

FDNY Haz-Mat Incidents

The Department has further increased its ability to deal with hazardous material incidents. In June, Commissioner Scoppetta announced the addition of three new Hazardous Materials Technician (HazTech) Engine Companies to the ranks - Engine 44 in Manhattan, Engine 165 in Staten Island, and Engine 274 in Queens.

"The deployment of these three HazTech Engine Companies further demonstrates the commitment the Fire Department has to providing the people of New York with the best protection against the new threats we face," said Chief of Department Frank Cruthers during the announcement at Engine 44. "They will also enhance and decentralize the Department's response to multiple incidents involving hazardous materials and life safety operations."

The companies will still assume primary fire duties in their respective response areas, but will also be available to respond to HazMat incidents citywide, further increasing the capability of the Department to respond to such incidents. The new HazTech Companies will respond as additional units on HazMat incidents in order to get field experience before being placed in-service as a primary responder.

The Department currently maintains a tiered response system

for HazMat incidents, with different companies equipped to respond to a variety of incidents involving hazardous materials. At the very top are the Specialists of the FDNY's HazMat 1 Company. Training for HazMat 1 is a continual process, with all members completing a minimum of 530 hours of instruction and drills for a variety of HazMat incidents, from radiation leaks to chemical warfare.

The Department's seven Squads, five Rescue Companies, and three new HazTech Engine Companies comprise the Department's next tier of HazMat incident response, with members receiving 80 hours of specialized HazMat response training. Rounding out the Department's HazMat capabilities are 20 EMS Haz-Tac Ambulances, 21 SOC Support Companies (with 64 and 40 hours of specialized HazMat training, respectively) and 200 members trained and equipped to don chemical protective clothing (CPC) for HazMat response.

The Department first added HazMat response capabilities in September of 1984 to deal primarily with industrial spills and releases. Over the past 20 years, a robust HazMat response program has developed. As the threats facing New York change, the FDNY continues to adapt, ensuring the safety of all New Yorkers.

FDNY APPOINTS NEW 1ST DEPUTY FIRE COMMISSIONER AND CHIEF OF DEPARTMENT

Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta and Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg on June 28 announced the appointments of Chief of Department Frank P. Cruthers as First Deputy Commissioner and Peter E. Hayden as the 32nd Chief of Department.

As First Deputy Commissioner, Chief Cruthers will oversee anti-terrorism efforts and lead the Safety and Inspection Command. As Chief of Department, Chief Hayden will be charged with the management of the 11,500-member uniformed force and other major bureaus including Operations, Fire Prevention, Training, EMS and Communications.

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg shared his support for Chief Cruthers and Chief Hayden. "With a combined experience of over 70 years in the department, Chief Cruthers and Chief Hayden have shown the commitment and dedication it takes to be New York's Bravest," Mayor Bloomberg said. "These appointments will further bolster the leadership of the greatest fire department in the world."

Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta commended the leadership of Chief Cruthers and Chief Hayden that enabled the department to rebuild its ranks after September 11th and meet today's complex challenges. "They have led by example - an example characterized by integrity, honor and dedication," Commissioner Scoppetta said. "They bring a wealth of experience as firefighters and fire officers and an intelligence and creativity that singles them out as great leaders."

Reflecting on his Department career, which began in 1968, Chief Cruthers found a bit of humor in adjusting to his new civilian role, "For the first time in 35 years I had to decide what to wear to work" he said.

Chief Hayden reflected on his own professional journey. "It's been a long ride, an emotional time," he said.

Chief Cruthers has received a Fire Department medal and two other individual awards for meritorious acts of bravery during his career. He is the son of the late Chief of Department Francis Cruthers, who held the position from 1978 to 1980, making them the only father and son to serve as Chief of Department in Fire Department history. Chief Cruthers and his wife, Eileen, have two sons, Frank and Scott, and five grandchildren, Liam, Tyler, Hannah, Olivia and Cole. His nephew, George Young, is a firefighter in Ladder 4.

During his career, Chief Hayden has received five individual awards for meritorious acts of bravery. In 1986 he received the Department's Leon Lowenstein Award for administrative excellence, and in 2002 he received the Marist College President's Award for professional achievement. He and his wife, Rita, have been married for 30 years and reside in Rockaway. They have 5 children, Rita, Katherine, Peter, Patrick and Mary and two grandchildren, John and Katherine Martin. His brother John is a firefighter in Engine 268, his son Peter is a Firefighter in Ladder 147, his son Patrick is a firefighter in Ladder 105, and his son in law, John Martin, is a firefighter in Ladder 103. His nephew Sean is a firefighter in Engine 310.

