



**Disaster Preparedness
Commission**



2023 Annual Report



**Prepared by the New York State
Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Services**

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Introduction

The New York State Disaster Preparedness Commission (DPC) is comprised of the Commissioners, Directors, and Chairpersons of 30 State Agencies and two volunteer organizations: the American Red Cross and 2-1-1. The DPC's responsibilities include preparing State disaster plans; directing State disaster operations; coordinating State operations with those of local government; and coordinating federal, State, and private recovery efforts. This report is produced pursuant to Executive Law Section 21(3)(i) and provides an overview of the DPC's efforts to enhance New York State's overall preparedness, response, and recovery capabilities.

State Response to Major Emergencies

State Emergency Operations Center

Pursuant to Executive Law Section 21(5), the New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services' (DHSES) Office of Emergency Management (OEM) serves as the operational arm of the DPC. One core function of OEM is to maintain and coordinate the functions of the State Emergency Operations Center (State EOC).

The State Watch Center conducts surveillance and monitoring of potential or actual emergencies 365 days per year and 24 hours per day through reports from field staff, social media, news outlets, emergency notifications, dispatch centers, weather monitoring systems, and other sources of information. The New York State Watch Center served as a vital hub for receiving and disseminating information on planned events, emergencies, and disasters. The State Watch Center processed more than 1,400 requests for State resources.

During "steady state," e.g., when there is no major emergency, OEM maintains the State EOC in a readiness posture. The State EOC is activated to Enhanced Monitoring Mode when a situation requires additional monitoring and potential response coordination across State agencies.

The State EOC is activated to Level 3 or Limited Activation when multi-agency coordination is necessary to prepare for or respond to an incident and the appropriate Emergency Support Function (ESF) is activated to support operations. The State EOC was activated to Level 3 on four occasions:

- Coastal Winter Storm: March 13-15 (five operational periods)
- Rain Event: July 10-12 (six operational periods)

- Rain Event: September 29-30 (two operational periods)
- Water Main Break: October 19-20 (three operational periods)

The State EOC is activated to Level 2 or Partial Activation when an incident may cause or is causing significant impacts on the State. Multi-agency coordination efforts may be required across all agencies and additional representation from federal partners. The State EOC was not activated to Level 2.

The State EOC is activated to Level 1 or Full State/Federal response when federal agency resources and integration are required due to the severity of the incident. The State EOC was not activated to Level 1.

Other critical situational awareness and information gathering efforts included major incidents such as the following:

- Sheltering asylum seekers and linking them to employment (ongoing)
- Hazardous air quality caused by Canadian wildfire smoke (June)
- Water main break in Watertown (October)

Statewide Disaster Preparedness and Planning Efforts

DHSES and DPC agencies engaged in several initiatives to strengthen the State's preparedness posture and ability to respond to a wide variety of disasters. These efforts included updating and enhancing the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP), which details the preparedness, response, and recovery roles and responsibilities for all emergencies, Continuity of Operations Planning (COOP) and Emergency Management Operation Protocols (EMOP).

To maintain an overall state of readiness, OEM partnered with local, county, State, and federal agencies on drills and exercises, including communications drills with the State Watch Center, as well as facility continuity of operations drills. OEM facilitated several disaster-simulation exercises, which included State Watch Center, State EOC and ESFs, and DPC agency participation.

Other OEM activities included:

- Conducted a review of State EOC operations and organizational structure to enhance functions and the process for meeting federal credentialing requirements.

- Refined ESF 7 to align roles and responsibilities to improve efficiency, tracking and coordination.
- Conducted training and multi-agency exercises to evaluate and incorporate updates to the State CEMP and associated annexes.
- Coordinated delivery of 250 trainings to more than 5,800 individuals, including 135 different courses in topics such as Incident Command System, EOCs, Exercise Design, Incident Response and Coordination, and Planning.
- Distributed more than one million N95 masks in response to hazardous air quality caused by Canadian wildfire smoke.
- Co-chaired the Solar Eclipse Interagency Task Force, including more than 20 State agencies, to prepare for the April 8, 2024 total solar eclipse.
- Conducted winter weather tabletop exercises in each of OEM's ten regions.

Extreme Heat Task Force

Several DPC agencies participated in the Extreme Heat Task Force, led by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, to develop recommendations on combatting the dangerous impacts of climate-induced, extreme heat. The Task Force collaborated on a draft of an Extreme Heat Action Plan, which assisted in providing content for future tabletop exercises. Agencies advanced internal practices, developed community notifications, and collaborated on long-term plans that supported extreme heat mitigation efforts.

Citizen Preparedness Corps

The Citizen Preparedness Corps provided trainings to residents to help them develop an emergency plan, respond appropriately during an emergency, and recover to pre-disaster conditions as quickly as possible. The trainings included topics such as making family plans and aligning them with other community organizations and community plans, preparing an emergency preparedness bag, preparing one's home, learning basic first aid, communication during an emergency, what to do if suspicious activity is noticed, and basic considerations to assist in the recovery process after a traumatic event.

Two types of in-person events were provided. Public events were led by the New York National Guard working with OEM and local county emergency management personnel at various venues such as armories, community centers, the New York State Fair, and other locations statewide. Private events requested by organizations such as schools or corporations were provided by the New York National Guard or the American Red Cross.

This year, the Division of Military and Naval Affairs completed 843 trainings for 26,500 individuals with 9,582 emergency preparedness kits distributed across the State, and the American Red Cross presented 76 trainings to 4,478 individuals. Since the program was established in 2014, the Citizen Preparedness Corps has trained more than 381,000 individuals and provided 94,500 emergency preparedness kits to families.

Agency-Specific Disaster Preparedness Activities

Office of Addiction Services and Supports

The New York State Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS) system of care included approximately 1,700 substance use disorder prevention, treatment, and recovery programs serving more than 200,000 individuals annually. The OASAS provider system cared for approximately 100,000 people daily, including more than 11,300 people in bedded and medically managed/supervised and monitored services, and more than 40,300 receiving daily medication via an opioid treatment program. OASAS directed the operation of 12 addiction treatment centers where doctors, nurses, and clinical staff provided inpatient and residential services to approximately 8,000 individuals annually.

As part of ESF 8, OASAS was the single designated State agency responsible for coordination of State and federal relations in addiction services.

OASAS achieved the following in emergency response to the opioid crisis:

- All 12 OASAS addiction treatment centers received three-year Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities accreditation, which establishes a set of standards by which treatment facilities are assessed. The accreditation demonstrated to clients that OASAS facilities are quality programs proven to help people recover.
- Two mobile medication units opened in New York City, allowing access to medical screenings, methadone, buprenorphine, bringing services to where it is needed and expanding access to medical treatment, counseling, harm reduction supplies and other resources.
- Comprehensive low-threshold buprenorphine programs were created to increase access to person-centered substance use disorder and medication for opioid use disorder services.
- The Buprenorphine Assistance Program was created to assist the uninsured or underinsured with covering buprenorphine costs.

- Twelve new providers were added to Outreach and Engagement Services, which brought treatment and recovery resources to the streets for those struggling with access, linking people to care.
- OASAS staff trained 6,352 individuals in overdose response.
- 71,000 thousand naloxone kits were ordered, 5.2 million fentanyl strips were distributed, and 4.5 thousand xylazine strips were distributed.

Office for the Aging

The New York State Office for the Aging (NYSOFA) participated in quarterly DHSES multi-agency planning meetings, which allowed State agencies an opportunity to discuss emergency operations activities. NYSOFA remained updated on State emergency management-related activities and training opportunities for disaster planning through these meetings.

During EOC activations, the multi-agency planning group met daily to provide real-time weather and traffic updates, and each member agency reported contributions to the event response. NYSOFA provided daily updates from local Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) regarding interruptions in services, service modifications, and ongoing strategies to check on the welfare of vulnerable older adults.

