



NEW YORK CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT

**TESTIMONY OF FIRE COMMISSIONER NICHOLAS SCOPPETTA
BEFORE THE NATIONAL COMMISSION ON TERRORIST ATTACKS
UPON THE UNITED STATES**

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I. Introduction

Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and Commissioners. I am pleased to have this opportunity to discuss the Fire Department's very substantial progress toward enhancing its preparedness since 9/11. As you know, I became Fire Commissioner on January 1, 2002.

In the aftermath of the World Trade Center (WTC) attacks, and the loss of 343 members with over 4,400 years of collective experience, the New York City Fire Department (FDNY or the Department) faced an enormous challenge. We needed to simultaneously conduct a massive recovery effort at the WTC site, replace lost equipment, hire and train new personnel, attend hundreds of funerals and memorial services, and begin the difficult process of developing new strategies, procedures, training methods and technologies to enhance our preparedness for future acts of terrorism. More than two and a half years later, I am proud to say that the Department has met this historic challenge with bravery, dedication and honor. We are more prepared to respond to major acts of terrorism than we were on 9/11.

Among other accomplishments, the FDNY has replaced all apparatus and equipment lost on 9/11 and re-staffed to pre-9/11 levels, albeit with much less experienced personnel. We have provided our Firefighters with counter-terrorism training and have begun comprehensive Incident Command System (ICS) training for all 2,751 fire officers. We now have two fully trained Incident Management Teams (IMTs), 21 strategically located ladder companies trained in HazMat and technical rescue, 20 Haz-Tac ambulances staffed with HazMat-trained personnel, and numerous fire companies throughout the City trained to perform "hot-zone" rescues in Chemical Protective Clothing.

In partnership with the Combating Terrorism Center at the United States Military Academy (USMA), we have developed and delivered an innovative graduate level counter-terrorism preparedness course for Battalion Chiefs and

Captains. And in partnership with Columbia University and General Electric, we are providing advanced management training for our senior Chiefs.

We also have deployed improved handie-talkie radios and implemented an effective three-component fireground communications system to complement the new radios. We are making progress toward enhancing our operations center and have developed new procedures to improve recall and staging. All of these initiatives, and many more, are part of the Department's recently released *Strategic Plan for 2004-2005*, the first strategic plan ever issued by the FDNY in its nearly 140-year history.

While the Department is rightfully proud of its accomplishments in rebuilding and enhancing preparedness since 9/11, much remains to be done. I will detail the Department's progress and future plans in a number of key areas.

II. Apparatus, Equipment and Staffing

The Department has replaced all apparatus and equipment lost on 9/11. This includes 91 pieces of fire and Emergency Medical Service (EMS) apparatus, and an enormous number of tools, supplies and other equipment. While FEMA provided funds to replace the apparatus and equipment lost on 9/11, the Department spent an additional \$15 million, which was not reimbursed, shortly after 9/11 for equipment, supplies and vehicles to ensure readiness.

The Department has added some significant new pieces of apparatus, including a state-of-the-art mobile command vehicle that should be delivered to us within a couple of months. We have a number of advanced EMS apparatus on order, such as a Mobile Emergency Response Vehicle (MERVE) and an oxygen response vehicle.

Since 9/11 we have trained on and deployed an array of new equipment to advance our capacity to respond to weapons of mass destruction (WMD) incidents. Such equipment includes:

- Dosimeters (radiation detectors) for all riding positions on fire apparatus.
- RAD Alert 50 detectors deployed to every firefighting unit.
- More than 200 Level A suits assigned to fully equip 21 ladder and three engine companies throughout the response matrix.
- An equipment cache including a package to provide 900 recalled Firefighters with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other equipment.
- A second collapse truck with associated equipment to shore up rubble and conduct safe rescue operations in major collapses.
- Technical rescue equipment, including snake-eye cameras, “search cams,” and life-detector systems to provide rescuers with tools to detect if there is life deep within a collapse or other problematic environments.
- An air purified respirator (APR) has been issued to all EMS personnel for use as an escape mask.

Recently, the Department’s headcount reached pre-9/11 levels and now slightly exceeds it, to meet ordinary attrition. To accomplish this, the FDNY has hired and trained 2,668 new Firefighters in less than two and a half years. The Department also has promoted 1,543 fire officers during this period to fill the vacancies left by the devastating events of 9/11 and the extraordinary number of retirements that followed.

Our new members are bright, talented and eager, but obviously inexperienced. Similarly, at all supervisory levels our workforce is younger and less experienced than ever before. This makes training more important than ever.

III. Training

Training is among the Department's very highest priorities. Our Training Academy continues to provide excellent basic training for all probationary Firefighters and a wide array of in-service training for Firefighters, Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs), Paramedics, and fire and EMS officers. Since 9/11, a number of special counter-terrorism training initiatives have been planned and implemented, and additional courses are now being developed. All of these efforts are being guided by a newly appointed Chief of Training who has more than 25 years of experience in the field and who is assessing how we can do even more to prepare our members. The Department will in turn seek Federal grants to fund future training initiatives. As with almost every topic I will discuss today, we have accomplished a great deal to date, yet much more still needs to be done to continue to enhance our preparedness.

