
DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



Our 31st annual Tactical Operations Conference and Trade Show, held for the first time in Alabama, was a roaring success with nearly 700 attendees and more than 200 vendors. Thanks goes out to Major Kara Rose of the Mobile Police Department, the Alabama Tactical Officers Association, and the many other agencies that contributed countless hours of hard work and planning. As attested to by prior conference hosts, it takes about two years of preparation to host the conference and trade show. Hosting a conference of this size is a complex task for our staff to tackle, as well, but they do so with confidence and energy and somehow make it look effortless. Finally, to vendors and students: If not for you, we would not have such an amazing tradition of providing this venue for you every year. Please read our conference article on page 14 in this issue and mark your calendars for next year's conference in Salt Lake City!

By now, some of your agencies have received the NTOA/IACP SWAT Survey. This is the first, in-depth national study to be conducted on SWAT, and has taken over a year to prepare and disseminate. Over the past several years, many in the media and others have criticized the tactics, equipment, training — even the mere existence — of SWAT. Moreover, the DoD Excess Property Program (also known as DoD 1033) has come under attack. The law enforcement community, collectively, has not had the quantitative and qualitative evidence to refute those critics and, more importantly, to provide a clear, unbiased picture of how, when and where SWAT teams and tactical units save lives, protect property and quell violence. This study is the first step to addressing those concerns. Results should be available in early 2015.

The NTOA had the privilege of testifying before the U.S. House and Senate regarding the 1033 program. The NTOA and the Police Foundation were the only law enforcement associations invited to testify before the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the House Armed Services Committee. Additionally, the NTOA has been sought out to provide insight and guidance on several legislative bills, proposals and inquiries. Your voice is being heard.

Finally, a chapter of NTOA history is closing as Rob Cartner announced at the conference that he is retiring at the end of this year, after serving 17 years as our Director of Training. As many of you know, Rob has been a dedicated NTOA member and staffer for several decades. From the association's humble beginning, Rob has been an essential contributor and mentor, and is largely responsible for tirelessly building our reputation of providing the highest quality law enforcement training available anywhere. His contribution to tactical training and officer safety is truly immeasurable. His wife Lora has also dedicated her time and efforts to the NTOA at our conferences, on committees, and by traveling with Rob for training courses. I will miss our conversations over the years, both personally and professionally. Congratulations, Rob and Lora. May this new chapter in your life bring you joy and happiness.

Be safe and God Bless,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Lomax". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Mark Lomax
Executive Director