

PART III
ADDITIONAL ISSUES
TO BE ADDRESSED

Additional issues to be addressed

The recommendations in this report focus on changing internal FDNY procedures, technology, management processes and organization to better prepare for major incidents. However, we believe the Department cannot do the critical job of enhancing preparedness alone.

To truly improve New York City's preparedness, the city or state must establish an enhanced coordination process that encourages government agencies to plan and execute their response to major incidents together.

This coordination would give decision makers a comprehensive view of the capabilities and responsibilities of *all* relevant agencies. It would give them a common perspective on the types of threats, the level of threats, the potential consequences, and the ability of responding agencies to mitigate those threats and their consequences.

The coordination would also offer a number of specific benefits, including establishment of compatible incident response procedures, and the deployment of improved, citywide emergency response plans. It would also help the FDNY expand its hazmat capabilities and re-evaluate its marine and heavy rescue capabilities, a recommendation discussed in the Operational Preparedness section of this report.

ESTABLISHMENT OF COMPATIBLE PROCEDURES

An enhanced inter-agency planning process would give agencies a greater ability to identify, discuss and resolve important tactical issues, establish compatible procedures, and improve communication. Ideally, all agencies that might take part in the response to emergencies in the city would participate in and be committed to this process and its results. It will probably take time to create the process given the potentially large number of agencies involved, including the FDNY, NYPD, city Office of Emergency Management, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, the FBI, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the U.S. Departments of Justice, Defense and Energy, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Homeland Security Agency.

It is particularly crucial and urgent to improve the coordination between the FDNY and the NYPD. Commissioners Scoppetta and Kelly have taken positive first steps to improve the coordination and cooperation between the two departments. But more needs to be done. For instance, the FDNY, NYPD and other agencies should seek to:

- ¶ Create common command and control structures and terminology, and agree on the roles and responsibilities of each agency for managing the response to any incident, in accordance with ICS principles.
- ¶ Deploy interoperable communications infrastructures and protocols to improve response coordination and the exchange of information among agencies.
- ¶ Improve the flow of vital information among agencies to ensure it is clear and unambiguous, appropriately prioritized, and reaches the appropriate parties in a timely fashion during incidents and in day-to-day operations.
- ¶ Plan and execute joint training exercises and evaluate these exercises together to ensure that agencies can and will cooperate effectively during incidents, e.g., by operating under a unified command and control structure.
- ¶ Ensure that agencies exchange information on traffic to minimize gridlock and facilitate access to incident areas by emergency services vehicles and personnel.
- ¶ Establish processes to enforce security at incident sites quickly and efficiently, including a credentialing system adequate for first responders in incident areas.

DEPLOYMENT OF IMPROVED EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANS

In addition, an enhanced inter-agency planning process would help agencies develop and deploy more detailed, consistent and complete citywide emergency response plans for different types of threats and hazards. These plans would:

- ¶ Clearly define the roles and responsibilities of different local, state and federal agencies, including the level and type of response they would be expected to deploy under different scenarios.
- ¶ Ensure that an appropriate agency is assigned responsibility for every important element of the emergency response plan, and ensure that each agency receives ample resources to meet its responsibilities.
- ¶ Serve as a blueprint for joint training exercises.

EXPANSION OF HAZMAT CAPABILITIES

As mentioned earlier in this report, there are a number of plausible scenarios for attacks involving radiological, chemical, and biological agents, and/or multiple,

simultaneous incidents, either on land or over water. Many of these could require hazmat and other special operations resources well beyond the FDNY's current capabilities.

An enhanced inter-agency coordination process would help ensure that the FDNY and all agencies likely to be involved in hazmat incidents understand each other's responsibilities, have the resources necessary to meet those responsibilities and respond to incidents cohesively and effectively.

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The attack on the World Trade Center has created a new urgency for the Department to make improvements in its preparedness. We believe that, if the recommendations in this report are implemented, they will help protect civilians and firefighters from injury and loss of life, and will minimize property damage, if the city ever again has to face a crisis like it did on September 11.

