



State Preparedness Training Center (SPTC)

2018
Annual
Report

TRAINING FOR TODAY, BUILDING FOR TOMORROW

Introduction to the SPTC Annual Report

New York City. Las Vegas. Orlando. Austin. Parkland. Over the past two years, major attacks have occurred in each of these areas, pushing first responder organizations to adapt and evolve to effectively respond to the current threat environment. Given the complexity of these and other related incidents, integrated training for first responders is more important now than ever.

New York State is home to one of the premier first responder training facilities in the nation – the State Preparedness Training Center (SPTC) in Oriskany, New York. Operated by the New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHSES), the SPTC provides contemporary, cutting-edge training to thousands of first responders each year. Located on 1,100 acres, the SPTC is home to an extensive series of realistic training venues, including a 45,000-square foot CityScape, which includes a simulated high school, courthouse, mall, bank, motel, and apartments.

In 2018, the SPTC made great strides forward with the addition of new venues, new courses, and new special events. This Annual Report captures the highlights of the Center's activities this year.



2018 SPTC Fast Facts



9,513 students trained

4,203 ~ DHSES-directed Residential Courses

4,648 ~ Third Party Facility Usage

662 ~ DHSES-directed Mobile Training



Top Four Disciplines Trained (in Residential Courses)



63.6% ~ Law Enforcement



23.7% ~ Fire Service



3% ~ Emergency Management



5.4% ~ Emergency Medical Services

Top Five Courses (# of students trained)

Course	# of Students Trained
Initial Response to Active Shooters	604
Rescue Task Force for EMS	188
Rescue Task Force for Law Enforcement	178
Officer Survival Tactics	175
Close Quarter Tactics	169

2018 Student Feedback



Course Content – 4.8/5

Instructor Team – 4.8/5

Overall Satisfaction – 4.8/5

New and Exciting Venues: The Swift Water and Flood Training (SWFT) Complex

As New Yorkers know all too well, flooding is the most frequent and costliest natural hazard faced in the state. To address this reality, construction began in March 2017 on a new, state-of-the-art Swift Water and Flood Training (SWFT) complex at the SPTC. Completed in May 2018, SWFT was opened for training of external partners in July. SWFT features a swift water channel, an urban flood simulator, a three-acre pond and a high-angle rope rescue tower. DHSES' Office of Fire Prevention and Control (OFPC) hired over a dozen new fire protection specialists, stationed in Oriskany, to provide training on SWFT to first responders from across the state.



The opening of SWFT was cause for great fanfare, both in New York State and across the nation. In September 2018, the SWFT complex was featured on the “Today Show” in a spot with NBC correspondent Kerry Sanders. This marked the first time that the SPTC appeared on a nationally televised news program. Publicity surrounding SWFT helped to generate significant interest in the SPTC.

The opening of SWFT in 2018 also strengthened existing partnerships between the SPTC and the DHSES Office of Fire Prevention and Control (OFPC). OFPC now offers a number of courses (i.e. Emergency Boat Operations and Rescue, Swiftwater/Flood Rescue Technician – Basic) in Oriskany, utilizing the SWFT venue. In just six months of operation, over 375 first responders were trained by OFPC in SWFT.

The SPTC and OFPC partnership on SWFT is part of a larger effort to market Oriskany as the Technical Rescue training hub in New York State. OFPC built a confined space simulator within CityScape in early 2018 and they regularly utilize the Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) rubble pile for training. Moving forward, there are tentative plans for a trench simulator and other Technical Rescue venues to further support DHSES' efforts in this area.



Cutting-Edge, Contemporary Training: New Courses at the SPTC

- **Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Training Efforts:** In 2017, the SPTC launched an exciting new series of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) training courses to educate public safety officials on how to effectively and ethically utilize drones to support their missions. The SPTC began with a one-day “UAS Awareness Workshop” and a five day “UAS Basic Operator Course” in 2017. These efforts expanded in 2018 with the following:

- **UAS Part 107 Preparation Course:** The SPTC partnered with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to develop a two-day “UAS Part 107 Preparation Course.” This course helps budding public safety pilots to pass an exam related to UAS flight that is administered by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). This course has been extremely popular with first responders, generating tremendous interest and lengthy waiting lists for inclusion in the training.



