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Monday, September 23, 2013

MTA forms rail safety panel

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New York's Metropolitan Transportation Authority has appointed six people to a Blue Ribbon Panel to study the causes of rail accidents and incidents, including the major **derailment last May on Metro-North's New Haven Line and several train-car accidents on the Long Island Rail Road.**

Panel members include: Louis Cerny, former executive director of the American Railway Engineering Association; Mortimer Downey, former MTA executive director and former U.S. Deputy Secretary of

Transportation; former House Rep. Jack Quinn (R-N.Y.); University of Illinois senior research engineer Conrad Ruppert Jr., former U.S. Secretary of Transportation Rodney Slater; and former Union Pacific Railroad executive William Van Trump.

"These six experts are widely respected in their field and uniquely qualified to review maintenance and workplace practices, protocols and strategies that may have a relation to these recent incidents," MTA Chairman and CEO Thomas Prendergast said in a statement. "We want to learn lessons so these particular problems never happen again, but we also want to make sure the MTA has a rigorous safety culture that ensures every employee works to prevent unforeseen problems in the future."

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