

# DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

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It's hard to believe it's been 35 years since the National Tactical Officers Association was founded by a true visionary, Capt. John Kolman (LASD, ret.). While on the surface John's goal appeared simple, to improve

training and information sharing, his true intent went much deeper. He wanted to save the lives of SWAT operators and those going into harm's way on a daily basis for their communities. John was convinced there was a better way, and his selfless drive and commitment led to the creation of the NTOA.

The NTOA has worked hard over the years to offer cutting-edge training that meets the needs of today's first responders. We continually monitor emerging threats, looking to expand our courses to help all law enforcement officers, including corrections. While our classes have evolved, our goal of saving lives remains the same. For many of us, the NTOA has been such a mainstay of our training and development that it is hard to imagine a world without it. John's impact has been immeasurable. His example and influence has helped shape the NTOA into the association it is today and we owe him a huge debt of gratitude. Thank you, John!

The NTOA also is committed to improving the profession. This effort led to development of NTOA best practices and our Tactical Response and Operations Standard (TROS). The TROS is a guide to improving the professionalism of our chosen specialty. These voluntary standards have been derived

from the input of the membership and in collaboration with state tactical associations. Please take the time to review the latest iteration of the TROS. Significant improvement has been made in categories such as equipment, CNT and TEMS. The highly contentious issues of training hours and Priority of Life language also have been addressed. I am confident the TROS not only will help guide your team's training, but will improve its performance. Read more on the updated TROS on page 10 of this issue.

As I conclude my message, I would like to take a moment and encourage each of you to attend our annual conference in September. This year it will be held in Milwaukee, with the help of the Association of SWAT Personnel — Wisconsin. The NTOA training staff has been working hard to make this a truly memorable event. There will be ample opportunity to learn and have fun. One of the many benefits will be the incident debriefs, which include contemporary events such as the 2016 Pulse nightclub shooting in Orlando and the 2017 Route 91 Harvest Festival shooting in Las Vegas. This year's debriefs have been selected for the "tough" lessons learned and the candid delivery by the presenters.

Come help us celebrate the 35th anniversary of the NTOA while having some fun with old and new friends. See you there!

Take care and be safe,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Thor Eells".

Thor Eells  
Executive Director