



State Association News

Oklahoma Special Operations Association

BY JASON MUSE

Today's SWAT community has evolved into one that has to be rooted in industry standards and have the ability to train to meet those standards. In the past, SWAT officers in the state of Oklahoma have been left to look outside the state to find a training resource for their teams. In 2016, officers from across the state came together to form the Oklahoma Special Operations Association (OKSOA). The goal of the association is to establish standards for the SWAT community and any other special operations groups that need a place to grow and develop their team in the state. The main focus of the association was to establish standards, and then help provide funding and training to meet those standards.

When the board of directors came together in 2017 they began discussing the needs of their region and what standards they wanted to meet those needs. The board quickly identified that most of their officers attended classes taught by NTOA. They also identified the fact that NTOA had published SWAT standards nationally. The board reviewed the standards and discussed at length whether there were any conditions they disagreed with. The board unanimously agreed that those standards provided a nationally

recognized framework for helping our state begin to train and operate in a way that best supported regional resiliency and professionalism. The board is working closely with our state certifying agency and our state Office of Homeland Security to ensure courses are developed in a way that is eligible for funding and meets the state's burden for certification.

One of the primary areas of concern for the special operations community in law enforcement is the need for interoperability. The reality of SWAT/bomb interoperability, the need for the bomb and dive community to work together, the need for support from the aviation programs and K9 units, and support from fire departments in all the specialty areas they work in ensures that the work of our state association will be needed well into the future.

One of the main tools we are using to give us a better picture of our state resources in the SWAT, bomb, dive and explosive detection canine (EDC) communities is the National Counter-IED Capabilities Analysis Database (NCCAD). This program was developed by the Office for Bombing Prevention to allow agencies to meet the core capabilities of the National

Preparedness Goal. Using the NCCAD program gives us the ability to see what teams need for equipment, training and funding to meet those needs.

As an association we hope to act as a resource for officers across Oklahoma to exchange information, provide needed training and offer subject matter experts for community-related questions. We have established a website at oksoa.org to facilitate these goals. On the website we have posted our bylaws, the NTOA Tactical Response and Operations Standards, training courses and relevant events across the state. As the association grows we will work to develop our resources on the website and throughout the association to meet the needs of our teams across the state.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Cpl. Jason Muse has been a Tulsa Police Department Special Operations Team member since 2007 and currently serves as an assistant team leader for Entry Team 2. He is a tactical breaching instructor, explosive breacher, rappel master, and a Hazmat instructor. Muse currently serves as chairman of the board and executive director of the Oklahoma Special Operations Association.