A. Training since 9/11

New training initiatives since 9/11 include the following:

- All FDNY uniformed and EMS members have received at least one eight-hour "Emergency Response to Terrorism" course.
- All new Firefighters are receiving a 16-hour "Emergency Response to Terrorism" course.
- All new Firefighters are given a total of 40 hours of combined HazMat and terrorism awareness training.
- All officers are receiving an appropriate level of ICS training, from 16 hours for fire Lieutenants to 40 hours for fire Captains, Chiefs, EMS Lieutenants and more senior officers.
- 75 Firefighters and 10 officers have received 80 hours of training and three HazMat Technician units have been created.

- 55 EMTs and 56 Paramedics have received 64 hours of HazMat training to field 10 EMS HazTac ambulances so that now we have a total of 20 units.
- All fire officers have been trained to use the RAD Alert 50 detector; this training has been included in our First Line Supervisor's Training Program and given to EMS' HazTac Battalion.
- Over 625 members have been trained to field 21 Ladder Support Companies; these members received 40 hours of HazMat training and 40 hours of specialized rescue training.
- Through a rigorous training program, HazMat 1, which had lost 80 percent of its members on 9/11 or immediately after due to retirement, is proceeding with an intensive training program. These Firefighters and officers receive, among other advanced, specialized courses, an 80-hour accredited, college-level chemistry course, and training in Radiation Awareness, Bomb Awareness, Live Nerve Agent Awareness, Rail/Tankers, and Infrared detection systems.
- Five senior officers are attending the Naval Post Graduate School in California to obtain a Masters Degree in Homeland Security.
- 10 officers are attending a three-week course at the National Fire Academy to be certified as Master Exercise Project Directors.
- Eight officers attended a 32-hour Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) exercise Development course sponsored by the City's Office of Emergency Management (OEM).
- We are training 50 of our top EMTs to the Paramedic level with a 1,100-hour training program to begin to address a critical Paramedic shortage that could prove disastrous in a mass-casualty incident.

We will provide additional training, including the following, for which we are already funded:

- An eight-hour WMD course will be given to the entire Fire and EMS workforce to cover HazMat Action Plans, recall procedures and terrorism recognition.
- Our Captains, who often are called upon to serve as scene commanders, will undergo 40 hours training in incident management procedures.
- Chiefs will receive 40 hours of Emergency Scene Command Training with emphasis on WMD operations, and command and control tactics.
- To add response capabilities to first-line units, we will provide all necessary training to create: one additional HazMat Technician Unit for a total of four such units; 14 engine companies to serve as decontamination (decon) units; four additional Special Operations Command (SOC) ladder support companies for a total of 25. We will also train 75 officers to cover or take over command of these and other newly enhanced units.
- To ensure that our apparatus drivers are prepared for catastrophic events, all 2,400 chauffeurs will receive eight hours of WMD operations and mass decon training.
- All SOC members, including the Marine Division, as well as 21 land-based companies comprising the first due marine response matrix, will be trained in shipboard firefighting.
- Plans are in place for the Master Exercise Planner program, FDNY Officers Management Institute and the USMA/FDNY counter-terrorism preparedness course to continue.

Clearly, there is a great deal of training underway and planned that will continue to increase our overall preparedness. I will discuss funding issues in

detail shortly, but it must be emphasized that without Federal assistance, the preparedness training we need would simply not be possible. In this area, as with others, there is much more to be done. Numerous new training initiatives beyond those I have described are in the early planning stages and we will seek to have those programs funded. Please bear in mind that the initiatives I described are being done while personnel also receive all required in-service and refresher training (e.g., training on mask use and fire tools, and State-mandated refresher training for EMS).

B. Incident Management Teams (IMTs)

Working with the U.S. Forestry Service, which has extensive experience using ICS at complex, long-duration incidents, the FDNY developed two 32-member IMTs. Initial training focusing on specialized management functions such as operations, planning, logistics and resource management, was completed in April 2003. In August 2003, the Department began sending IMT members for hands-on training at major incidents in the western United States. Members of the FDNY IMTs continue their extensive training with Federal instructors.

Currently, the Department's IMTs are on-call and ready to respond to any large-scale incident at the direction of the Chief of Department. The Department also has in place a fully operational incident management system for handling urban terrorist incidents.

C. Advanced Counter-terrorism and Management Training

To better understand terrorism threats to New York City and the nation, the FDNY partnered with the USMA's Combating Terrorism Center at West Point to develop a leadership-training program. This 14-week graduate level course was given to 34 FDNY officers, including Battalion Chiefs, Captains, Supervising Fire Marshals and EMS Deputy Chiefs and Captains. Participants attended a

series of seminars, taught by military experts in the field of terrorism, and worked on group projects that address issues critical to the Department.

This innovative program will continue this fall with another class of FDNY leaders. In addition, our partnership with West Point is expanding to include a series of counter-terrorism lectures and seminars with FDNY's senior Chiefs. This important joint venture assists the FDNY by developing and educating its leaders, networking them with other agencies that deal with homeland security issues, and providing a vital link with the military sector and local first responders.

The Department continues to benefit from the advice and technical assistance provided by our Counter-terrorism Advisory Taskforce, led by former CIA Director Jim Woolsey. Taskforce representatives will conduct a tabletop exercise in June that will test preparedness plans for the Republican National Convention.

The Department has sought to strengthen its management and planning capabilities by providing its most senior Fire and EMS Officers with additional training in management principles, best practices and skills. Through a partnership with the private and academic sectors, the Department established the custom-designed FDNY Officers Management Institute (FOMI). This management-focused training is provided by the Columbia University School of International and Public Affairs and taught at General Electric's Jack Welch Management Training Center.

