



State Preparedness Training Center (SPTC)

2019
Annual Report

Introduction to the SPTC Annual Report

Today's first responders face an ever-broadening array of threats from terrorists and other extremists, both foreign and homegrown. After Action Reviews (AARs) from major incidents perpetrated by these groups often share a common trend: Jurisdictions that invest in active training and exercise programs often have better results when their capabilities are put to the test in real-world incidents. Given this reality, New York State has made a sustained commitment to supporting first responders with their training and exercise efforts.

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. 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 offers an extensive series of realistic training venues, a Swift Water and Flood Training (SWFT) venue, a 45,000 square foot CityScape complex, and an Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) simulator.

In 2019, the SPTC made great strides forward with the addition of new venues, cutting-edge training courses, major special events, and enhanced partnerships. This Annual Report captures the highlights of the Center's activities this year.

Who We Train: Key SPTC Statistics



Homeland Security
and Emergency Services

State Preparedness
Training Center

2019 SPTC Fast Facts

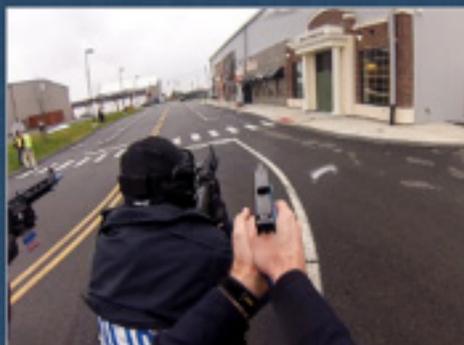


13,520 students
trained

5,189 ~ Residential Courses

5,349 ~ Third Party Facility Usage

2,982 ~ SPTC-directed Mobile Training



Top Four Disciplines Trained

(In Residential Courses)



58.8% ~ Law Enforcement



21.0% ~ Fire Service



9.7% ~ Emergency
Management



5.3% ~ Emergency
Medical Services

Top Five Courses

(# of Students Trained)

Course	# of Students Trained
Initial Response to Active Shooters (IRAS)	557
Swiftwater Flood Rescue Technician	327
Close Quarter Tactics	196
Rescue Task Force for EMS	179
Officer Survival Tactics	154

2019 Student Feedback



Course Content – 4.8/5

Instructor Team – 4.8/5

Overall Satisfaction – 4.8/5

New and Exciting Venues

Coming Soon...A New Multi-Purpose Theatre at the SPTC:

Theatres and concert venues have been targeted by terrorist organizations (i.e. the Bataclan Theatre in Paris in 2015), so it is critical that responders train in these environments. In exciting news this year, DHSES received \$5 million in capital appropriations under the 2019-2020 Enacted State Budget. In the fall of 2019, DHSES began work with the NYS Office of General Services (OGS) on the design of a new multi-purpose theatre. The theatre will seat several hundred people and will be used to host large-scale events. It will also be used to conduct realistic, scenario-based training for first responders. The design of the new theatre will continue in 2020, construction will begin in 2021, and the venue is slated to open in 2022.



The Swift Water and Flood Training (SWFT) Complex: As New Yorkers know all too well, flooding is the most frequent and costliest natural hazard in the State. To address this reality, New York State built a new, state-of-the-art Swift Water and Flood Training (SWFT) complex at the SPTC. Completed in 2018, 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) develops, executes, and evaluates high-impact training at the SWFT venue for first responders statewide.



- In 2019, its first full year of operations, nearly 800 first responders from across the state were trained by OFPC at the SWFT venue. The SWFT venue and the associated training were recognized by "American Security Today" with an award in November 2019.
- The SPTC and OFPC continue to work together to fully maximize the potential of this exciting new venue. In 2020, a new "Flood Awareness Course for Law Enforcement Officers" will be developed. Law Enforcement Officers are often the first responders on-scene during flooding events, yet they typically receive little to no training (depending on their department) on how to safely and effectively respond in a flooded environment. This new course will address this training gap.



New Indoor Simulations Center: Based on a request from the New York State Police (NYSP), the SPTC was able to refurbish a small, vacant building into a new Indoor Simulations Center. This Simulations Center allows the NYSP and other law enforcement agencies to test their response skills in realistic settings (hallways, rooms, doorways) using training weapons. While the design of the Simulations Center is very simple, it is an example of how sometimes the most basic of venues can meet the most pressing needs of first responders. The Simulations Center was completed in the summer of 2019 and was immediately put into use during the Excelsior Challenge in September.

