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## Exclusive: FDNY Not Ready To Fight Toxic Fires

### Month After Deutsche Blaze, Dept. Said To Be Without Plan

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Marcia Kramer ([http://wcbstv.com/bios/local\\_bio\\_203134125.html](http://wcbstv.com/bios/local_bio_203134125.html))  
Reporting

*(CBS) NEW YORK* There were new developments Wednesday evening in the aftermath of the Deutsche Bank fire. Startling details came out of a closed door meeting of top fire officials.

With the deadly fire just over a month old there are apparently still no new plans for fighting fires in toxic buildings.

"I'm shocked," said Deputy Chief Richard Alles.

Alles was stunned by a disclosure he says was made by Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta and his top aides at a behind-the-scenes meeting Monday night when the chiefs reportedly put Scoppetta and his men on the spot.

They asked how they should attack a fire like the one at Deutsche Bank that resulted in the deaths of two firemen.

The answer?

"They are in the process of designing plans ... one month after the fire," Alles said.

Scoppetta and his top aides reportedly revealed the lack of plans at a private session Monday night, with some 50 chiefs assigned to Division I in lower Manhattan. They told their union reps what happened.

Alles says a lot of projects are reportedly affected.

"One hundred to 200 buildings ... mind-boggling," he said.

Added Battalion Chief George Belnavis: "Why don't we have a plan and what do we do next time? We really didn't get any answers yet, but that doesn't help the guys who are working today, tonight and tomorrow."

Alles says one thing is certain. The FDNY doesn't appear to be looking out for the people it serves.

"It is my belief the upper echelon of this department is more concerned with circling their own wagons and protecting their own interests," Alles said. "If they cared we would have the new procedure to follow today."

FDNY spokesman James Long says the statements made by the chiefs are patently false and a misrepresentation of what was discussed at the meeting.

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*"It is my belief the upper echelon of this department is more concerned with circling their own wagons and protecting their own interests." -- Deputy Chief Richard Alles*

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The vacant Deutsche Bank building near ground zero in Lower Manhattan.

Gregg Geller

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New York Fire Department vehicles pack the streets near the Deutsche Bank skyscraper as it burned in Lower Manhattan on Aug. 18, 2007.

Nicholas Roberts/AFP/Getty Images

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