To date, 39 senior Fire and EMS Chiefs have attended this management immersion course, in which participants attend seminars led by leading experts and complete team projects in areas where the Department is seeking management and efficiency improvements.

IV. Communications and Technology

The Department has addressed its most urgent radio communications needs since 9/11. This major accomplishment has been achieved through the

painstaking work of many uniformed and civilian members of the FDNY, who worked together over a period of many months to refine, test, evaluate, pilot and ultimately implement the new radio system. This group also created an excellent training video that greatly assisted the transition to the new modified radios.

A. Radio System

It is critically important to understand that there is simply no 100 percent, foolproof radio system. Moreover, even the best radios cannot always penetrate high-rise buildings, subway tunnels and other difficult environments. That is why we have insisted on not focusing solely on the handie-talkie radio carried by fire personnel, but on creating an integrated system that utilizes multiple components to optimize the radios' performance.

Specifically, the Department successfully tested and deployed newly modified handie-talkie radios to the field in February 2003. These analog radios have several features that provide significant advantages over the previous digital model. The Department's radios now have an emergency alert function, many more channels, and use the UHF band, which allows for greater penetration in buildings and allows for interoperability among Fire, EMS and other emergency service agencies, including the New York City Police Department (NYPD). The radios operate at a higher basic power level (two watts) and can be boosted to five watts on a pre-defined per channel basis. In addition, analog radios are generally more efficient during incidents when many Firefighters and officers are attempting to communicate at the same time over the same frequency. The analog radios allow for more messages to get through without being "stepped on" by other messages, which was a significant flaw with the digital radios.

To provide increased reliability when the handie-talkies are used in high-rise buildings, a system was developed that consists of the handie-talkies, high-powered post radios and Battalion car repeaters. Post radios are interoperable-capable 45-watt radios, which were designed initially for use by the Incident

Commander at the command post. Because they fit in a small specially designed hard-shell suitcase and are light enough to be carried, they can be used at any assigned post within a high-rise.

Our new-generation vehicle crossband repeaters have proved to be extremely successful in boosting radio signals in high-rise and other complex environments. Having the capability to bring our own enhanced repeater to the fireground has strengthened our communications enormously. We no longer have to rely entirely on an in-building repeater. Many buildings do not have repeater systems and those that do may lose the ability to boost radio signals when damaged during the very incident to which we are responding. Because of the effectiveness and strategic import of this package of communications enhancements, the Department has acquired 75 post radios. They are now deployed throughout the City. We now have 13 Battalion car repeaters installed, enough for each Battalion car and Division commander who typically respond to the high-rise environment, and we plan to acquire more.

Taken together, these enhanced features measurably improve the communications capabilities of the Department. All of these components, with particular emphasis on the handie-talkie, were exhaustively tested and piloted in the field; the Department compiled literally thousands of evaluations from Firefighters and officers, and utilized the data to demand refinements from the manufacturer before full deployment. The result has been that our field personnel are very satisfied with the new radio system; this represents a critical step forward in improving fireground communications.

B. Interoperability

It is critical that the Department's communications capacity be completely interoperable both internally – between Fire and EMS personnel – and externally, with the NYPD and numerous other emergency response agencies. Fire and EMS personnel can now communicate directly on the fireground using the new handie-talkies because all of those radios utilize UHF, and we now have the capability of using the same channels. The same is true for FDNY communications with the NYPD, because its portable radios are also both UHF and analog.

Interoperable radio communication has been further enhanced through the installation of a new piece of equipment called the TRP-1000 in the Department's two Field Communications units. The TRP-1000 takes any and all radio frequencies in use and directs them so that personnel on any frequency can hear and communicate with personnel on any other frequency. This allows FDNY Chiefs using their new radios to "patch in" to communicate directly with other City personnel, for example OEM and NYPD, and with the FBI and other Federal agencies.

The City has developed redundant capacity for this important new piece of equipment, as both OEM and NYPD also have this unit. In addition, all FDNY SOC personnel, Chiefs and SOC Ladder Support Companies have the capability to communicate with the NYPD on a dedicated tactical channel ("TAC U"). This is a police frequency that we have programmed into the handie-talkies of all chief officers and all FDNY units that have HazMat suit capability. Working with key staff from the NYPD, we have developed operational protocols to effect this interagency communication. Of course, true interoperability requires training, drills and actual experience. These drills and experiences will ensure that new interoperability protocols and procedures are being followed. Just two days ago a major drill was conducted in downtown Manhattan; there, we tested our interoperable communications equipment, including the TRP-1000, which allows

personnel on any radio frequency to hear and communicate with personnel from multiple agencies (including Federal agencies) on up to 10 different frequencies.

C. Technology

Spearheaded by a recently formed Technology Oversight Committee (TOC), the Department has made substantial progress toward the development of several key technological enhancements.

The Fire Department Operations Center (FDOC) serves as a critical hub for information flowing between the Department and other City, State and Federal agencies. Utilizing the ICS system, FDOC personnel are assigned specific roles to facilitate communications, planning, logistics and other areas. During the past year, the Department has improved the FDOC's capacities by upgrading telecommunications and procedures. In the event of a major incident, key senior Chiefs will report to the FDOC to provide citywide command and control, and operational planning. The FDOC now has the technological infrastructure to receive live video feeds not only from NYPD helicopters, but also from our own satellite camera system. While these improvements are significant, much more needs to be done to create the state-of-the-art facility we need.

