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PORT AUTHORITY EXPANDS AWARD-WINNING DEFIBRILLATOR PROGRAM AT FACILITIES

Nearly 10 years after the Port Authority pioneered the use of automated external defibrillators (AEDs) within its police department, the agency will greatly expand the program with the purchase of 1,200 new AEDs for use at its airports, PATH rapid-transit rail system, tunnels, bridges, bus terminals and port terminals in New York and New Jersey.

The Port Authority Board of Commissioners today approved a \$1.9 million contract with Medtronic Emergency Response Systems, which will provide the units along with maintenance and training for the bistate agency's civilian staff. The Port Authority currently has 185 AEDs throughout its facilities.

AEDs, which can revive victims in cardiac arrest, will be clearly marked and positioned throughout the Port Authority's various transportation facilities.

The Port Authority is recognized for pioneering the use of AEDs in New York and New Jersey. All members of the Port Authority Police Department are trained to operate the equipment and since 1997, nearly 1,000 Port Authority civilian employees have been trained in operating AEDs.

The late Port Authority Police Captain Kathy Mazza, who was killed on 9/11 and worked for 10 years as an operating room nurse before joining the department, created the

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program in 1997 that equipped Port Authority facilities with AEDs and trained the members of the police force in their operation.

In 1999, the Regional Emergency Medical Services Council of New York City, Inc., named Captain Mazza as its Basic Life Support Provider of the Year for promoting the AED program at the Port Authority.

Port Authority Chairman Anthony R. Coscia said, “In cases of cardiac arrest, automated external defibrillators can help save lives by restoring a heart rhythm to normal. With increasing numbers of customers using our airports, tunnels, bridges, bus terminals and PATH system each year, we want to expand our staff’s ability to respond to these types of medical emergencies.”

Port Authority Vice Chairman Charles A. Gargano said, “Dozens of lives have been saved through the use of AEDs at Port Authority facilities since 1997. Our action today underscores our commitment to the well-being of our customers by training and equipping many more of our employees to respond to cardiac incidents.”

Port Authority Executive Director Kenneth J. Ringler Jr. said, “As a result of the AEDs, our police officers have saved lives at our facilities, which is a tribute to Captain Mazza’s legacy. Expansion of this program is critical because there is no program more important than one that could potentially save lives.”

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The Port Authority expects to begin installing the additional AEDs throughout its facilities by May 2006.

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey operates many of the busiest and most important transportation links in the region. They include John F. Kennedy International, Newark Liberty International, LaGuardia and Teterboro airports; AirTrain JFK and AirTrain Newark; the George Washington Bridge and Bus Station; the Lincoln and Holland tunnels; the three bridges between Staten Island and New Jersey; the PATH (Port Authority Trans-Hudson) rapid-transit system; the Port Authority-Downtown Manhattan Heliport; Port Newark; the Elizabeth-Port Authority Marine Terminal; the Howland Hook Marine Terminal on Staten Island; the Brooklyn Piers/Red Hook Container Terminal; and the Port Authority Bus Terminal in midtown Manhattan. The agency also owns the 16-acre World Trade Center site in Lower Manhattan.

The Port Authority is financially self-supporting and receives no tax revenue from either state.

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