The NYSOFA emergency management team supported DHSES through ongoing participation in State EOC drills and exercises to prepare and practice functions of response specific to mass care. NYSOFA participated in tabletop exercises for radiological events, winter weather, extreme heat, and large-scale traffic accidents. NYSOFA participated in regularly scheduled leadership and synchronizing meetings to strategize with partner agencies for various potential activations. NYSOFA completed its draft of the newly required Emergency Management Plan.

The emergency management team responded to several extreme weather activations, including the air quality event in June. Due to the substantial impact this had on most older adults, NYSOFA provided regular communication and guidance to the network of local AAAs, and items such as masks and air purifiers were distributed at senior centers and AAAs.

NYSOFA maximized current AAAs and community partnerships to increase multi-faceted communication platforms that alerted and notified older adults regarding preparing for extreme heat and how to respond when an extreme heat event occurs. NYSOFA provided disaster preparedness training opportunities for its staff, the AAA network, and older adults across the State. At the “Aging Concerns Unite Us” conference, NYSOFA hosted an intermediate level training course for AAA directors and staff on the

importance of local agency preparedness and encouraged providing individual preparedness and awareness guidance to older adults when speaking with them in the community.

NYSOFA and DHSES partnered to promote and host regional Citizen Preparedness Corps trainings specific to the needs of older adults. Training sessions were coordinated with local county emergency management personnel at various venues such as senior centers, armories, community centers, and other locations statewide. The course provided an introduction on responding to a natural or human-caused disaster, and participants were offered guidance on how to properly develop family emergency plans and stock up on emergency supplies. Free disaster preparedness kits were distributed to participants.

Department of Agriculture and Markets

The New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets (AGM) Emergency Management (EM) division participated in several radiological emergency preparedness ingestion pathway planning meetings and State EOC exercises in preparation for the federally evaluated exercise in June. During the three-day exercise, AGM EM and executive decision makers participated in Day One (live sample exercise at agricultural locations), Day Two (plume phase sampling plan development and analysis) and Day Three (protective action and decisions for post plume) activities. AGM updated the radiological emergency preparedness dairy sampling plan and the radiological preparedness guide for the agricultural community.

In March, AGM EM began drafting its first Unmanned Aircraft Systems official policy and program operator manual. AGM has six U.S. Federal Aviation Administration CFR 107-licensed pilots and five drones to conduct invasive plant and plant species detection in Division of Plant Industry quarantine zones of railyards and railcars.

Throughout the year, AGM EM, Division of Animal Industry (DAI), Food Safety and Inspection (FSI), and AGM's emergency operations volunteer organization supported 24 boil water order emergencies, more than 44 sick bird inquiries, and eight vehicle accidents containing agricultural products.

AGM EM, in partnership with AGM's Division of Agricultural Development, tracked and compiled reports on damage the agricultural community suffered due to weather events across the State. Through a joint letter with other member states of the Northeastern Association of State Departments of Agriculture, AGM requested a Disaster Designation from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for 31 counties across New York State impacted by a late May frost/freeze event. The designations allowed impacted farmers in

identified areas to apply for assistance, including emergency loans, from the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA).

In August, AGM issued a crop loss determination to help farm wineries impacted by the May freeze event to help sustain business operations. The emergency declaration allowed farm winery owners, licensed by the New York State Liquor Authority, to temporarily source grapes or juice from outside of New York through December 31, while still maintaining New York farm winery status and enabling them to manufacture or sell wine produced from out-of-state grapes or juice for the impacted varieties.

AGM EM participated in the Extreme Heat Action Plan Working Group and attended monthly workshops to provide input as the State's plan was developed. AGM EM developed a webpage dedicated to agriculture disaster recovery and extreme heat.

AGM DAI, in partnership with USDA Veterinary Services (USDA-VS), New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), and other State and local agencies, detected and stamped out 25 Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) detections across the State. AGM DAI updated the Initial Response and Containment Plan for low pathogenic avian influenza response and hosted a multi-agency poultry wet lab for response and control of avian disease such as HPAI and salmonella pullorum. More than 40 regulatory animal health officials from DAI, USDA APHIS VS, DEC, and Cornell Animal Health Diagnostics Center participated in the wet lab at the New York State Fairgrounds.

AGM DAI worked with private veterinarians and producers to institute farm-specific enhanced biosecurity plans for the prevention and control of high consequence foreign animal diseases. More than 40 farms completed initial secure food supply plans working with private veterinarians through the New York State Cattle Health Assurance Program. AGM DAI worked with DHSES' Office of Fire Prevention and Control, New York State Police, and the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals to develop an Animal Response Operations course, including a two-day, Technical Large Animal Emergency Response Awareness training for first responders and County Animal Response Teams.

AGM's FSI participated in the quarterly Biological Threat Assessment Committee to discuss managing biological threats; compliance and non-compliance-related data relative to agricultural operations, patterns, trends, and effects of seasonality on the exclusion of invasive plant pests, and exotic foreign animal disease as it relates to quarantine material interceptions, plant pest interceptions, emergency and/or remedial actions. FSI coordinated with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on food safety and food recalls that crossed over State boundaries.

AGM EM and Division of Land and Water Resources participated as a member of the Drought Management Task Force to monitor drought conditions and coordinate tentative action steps.

In December, AGM's Bureau of Weights and Measures reported the number of gas stations in full compliance with the Fuel NY Program was approaching 800. The Fuel NY initiative requires gas stations in the downstate region that meet certain criteria to install a transfer switch, develop a generator deployment plan, and deploy a generator in the event of an energy emergency.

AGM DPI and DEC coordinated storm debris management efforts and promoted effective storm debris removal related to the recent increase in several invasive species such as Spotted Lanternfly and Asian Longhorn Beetle activity in Long Island and downstate areas where activity was spotted.

DPI staff were involved in a project to improve communication and data sharing between federal plant regulatory authorities in the United States and Canada, as well as State and provincial officials. The purpose of this project was to harmonize approaches to the regulation and management of agricultural invasive species in the two countries. DPI staff participated in the Port Risk Committee Meetings for the Port of Buffalo and John F. Kennedy Airport. At these meetings, State and federal animal and plant health officials discussed issues related to imports, exports, and smuggling.

DPI trained staff on Incident Command System and had two trained incident management teams that could be deployed in a plant health emergency requiring Certified Category 9 (regulatory) Pesticide Applicators. These staff members would be able to respond to the introduction of a new pest or disease and make pesticide applications to mitigate the issue.

Nourish New York Program

In response to the pandemic, New York State launched the Nourish New York program to support both families in need and farmers who were struggling because of the loss of markets due to the pandemic. In November 2021, the Nourish New York program was signed into law and transitioned from an emergency response to a permanent program that provided annual funding for food banks to purchase and distribute New York grown and produced food to New Yorkers experiencing food insecurity. The program, administered by AGM in collaboration with the New York State Department of Health, provided a market for the State's farmers through regional food banks' purchase of New York State products including milk, yogurt, cheese, vegetables, fruit, meat, and more.

To date, food banks purchased more than 99 million pounds of products from New York State food producers, created more than 83 million meals for households in need, and benefited more than 4,300 New York State businesses. In Fiscal Year 22-23, Nourish NY was funded at \$50 million. Through a Request for Application, program contractors were selected for the next five contract years. In each contract year, food banks will be funded at \$50 million per year.

AGM Workforce Rebuilding

After the setbacks of the COVID-19 pandemic, AGM hired a training specialist to help rebuild its workforce. This position focused on providing staff with training programs that enhanced current skills and provided new opportunities for career advancement within AGM. The specialist developed various training programs aimed at enhancing the skills and knowledge of the staff, underscoring AGM's commitment to recovering from the pandemic's impact and strengthening its team for the future.

