

# DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

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I hope that this edition of *The Tactical Edge* finds you doing well and enjoying your summer. If the news is an accurate barometer, challenges against law enforcement continue. Recent assaults on police shock the conscience and even more disturbing is the response in some communities. There is

further degradation of civility within our society and it's becoming acceptable to belittle our noble profession.

Just recently, officers in Arizona were asked to leave a Starbucks after a customer complained that their presence made them feel unsafe. Like many of you, my first reaction was one of fury and a quick promise to never visit a Starbucks again. In fairness to Starbucks, the corporate office was quick to apologize for the actions of its employee. Initially, this did little to calm my outrage. Yet, as I considered the event, coupled with the lack of civility and respect for law enforcement, I realized that I was guilty of the same rush to judgment that has contributed to this strain between our profession and the people we serve. I was willing to judge all by the actions of a few. I think we can all agree that much of that has been happening to our profession.

In choosing to do what we do, we made a conscious decision to be selfless in our service and to be non-judgmental. Each of you witnesses this behavior in action on a daily basis, so much so that it is our new norm. Given the current pressures and strains being placed on law enforcement, I think it is more important than ever for us to recommit to being as professional as we can possibly be. We must continue to take the high road, even under the most trying circumstances. We must work to find ways to improve ourselves individually, and thereby improve our profession.

Seeking professional development through training and education is one avenue toward improvement, but it can be expensive. To help members, the National Tactical Officers Association has partnered with other leading

law enforcement associations, in conjunction with the Department of Justice COPS Office, to create an avenue to receive training in various topics at no cost to the agency or officer. This venture, the Collaborative Reform Initiative-Technical Assistance Center (CRI-TAC), provides free customized technical assistance to an agency in a variety of disciplines. Some of these topics include active shooter response, mass casualty response and rescue task force, public disorder response, and officer safety and wellness. These are just a few that may appeal to you and your agency.

The primary difference between CRI-TAC assistance and other federal grants is there is little to no paperwork involved, and no need to assign a grant administrator. Simply make a request on the type of training desired and participate in a follow up phone call to clarify your needs. The majority of paperwork will be completed by the CRI-TAC participants. Trust me, this truly is as simple as it sounds and is a great conduit to free training for your agency. Please take a moment to explore this opportunity and contact me with any questions you may have. A link to CRI-TAC can be found at [ntoa.org](http://ntoa.org) on the main page.

Other opportunities for exceptional training will be offered at our upcoming conferences. Our annual Law Enforcement Operations Conference and Trade Show will be held Aug. 18-23 in Orlando, Florida, and our Crisis Negotiations Conference will take place on Nov. 19-22 in Scottsdale, Arizona. Both events will offer the very best instructors in a variety of disciplines. I hope to see you at one or both of these conferences. I am confident that you will not be disappointed!

Please continue to be safe, and thank you all for your dedication and service. God speed!

Thank you and take care,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Thor Eells". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Thor Eells  
Executive Director