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

- **Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Training Efforts:** In 2019, the SPTC made significant advancements in its efforts to provide UAS training to first responders across the State. The facility solidified its existing suite of UAS courses, which includes a UAS Awareness Course (1 day), a UAS Part 107 Preparation Course (2 days), a UAS Operator Course (5 days), and a UAS Advanced Operator Course (2 days). In April, the SPTC reached a milestone of training 500 first responders in UAS operations – this achievement was highlighted by Governor Cuomo in a press release. The SPTC also received an award from “American Security Today” for its UAS Training Program this year. By the end of 2019, the SPTC had trained nearly 850 officials in this technology.



- **Drone Skills Day:** In 2019, the SPTC launched a new event – called the “Public Safety Drone Skills Day” – in Oriskany. This event featured six unique training lanes, including a maritime rescue, a woodland search and rescue, and the completion of an advanced UAS obstacle course. This event was designed by State Agencies (including DHSES, the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, the NYS) for local agencies. Five teams of Public Safety UAS Operators from across the State participated in this inaugural event, which included a competitive component. At the end of the day, the Manlius Police Department’s UAS Team was “crowned” the winner of Drone Skills Day.



- **Rescue Task Force (RTF) – Tactics and Operations:** The SPTC continued its long-term efforts to support integrated training for law enforcement, fire service, and emergency medical service (EMS) responders this year. In conjunction with the University at Albany, the SPTC developed a new, two day “Rescue Task Force – Tactics and Operations” course. This course was piloted in July 2019 and more than 20 first responders from across the State participated. The feedback from students was extremely positive and additional deliveries will be conducted in 2020.



- **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 designed for all school staff, including superintendents, principals, teachers, bus drivers and cafeteria workers. This effort was piloted in 2018 and offerings began in earnest in early 2019. Over 2,500 educational staff statewide were trained through this effort in 2019.



Advancing the Center for Responders Statewide: Major Special Events

- **Complex Coordinated Terrorist Attack (CCTA) Program:** In 2017, DHSES received \$1.379 million under the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA’s) CCTA grant program. DHSES partnered with the four major upstate urban areas (Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, Albany) on this effort. The CCTA program included a series of efforts, including a “Capstone Exercise” this year. The Capstone Exercise in October was the largest event at the SPTC in 2019. More than 400 people were on property during the exercise, including participants, instructional staff, exercise support staff, and role players. The exercise, called “Election Day Chaos,” featured two primary components: A three-day “Command Portion” which was designed to increase the crisis leadership, crisis decision-making, and crisis communications capabilities of participants. The second component was a two-day “Hands-On Portion” that was a more traditional full-scale exercise involving patrol officers, bomb technicians, explosive detection canine handlers, tactical team operators, emergency managers, hazardous materials technicians, dispatchers, and Crime Analysis Center (CAC) analysts.



- **After Action Review (AAR):** The AAR for the exercise was drafted in 2019 and DHSES will conduct “AAR Workshops” in each of the four upstate regions in January 2020. The AAR will be finalized in February and will be used to guide future CCTA preparedness activities.



- **2019 Excelsior Challenge:**

In September, the SPTC hosted its premier event – the Excelsior Challenge – for bomb technicians, explosive detection canine handlers and tactical team operators statewide. More than 100 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 a house of worship, a large-scale protest that erupts in violence, and the takedown of a serial parcel bomber in lowlight conditions. The Excelsior Challenge is supported by numerous local, state and federal law enforcement agencies and continues to expand and advance each year.

- **2019 Canine Week:** In June 2019, the SPTC hosted the inaugural “Canine Week” at the Center. More than 40 explosive detection canine (EDC) Teams from across the State participated in this event. The teams rotated through eight hands-on training lanes, including EDC tactical emergency casualty care, dignitary protection, and a “special situations” lane that included aviation and maritime components. Participant feedback on this new event was extremely positive and a second event will be held in the summer of 2020.



- **2019 Tactical Week:** In May 2019, the SPTC hosted the third annual “Tactical Week” in Oriskany. This event was re-tooled in 2019 to focus on six tactical teams from across the State – All of these teams have achieved the rigorous SWAT Accreditation Standards administered by the NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS). The 2019 Tactical Week was designed for these teams – by these teams – with additional support from the NYPD’s elite Emergency Services Unit (ESU). At the end of the week, the Troy Police Department’s Emergency Response Team (ERT) was announced as the “winner” of Tactical Week.



