

# DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



I hope this message finds you doing well and enjoying many of the summer activities we were unable to enjoy last year. Hopefully, daily living is beginning to “normalize” as we move past the peak of the pandemic.

Life here at the NTOA has been as busy as ever. The staff has been working hard to meet the training requests coming in daily. In addition, we have been working to put together the 2021 Law Enforcement Operations Conference and Trade Show. I look forward to seeing many of you in Kansas City, where we will have over 100 different sessions, including daily debriefs of critical incidents. I am confident that there is something on the schedule to benefit all of you.

Over the past year, we have been using our TacTalks webinars to share timely topics and information. One of the most requested subjects has been public order and the civil unrest that has occurred in communities across the country. There is no question that the civil unrest and rioting is presenting law enforcement with one of its greatest challenges in years. Despite the best efforts of law enforcement, it continues to be criticized for its response to these “protests.” Unfortunately, as is all too often the case these days, the criticism is based on a lack of understanding and optics. While tactical teams have a role to play in civil unrest and have some training in this area, it is not their primary mission. Specifically trained and equipped public order units are much better situated to be the primary responders to these events. As SWAT teams often find themselves thrust into these scenarios, the NTOA has convened a panel of national and international subject matter experts (SMEs) to examine policing’s training, equipment and capabilities in public order.

As with other sub-specialties of law enforcement such as Tactical Emergency Medical Services (TEMS), SWAT or K9, a new Public Order section will be created and led by a chairperson. This section will focus on developing a new training curriculum, identifying specific equipment needs and safety standards, and setting public order standards similar to the NTOA Tactical Response Operations Standards (TROS) that guide tactical teams. There is a critical need for this information, and the NTOA is ideally positioned to provide it. Our goal is to have this effort completed and ready for dissemination at the conference. We are acutely aware of the challenges being placed on our noble profession by these incidents. Knowing the SMEs that we have working on this project, I am confident that the end product will be extremely helpful. As always, your input is encouraged and welcomed as we push forward with this effort. In the meantime, please stay safe and God Speed.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Thor Eells', written in a cursive style.

Thor Eells  
Executive Director