- **UAS Advanced Operator Course:** The SPTC coordinated with the University at Albany’s National Center for Security and Preparedness (NCSP) to develop a two-day “UAS Advanced Operator Course” to allow more seasoned drone pilots to enhance their skills. This new course was delivered two times in 2018 and 24 advanced drone pilots were trained.



- **NYS Public Safety UAS Summit:** In August, DHSES hosted the first “NYS Public Safety UAS Summit” at the SPTC. This event brought together more than 80 local, state, and federal UAS experts to share lessons learned and best practices. The feedback on this inaugural event was extremely positive and the Division is planning a second summit in the summer of 2019. The SPTC’s efforts to develop a comprehensive set of drone training courses was highlighted in the NYS Association of Chiefs of Police magazine, “The Chief’s Chronicle” in December of 2018. Since drone training began at the SPTC in 2017, over 450 first responders have been trained public safety UAS operations in Oriskany.



- **Tactical Team Leadership Course:** The SPTC has expanded in recent years to be a central source of tactical team training in New York State. The center provides several SWAT courses, including the NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) Basic SWAT Operator Course, Close Quarter Tactics, and Advanced Tactical Team Scenarios. In 2018, the SPTC (in partnership with the University at Albany) developed a new, three-day “Tactical Team Leadership Course.” This course provides both new and senior team leaders with the skills necessary to lead tactical operations and to plan for crisis situations. This new course was piloted two times in 2018 and nearly 30 team leaders were trained.



- **2018 Tactical Week at the SPTC:** The SPTC hosted the second annual “Tactical Week” in May. Eight tactical teams from across the state were invited to participate in advanced, hands-on skills lanes and scenarios. At the end of the week, the Colonie Police Department’s Special Services Team was crowned the “winner” of Tactical Week for their outstanding performance and teamwork during the event.



- **School Violence – Incident Prevention and Response Workshop:** In the wake of the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in February 2018, the SPTC launched a partnership with the New York State Police (NYSP) to develop a three-hour “School Violence: Incident Prevention and Response” Workshop. This workshop is for all school staff, including superintendents, principals, teachers, bus drivers and cafeteria workers. Two initial deliveries were conducted in late 2018 and more than 100 educational staff were trained. These numbers will increase dramatically in 2019 as the program is expanded across the state.
- **New Partnerships for Expanded Training at the SPTC:** In 2018, the SPTC worked to expand its partnership with nationally-recognized training providers to bring cutting-edge, contemporary training to New York State’s first responders. Two key examples of this effort include:

- **Active Threat Integrated Response Course (ATIRC):** The SPTC partnered with the National Center for Biomedical Research and Training (NCBRT) – a member of the National Domestic Preparedness Consortium – to bring the “Active Threat Integrated Response Course” (PER-340) to Oriskany two times in 2018. This course is focused on the integration of law enforcement, fire, and emergency medical services (EMS) providers during active shooter events. This course emphasizes the “Rescue Task Force” model of providing “warm zone” care to injured victims during an event. In total, 64 first responders were trained through this course in 2018.



- **Leadership in Crisis Training Program (LICTP):** The SPTC coordinated with the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC), based in Georgia, to bring their “Leadership in Crisis Training Program” (LICTP) to Oriskany in September. This course helps law enforcement officials, emergency managers, and other first responders hone the leadership skills that will be needed during a critical event. This program complements the state’s efforts under the “Complex Coordinated Terrorist Attack” (CCTA) program outlined below.



Advancing the Center for Responders Statewide: Major Milestones and Special Events

- **Complex Coordinated Terrorist Attack (CCTA) Program:** In 2017, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) released a new grant dedicated to preparing for complex coordinated terrorist attacks (CCTAs). Funding was awarded via a nationwide competitive process and New York State’s application was one of less than 30 selected nationally for funding. New York State’s application, coordinated by DHS&S, involved four of the major upstate urban areas (Buffalo-Erie-Niagara; Monroe-Rochester; Onondaga-Syracuse, and the Capital District). In January 2018, a “New York State CCTA Kick-Off Workshop” was conducted in Oriskany for 40 officials, followed by CCTA Technical Assistance



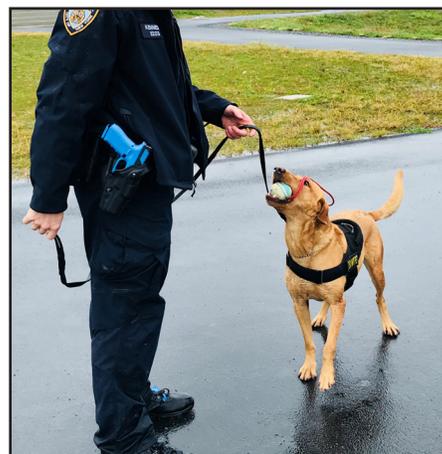
from FEMA in May for more than 60 attendees. In 2019, the SPTC will host the “CCTA Capstone Exercise” in October, which is focused on a scenario involving (simulated) coordinated attacks on Election Day across upstate New York.