- **2019 Raven’s Challenge:** In April 2019, the SPTC was one of four host sites nationally for the 2019 Raven’s Challenge, which is the largest bomb squad exercise in the world. 115 public safety bomb technicians and military explosive ordnance device (EOD) operators from across the world participated in this exercise, which is designed to increase coordination, communication, and collaboration among public safety bomb squads and their military counterparts.



- **2020 NYS Bomb Technician Challenge:** Looking ahead to 2020, the SPTC will host the inaugural “Bomb Technician Challenge” in May at the Center. All 13 of the State’s FBI-accredited bomb squads will participate in this event, which is being developed by DHSES, the NYSP Bomb Disposal Unit, and the FBI’s Counter Improvised Explosive Device (C-IED) Unit.

- **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. 2019 marked the second consecutive year that the NY-Hope Exercise was hosted at the SPTC – and the event will be back again in 2020.



- **DHSES “All Staff” Meeting:** In July, the SPTC had the unique opportunity to host the DHSES “All-Staff” meeting at the Center. Over 300 DHSES staff participated in this daylong event. Staff received a comprehensive brief on the DHSES Strategic Plan (including our shared vision, mission, and values) from Commissioner Murphy. Staff toured the entire SPTC grounds and participated in demonstrations, including a lesson in “bystander care” taught by SPTC staff.



Supporting First Responder Training and Preparedness: Enhanced Partnerships

- **New Research and Development (R&D) Effort with DHS Science and Technology (S&T):** New in 2019, the SPTC became a test site for DHS Science & Technology (S&T) Research and Development (R&D) efforts. In October, S&T personnel, along with local, state, and federal first responders, tested methods to improve through-wall human detection systems for tactical teams. The need for improved detection systems has been identified as a gap within the national tactical team community, so S&T is working with industry and public safety partners to test technological solutions. The SPTC provides the perfect location for this type of cutting-edge research and testing.



- **Enhanced Partnerships with NYC Metropolitan Area:**

The SPTC continued to enhance its partnerships for with public safety agencies in the NYC Metropolitan Area. For example, the SPTC worked with the NYPD’s Counterterrorism Response Command (CRC) to provide “Close Quarters Tactics” trainings nearly 80 of their members in 2019 in Oriskany. The CRC is one of the NYPD’s first lines of defense against a terrorist-related attack. The SPTC also provided CQT training to 15 members of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) Police Department’s new “Hybrid Threat Unit” in December. Hybrid Threat Unit members are highly trained to recognize and prevent threats to the MTA passenger rail system. These partnerships will continue in 2020, as the SPTC works to support the unique needs of public safety agencies in the NYC Metropolitan Area.



- **NY/NJ/CT Regional Transit Security Working Group (RTSWG) Support:** DHSES serves as 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 MTA, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PANYNJ), New Jersey Transit, and AMTRAK. The RTSWG is co-chaired by the DHSES Office of Counter Terrorism and the SPTC. In 2019, a new Regional Transit Security Strategy (RTSS) for the region was completed and DHSES received funding to conduct a series of Tabletop Exercises (TTXs) to test security measures at the new Moynihan Train Hall in Manhattan, which is slated to open in late 2020.

- **Support for the Rochester Threat Advisory Committee (ROCTAC):**

In 2019, the SPTC worked to support the development of the ROCTAC, which was led by Sheriff Todd Baxter and the Monroe County Sheriff's Office, in conjunction with more than 20 local, state, federal, and non-governmental partners. The ROCTAC is focused on prevention efforts and meets regularly to assess threats and behaviors that could lead to targeted violence. The SPTC was proud to host the ROCTAC's initial training in March of 2019 and to share this concept with public safety partners statewide during the Complex Coordinated Terrorist Attack (CCTA) Capstone Exercise in October.



Looking Ahead to 2020: Training for Tomorrow

Looking ahead to 2020, the SPTC plans to continue expanding and advancing its efforts in terms of venues, new courses, major events, and enhanced partnerships. 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 breadth and complexity of terrorist attacks occurring worldwide, integrated, hands-on, scenario-driven training for first responders is critically important. 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