

# media release

SA Metropolitan Fire Service



## SA firefighter's 9/11 pilgrimage to New York

Saturday, 11 September 2010

On September 11, a group of Australian and American first responders will send a message of hope when they mark the anniversary of the 2001 attacks.

36 firefighters, police officers and paramedics will run across the Brooklyn Bridge in New York to Ground Zero, concluding a month-long, 7,500 km relay run across America.

Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) Station Officer, Michael Tagell, the only South Australian participating in the *Tour of Duty*, said it will be an emotional time arriving in New York.

“The purpose of our journey is to remember and honour the first responders who perished in the September 11 attacks in 2001. Hundreds of our brothers and sisters lost their lives trying to rescue the public from the Twin Towers.

“This journey has been more fulfilling and rewarding than any of us could have imagined. The support we’ve received in every community we’ve visited has been incredible, and it has grown every step of the way,” Station Officer Tagell said.

The 16 Australian firefighters and 20 American first responders set off from LA on 12 August, relay running through Las Vegas, Oklahoma, New Orleans, Chicago and Washington.

The group has braved the heat of summer while relay running in six hour shifts around the clock, forming strong bonds along the way.

Station Officer Tagell said he has been overwhelmed by the generosity of communities and peers during the run.

“Throughout our run, we’ve been fundraising for various charities. My charity is the Australian Professional Firefighters Foundation (APFF). I’d like to thank people for their generous donations which will benefit burns survivors,” he said.

MFS Chief Officer, Grant Lupton said the *Tour of Duty* run has moved so many people across America, Australia and the world.

“I commend Station Officer Tagell and the fellow firefighters and first responders who’ve undertaken this journey, which has given many a sense of hope,” Chief Officer Lupton said.

The *Tour of Duty* run is the brainchild of Melbourne (MFB) firefighter Paul Ritchie.

For more information about the *Tour of Duty*, visit: [www.touofduty.com.au](http://www.touofduty.com.au)

**For media enquiries and interviews call the MFS Media Line on (08) 8204 3770**

[www.mfs.sa.gov.au](http://www.mfs.sa.gov.au)