New York State Fair

New York State Fairgrounds (NYSF) staff and EM supported public safety practices and emergency management events such as:

- Constructed the Joint Operations Center, a command center for the agency and supporting agencies in emergencies and planned events.
- Coordinated with State Office of Emergency Management regarding planning exercises for the next three years. Each year, the exercises will build off the previous year's exercise to add complexity and to cover all aspects of the NYSF EMOP.
- Implemented technology to modify command center AV products to suit incident needs.
- Supported local, State, and private public safety partners by facilitating numerous trainings to include the following topics: riot/crowd control response, pre-law enforcement operation briefings, advanced hazardous materials life support training, mounted (horseback) patrol, active shooter response, K-9 training, and fire department drills.
- Hosted a tabletop exercise in March to prepare for the State Fair.
- Conducted a State Fair public safety briefing with approximately 70 attendees from State and other agencies.
- Facilitated meeting of area law enforcement officials in preparation for off-site activities related to the Syracuse Nationals Car Chow in July.

- Hosted a Law Enforcement After Action Report for the Syracuse Nationals Car Show in August.
- Conducted a post-Fair after action briefing in November with all agencies involved in the State Fair, including approximately 65 attendees.
- Hosted the Oswego County Radiological Event Reception Center in November.
- Completed National Emergency Management Basic Academy in December.
- Security installed six new 180 degree, six 360-degree, six new pan-tilt-zoom cameras and 12 fixed cameras and repaired cameras, implemented automatic weapon detection systems at all pedestrian gates for the State Fair, and implemented additional vehicle barriers on interior roads.

Office of Children and Family Services

The New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) provided support for the State's response to COVID-19 within its regulated programs and voluntary agencies, as well as guidance and information sharing. OCFS reevaluated internal policies and plans based on guidance from relevant organizations such as the Department of Health.

OCFS maintained a Ready Emergency Data Book to support mission-essential, agency-wide operations, which were reviewed and updated annually. The Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth (DJJOY) took part in a yearlong effort of emergency management planning workshops to devise an emergency operations plan for a specific youth facility that would address larger scale interactions, considerations of, and implications to the facility during emergencies. The plan will be used as a template for each facility and work in compliment to each facility's Ready Emergency Data Book.

Other activities included:

- DJJOY facilities participated in the New York State Evacuation of Facilities in Disasters System (New York State e-FINDS) emergency location tracking system to track facility residents.
- Staff from the Offices of Emergency Management, Management Services and Safety and Health collaborated on a significant revision of the Home Office Rapid Response Team Playbook. This team coordinated emergency response activities for offices across the agency, as well as DJJOY for issues involving facilities.
- Recruited and maintained a list of volunteers to staff the agency representative desk at the State EOC when activations occurred.

- Used desktop geographic information system software packages and the web-based Critical Infrastructure Response Information System to identify facilities and providers in impacted areas for disaster response.
- Used NY Alert as a primary notification system to contact employees in an efficient and simultaneous manner if a work-related emergency were to occur and to request OCFS staff to support the State's response to an emergency.
- Used the Disaster Asset Management System application for tracking agency assets deployed during disasters.
- Participated in various exercises, planning workshops and ESF 6 working group meetings though the course of the year, helping to enhance State readiness.
- Was an active member of the Extreme Heat Action Plan Working Group and contributor to the Interim Recommendations Report, as well as support as a member of the Emergency Heat Coordination Team and relevant planning efforts.
- Participated in nuclear safety exercises, workshops, and conferences.

OCFS served as a member in the following groups and committees:

- ESF 6
- Homeland Security Senior Advisory Committee
- New York State Nuclear Safety Subcommittee Power Pool
- Multi-Agency Coordination Group
- Department of Health Pediatric Surge Annex Planning Group
- Disaster Preparedness Commission
- Extreme Heat Action Plan Working Group
- Integrated Preparedness Plan Workshop

Department of Corrections and Community Supervision

The New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS) remained committed to the State's preparedness goals and developed and improved strategies to prevent, protect against, mitigate the effects of, respond to, and recover from disasters. DOCCS personnel participated in various training and exercise activities and provided support for emergency incidents. DOCCS identified proactive methods to advance and expand response capabilities in support of seven ESFs and committed to the creation of a Functional Support Team.

DOCCS mandated NIMS/ICS, IS-100 and IS-700 training be provided to new supervisors, Crisis Intervention Unit (CIU) members, Fire Response Team members, and Corrections Emergency Response Team (CERT) members, and qualified employees for deployment through NY Responds and State EOC training.

All facilities conducted escape and threat elevation tabletops, drills, and exercises to improve preparation and response efforts as a requirement. The DOCCS CIU and CERT conducted two full-scale disturbance/hostage incident exercises that tested and evaluated Special Operations Team capabilities. CIU members participated in the FBI Advanced Hostage Negotiations course offered at the State Preparedness Training Center. DOCCS CERT participated in regional civil disturbance training scenarios in conjunction with the New York State Police Mobile Field Unit. Leadership from DOCCS Corcraft and Food Service participated in the New York State Department of Transportation annual staging area drill held in Hornellsville, which served to further understanding and strengthen the relationship with transportation and logistics partners.

DOCCS took steps in response to climate change, conducting retro-commissioning studies on its facilities with a focus on energy efficiency. Energy upgrade projects included LED lighting, building envelope weatherization, installation of variable frequency drive electric motor controllers, chillers, condensing units, refrigeration controls, shower head replacement, steam trap repair or replacement and combined heat and power cogeneration applications. DOCCS maintained a cooperative agreement, providing the land for solar farms at Eastern, Greene, Green Haven, Mid State and Wende Correctional Facilities.

DOCCS CERT K-9 assisted the New York State Police with narcotics, evidence, cadaver and missing persons details in Sullivan, Dutchess, Westchester, and Columbia counties, along with assisting in explosives sweeps during the Wine Glass Marathon in Corning and the NASCAR race weekend in Watkins Glen.

DOCCS CERT assisted the New York State Police and Department of Environmental Conservation in wildland searches in Sullivan and Saratoga counties. CERT members from Great Meadow Correctional Facility assisted in the large-scale search efforts to locate and recover a missing child, abducted in Moreau State Park.

Working in conjunction with the New York State Police and Event Security Management, DOCCS CERT members from Gouverneur and Riverview Correctional Facilities provided around the clock security for SUNY Potsdam's Maxcy Hall, a main hockey venue during the FISU World University Games. CERT members provided perimeter control, denying unauthorized vehicles access to the building and access point security/frisking which prevented unauthorized substances, weapons, and persons from entering the arena, ensuring a safe experience for the athletes and spectators.

DOCCS Corcraft, Support Operations and Food Service provided immense transportation and logistical support, including tractor trailers, box trucks and drivers for the deliveries of COVID-19 tests to the Nassau BOCES, canned water in support of the

water main break in Watertown, State disaster kits to New York City and Rochester, personal protective equipment masks to New York City and Central New York for distribution in response to the Canadian Wildfires and many others.

DOCCS Corcraft, Support Operations, Food Service and Facility Employees provided tractor trailers, box trucks and drivers and were instrumental in the reconfiguration of the JFK Airport stockpile, completing missions to neighboring stockpiles and creating room for the growing asylum seeker crisis. DOCCS Corcraft delivered emergency cots and blankets to the JFK stockpile for asylum seeker use. DOCCS Facility Employees delivered shower and bathroom trailers from the Oriskany stockpile to the JFK stockpile in support of the asylum seeker crisis and provided further roundtrip transport from the JFK stockpile to a Norwich repair facility for the required maintenance of upkeep of trailers. Support Operations, in conjunction with Corcraft, staged tractor trailers with bed frames, mattresses, and pillows for potential deployment to DOCCS's closed Lincoln Correctional Facility. DOCCS deployed buses for the emergency transport of asylum seekers at the Floyd Bennet Airfield in response to severe wind and rain conditions.

Division of Criminal Justice Services

The New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) used NY Alert to distribute information about missing persons. The agency's Missing Persons Clearinghouse leveraged the system to distribute missing vulnerable adult, missing child, and missing college student alerts to the public, travel hubs, and other entities, such as hospitals, bus terminals, and New York State Thruway rest areas and messaging boards. DCJS staff participated in two grant evaluation panels as requested by DHSES regarding Explosive Detection Canine and Interagency Tactical Team grant applications. DCJS maintained representation on the State Interoperable and Emergency Communication Board, as well as working groups for ESF 13 and New York State Next Generation 911. DCJS assigned an employee to the State EOC as needed and more than a dozen additional employees were identified and trained as volunteers to support an activation.

