

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



The NTOA is ever-evolving and responding to current issues, addressing your concerns and enhancing your benefits. Recently, we hired a professional lobbying firm to have a voice for the association in Washington. As you may be aware, many membership associations, including those in the law enforcement community, have access to law and policymakers in DC. The NTOA believes that you need a voice there as well, so in May I accompanied our lobbyist to Capitol Hill and met with senior staffers and members of Congress to remind and familiarize them with the hard work, dedication and professionalism that you bring to law enforcement and our communities. We were able to spend time with the chief counsels of both the Senate and House judiciary committees.

A few weeks after our visit, NTOA was contacted by a congressional senior staffer about an amendment to the Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 2014. The amendment sought to increase funding by several million dollars for state and local police crisis intervention training. The NTOA provided valuable information that was used to make an argument for such funding. The amendment was passed. There were other requests for information and similar support from several other offices, demonstrating that NTOA is now being recognized on a national level as a resource for information, training and expertise.

It is imperative for the future of the tactical community, in light of the recent criticism by some in the media, the public and the government, that the real story of what you do is being heard. We can no longer just sit back and let others paint the picture of the tactical community, including K9, CNT, EOD, corrections, TEMS, tactical patrol and other specialized units in law enforcement who risk their lives every day, serving and protecting our communities. We need to be proactive in standing down those critics, be at the table where laws and policies are being made that impact what you do, and educate our communities, policymakers, media and lawmakers. Your story must be heard. Your dedication, and in some instances the tragic loss of life, will not go unnoticed.

This issue of *The Tactical Edge* marks an expanded focus on the patrol officer. We believe that the skill set, training, education and capabilities that you have honed and acquired over the course of your career should be accessed by the men

and women of patrol. All police officers and deputies should be thinking "tactical" in whatever they do while on duty. As you are well aware, patrol is typically the first to respond to any major event, including active shooter situations. We believe that having a tactically trained first responder is essential to saving lives at the scene and to officer safety.

So, with our patrol community in mind, we announce our new Advanced Response Patrol OfficerSM course on page 8 of this issue. This course will provide patrol officers and deputies with blocks of instruction covering basic tactical operational procedures. It is not the intent of the course to develop SWAT officers, crisis negotiators or other tactical team positions, but to expose first responders to training that they can use within the first few minutes of a major violent situation. It will allow a smoother transition from patrol to SWAT or other specialized units upon arrival. The NTOA is uniquely positioned with outstanding instructors and training experience to provide this type of training to our first responders. We will be looking for additional instructors to build this new initiative and other expanded areas of instruction. Please visit our website for notification of future openings.

On page 12 of this issue, we feature the "Below 100 Initiative," which NTOA enthusiastically endorses. The goals of Below 100 are to reduce annual line-of-duty deaths to below 100, to make changes where possible and needed, and to encourage a culture of safety in police departments. Below 100 teaches five basic tenets to keep you alive and safe during your shift. NTOA has recently hosted several Below 100 classes and I encourage you to look for one near you or consider hosting one in your department.

On a closing note, I would like to thank Derrick Bartlett of the American Sniper Association (ASA) for his dedication to the sniper community. We are looking forward to providing training opportunities, exchange of information and mutual professional development with the ASA, state associations and other law enforcement associations and organizations. It is through mutual cooperation, effective training and open communication that you can do your job safely and effectively, and ensure that our communities are well protected.

Be safe and God Bless,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Lomax".

Mark Lomax