



This is an exciting time for the NTOA. We remain committed to our mandate to pursue networking and information-sharing resources for our members to improve themselves and their job performance. A number of opportunities are being explored, including partnerships with academia, federal agencies and private companies to develop educational and training courses on tactical operations of unmanned aircraft systems, tactical leadership certifications, web-based learning environments and virtual classrooms. Our new director of training and education, Don Kester, will be spearheading these and similar initiatives.

One issue currently driving the NTOA is the expanding need for corrections personnel training. In May, I was honored to attend the 19th Annual Mock Prison Riot, which was held on the grounds of the decommissioned West Virginia Penitentiary in Moundsville, West Virginia. More than 1,300 corrections tactical officers from 14 different countries attended this year's event. For the first time, the NTOA conducted three training workshops and three information sessions at the event. Kudos to Keith Moon, NTOA corrections section chair, and his section members for their hard work and planning for this conference. I met with the West Virginia secretary of corrections, who was very appreciative of the NTOA's involvement in the Mock Prison Riot and is looking forward to future collaborative training events and courses for corrections

officers assigned to tactical response teams. This year the NTOA also developed five new training courses for the corrections community. This expansion of our corrections training portfolio is only one of several initiatives the NTOA is developing.

In 2015, there have been several proposed legislative bills from the House and Senate that addressed federal funding for the acquisition and transference of military surplus equipment for use by law enforcement. Most of these bills did not make it into legislative committees or out of committee. More recently, the President issued Executive Order 13688, which places limits on certain military equipment for use by law enforcement and which requires more training and transparency relative to the acquisition and use of the equipment. The NTOA has been sought out by Capitol Hill for its expertise and knowledge in regards to SWAT-related issues, and we have been actively involved in the discussions on these legislative proposals and orders. It is the NTOA's charge to ensure that law enforcement has access to lifesaving equipment and training.

The NTOA is currently revising the NTOA SWAT Standard, first published in 2008 and revised in 2009 and 2011. This most recent update will keep the document relevant and useful to our members. Major Ed Allen, former board member and current consulting editor for *The Tactical Edge*, headed up the revision working group. The new SWAT Standard will include the topic of interoperability among TEMS, canine, bomb technicians, snipers, crisis negotiators and other disciplines. Moreover, it will address large, medium and small agency concerns

relative to staffing, equipment and training. The SWAT Standard Working Group reviewed comments during an online open-comment period set up exclusively for membership input. Your feedback was, as always, critical to the document's relevancy.

In 2014, the NTOA hired the International Association of Chiefs of Police and the University of Chicago to develop a national survey on SWAT, and the results will be published this fall. This was the first survey of its kind, and the results are eagerly awaited by law enforcement agencies and associations, as well as our critics and key decision-makers in our government. NTOA's increased presence and the greater attention to SWAT issues in Washington, D.C., are ushering in a new era of law enforcement support that we proudly stand behind. We look forward to working with all the groups I have mentioned here to take the association and our membership to the next level of professionalism and to provide the men and women in law enforcement quality training, timely exchange of information and the advancement of the tactical community.

I look forward to seeing you in Salt Lake City, Utah, at our annual conference in August. ■

Be safe and God Bless,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Lomax'.

Mark Lomax