Department of Education

The New York State Department of Education (SED) participated in the activation of the State EOC both in-person and virtually. SED reviewed and worked with school districts to ensure safety, continuity, and communication plans were updated and submitted to State public safety agencies. SED worked closely with public safety agencies including State Police, DHSES, and Division of Criminal Justice Services to enhance the overall safety of schools as part of the School Safety Improvement Team.

Empire State Development Corporation

Empire State Development (ESD) is the economic development arm of New York State. The mission of ESD is to promote a vigorous and growing state economy, encourage business investment and job creation, and support diverse, prosperous local economies across New York State through the efficient use of loans, grants, tax credits, real estate development, marketing, and other forms of assistance.

ESD managed several policy initiatives aimed at providing targeted economic and other relief to organizations negatively impacted by COVID-19 and other disasters throughout New York State.

Division of Small Business and Technology Development

ESD's Division of Small Business and Technology Development launched several efforts to support the survival and growth of small businesses across the State during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The COVID-19 Pandemic Small Business Recovery Grant Program provided flexible grants of \$5,000 to \$50,000 to viable small businesses, micro-businesses, and for-profit independent arts and cultural organizations in New York State who experienced economic hardship due to the pandemic. The Program aimed to support small businesses that typically have the least access to resources. The Program encouraged participation from micro-businesses (10 or fewer workers), socially and economically disadvantaged business owners, minority and/or women owned businesses, and small businesses that did not receive adequate federal COVID-19 support. Grant recipients used funding to cover COVID-related losses incurred, including payroll, rent or mortgage payments, personal protective equipment expenses, utility bills, and costs associated in complying with COVID-19 health and safety protocols. The Program awarded \$760 million to nearly 41,000 small businesses.

The NYS Seed Funding Grant Program provided flexible grants of \$5,000 to \$25,000 to early-stage small businesses to help them succeed in a recovering New York State economy in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. This Program was tailored to needs of businesses that opened their doors after September 1, 2018 and were unable to qualify for or obtain sufficient funding from federal COVID-19 recovery programs. The program awarded \$187 million to nearly 16,000 small businesses.

To assist applicants with grants application processes and share information about other COVID relief opportunities, the Division provided \$10 million in funding to support a network of 69 technical assistance partners to provide one-on-one assistance. The

partners assisted nearly 37,700 applicants and delivered over 800 informational webinars.

The Division also provided \$7.5 million in grants to 24 New York State Entrepreneurship Assistance Centers, 23 Small Business Development Centers and 23 federally certified Community Development Financial Institutions to provide technical assistance and counseling to help small businesses apply to COVID-19 financial assistance programs. These organizations assisted approximately 68,600 small businesses in accessing funding totaling more than \$390 million.

The New York Forward Loan Fund Program was created to help small businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic to obtain much-needed financing. The program offered two- to three-percent interest working capital loans for five years to small businesses, nonprofits, and small residential landlords impacted by the pandemic. The Program funded \$96.2 million in loans to nearly 1,700 small businesses.

The New York Manufacturing Extension Partnership COVID-19 Recovery Initiative provided \$2.3 million in grants to New York manufacturers to manage challenges created by the pandemic. The Division provided \$250,000 in research and development grant funding to small businesses to increase manufacturing of ventilators, personal protective equipment, and new technologies in diagnostics and vaccines.

Empire State Digital, a first-in-the-nation program, offered education, training, marketing support, and discounted pricing with Shopify, Square, Etsy, Ritual One, and Clearbanc to help small businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic to launch or grow an online presence. Approximately 3,000 small businesses took advantage of the special offerings and discounts made available from the digital partners.

New York Forward Small Business Lease Assistance Partnership provided small businesses and commercial landlords with informational resources and pro bono assistance to help parties reach mutually beneficial lease workout agreements. Free legal assistance was offered through a public-private partnership between Empire State Development, the nonprofit Start Small Think Big, and the New York State Bar Association to help small businesses survive the impact from the COVID-19 pandemic. The program assisted more than 800 small businesses.

Raising the NYS Bar Restaurant Recovery Fund, a \$3 million grant fund that was supported through financial donations led by Diageo North America and Coastal Pacific Wine & Spirits (a division of Southern Glazer's Wine & Spirits), provided grants of up to \$5,000 to New York State restaurants affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The program helped restaurants with costs on qualifying purchases and expenditures related to

operation adjustments, improvements, and equipment to allow businesses to comply with health and safety measures, expand take-out/delivery operations, or accommodate outdoor dining throughout the winter months when outdoor dining was limited. The program was implemented by the non-profit National Development Council.

The Division provided \$15 million in loan capital to four Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) lenders to provide Paycheck Protection Program loans to small businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic to support retention of businesses and jobs. An additional \$400,000 in loan capital was provided to five CDFI lenders for a statewide microloan initiative to provide loans under \$25,000 to microbusinesses.

Business Mentor NY, a free online mentoring program, also assisted small businesses with the challenges they faced in operating their business during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Division of Tourism

In the four years since COVID-19, New York State's tourism industry has undergone an unprecedented recovery. Tourism was one of the most impacted industries across the state in 2020 and since then, the industry has surpassed record-breaking visitation and economic impact numbers set pre-pandemic. While the tourism industry in New York has recovered overall, there are still areas that have not yet caught up, including visitation, and spending in certain regions (most notably New York City), as well as international and business travel.

The Division of Tourism executed promotional and industry support programs to increase visitation, for example, I LOVE NY promoted the state as a premiere travel destination through consumer marketing efforts including paid advertising, experiential marketing, digital and social media, public relations, and licensing. The Division also administered programs such as Market NY and Tourism Matching Funds to provide funds to grantees for capital and marketing projects designed to bring new travelers to regions across the state.

The State created programs specifically targeted to help tourism businesses and organizations recover from COVID-19, for example, the "Bring Back Tourism, Bring Back Jobs" initiative allocated \$100 million for the Tourism Return-to-Work Grant Program which incentivized tourism employers that suffered economic hardship during the pandemic to hire back workers. An additional \$25 million was allocated to the Meet in New York Grant Program to help bring back tourism connected to conferences, meetings, and events by covering a portion of the cost of event-based discounts at conference spaces and partnering hotels.

New York State received nearly \$45 million in federal funding through a statewide non-competitive U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant dedicated specifically for travel, tourism, and outdoor recreation as part of the American Rescue Plan. This grant was used by the Division of Tourism to pursue significant potential growth areas for the state including meetings, incentives, conference, and exhibitions tourism as well as group and amateur sports travel; capitalizing on pent-up demand for travel among international consumers; and maximizing the trend of increased outdoor tourism and converting first-time users of New York's outdoor recreational assets to regular guests. As part of its federal EDA tourism grant, the Division of Tourism made \$14.25 million available through a competitive program to enable local and regional Destination Marketing Organization partners to execute promotional programs that complement the initiatives being executed by the Division with its EDA funding. The Division began distributing funds to the 30 awarded tourism partners.

2019 Lake Ontario Business Resiliency Program

In 2019, New York State launched the Lake Ontario Business Resiliency Program. The program is administered by ESD and was opened to businesses and other organizations directly impacted by the historic flooding of Lake Ontario, the St. Lawrence River, and nearby waterways in 2019. The Resiliency and Economic Development Initiative (REDI) Commission made available up to \$30 million to support resiliency-related capital improvement projects at affected businesses and other eligible organizations, which could qualify for reimbursement of up to 50 percent of project costs, with a maximum award of \$200,000. Eligible applicants included most private businesses, homeowner's associations, certain not-for-profits, farms, and owners of multiple dwellings used for business purposes located in Niagara, Orleans, Monroe, Wayne, Cayuga, Oswego, Jefferson, and St. Lawrence counties.