That is why the Department released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a consultant to assist in the development of the FDOC. Utilizing Federal grant funds, the Department has retained a consultant who has begun a comprehensive needs assessment based on specifications the Department developed with the consultant. The Department has requested additional funding to ensure that the FDOC can be a fully functioning off-site command post.

The FDOC will provide our commanders with the resources necessary to facilitate better situational awareness. The plan for the FDOC calls for technological improvements such as video teleconferencing, the ability to analyze data from wireless command boards in the field and an enhanced

Geographical Information System (GIS). From the FDOC, Chiefs should be able to establish the Department's operational priorities during resource-taxing events, analyze resource availability and initiate a recall or call for mutual aid. The FDOC could be used as a regional command post if necessary, and will serve as the information backbone for ICS support functions. We are aiming to fulfill this vision within the coming year.

Large-scale incidents of the kind potentially confronting the Department require the management of large amounts of information regarding the deployment of personnel and equipment. The response to the World Trade Center attacks on September 11, 2001, highlight how essential it is to manage resources and safeguard information recorded at a command post.

The Department has been at the forefront of the development of Electronic Command Boards (ECBs), which will enable Chiefs to communicate wirelessly between several ECB's at an incident and download critical information to the FDOC in real time. These wireless ECBs, once adapted to meet the rugged conditions in which we operate, will replace the magnetic board traditionally used by Chiefs to track units at an incident. With ECBs, the Department can store and transmit current deployment information at all times. The portable, wireless, PC-based ECBs will have much greater functionality than existing magnetic command boards and can help the Incident Commander with Firefighter tracking, communications and tactical coordination tasks. These PC-based wireless boards will be able to store and display maps and building plans. This enables a Chief to review structural and other characteristics of buildings and zoom in on specific floors or building areas. They also can be used to store databases of detailed hazards and FDNY procedures. This critical information must be captured using modern technology so that information can be disseminated quickly and simultaneously backed up in a remote location such as the FDOC.

In partnership with New York University's Center for Advanced Technology, prototype ECBs have been researched and developed. FDNY's

TOC has recently completed a review from three vendors who responded to an RFP for ECB production. In addition, the TOC is researching technology that would incorporate a Firefighter accountability system. This would enable the Incident Commander to locate and identify all Firefighters and other emergency responders who are at an incident.

The ability to use a deployment and tracking model to analyze resource data from both Fire and EMS in real time is critical for modernizing the Department's planning and response capacity. The Department's current unit deployment and tracking model for fire resources can predict response times, but cannot be used to analyze or improve deployment in real time. It also lacks an interface with EMS, which currently operates without a computer model.

The Department has researched various deployment and tracking models and has obtained grant funds to purchase a state-of-the-art, computerized unit-tracking and deployment model. This model will use dispatch data to optimize response to and coverage of routine operations and large-scale incidents. Integrating computer analytical capabilities with real-time response data and the identification of the availability of specialized manpower and apparatus resources will greatly improve the safety of both emergency responders and the public.

Since 9/11, the Department has studied ways to enhance EMS radio communications and will establish a second EMS citywide radio channel to support EMS operations in responding to multiple-casualty incidents. The Department has already obtained Federal grant funding for this project, which will allow a dedicated EMS channel to handle a large-scale incident, while permitting other existing channels to handle day-to-day communications. The Department is modifying current procedures, protocols and staffing needs to effectively utilize the second channel. The Department has set a target date of July 15, 2004 to make the second EMS citywide channel operational.

In addition, the City's Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications is coordinating the development of a centralized emergency

dispatch system in which a new Citywide Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system will be implemented. The Department is participating fully in the design of this new CAD system.

The system will integrate FDNY, FDNY-EMS, NYPD and NYPD-Transit dispatch operations into two redundant, resilient centers housing call-takers and agency-specific dispatchers. State-of-the-art technologies will shorten overall response time and enhance the level of service provided to the public by improving interoperability, eliminating call transfers and repetition of information to different agencies, eliminating single points of failure, and optimizing the mix of emergency resource dispatches.

V. Operations

Of course, the purpose of all the training and technology enhancements I have discussed is to improve our operational preparedness. This is also being accomplished through changes in procedures and protocols, efforts to improve cooperation and interoperability in operations between partner agencies, internal and multi-agency drills and exercises, the development of specific emergency response plans and prevention activities relating to building and fire codes. Instituting a borough-based command structure, which occurred in early 2002, has increased accountability and facilitated operational advances.

A. Recall, Staging and Mutual Aid

The Department has initiated implementation of a flexible recall program in order to efficiently mobilize all or part of its Firefighter and EMS personnel in the event of a large-scale emergency or an increase in the terrorism threat level. This recall program allows the Department to effectively recall members by geographic area and/or type of unit in sufficient numbers to address the needs of an Incident Commander at a particular event, while simultaneously allowing the Department to safely and effectively manage recalled members and maintain

adequate reserve members for later shifts. (Prior to 9/11, the last *full* recall of fire personnel occurred on December 26, 1947 in response to a major snowstorm.)

The Department's regulations were amended in Spring 2003 to clarify and emphasize that recalled members must report to their firehouse, unless instructed otherwise. This mandatory regulation will ensure that recalled members do not report directly to the incident site (or any other location) unless specifically instructed to do so. The Department will strictly enforce its modified recall regulations to ensure future compliance.

