

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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**NYC OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND PORT
AUTHORITY OF NY & NJ HOST MULTI-AGENCY FIELD EXERCISE
AT WTC PATH STATION**

Hundreds of Emergency Responders Simulate Response to Incident aboard PATH train.

The New York City Office of Emergency Management (NYC OEM) and Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PANYNJ) today hosted *Operation Safe PATH 2009*, a full-scale, multi-agency exercise to test the City's and the Port Authority's response to an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) detonation on a New Jersey-bound Port Authority Trans-Hudson (PATH) train. The two-hour exercise was coordinated by the PANYNJ Public Safety Department, the PATH Corporation, and NYC OEM.

"I am always impressed by the professionalism of our public safety personnel respond to challenging emergencies," said Deputy Mayor for Operations Edward Skyler. "Today's exercise was particularly important because it demonstrated the commitment our emergency personnel are making to training and to cooperation among both City agencies and other parts of government."

"Full-scale exercises like today's give us an opportunity to practice how to integrate the vast response resources available in New York City and establish a command structure under the Citywide Incident Management System (CIMS)," said NYC OEM Commissioner Joseph F. Bruno. "I want to thank the Port Authority and all of the City's first response agencies for sharing their expertise and helping in the development and execution of this drill."

"These drills give our police the opportunity to work side by side with our partner agencies so that we can jointly respond to any incident that may arise in the future," said Port Authority Executive Director Chris Ward.

"Our top priority is the safety and security of our customers, which is why we've invested billions in security at our facilities," said Port Authority Chairman Anthony R. Coscia. Today's drill will help PAPD and our partner agencies respond quickly and effectively in the case of a real emergency."

More than 800 emergency responders from the New York City Police Department (NYPD), Fire Department (FDNY), Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), NYC OEM, the Port Authority Police Department (PAPD), PATH, and the Port Authority Office of Emergency Management (PANYNJ OEM)

participated in the simulated response to two explosions on a train in one of the PATH tunnels between the World Trade Center and Exchange Place Stations.

The exercise focused on the integration of PANYNJ and New York City assets and tested the decision making necessary to save lives and protect the public. Specifically, the exercise tested on-site incident management, search and rescue, mass casualty medical support, intelligence and investigation, and tactical interoperable communications.

"These exercises help our members and all of the city's first-responders prepare for every possible situation," Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta said. "They also allow us to find ways to work cooperatively with other agencies in New York City and the region to make sure we're doing all we can to keep the public safe, no matter what."

Officials from participating agencies will evaluate the exercise based on six key objectives:

1. The implementation of a Unified Command Structure in accordance with the Citywide Incident Management System (CIMS)
2. The establishment and management of multi-agency tactical communications
3. The formation of an Assessment Task Force to conduct a thorough scene assessment and form a Rescue Task Force to perform victim rescue and extrication operations
4. The triage, treatment, and transport of patients from the incident site
5. The implementation of a multi-agency security perimeter
6. The management, coordination, and direction of investigation and intelligence operations

In addition to the 800 first responders participating in exercise play, roughly 150 NYC OEM Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) members assisted in the drill by playing victims of the simulated incident. With evaluators, observers, and support staff, more than 1,000 people participated in *Operation Safe PATH 2009*.

In 2007, NYC OEM conducted a simulated explosion on an Amtrak train at Penn Station. Past drills have also included a simulated response to a hazardous chemical spill, the set-up and break-down of a hurricane shelter, and the distribution of Strategic National Stockpile assets during a mock bioterrorist attack.

Funding for *Operation Safe PATH 2009* and other drills is provided by a federal grant through the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

For more information about NYC OEM's Training and Exercise programs call 311 or visit www.nyc.gov/oem.

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