Eligible capital projects were required to strengthen the entities against impacts from future flooding to reduce the entity's vulnerability to risks experienced during high water events, prevent permanent damage, and improve its ability to withstand and quickly recover from extreme weather events. The program application deadline was January 2020 and ESD received 178 applications for assistance that were reviewed in partnership with Department of State. In August 2020, New York State announced more than \$17 million in funding to more than 140 eligible applicants in shoreline communities to assist with restoration and resiliency efforts from prior flooding events, and to strengthen them against future flooding. Of the more than 140 projects awarded in 2020, 100 projects advanced through ESD's grant approval process, representing up to \$12.3 million in funding. A total of 93 projects were approved and the remaining seven projects pending further approvals.

Energy Research and Development Authority

The New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) helped facilitate and coordinate information sharing and response with regards to energy resilience concerns for the liquid petroleum fuels (primarily low inventory levels of distillate fuel including diesel and heating oil) and natural gas industries primarily stemming from the worldwide petroleum and natural gas market impacts from the ongoing War in Ukraine.

NYSERDA worked with the petroleum industry along with State and Federal partners to provide an understanding of the dynamically changing worldwide petroleum flows and the impact on New York State energy supply and pricing. Ongoing historically low regional inventory levels of petroleum fuels in New York State, particularly distillate products, were recorded throughout the year. Fortunately, in comparison to 2022, there were no major price spikes for petroleum products which would have had significant impacts on consumers. Kerosene, a niche fuel experienced minor supply challenges in regional locations but significantly reduced in impact compared to last year.

NYSERDA participated in regional and national calls with the petroleum industry, Federal and State government agencies, state associations, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Department of Energy, National Association of State Energy Officials, and others to discuss the ongoing petroleum markets situation.

NYSERDA fulfilled its energy resilience and emergency preparedness role throughout the year by providing support as demonstrated through several events and market monitoring:

- Monitored impacts from extreme cold temperatures in February and a major Nor'easter in March. NYSEDA provided contact and coordination with the liquid fuels industry. NYSEDA coordinated with partner agencies including the New York State Department of Transportation on regulatory relief actions for the industry including hours of service waivers related to the delivery of vital transportation and heating fuels.
- Supported one of the petroleum terminals in New York State experiencing a series of power outages. NYSEDA coordinated with the New York State Department of Public Service to resolve the issue with the local utility provider for the terminal. The terminal was impacted by a series of wind events/tree limbs falling causing the power loss issues. NYSEDA coordinated with the Department of Public Service and industry representatives when power outages related to weather events interrupted normal operations at critical State fuels terminals.

- Monitored implementation of the five-percent bio-heating fuel requirement for heating oil in upstate New York that went into effect on July 1, including increased coordination with the liquid petroleum fuels industry and major terminals on infrastructure upgrades, supply chain dynamics, supply availability issues, and market and industry concerns. There were several localized supply runouts for spot purchases of fuel in regional locations for the retail heating oil market in September and October that were temporary, but no major supply concerns as the industry adjusted to the new requirement.
- Monitored extreme weather events including major rainfall and flooding and extreme heat in July, as well as impacts from Hurricane Lee and Tropical Storm Ophelia and major rainfall in September. There were no major impacts to the liquid petroleum fuels infrastructure or supply systems from these events.
- Monitored concerns over the St. Lawrence Seaway segment shut down by a Canadian labor strike in October, as well as reports of oil tar bars found along the Brooklyn shoreline in November. Neither issue presented the petroleum industry with any major challenges or disruptions.

NYSERDA administered the Strategic Fuel Reserve, which is a component of the State's broader Fuel NY Initiative. As part of the Strategic Fuel Reserve, NYSERDA maintained two regional strategic fuel reserves:

- The Downstate Strategic Gasoline Reserve contained approximately 2.4 million gallons of gasoline and was located at a fuel terminal on Long Island.
- The Upstate Strategic Fuel Reserve contained 1.4 million gallons of diesel fuel and 1.4 million gallons of gasoline, located at six separate distribution terminals across upstate New York.

Upon declaration of a fuel emergency, gasoline and diesel fuel from the reserves may be released to meet fuel needs while the industry recovers from a disruption in routine fuel supply operations.

NYSERDA completed, submitted, and received approval from the U.S. Department of Energy for the New York State Energy Security Plan, which provides State, federal government, and other stakeholders with an updated, comprehensive assessment of New York State's energy supply chain, energy risk profile, and energy emergency mitigation and response measures. The Plan described the State's energy landscape, people, processes, and the State's strategy to build energy resilience. More specifically, the Plan detailed how the State, working with energy partners, could secure its energy infrastructure against all physical and cybersecurity threats; mitigate the risk of energy supply disruptions to the State; enhance the response to, and recovery from, energy

disruptions; and ensure the State has a secure, reliable, and resilient energy infrastructure. The development of the Plan was led by NYSERDA and included input from many DPC agencies.

Department of Environmental Conservation

The New York State Department of Environment Conservation (DEC) engaged in the following activities:

Emergency Spill Response

DEC's Emergency Spill Response Program responded to approximately 10,160 hazardous spills, helping to protect State lands, waters, and public health. For example, in September, DEC coordinated the containment and cleanup of thousands of gallons of asphalt emulsion at the site of a tanker truck rollover on a bridge over the west branch of the Mohawk River in the Town of Lewis, Lewis County. An estimated 5,000 gallons of emulsion were released into the East Branch of the Mohawk River. DEC found no impacts to public drinking water supplies; a fish kill of approximately 15,500 fish was reported downstream. Within 48 hours of the spill, fish moved back into the area and fish populations are expected to return to pre-spill levels.

Geographic Response Plans

DEC led the New York State Geographic Response Plan Program, a multi-stakeholder effort to strengthen the State's preparedness for incidents involving transportation of petroleum products. This year, the plans for five counties were updated to maintain accuracy and effectiveness. DEC held 10 training sessions around the State to help local responders familiarize themselves with the plans and learn how to respond in an incident, including deployment and utilization of response trailers and tabletop exercises. Construction commenced on 20 new spill response trailers to be distributed across the State to supplement the current trailer fleet.

Orphaned Oil and Gas Wells Plugging

Thousands of orphaned and abandoned wells are scattered across the landscape of central and western New York State – proper plugging protects ground and surface waters, as well as public health and safety. This year, DEC used new tools and techniques, including drones equipped with magnetometers, to locate orphaned oil and gas wells drilled prior to regulation by New York State. Once located, DEC inspectors evaluated wells and awarded priority scores for well plugging. DEC directed the plugging of 40 orphaned and abandoned oil and gas wells. In addition to NY Works funding, DEC

received more than \$33 million in federal grant funding to support well-plugging efforts through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act.

State Superfund

Under New York's State Superfund Program, the State identifies, investigates, and cleans up sites with significant amounts of contamination. DEC made significant progress on the cleanup of State Superfund sites statewide:

- 936 State Superfund registry sites including Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, or RCRA;
- 429 Class 2 sites (investigation or cleanup ongoing; included RCRA);
- 42 Class 3 sites (not presently or a foreseeable significant threat);
- 465 Class 4 sites (properly closed/requires management; included RCRA); and
- \$40.2 million cost recovery revenue because of DEC polluter enforcement.

Brownfield Cleanup Program

Brownfield sites offer tremendous potential for economic development, community revitalization, and job creation by encouraging the voluntary cleanup of contaminated properties so they can be reused and/or redeveloped. Overseen by DEC's Division of Environmental Remediation, New York State's Brownfield Cleanup Program encouraged the voluntary cleanup of contaminated properties so they could be reused and redeveloped, benefiting the community and region. DEC received 72 applications for the program and issued 65 Certificates of Completion.

Reducing Toxic Chemicals in Products

DEC implemented three recently enacted laws to reduce consumers' exposure to toxic chemicals in the products they buy and use every day, and to reduce the amount of toxic chemicals that make their way into the environment at the end of a product's lifecycle:

- A sales ban restricting the presence of asbestos, benzene, and a toxic flame retardant in children's products under the Toxic Chemicals in Children's Products law;
- A ban on the use of pavement sealers containing coal tar; and
- Further reductions in the allowable amount of 1,4-dioxane in household cleaning and personal care products.

