

considerations, we conclude that the technical failure of FDNY radios, while a contributing factor, was not the primary cause of the many firefighter fatalities in the North Tower.²⁰⁹

The FDNY has worked hard in the past several years to address its radio deficiencies. To improve radio capability in high-rises, the FDNY has internally developed a “post radio” that is small enough for a battalion chief to carry to the upper floors and that greatly repeats and enhances radio signal strength.²¹⁰

The story with respect to Port Authority police officers in the North Tower is less complicated; most of them lacked access to the radio channel on which the Port Authority police evacuation order was given. Since September 11, the Port Authority has worked hard to integrate the radio systems of their different commands.

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THE LESSON OF 9/11 for civilians and first responders can be stated simply: in the new age of terror, they—we—are the primary targets. The losses America suffered that day demonstrated both the gravity of the terrorist threat and the commensurate need to prepare ourselves to meet it.

The first responders of today live in a world transformed by the attacks on 9/11. Because no one believes that every conceivable form of attack can be prevented, civilians and first responders will again find themselves on the front lines. We must plan for that eventuality. A rededication to preparedness is perhaps the best way to honor the memories of those we lost that day.