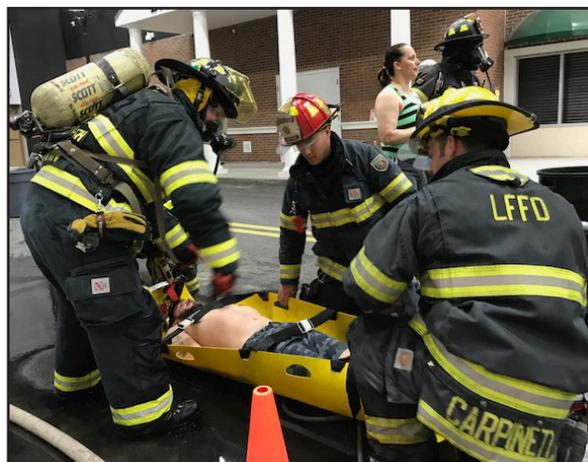
- **2018 Excelsior Challenge:** In October, the SPTC hosted its capstone event – the Excelsior Challenge – for bomb technicians, explosive detection canine handlers and tactical team operators statewide. More than 115 law enforcement specialty team members from 40 different organizations participated in this year’s event. The goal of the Excelsior Challenge is to increase coordination and collaboration among bomb squads, explosive detection canine teams and tactical teams. Together, members of these teams were challenged through complex scenarios inspired by the most recent terrorist attacks from across the globe. This year’s scenarios included an active shooter attack on an outdoor concert (similar to the Harvest Concert Shooting in Las Vegas) and a series of mail-based bombings (based on the Austin bombings in 2017). The Excelsior Challenge is supported by numerous local, state and federal law enforcement agencies and continues to expand and advance each year.



- **Expanded Specialty Team Training Opportunities:** Based on the success of the Excelsior Challenge, the SPTC has worked to expand its training opportunities for tactical teams (outlined above), bomb squads, and canine teams. In April 2019, the SPTC will be one of four host sites nationally for the “Raven’s Challenge” exercise, which is focused on enhance coordination among public safety bomb squads and military explosive ordnance device (EOD) units. Further, in June 2019, the SPTC will conduct the first “Canine Week” in Oriskany. More than 40 explosive detection canine teams will be able to participate in advance, hands-on training to further enhance their capabilities.



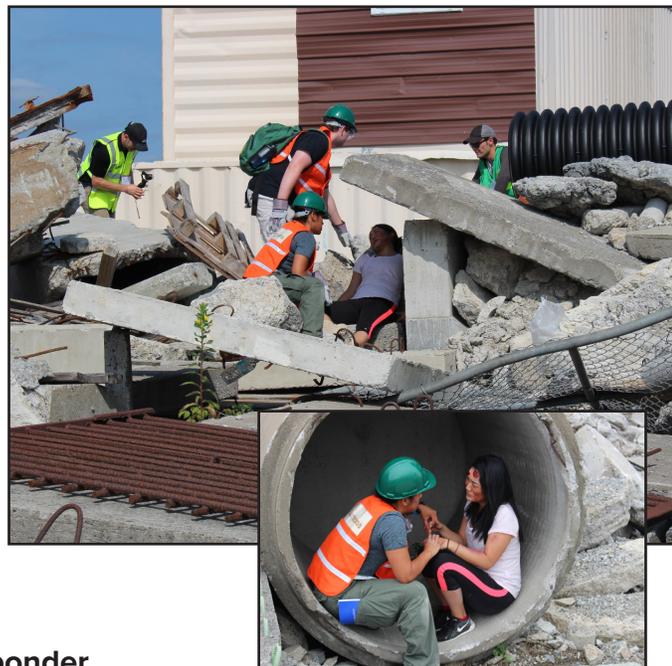
- **Inaugural New York – New Jersey Exercise:** The interconnectedness of New York and New Jersey’s residents, transit systems, and economies cannot be understated. Accordingly, in April, the SPTC coordinated with the Northern New Jersey Urban Area to host the first “New York-New Jersey” exercise in Oriskany and in locations across North Jersey. The exercise focused heavily on information-sharing and integration between the New York State Intelligence Center (NYSIC) and intelligence functions in New Jersey. It also included a hands-on component, featuring bomb squad, hazmat, and technical rescue lanes at the SPTC.