Water Quality Guidance to Regulate PFOA, PFOS, and 1,4-Dioxane

In March, DEC released final water quality guidance values to regulate perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS), and 1,4-dioxane in New York State waters. These guidance values reinforced the State Department of Health's maximum contaminant levels for PFOA, PFOS, and 1,4-dioxane in finished drinking water, providing an extra margin of safety against potential contamination and protection for aquatic life. The guidance values were initially incorporated into requirements for permitted industrial dischargers suspected of handling and using these chemicals, which aimed to reduce the potential contribution of emerging contaminants to the environment.

Community Air Monitoring Initiative

The effort to measure local air pollution burdens, including greenhouse gases, was the largest ever undertaken by DEC. DEC's statewide air quality monitoring initiative completed the collection of data from 10 disadvantaged communities historically overburdened by environmental pollution and home to approximately five million New Yorkers or 25 percent of the State's population. Working in partnership with community-based organizations, DEC held more than 50 public meetings to support this initiative, which provided a forum to hear air quality concerns directly from residents and provide preliminary monitoring results. This first-ever statewide mobile monitoring complements DEC's existing efforts to measure levels of outdoor air pollution at more than 50 stationary sites across New York.

Wildfire Response

This year, throughout Canada, more than 4,000 fires burned an estimated 23.7 million acres. DEC crews were deployed to combat the wildfire smoke as part of an interagency crew comprised of wildland firefighters from the states of Maine, New Hampshire, Connecticut, and Vermont. On June 2, one Forest Ranger was deployed as a Crew Boss to Nova Scotia. On June 8, a team of seven DEC Forest Rangers was deployed to assist with efforts to help contain the wildfires in Quebec. These missions were the first time State Forest Rangers were deployed to Canada since the 2005 Quebec wildfires. DEC worked with partners at the State Department of Health to issue Air Quality Health Advisories when fine particulate pollution driven by the wildfires impacted air quality and potential health issues.

Another crew of 20 wildland firefighters led by DEC Forest Rangers was deployed on a two-week mission in California to assist with firefighting efforts at the Smith River Complex fire, which burned more than 94,500 acres after a lightning strike on August 15.

The New York State crew joined forces with 38 different crews from across the country. DEC Forest Rangers worked alongside nine of DEC's expertly trained wildland firefighters from the divisions of Lands and Forests, Fish and Wildlife, and Materials Management (Pesticides) and the Emergency Management Unit.

Protecting Public Safety

DEC Forest Rangers conducted 370 search and rescue missions, extinguished 146 wildfires covering nearly 1,400 acres, participated in 52 prescribed fires that served to rejuvenate more than 1,000 acres of land, and worked on cases that resulted in hundreds of tickets and arrests. One of the more high-profile assignments was the response to a missing nine-year-old girl who was abducted from Moreau Lake State Park in Saratoga County. DEC led the Incident Command Center and Rangers supported the massive, 430-person ground search with assistance from DEC's Division of Law Enforcement and Emergency Management Unit, along with numerous State, local, and federal entities.

DEC's Division of Law Enforcement enforced the 71 chapters of New York State's Environmental Conservation Law to protect fish and wildlife and preserve environmental quality across New York. Environmental Conservation Police Officers (ECOs) and Investigators across the State responded to more than 25,600 calls and worked on cases that resulted in nearly 13,800 tickets or arrests for violations ranging from deer poaching to solid waste dumping, illegal mining, the illegal pet trade, and excessive emissions violations.

DEC undertook Operation ECO-Quality in the Washington Heights neighborhood in Manhattan, an initiative to inform people about unregistered and restricted-use pesticide products that should not be available for purchase, possession, or use by the public, and may represent a significant danger to communities due to unknown toxicity levels. Staff worked with local elected officials and organizations to conduct community outreach, education, and enforcement in the neighborhood, providing written information in both English and Spanish to inform the public about the harmful effects and health issues that illegal pesticides can cause. From July to November, DEC's Law Enforcement and Pesticides staff orchestrated four pesticides seizures, confiscating more than 14,000 units of illegal pesticides.

Department of Financial Services

The New York State Department of Financial Services (DFS) upheld its mission to build an equitable, transparent, and resilient financial system that benefits individuals and supports business. DFS contributed to New York State's efforts to anticipate, mitigate, and manage disasters and other emergencies through the actions outlined below.

In partnership with fellow State agencies and local partners, DFS helped communities rebuild and recover following a tornado in Sullivan County in April and after historic flooding in the Hudson Valley in July. DFS allowed out-of-state insurance adjusters to operate in New York to ensure insurers had the staff needed to quickly process claims in the wake of disaster. DFS staff assisted 134 consumers in local communities affected by weather events, including onsite assistance regarding insurance-related questions and help navigating the claims-filing process.

Since the initial adoption of DFS's nation-leading cybersecurity regulation in 2017, the cybersecurity landscape has changed tremendously as threat actors have become more sophisticated and more prevalent, cyberattacks have become easier to perpetrate and more expensive to remediate, and additional cybersecurity controls have become available to manage cyber risk at reasonable cost.

DFS took steps to protect New Yorkers and safeguard its regulated entities by amending its cybersecurity regulation. The amended regulation, which was rolled out in November, enhanced cyber governance, tailored requirements to entities' size and risks, and better protected New York businesses and consumers from cyber threats. The amended regulation built on the sweeping impact of the original cybersecurity regulation, which established the innovative framework modeled by both federal and State financial regulators to protect against cyber threats, and the Governor's comprehensive, statewide effort to improve safeguards for businesses and consumers.

DFS was the first U.S. financial regulator to issue a holistic set of expectations on managing the financial risks from climate change. DFS adopted two pieces of regulatory guidance for New York State-regulated banking, mortgage, and domestic insurance entities to help them manage material financial and operational risks associated with climate change. The guidance was designed to support institutions' efforts to identify, measure, monitor, and control material climate-related financial and operational risks in a manner consistent with current risk management principles. Key components of prudent risk management by institutions were addressed — including corporate governance, internal control frameworks, risk management processes and data collection and analysis — so institutions incorporate assessment of these risks into existing frameworks.

Office of General Services

The New York State Office of General Services (OGS) operated or oversaw OGS real estate, initiated capital projects or emergency contracts, managed centralized procurement contracts, and provided logistics and warehousing support. As a member of ESFs 3, 6, and 7, OGS supported the State's disaster response.

In response to the Watertown water emergency, OGS transported eight pallets of emergency canned water from Albany County to Watertown for affected residents. In October, OGS transported two pallets of bottled water from Albany County to Saratoga County to support the water needs of the Moreau State Park search and rescue operation. In response to the asylum seekers surge, OGS released a centralized contract for sheltering and wraparound services that State and non-State agencies may use.

Emergency Construction Support

OGS responded to just under 200 emergencies totaling roughly \$55 million dollars in bid construction work ranging from simple watermain breaks to complete power failures at facilities due to storm events. The first major emergency response came in June to secure housing for newly arriving asylum seekers, which required the need to recommission the former Lincoln Correctional Facility in Manhattan. This project brought many challenges to return the building to working order as quickly as possible. OGS and contractors restored all building management systems, including the fire alarm, boilers, and water/sewer lines, and transformed a correctional building into a place for asylum seekers to shelter.

Shortly after the Lincoln emergency, a major storm brought extreme rain and flooding to most of the State and caused two major emergency responses. The first was at the SUNY Environmental Science and Forestry in Newcomb where nearly 16 miles of roadways, bridges and culverts were washed away from heavy floods. OGS and emergency contractors restored bridge access to the facility and roadways, which required importing nearly 30,000 tons of material, 1,200 feet of drainage piping, and 3,600 staffing hours.