The Department's Bureaus of Fire and EMS Operations have developed detailed draft guidelines and training materials on personnel recall procedures, which enable the Department's leadership to mobilize specific, targeted capabilities, such as SOC and Ladder Support Company units. This allows for the recall of large numbers of personnel of all ranks, using clear, straightforward instructions and methods.

The major components of the Department's draft recall guidelines include:

- Pre-defined recall "trigger points".
- Clearly defined lines of authority to initiate a personnel recall.
- Pre-defined recall packages.
- FDOC will have the technological tools to analyze recall needs, and scope and characteristics of personnel and skills required.
- Precise and consistent communication of the recall process.
- Establishment of designated mobilization points.
- A training curriculum on recall procedures.
- Caches of equipment and supplies located around the City.

The Department continues to explore improvements in its recall program through the use of technology and communication enhancements. Recent recall drills utilizing new automated telephone messaging technology produced satisfactory results. When used in combination with broad media notification of our members, the Department is confident such technology will enable us to effectively recall needed members.

In concert with the new recall procedures, the Department also has modified its staging procedures to ensure that the Incident Commander (IC) can effectively maintain command and control of resources as incidents escalate. Our new staging regulations require the designation of a Staging Area Chief and the establishment of a staging area at all third or greater alarms. Of course, the IC can make such designations for any alarm level, if necessary.

Under the new regulations, the IC will make the staging area known to the dispatcher, who will direct the Staging Area Chief and affected units to that location. The regulations require that “all responding units, unless otherwise given specific assignments by the IC, shall report to the staging area.” These modified and clarified requirements, when strictly enforced, will help avoid any confusion about the location of Department resources and will enable ICs to manage those resources better.

The Department has also sought written agreements with surrounding counties to clarify mutual aid roles and responsibilities. Obviously, given the size of our Department, mutual aid is rarely needed in New York City. Since 9/11, the FDNY has provided mutual aid resources to Yonkers and New Jersey but, fortunately, has not required mutual aid from other jurisdictions.

We believe, however, that having clear mutual aid agreements and protocols is greatly beneficial to the Department and the region as a whole. To that end, we have established or are about to establish formal mutual aid agreements covering nearby upstate New York counties and Nassau County. Discussions with New Jersey are also underway. EMS arrangements are being

finalized with respect to all New York State counties; an agreement with New Jersey is currently under final review.

These agreements will contain, or lead to the creation of procedures that specify, minimum training and equipment requirements, communications procedures and prescribed or potential mobilization points. Tabletop exercises and drills will reinforce the new protocols.

B. Incident Command and Inter-agency Operations

FDNY subscribes fully to the letter, policy and principles of ICS, which it has utilized for many years. We have trained and are continuing to train extensively in the use of ICS and base all operational plans around it. As noted earlier, we sought and received special Federal ICS training to create two IMTs, which are now deployable at major incidents.

Since 9/11, we have utilized ICS effectively in responding to several major incidents, including the West 19th Street/Kaltech explosion in April 2002, the Port Mobil fire in April 2003, the August 2003 blackout and the Staten Island ferry crash in October 2003.

Also since 9/11 there has been a great deal of public discussion about the use of ICS citywide. A protocol establishing a Citywide Incident Management System (CIMS) and incorporating ICS has recently been announced. We believe this protocol will help ensure that all agencies operate with a common, written understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

That being said, it is clear that every day, in responding to hundreds of incidents large and small, the FDNY and the NYPD operate cooperatively and effectively. This was certainly true at the four major incidents that I just mentioned.

It also is true because of the numerous drills and exercises that we participate in together. Since 9/11, we have participated in the following inter-

agency drills, all of which included the NYPD, and some of which were coordinated by OEM:

- Operation Tripod (5/22/02) -- OEM conducted Operation Tripod at Pier 92 in Manhattan.
- Yankee Stadium Drill (9/29/02) -- HazMat drill at Yankee Stadium in the Bronx.
- Operation SADD (10/5/02) -- The Port Authority conducted a simulated aircraft disaster drill, "Operation SADD" at LaGuardia Airport in Queens.
- Ft. Hamilton HazMat Drill (10/17/02) -- HazMat decon drill at Fort Hamilton in Brooklyn.
- HazMat Drill (10/27/02) -- HazMat preparedness drill took place at the Verrazano Narrows Bridge in Staten Island.
- Broad Street HazMat Drill (4/27/03) -- The Transit Authority conducted an inter-agency preparedness exercise in Manhattan at the Broad Street subway station that involved a simulated chemical release and evacuation of passengers from the station.
- Winter Sun (5/18/03) -- OEM conducted an inter-agency HazMat preparedness exercise in Brooklyn.
- Grand Central Terminal Drill (10/27/03) -- FDNY Division 3 conducted a drill in the Waldorf train yard of Grand Central Terminal in Manhattan. The drill involved a simulated electrical malfunction in the M-50 substation of the Waldorf yard resulting in an explosion and fire in the vicinity of the substation. The simulated malfunction also caused a power surge into the third rail resulting in an ensuing fire in a parked train.

- Operation United Response (3/14/04) -- OEM conducted a preparedness exercise at Shea Stadium in Queens simulating a large-scale, multi-casualty incident.
- Operation Transit Safe (5/16/04) -- OEM conducted a preparedness exercise at the Bowling Green subway station in Manhattan. This exercise simulated a large-scale, underground multi-casualty incident.

