

REPORT OF UNIT CITATION

March 27, 1992

Date

Haz Mat #1

Unit

SOC

Battalion

SOC

Division

0037

Queens

March 22, 1992

2137

Box

Borough

Date

Time

2152

March 22, 1992

Time of Act

Date

MEMBERS RESPONDING

RANK	NAME	UNIT	ASSIGNED UNIT
Lt.	Albert S. Warta	HM-1	HM-1
Lt.	George Peknic	HM-1	46 Batt
FF.	Sydney K. Martin	HM-1	HM-1
FF.	Fred Herrmann	HM-1	HM-1
FF.	James F. Hay	HM-1	HM-1
FF.	Joseph Proscia	HM-1	HM-1
FF.	Thomas W. Nouza	HM-1	HM-1
FF.	Thomas P. Daly	HM-1	HM-1
FF.	Hugh Masterson	HM-1	Eng. 324

3. ARE ANY OF THESE MEMBERS BEING RECOMMENDED INDIVIDUALLY FOR MERITORIOUS ACT IN CONNECTION WITH THIS FIRE? NO (If yes - list names)

4. LOCATION OF UNIT OPERATIONS:

a) If in building: Address N/A

Height _____ Area _____ Construction _____

Occupancy _____ Number of apartments in building _____

Floor(s) _____ Room _____

b) If not in building: Give complete descriptive information so that physical setting can be recreated.

A jet passenger aircraft crash in the water and on fire.

5. PERSON(S) AIDED:

NAME	
ADDRESS	
AGE - SEX	
RESCUE BREATHING	
EXTERNAL CARDIAC MASSAGE	
RESUSCITATOR APPLIED	
HOSPITALIZED	
NAME OF HOSPITAL	
DIAGNOSIS	
LENGTH OF HOSPITALIZATION	

Upon receipt of Queens Box 0037, Hazardous Materials Company #1 responded to La Guardia Airport for a confirmed aircraft down in the water and on fire.

Upon arrival at the scene the apparatus was strategically placed for quick deployment of its specialized equipment and for use of the light tower.

Lt. Warta took FF Herrmann and FF Martin (already in immersion suits) and FF Hay and FF Proscia to the scene for size up and perimeter survey. With no Haz Mat operations to perform at this time and giving the obvious life hazard top priority, Lt. Warta ordered Herrmann and Martin into the water and Hay and Proscia to search for shoreline survivors. Lt. Penic (SA officer from the 46 Batt riding with Haz Mat) was asked by Lt. Warta to have the following equipment brought up by FF's Nouza, Daly and Masterson (E-324): 300 feet of air hose and the air chisel, all Hurst tool and cutting equipment, search, utility and life saving ropes; the rescue platform, life jackets; the Stokes stretcher and blankets. The Stokes stretcher was loaded with several hundred pounds of equipment and used as a sled to transport them over the snow from the apparatus to the site of the aircraft fuselage. This same Stokes was then used as a float to ferry the Hurst generator to the side of the plane in close proximity to where the Hurst equipment would eventually be used. Haz Mat members also assisted in ladder placement, debris removal and body recovery. Communications were set up with the U.S. Coast Guard for tidal information by FF Nouza who took over the duties of the resource man.

Haz Mat members operated in the 31 degree water for two and one half hours. FF's Herrmann, Hay were granted medical leave for hypothermia and exposure to jet fuel (eyes). FF Martin latter found he was passing blood in his urine and was subsequently admitted into Queens General Hospital for a bruised kidney. The remainder of the unit returned to quarters, and along with replacement members, cleaned and replaced equipment to bring HM-1 back in service in a very short period of time.

The members of Haz Mat played a major role in the water and on land at the crash of U.S. Air flight 405. The members in the water had put themselves at great risk entering the darkened fuselage under extreme weather conditions in search of survivors. Those members on the shore supported the in-water operations which assured a smooth and safe and effective operation.

For their actions at this unfortunate accident, I respectfully request consideration by the Board of Merit.

RECOMMENDATION:

For their initiative and capability in conjunction with teamwork and coordination recommend the members of Haz Mat 1 receive consideration for a Unit Citation

Francis M. Clouse
Deputy Chief

Examined and Forwarded.

14th Division 5/7/92
Date

Joseph A. Casaburi
Joseph A. Casaburi
Commander, Queens North Fire Command