
Fleet Spotlight: Donald Cooke, Welder, DOT

By: Lenin Fierro

On January 23rd and 24th, the City of New York and the City of London will host the second annual Future Fleets Conference in London, England. Deputy Commissioner Robert Martinez of NYPD will represent the City at this year's conference.

For this week's fleet spotlight, we recognize a skilled fleet professional who began his education and public service career in London: Donald Cooke of the NYC Department of Transportation.



The City's fleet is serviced by a wide variety of technical experts with diverse skills, including welders like Donald Cooke, who works at DOT's Brooklyn Repair Shop and is in his 32nd year as a public servant.

Welding is a challenging trade, requiring great care, precision, and close attention to safety. Donald performs inspections to ensure the integrity of fleet bodies and frames. He also makes structural repairs on vehicle bodies and fabricates parts and components to enhance fleet units and facility structures.

Donald is very thankful for his career with the City of New York. "I have the best job one could ever have," he said.

Donald's time with DOT has been marked by many challenging projects, but he credits his old welding partner, Herbert "George" Stewart, for being there and lending a hand when needed. Donald recalls that for seven years he and George were DOT's only welders, performing critical repairs in all five boroughs. George retired after 36 years of service last September.

Among his many roles with DOT, the most important for Donald was his work at Ground Zero after 9-11, where he used his skills to cut and remove metal debris and building remnants to assist the rescue and recovery operations at the site.

Donald graduated with his welding certificate from the West Ham Technical College in London, England. His first public service job was as a police officer for the City of London.

When Donald moved to NYC, he went to Apex Technical School to learn repair and welding. After working with companies, including HO Penn, Donald joined DOT in 1986, quickly passed the welders Civil Service exam, and was off and welding.

Donald is a proud father to daughter Tiffany Cooke, who is an attorney in NYC, and son Christopher Elcott, who resides in London. Donald lives in West Hempstead, Long Island and enjoys going to the gym and watching cricket matches and soccer clubs, including West Ham United F.C. and Preston North End.

Thanks to Donald for his many years of terrific service.

Check out past editions of the Fleet Newsletter

[NYC Fleet Newsletter 248, January 4, 2019](#): It's a City Fleet Vehicle. It Is Not Your Car.

[NYC Fleet Newsletter 247, December 27, 2018](#): 2018: The Year in Fleet

[NYC Fleet Newsletter 246, December 20, 2018](#): NYC Fleet Spotlight: Anthony Dell'Era, Quality Assurance, DCAS

[NYC Fleet Newsletter 245, December 7, 2018](#): NYC Fleet Spotlight: Juana Garcia and the New York Harbor School

[NYC Fleet Newsletter 244, November 30, 2018](#): DCAS Publishes Safe Fleet Transition Plan Update

Check out the [complete archive](#).

// CONNECT WITH DCAS TO FOLLOW NYC FLEET //

[Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#)

Visit us on the web at nyc.gov/DCAS