The last drill on this list occurred just two days ago and is one of numerous planned drills geared toward preparing for the Republican National Convention, which has become a focus for our immediate planning efforts. At the drill, we tested our interoperable communications equipment, including the TRP-1000, which allows personnel on any radio frequency to hear and communicate with personnel from up to 12 agencies (including Federal agencies) on any other frequency.

I do not mean to suggest that everything always works perfectly between our two Departments. There can be and have been conflicts, and these will never be eliminated entirely given both Departments' enormous pride and history. We need to communicate better on-scene and off; true interoperability involves both mechanical and human factors. We have some of the necessary tools; the focus must turn to drilling, exercising and utilizing those tools effectively every day.

The Department has made significant, perhaps unprecedented, progress since 9/11 in improving coordination between NYPD and FDNY. These steps include:

- Agreement for FDNY to receive live feeds from NYPD helicopters.
- Agreement for an FDNY Chief to ride in a NYPD helicopter as may be required by the incident.
- Mutual stationing of liaison officers at each other's headquarters.

- Procedure to station a Chief at each other's command post.
- NYPD supervisor responds to all second alarms or greater to provide on-scene liaison.
- Interoperable communications equipment (TRP-1000) deployed along with radios that have a specific channel (Channel 13 or "TAC U") for interagency communications.
- Joint FDNY/NYPD teaching of Citizens Emergency Response Team (CERT) programs to train the public on how to assist their community in the event of a disaster. This curriculum was custom developed for the urban environment by a team of FDNY and NYPD responders. Team-taught classes for community groups are continuing throughout the City.

We look forward to continued cooperation and progress as we begin to operate under the recently released CIMS protocol.

C. SOC and Special Units

Expanding the FDNY's SOC is critical to the Department's efforts to improve its responses to large-scale incidents. Of particular importance is the expansion of the Department's HazMat-capable units, which are called upon to respond to incidents involving chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosive (CBRNE) agents often associated with terrorist attacks. Preparing for and responding to such attacks requires special operations capabilities well beyond those that the Department possessed on September 11, 2001.

The Department has acquired additional equipment with the assistance of grant funds from the Federal government. Chemical Protective Clothing (CPC), radiation detectors, reserve rescue apparatus and strategically located caches of equipment and medical supplies have increased the Department's preparedness, while enhancing the safety of the members operating in the field.

The Department's Squad and Rescue Companies and EMS Haz-Tac units are trained as HazMat technicians; many members of HazMat Company 1 are trained to the level of HazMat Specialist, the highest level of HazMat training in the City. As noted earlier, radiation detection training has been incorporated into the First Line Supervisors Training Program (FLSTP) for new officers and for members of the EMS Haz-Tac Battalion. Hazardous materials refresher training has been provided to all members of HazMat, Rescue and Squad Companies; seven Ladder Companies have been trained to use CPC.

To expand resources for hazardous materials and rescue incidents, the Department has trained 21 Ladder Companies to serve as SOC Support Ladder Companies; four more units are currently in training. These companies, geographically dispersed throughout the City, have been trained and equipped in both technical rescue and HazMat operations. These units can quickly respond to incidents requiring these special capacities, including the ability to perform scene surveys of collapse and confined space incidents.

These Support Ladder Companies can also respond as additional units during large incidents when Rescue and Squad Companies are otherwise unavailable, and provide support for SOC units once Rescue, HazMat or Squad Companies arrive on-scene. These Ladder Companies have been trained in hazardous materials monitoring, operations in CPC and decontamination. All members of these Companies received 40 hours of rescue operations training and 40 hours of HazMat training. The Department has also provided three engine companies with 80 hours of HazMat training and information. Starting in June 2004, these companies will continue to fight fires as engine companies but will also have the responsibility to work as a HazMat Technician unit when needed. A fourth "HazMat Tech" engine company has been funded and will go on line later this year.

It should be noted that the Department continues to work toward the goal of creating a second HazMat unit. Until full funding makes this possible, the

Department will continue to implement its parallel strategy of enhancing and broadening the HazMat training and responsibilities of dozens of companies located around the City.

D. Marine Capabilities

Given the increase in commercial and recreational use of the City's ports and waterways, including plans for private water taxis, an expanding cruise industry and a dramatic increase in cargo transportation in New York City, the Department continues to upgrade the capabilities of its Marine Division. Recognizing the increasing obsolescence of the Department's fireboat fleet and the City's increasing concerns about a potential major marine disaster or terrorist act, the Department intends to purchase new state-of-the-art fireboats to replace an aging fleet, and to develop enhanced training for shipboard firefighting.

Because shipboard fires present unique complexities, in Spring 2002 the Department contracted with a vendor to provide training in marine firefighting techniques for land-based fire companies. This train-the-trainer course provided marine firefighting awareness and operations-level training to 20 carefully selected members of the SOC and Marine Division, which is part of SOC. The curriculum included tactical exercises at the U.S. Naval base in Norfolk, Virginia, and a review of marine firefighting Incident Command. The Department has begun to enhance its shipboard firefighting training and, in September 2003, the first class of Battalion Chiefs received shipboard firefighting as part of the FDNY Incident Command course. A class of probationary Firefighters received marine firefighting awareness training for the first time in Fall 2003.

In addition, the Department has purchased and placed into service a new 27-foot Boston Whaler for Staten Island. The Marine Division dry-docked and overhauled fireboats *McKean* and *Fire Fighter*, updated marine navigation and communications equipment on all boats and assigned 27-foot rescue boats to Marine Companies 1 and 9 for rapid response calls.

