Emergency Egress and Access

Tall buildings present a unique and challenging egress environment. The very aspect ratio which makes tall buildings economically desirable accentuates the impact of egress and other building systems. Further, recent events have raised important questions about the egress design and procedural assumptions traditionally used in tall building design.

This presentation will discuss how technology, training, and emergency management can address the challenges of tall building egress and access. Elevators will likely play a key future role in both fire department access and occupant egress, particularly for mobility challenged-occupants. Coordination and information flow between building systems, building management, emergency responders, call centers, and occupants will be discussed. These are presented in the context of the findings and recommendations of the NIST World Trade Center Investigation with regard to recommended changes to codes, standards, and practices.