- **Full-Scale Incident Management Team (IMT) Exercise:** In April, the FDNY and New York State Incident Management Teams (IMTs) co-hosted a large full-scale exercise at the SPTC. More than 300 personnel were involved in this exercise, which focused on a series of simulated tornadoes across Central New York resulting in the need for IMT support.



- **NY-Hope Exercise:** In August, the SPTC served as the host site for the NY-Hope exercise, in coordination with the University at Albany's College of Emergency Preparedness, Homeland Security and Cybersecurity (CEHC) and the Center for Humanitarian Service and Education (CHSE). This exercise is run by students (with oversight from first responders and other experts) and helps students to develop and hone their skills as emergency responders. The students worked in teams and rotated through challenges that included mass casualty situations, water rescue operations, damage assessment, and Emergency Operations Center (EOC) operations. 2018 marked the first time that the NY-Hope exercise was conducted at the SPTC – and NY-Hope will be back again in 2019.



- **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in the First Responder Community:** In September, the SPTC hosted its first event dedicated to addressing PTSD in the first responder community. It featured briefings from recognized experts in this field, including Sheriff Timothy Whitcomb from Cattaraugus County, and Dr. David Griffen from the Charleston (South Carolina) Fire Department. More than 50 local, state, and federal public safety officials attended this inaugural event. Based on stakeholder feedback, another PTSD forum will occur in the fall of 2019.



- **Training Center Site Visits:** To continue the center's advancement, the SPTC conducted a series of site visits at local, state, and federal training centers to understand how they develop, deliver, and evaluate their training programs. This information has been – and will be – used to enhance efforts to train first responders in Oriskany. Highlights of the 2018 site visits included trips to the FBI Academy in Quantico, Virginia; the U.S. Army's Asymmetric Warfare Group Training Center in Fort AP Hill, Virginia, and the NYPD and FDNY academies, respectively, in New York City.



- **NY/NJ/CT Regional Transit Security Working Group (RTSWG) Support:** In 2018, the NYS Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHSES) assumed the Chair of the NY/NJ/CT Regional Transit Security Working Group (RTSWG). The RTSWG includes membership from the major transit security providers in the metropolitan region, including the NYPD, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PANYNJ), New Jersey Transit, and AMTRAK. Within DHSES, the Office of Counter Terrorism (OCT) serves as the Chair of the RTSWG, with support from the SPTC. In September, the SPTC hosted the RTSWG for a two-day meeting and tour in Oriskany. As part of the meeting, the group discussed and evaluated mechanisms to enhance transit security training (and associated venues) at the SPTC.

Looking Ahead to 2019: The Way Forward

Looking ahead to 2019, the SPTC plans to continue expanding and advancing its efforts in terms of venues, new courses, and major milestones and events. These efforts will support first responders from all different disciplines, building on the center’s core audience with law enforcement, to incorporate additional participation from EMS, the fire service, emergency management, and public health.

Given the number and complexity of terrorist attacks occurring worldwide, integrated, hands-on, scenario-driven training for first responders is critically important. For example, in 2016, less than 48 hours after the Excelsior Challenge event ended, there were connected bombings in Seaside Park, N.J., and in New York City’s Chelsea neighborhood. In 2017, less than 72 hours after the training event ended, the deadliest active shooter incident in recent American history occurred in Las Vegas. In 2018, less than three weeks after the Excelsior Challenge, a series of bombs were sent to high-profile Democratic officials through the mail in a scenario very similar to one tested (in a simulated fashion) at the event.

For many responders participating in training at the SPTC, it’s not a matter of “if,” but “when” they will be called to respond to a complex attack. Their experience at the SPTC provides a core group of the state’s responders with enhanced capabilities to respond to these incidents.



Learn More About the SPTC!

www.dhSES.ny.gov/sptc