Recently, the FDNY secured Federal grant funding for a new state-of-the-art, 130-foot fireboat. The Department has completed its needs assessment and is reviewing engineering specifications for this fireboat.

The Staten Island ferry crash last fall is precisely the kind of incident that demonstrates the need for marine firefighting and rescue capabilities beyond what the FDNY now possesses. That is why we will continue to pursue expanded resources in this area.

E. Preparedness Planning

The new threats and long-term challenges facing the FDNY demand an in-depth and comprehensive planning effort that takes into account the need for inter- and intra-departmental coordination, research, strategic and tactical planning, development of in-depth response plans for various kinds of incidents, development and coordination of drills and exercises and critical analysis of operations.

The Department recently expanded its Planning and Strategy Unit and tasked it to, among other things:

- Develop and prepare training exercises for the FDNY, including inter-agency exercises.
- Provide risk assessments of potentially hazardous locations throughout the City.
- Develop FDNY Emergency Response Plans (ERPs).
- Coordinate with all bureaus on terrorism preparedness.
- Participate in post-incident critiques.
- Maintain inter-agency relationships at the operational level.

The Planning and Strategy Unit has drafted a plan for “Fire and EMS Tactics and Procedures for Subway Incidents involving WMD -- Chemical Agents” and a bio-terrorism response plan. In addition, the Unit has developed a risk and vulnerability assessment survey instrument to enable the Department to review and document targeted sites throughout the City.

To maximize preparedness, the Department is developing a plan for all major WMD threat categories. FDNY will then integrate these plans into its Standard Operating Procedures. In addition, the Department will soon complete vulnerability assessments of 65 designated sites to increase preparedness for possible future terrorist acts. The Department will develop a networked database to capture the information from the risk assessment surveys. The new database then will be made accessible to all members, Borough Commanders, Staff Chiefs and Incident Commanders via the FDNY Intranet.

In recognition of the increasing need to standardize the preparation, scheduling and evaluation of intra- and inter-agency exercises, FDNY will also establish an Exercise Design Team. This new unit will be dedicated to developing appropriate exercises, both intra- and inter-departmental. Team members will focus exclusively on the development and coordination of tabletop scenarios and hands-on exercises with internal FDNY units and external partners, including the NYPD, OEM, the Port Authority Police, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and its constituent agencies, utility companies and health care providers. The team also will be responsible for standardizing the roles and responsibilities of tabletop exercise controllers and evaluators, producing after-action critiques and interfacing with the Bureau of Training to ensure that lessons learned are implemented. The Department intends to conduct tabletop exercises on a monthly basis, with a minimum of 12 exercises per year. Within a year, the Exercise Design Team will have completed the Master Exercise Practitioners Certification Program sponsored by the National Fire Academy.

The Department is also in the preliminary stages of creating a Counter-Terrorism Center. This innovative undertaking would consolidate many of the planning activities I have just described into a central location and also serve as planning liaison with other agencies.

F. Prevention: Revising the Building Code and Fire Code

The events of 9/11 focused attention on the need for high-rise safety and the need to provide greater life and property protection in high-rise buildings. Because of their height and high occupancy, high-rise buildings present an unusual challenge to the FDNY, building employees and occupants for both fire and non-fire-related emergencies. After September 11, 2001, Mayor Bloomberg directed the Department of Buildings to establish a Task Force to examine the World Trade Center disaster and current Building Code provisions as they relate to high-rise buildings.

FDNY representatives from the Bureaus of Fire Prevention and Fire Operations were key participants in the development of the Task Force's recommendations, which included proposals to require the hardening of stairwells, to improve the marking of egress paths, doors and stairs with photoluminescent materials, and to require all high-rise commercial buildings over 100 feet without automatic sprinklers to install a sprinkler system within 15 years. Another key recommendation called for the City to enact a law requiring an emergency evacuation plan, in addition to a fire safety plan, for non-fire emergencies. The Department drafted a high-rise building emergency action plan that details proposed requirements and guidelines; that document is now being reviewed and finalized.

The Department also supports legislation that would give the Fire Commissioner the authority to require emergency action plans for commercial high-rise buildings. The legislation calls for the Department to establish a mechanism within FDNY to review evacuation plans and create an oversight mechanism for drills, record keeping and monitoring. We are also evaluating the

need to develop new legislation affecting residential high-rise buildings, as well as other occupancies.

The Department also has embarked on the arduous, but long overdue task of revising the New York City Fire Code. Building Code revision is already underway, with the FDNY's active participation, and we have determined that the Fire Code must be revised as well. We have received funding to staff a special unit dedicated to this difficult, inter-disciplinary challenge and that unit's work has already begun. This will be by far the most significant revision to the Fire Code since its adoption in 1913. The revision of both codes will strengthen public and first responder safety in years to come.

G. Intelligence Sharing and Needs

The Department is taking a proactive approach to working cooperatively with intelligence-gathering agencies at all levels. Our Bureau of Fire Investigation, which is the law enforcement arm of the Department, is the focal point for many of our intelligence sharing measures. The Bureau is linked to the New York State Office of Public Security Counter Terrorism Network System and receives instantaneous intelligence alerts. This information is analyzed and shared with Department leaders as appropriate.

