solution

This reliability issue with compressed gas air horns caused L.I.R.R. to explore other options. In 2018, L.I.R.R. reached out to WoodsCan Industries Inc. to investigate if the Hornet rechargeable electric air horn could be used as a more reliable safety signalling solution, particularly in winter conditions. The Hornet will reliably operate for 35 minutes on a single battery charge, it can be recharged 500 times, and it works well in freezing temperatures.

After trying and being completely satisfied with an initial order of 50 Hornets, L.I.R.R. procured over 200 units to fully equip their entire track maintenance team and have been using the Hornet air horns exclusively ever since.



Because of this working relationship between L.I.R.R. and WoodsCan, a Railway Safety Kit version of the Hornet was developed, which includes a special break-away shoulder strap that releases under 25 lbs or more tension.

Additional Applications

They have also expanded the use of Hornet rechargeable air horns to include safety spotting while power washing and removing snow from station platforms.

Learn more about the [Hornet Railway Safety Kit](#) on our [website](#) or contact us directly at info@woodscan.com with any questions or for assistance in locating a dealer near you.