



NEW YORK CITY **OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**
Office of Public Information

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**NEW YORK CITY'S URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE TEAM HOSTS TRIBUTE
DINNER AND PLAQUE DEDICATION FOR FDNY DEPUTY CHIEF
RAYMOND M. DOWNEY**

Office of Emergency Management (OEM) Commissioner Joseph F. Bruno, Fire Department (FDNY) officials and the leaders of several Urban Search and Rescue Teams (US&R) joined US&R New York Task Force 1 (NY-TF 1) at a tribute reception and plaque dedication for former FDNY Special Operations Command and NY-TF 1 task force leader Deputy Chief Raymond M. Downey on Wednesday, February 23, 2005.

"Chief Downey had extraordinary expertise in emergency response and was of utmost service to the people of the City of New York. His dedication lives on through the guidance and knowledge he provided to the current members of New York Task Force 1. He will always be missed, but never forgotten," said OEM Commissioner Joseph F. Bruno.

"Ray Downey was an innovator and a leader second to none," said Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta. "His pioneering work with the Fire Department's Special Operations Command and his extraordinary leadership on a national level has left an indelible mark on emergency responders across this country. His legacy and memory lives on in the Fire Department."

"We are extremely proud of my father's 39-year career with the FDNY, along with his many deployments with New York – Task Force 1. The Downey family is grateful to the East Coast Task Force Leaders for recognizing him for his leadership and dedication to FEMA's Urban Search and Rescue Program. My father was very passionate about his work and has touched many lives. This tribute to him will help to keep his memory alive in our hearts," said FDNY Battalion Chief and US&R member Joseph Downey, son of Deputy Chief Downey.

"Ray Downey was both a personal mentor and a close friend. His commitment to excellence and unsurpassed knowledge of the job has left shoes that are perhaps



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impossible to fill. While his leadership will always be missed, the lessons we have learned from Ray will always be with us,” said US&R national taskforce representative Fred Endrikat.

One of the founding members of New York City’s US&R taskforce and among the FDNY’s most decorated members, Deputy Chief Raymond Downey died in the line of duty on September 11, 2001. He provided assistance and expertise at numerous natural disasters including hurricanes, ice storms and floods, as well as emergencies including the 1995 Oklahoma City terrorist attack and the 1996 Atlanta Olympic bombing.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)’s US&R system was created in the late 1980s to respond to natural disasters and catastrophic events involving the collapse of heavy steel and concrete. The 28 advanced search and rescue teams are strategically located throughout the United States and are experts in the use of the specialized tools, equipment and techniques required for the most dangerous conditions. In New York City, the US&R team is known as NY-TF 1 and is managed by the Office of Emergency Management and comprised of members from the Fire and Police Departments.

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Press contact: Andrew Troisi / Jarrod Bernstein (718) 422-4888