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## **Counsel Steve Rabinowitz Represents NYC Firefighters in Deutsche Bank Fire Investigation**

Following an August 18, 2007 fire that left two firefighters dead at the former Deutsche Bank building at Ground Zero, the Manhattan District Attorney's Office launched an intensive investigation to determine whether criminal negligence played a role in the firefighters' deaths.

Pryor Cashman's Steven M. Rabinowitz – who has nearly twenty years experience representing New York City fire officers and other public employees in investigatory proceedings – provided counsel to some 30 fire officers who were involved in the DA's year-and-a-half long investigation. All of the nearly three dozen fire officers that Rabinowitz represented were cleared of any criminal wrongdoing. Indeed, thanks to Rabinowitz's efforts, the DA's Office granted full immunity from criminal prosecution to all those fire officers who had faced possible criminal charges.

In late December of 2008, the DA's Office, in addition to announcing several indictments for criminally negligent homicide, released a 32-page report criticizing the New York City Fire Department and other City agencies for their alleged failure to thoroughly inspect the Deutsche Bank building during the simultaneous demolition and asbestos removal process that was ongoing at the time of the August 18, 2007 fatal fire.

For example, the report noted that in May 2007 after a pipe fell from the Deutsche Bank building, piercing the roof of an adjacent firehouse, Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta, who inspected the damage from the falling pipe, did not order an inspection of the Deutsche Bank building.

In an article that appeared in the *New York Daily News* on December 24, 2008 entitled “*'Buck Stops With Me' in Deutsche Blaze, Not Scoppetta, Bloomberg Insists,*” Rabinowitz was asked about Scoppetta's failure to order an inspection. As he told the *Daily News*, “Scoppetta never said to anyone I represented, 'You better get in that building and make sure everything is kosher.’” The *Daily News* noted that as part of a deal with the DA's Office, the FDNY would be required to put in place a 25-member team devoted solely to inspecting buildings undergoing inspection, demolition or alteration.

To read the entire article, please [click here](#).