The same July storm event impacted Harriman and Bear Mountain State Park in the Hudson Valley. OGS and emergency contractors restored the Bear Mountain State Park water treatment plant, which required hours of clearing tanks of debris and replacing pumps that failed due to the influx of debris at the water plant. While the water plant was being restored, contractors at other sites restored roadways and bridges as well. The park's facility maintenance headquarters was repaired due to major flooding and debris damage. In total, six major recovery projects cost nearly \$7 million to restore the park's areas impacted by the storm.

Infrastructure Modernization

To prevent future challenges, OGS engaged in infrastructure modernization projects on State buildings, OGS awarded multiple contracts including waterproofing at the New York State Cultural Education Center and fire alarm upgrades at the Empire State Plaza.

Working with agency partners and the New York Power Authority, OGS installed new high-voltage equipment, switches, and systems as part of the Empire State Plaza emergency generator improvement project, to provide additional emergency power.

Special Event Emergency Preparedness

OGS hosted and engaged in emergency preparedness pre-planning for several large-scale events at the Empire State Plaza, including the Fourth of July Fireworks, the Summer Concert Series, the New York State Food Festival, the Hops and Harvest Festival, and the State Tree Lighting. OGS adopted a new emergency plan to guide delay, suspension, and cancellation of Empire State Plaza special events if an emergency occurred, as well as incident coordination plans for nine types of large-scale events. OGS partnered and coordinated with the New York State Police, DHSES Offices of Emergency Management, and Fire Prevention and Control, and other Plaza partners in creating these plans.

At the Fourth of July Celebration, OGS and partner agencies initiated an emergency evacuation of attendees to the Empire State Plaza Concourse due to sudden severe weather. The event was cancelled and the fireworks display occurred the next day.

Department of Health

The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) provided COVID-19 support to health care facilities, community health providers, local and State agencies, and the public via ongoing messaging and updated guidance. NYSDOH reviewed and approved requests for over-the-counter test kits and community-level personal protective equipment as they were received. NYSDOH's Incident Management System was activated in response to multiple events including extreme weather events, infrastructure issues, and healthcare staffing strikes. Notably, the January New York City / New York State Nurses Association strike impacted 17 regulated facilities to varying degrees and its effect was felt across the entire healthcare delivery system. The Evacuation of Facilities in Disasters System (eFINDS) patient tracking system was used seven times to supporting actual emergency evacuations.

The Health Care Facility Evacuation Center Plan and Facility Guidance Document were updated. Coastal Storm Planning efforts resulted in 99 percent of New York City-based facilities completing required elements of the Health Care Facility Evacuation Planning Application, including send/receive arrangements and critical facility infrastructure information. NYSDOH developed the regional Health Emergency Preparedness Coalition responsible for regional ESF 8 preparedness activities and provide information sharing during emergencies throughout the State. NYSDOH worked

with the State Office of Emergency Management on further development of the State ESF plans and provision of feedback on State-level plans, including COOP, hazardous mitigation, and nuclear power facility emergencies. Additional planning efforts included the multi-agency extreme heat planning initiative, the update of the NYSDOH Pandemic Response plan based on improvements identified during the COVID-19 pandemic, and development of a NYSDOH Radiological Surge Response Annex with corresponding Coalition-level surge response plans in each of the NYSDOH Regions.

NYSDOH provided guidance and templates to local health departments to update county-level, all-hazard, public health emergency preparedness and response plans that focused on pandemic response and continuity of operations planning. NYSDOH was involved in planning in anticipation of the April 2024 total eclipse, serving on multiple statewide taskforces and internal planning efforts.

More than 70 preparedness training opportunities were provided by NYSDOH to more than 4,000 individuals across the State. NYSDOH provided preparedness training to hospitals, local health departments, Emergency Medical Services and emergency management using four Regional Training Centers: Continuity of Operations Plan, e-FINDS, Burn Life Support, Disaster Life Support, Trauma Care, hazardous materials, Stop-the-Bleed Train-the-Trainer, Pediatric Disaster Response, Safety and Violence Education, and Disaster Triage. Staff participated in NIMS/ICS and EOC operations courses. Community Health and Epidemiology staff conducted monthly Clinical Operations and Medical Countermeasures trainings with local health departments. NYSDOH collaborated with the State Office of Mental Health to deliver Psychological First Aid and Disaster Mental Health training to healthcare and emergency response partners statewide. Preparedness staff delivered ServNY volunteer management system training and Health Care Facility Evacuation Center application training for all partners requiring use of each NYSDOH-maintained system. Coastal storm planning training was conducted for healthcare facilities in New York City. Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan training was provided to all nursing homes and adult care facilities across the State. NYSDOH continued training vaccinators in all settings in response to COVID-19.

NYSDOH conducted eight regional Interoperable Communications Drills involving Coalition partners and facilitated 57 healthcare volunteer notification and Medical Countermeasure Point of Dispensing drills with all local health departments outside of New York City. A Health Care Facility Evacuation Center exercise was conducted for coastal storm planning partners and New York City-based healthcare facilities. NYSDOH was also involved in the planning, evaluation, and participated in a statewide EOC activation functional exercise. Regional staff supported regionally based winter weather tabletop exercises and radiological emergency preparedness exercises, including a

federally evaluated EOC functional exercise and a multi-agency laboratory-surge full-scale exercise.

Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services

New York State Office of Emergency Management

In its role as the operational arm of the DPC, the New York State DHSES Office of Emergency Management (OEM) ensures the State is appropriately trained and coordinated to prepare for, respond to, and recover from all hazards threatening the State. OEM oversees the State Watch Center and regional field staff responsible for coordinating with State and local partners, as well as providing situational awareness. OEM also utilized the NY Responds online incident management system to develop and maintain situational awareness and coordinate sharing of emergency resources across the state.

The State EOC facilitated the distribution of test kits throughout the State to support ongoing COVID-19 operations. Since the start of the Omicron variant, the State has distributed more than 106,000,000 over the counter COVID-19 tests. The State provided personnel and resources to multiple Emergency Management Assistance Compact requests including a Volunteer Agency Liaison and Public Assistance to California, dam engineers to Vermont, Incident Management Team firefighting to Louisiana, and a Public Information Officer to assist in the Hawaiian Wildfires.

OEM's Stockpile Program managed New York State's nine strategic emergency stockpiles located throughout the State which contain various assets, equipment, and consumables for assistance to local partners in an emergency. This year, the program completed more than 450 individual issues of equipment in support of 178 NY Responds missions totaling 614,512 items deployed to support multiple municipalities and requests for resources. Support for emergency declarations due to severe snowstorms and rain across the State were supported by stockpile staff and emergency equipment deployments.

The OEM Radiological Emergency Preparedness Program (REP) conducted two successful federally evaluated exercises. The first was a large-scale plume exercise for the James A. FitzPatrick nuclear power plant, including Oswego County, on June 21, and the State EOC was activated with ESF agencies. The second was an Ingestion Pathway Exercise conducted from June 27-29, a multi-day exercise which included traveling to local farms to collect samples and transport samples to a laboratory for analysis. This exercise included many State agency partners. The REP program conducted an off-year plume exercise for the Robert E. Ginna nuclear power plant, including the counties of

Monroe and Wayne, on August 1. On August 23, OEM REP participated in an off-year exercise with Millstone nuclear power plant in the State of Connecticut, as well as Suffolk County and Fishers Island. These exercises provided multiple training and cross-training opportunities for OEM, DPC agencies and local jurisdictions.

OEM offered Emergency Management Certification and Training (EMCT) Tier 1 training through the New York State Association of Counties Legislative Conference for 57 county leaders, a Tier 2 EMCT refresher through the New York State Emergency Management Association for 115 emergency management leaders, and ten Tier 3 EMCT programs for 155 community leaders in various counties.

Two series of the National Emergency Management Basic Academy were conducted at the State Preparedness Training Center and in Genesee County. The Academy, designed and sponsored by FEMA, provides individuals who are pursuing a career in emergency management with an entry point to obtain a foundational education through contemporary learning programs and skilled instructors. The Academy consists of five instructor lead courses over 15 classroom course days with 120 hours of instruction, most of which offer continuing education unit and American Council on Education credits. Since the inception of New York State offering these programs, 134 students have completed the Academy requirements and received their diplomas; this year, there were 34 completions.

