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NYC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT HOSTS DISASTER EXERCISE FOR COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (CERT) VOLUNTEERS ON RANDALL'S ISLAND

Over 100 volunteers demonstrate emergency preparedness expertise

October 22, 2017 – The New York City Emergency Management Department hosted a disaster exercise today on Randall's Island for the city's Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) members. Instructors from NYC Emergency Management, FDNY, and NYPD tested and reviewed the volunteers' emergency preparedness and response skills in fire suppression, search and rescue, medical operations, responding to and supporting an active disaster scene, and planning a search for a missing person. The CERT volunteers practiced their role in several simulated disaster scenarios including a building evacuation, subway car evacuation, and multiple fires. Over 100 CERT members representing all five boroughs were in attendance to assist New York City's first responders.

The exercise simulated a major disaster including a bus crash into a building causing multiple injuries, car crashes and fires. This scenario allowed the CERT volunteers to practice evacuations, search and rescue operations, and traffic management. Some volunteers played the role of disaster victims in the simulation while others assisted first responders with medical triage and fire suppression.

In addition to the disaster simulation, the full day's activities also included a response to a subway car evacuation, active shooter training, and training on how to properly plan for and conduct a search for a missing person.

"Our Community Emergency Response Team members come to the aid of their fellow New Yorkers in times of emergency," said **NYC Emergency Management Commissioner Joseph Esposito**. "From hurricanes to building explosions, these dedicated volunteers readily come to the aid of their fellow New Yorkers. Exercises like today's simulations help them to prepare for the sights, sounds, and complexities they may experience when helping their communities during a real emergency."

Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) in New York City

The New York City Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program started in 2003 with 106 volunteers. Today there are more than 1,200 credentialed CERT volunteers representing more than 50 teams throughout New York City. NYC CERT volunteers participate in a 10-session basic training program in disaster preparedness and basic emergency response skills taught by active members of the Police and Fire Departments. After completing training,



NYC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

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new members join their local teams to support their communities by assisting City agencies that prepare for and respond to emergencies.

For more information about the CERT program, or if you are interested in becoming a CERT volunteer, call 311 or visit www.nyc.gov.

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CAPTION:

Queens CERT member Dennis Knowles practices extinguishing a fire with FDNY Lt. Brendan Hagan. *From left:* FDNY Lt. Brendan Hagan, Bronx CERT member David Gellman, Bronx CERT member Lynda Gains, Queens CERT member Dennis Knowles.

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