The Department participates in intelligence sharing efforts such as the Joint Terrorist Task Force and the Metropolitan Committee on Counter Terrorism, among others. These ventures are facilitating a reciprocal information flow. For instance, we have revised the way the FDNY deals with missing or stolen property so that the NYPD Intelligence Bureau and the FBI are now notified immediately. Other cooperative efforts include participation in the compilation of the City's Vulnerable Location Database and initiation of systemized reporting of potentially suspicious toxic substances.

There is more we can do and will do. Although our responders are not law enforcement personnel, they can, by the nature of their work, gather valuable

information. We are in the process of creating a curriculum that incorporates terrorism recognition awareness for all Firefighters and EMS personnel.

VI. Counseling and Member Health

The grievous loss of 343 members of our Department on 9/11 greatly increased demand for counseling for our members, their families and family members of those who perished. Prior to 9/11, approximately 600 clients per year utilized the Department's Counseling Services Unit (CSU). Since 9/11, nearly 9,000 clients have availed themselves of the CSU's bereavement, mental health, substance abuse and other counseling programs.

Obviously, the counseling demands placed upon the Department following 9/11 required immediate and dramatic expansion of CSU's staff and capabilities. FEMA, through Project Liberty, funded this expansion and has enabled CSU to provide a wide array of crisis counseling services to our workforce and family members.

Because a large number of FDNY members and families continue to seek counseling and related services, the Department has been greatly concerned that we will not be able to sustain the many critical counseling programs that have been developed and upon which our members and families rely. The Department requires funding for at least five more years to ensure that ongoing needs are met. In the aftermath of the Oklahoma City bombing, Federal funding was provided for counseling services for a total of seven years. At present, we are unsure of whether adequate funds will be available to provide the services that are necessary for our members and families.

We are grateful for funding that has supported several critical health initiatives. An initial \$4.8 million grant from the Centers for Disease Control enabled us to examine, and identify any health problems among, 10,000 FDNY members shortly after 9/11. The medical issues raised by this initial monitoring

study led to a recent NIOSH grant of \$25 million for a long-term health study of our active and retired members who worked at the WTC site on and after 9/11.

Finally, the Department has enhanced the preparedness of its Family Support Services bureau in the event of another incident with major FDNY casualties. We have established a comprehensive emergency notification database with detailed contact information for all of our uniformed personnel and are now doing the same for all civilian employees.

We have also established a special family information call center that can ramp up very quickly to handle the very large number of inquiries from families that would follow any incident with significant FDNY casualties. A secondary site is also being prepared to perform this critical function if Department headquarters becomes compromised or unavailable.

VII. Funding

Shortly after the World Trade Center attacks, the Federal government fully funded the replacement of all apparatus and equipment lost on 9/11. However, no Federal funds were immediately available to address the Department's urgent post-9/11 needs to enhance preparedness.

In the months following 9/11, as our commanders began to lay the groundwork for a substantial build up in our response capacity, the Department confronted enormous funding challenges in the face of New York City's worst budget crises in three decades. This crisis resulted in civilian layoffs at the Department, fire company closings and other cutbacks.

It was obvious to all that Federal funding would be required for the FDNY to scale up to an operational level equal to New York City's threat level. Late in 2002, we received our first Federal grant for new operational needs -- \$7.3 million from the Department of Justice. We put that funding to work immediately to train and equip SOC Ladder Support Companies and to train two IMTs.

After this modest beginning, the funding landscape improved significantly in Federal Fiscal Year 2003, when the FDNY received \$54 million in DHS funding. This year we experienced a decline, with only \$17 million appropriated directly to the FDNY. This funding is supporting many of the training, specialized equipment acquisition and operational initiatives I have discussed today. (In Federal Fiscal Year 2004, New York City received an additional \$37 million for the comprehensive integration of the City's emergency dispatch system.)

The Department has determined how to use this Federal funding through a comprehensive planning and prioritization process. This process began with the McKinsey Report, which was released after an exhaustive, four-month independent review of how the FDNY responded on 9/11, and continued through the development of the Department's *Strategic Plan for 2004-2005*. This intensive planning process has served us well in identifying gaps in our preparedness and prioritizing our preparedness needs. With DHS funding, our commanders have begun to implement a strategy that focuses on strengthening core infrastructure and building a more robust, tiered, multifunctional capacity for response to terrorism. The planning and prioritization process continues, however, as new needs are identified and new grant cycles begin.

This is a good start, and we are grateful that the Federal government recognizes the FDNY's key homeland security responsibilities. But, as noted in the DHS report *Securing the Homeland, Strengthening the Nation*, the terrorist threat is a permanent condition.

In order to lead first response and save lives in the most threatened City in the nation, the FDNY will require a dependable, long-term flexible funding stream from the Federal government. And it is absolutely critical that the formulas for such funding reflect reality: as Mayor Bloomberg testified at last year's hearing before this Commission, "Homeland Security funds must be allocated on the basis of threat analysis and risk. Any other formula defies logic..."

VIII. Conclusion

We believe that the FDNY has made very substantial progress toward enhancing its preparedness since 9/11. I am enormously proud of these accomplishments; indeed, I believe the tremendous heroism exhibited by the men and women of this Department on 9/11 has been followed by an equally admirable and necessary effort – in the face of overwhelming grief and adversity – to rebuild the Department and find a way to move forward to meet future challenges.

As I have also made clear, much more remains to be done. I am confident, however, that with ongoing, sufficient, flexible funding we will not only remain this nation's leading fire department in terms of fire suppression and pre-hospital medical care, but also become a model for overall first responder preparedness throughout the world.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. I would be happy to answer your questions at this time.