Office of Disaster Recovery Programs

The Office of Disaster Recovery Programs managed 15 open disasters totaling \$30 billion in federal disaster recovery funding. The Office supported the State's Major Disaster Declarations for the July Severe Storms and Flooding (DR-4723) that impacted Clinton, Dutchess, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton, Ontario, Orange, Putnam, and Rockland counties and the September Severe Storms and Flooding in Westchester, Nassau, and Kings counties, in addition to closing out one legacy Major Disaster Declaration.

The Office supported the COVID-19 pandemic (DR-4480), which was the first statewide major disaster declaration for the State. The unique nature of the COVID-19 pandemic and evolving FEMA required DHSES staff to have regular meetings with FEMA leadership and extensive outreach to applicants regarding latest policy developments. The Office worked with applicants to develop more than 4,000 projects with an estimated project value of more than \$18 billion.

The Office also supported the recovery from the New York Severe Winter Storm and Snowstorm (DR-4694), a historic blizzard that impacted Erie, Genesee, Niagara, St. Lawrence, and Suffolk counties. Snow assistance was granted for Erie and Niagara

counties and Public Assistance staff provided support to counties to maximize federal reimbursement.

The Individual Assistance section conducted seven Preliminary Damage Assessments in the counties of Kings, Queens, Nassau, Clinton, Orange, Ontario, and an additional assessment in Kings for a five-alarm fire destroying several businesses. The IA section secured an SBA declaration for Kings and Nassau Counties due to severe flooding to homes and businesses. The IA section secured the first Rural Agency Declaration for New York State in Clinton County due to flooding. DHSES submitted an appeal to FEMA for IA for Orange and Ontario counties. Lastly, the IA section secured the first-ever SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loan declaration for Kings County in support of the seven businesses that were destroyed by a fire. A Small Business Administration (SBA) Physical Disaster Loan declaration opened federal funding to impacted residents and businesses in the form of low interest loans.

The Individual Assistance section supported joint FEMA/State/SBA Preliminary Damage Assessments in Orange and Ontario counties after severe storms caused widespread flooding in early July. The State received a denial for a FEMA IA declaration and an appeal was subsequently submitted in October.

The Individual Assistance section supported the FEMA-funded Disaster Case Management Program in support of survivors impacted by Tropical Storm Ida. This program opened the opportunity for New York State to contract with an organization to provide one-on-one case management services to eligible residents in New York.

The Hazard Mitigation section worked with counties to update FEMA-approved hazard mitigation plans, which identifies risks and strategies and were essential to receive FEMA mitigation grants. The State Hazard Mitigation Plan, which must be adopted every five years, was adopted by the DPC, and approved by FEMA on December 14.

DHSES Hazard Mitigation submitted 184 subapplications to FEMA totaling more than \$582 million for project and planning grants under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program for Hurricane Ida, Tropical Storm Fred, and COVID-19. 84 subrecipients received awards from FEMA allowing \$412 million in hazard mitigation efforts to commence. DHSES Hazard Mitigation received 65 sub-applications totaling more than \$310.9 million in federal funding for project and planning grants under the FY2023 FEMA Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities and Flood Mitigation Assistance grant programs.

Office of Counter Terrorism

Preparing for, and subsequently responding to disasters, both natural and man-made is at the core of the Division's mission. These efforts take many forms and involve ensuring local law enforcement, emergency managers, first responders and the public have the training and resources necessary for addressing and recovering from any type of hazard they may encounter. It is critical businesses and not-for-profits that operate publicly accessible facilities, such as offices and storefronts, have the proper security measures in place and understand how to spot and report suspicious activity.

Cyber Incident Response Team

The risk of cyber compromises increases rapidly as technology evolves and cyber actors find creative ways to exploit the vulnerabilities of these technologies. For State, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) governments, these threats pose unique challenges for a variety of reasons. The DHSES Cyber Incident Response Team (CIRT) assisted State and local government organizations to prepare for, prevent, and respond to cyber incidents by providing cyber training, targeted exercise programs, and cyber incident response.

Other activities included:

- CIRT responded to 70 cyber incidents in the SLTT community, assisting entities in identification, containment, eradication, and a return to normal operations in a secure manor. All related cyber intel gathered during incidents is deidentified and disseminated to State entities for proactive and preventative actions. CIRT team members participated in and provided threat briefings at more than 25 cyber events that delivered critical information to hundreds of participants such as the members of the New York State Local IT Directors Association conferences, and dozens of school districts throughout the State
- CIRT performed phishing campaigns and follow up training for 3,153 users of the SLTT community.
- The CIRT conducted seven tabletop exercises with follow on reports to guide the organizations efforts. The CIRT is scheduled to lead 13 tabletop exercises in the coming year. This program walks entities through a mock cyber incident, testing response plans, identifying/documenting gaps, identifying areas of strength, and highlighting areas for improvement.
- CIRT executed seven cybersecurity risk assessments which evaluates all aspects of an entity's cyber program and provides a report with prioritized, actionable

recommendations to improve its cybersecurity posture. Each assessment reports lays out the steps for decreasing cyber risk with a 2+ year roadmap.

- CIRT Stood up a Cyber Capability Workshop Program for Local Government Leaders and held workshops for more than 150 local leaders. The workshops produced an activity report that participants can use to help guide discussions in government cyber governance and decision making, procurement, risk management, data management and training.

Engagements with Critical Infrastructure

The Division's Critical Infrastructure Unit within the Office of Counter Terrorism (OCT-CIU) worked with public and private sector partners to identify and assess critical infrastructure across New York State. The Office's services supported New York State's comprehensive strategy to ensure security and resiliency. OCT-CIU regularly conducted targeted outreach and provides services to assess the security and vulnerability of critical infrastructure. OCT-CIU completed 67 site visits and assessments at critical infrastructure sites throughout New York.

The Unit collaborated with federal, State, local, and private sector partners to enhance the overall security of the State's most critical assets. The Critical Infrastructure Unit conducted 48 assessments of infrastructure in the chemical, energy, pipeline, and public drinking water industries as required by New York State Executive Law, which requires DHSES to review and enhance critical infrastructure security. Six assessments focused on local government cybersecurity and were conducted in partnership with the OCT Cyber Incident Response Team. Two visits were conducted in partnership with Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Eight site visits were conducted in partnership with the State Police and Department of Agriculture and Markets to review industry practices for securing ammonium nitrate. Eight security projects were completed at the request of local government partners and were focused on facilities such as schools and publicly accessible government buildings.

The Unit managed a hostile vehicle mitigation system program, which provides a cost saving, movable vehicle barrier system to protect pedestrians and large crowds from accidental or intentional vehicle injury during special events. The hostile vehicle mitigation system program experienced a significant increase in requests and was deployed at events such as the World University Games, the PGA Tour, and multiple open-air events.

OCT-CIU strived to improve and promote sharing of threat related information, including maintaining processes to develop and distribute threat advisory information for the public and private critical infrastructure stakeholder. The Unit in partnership with team members from the Public Safety Unit, developed a new initiative designed to educate

owners and staff on the signs and indicators of terrorism and reporting suspicious activity. Five trainings were provided since the initiative was launched.

Red Team Exercises and Terrorism Awareness Outreach

Each year, the Division's Office of Counter Terrorism partners with law enforcement from more than 80 agencies throughout the State to conduct 'Red Team' exercises. These exercises, which involve federal, State, local and tribal counter terrorism personnel, assess the effectiveness of the State's "See Something, Say Something" training program on businesses. During each exercise, personnel from State and local agencies conceal their identities and assess the ability of businesses to recognize and report suspicious activity. Following each exercise, officials provide training on identifying and reporting suspicious activity.

OCT conducted 'Red Team' exercises at more than 1,000 locations across New York in each of the State's 16 counter terrorism zones. As part of this process, teams assessed suspicious activity reporting and recognition at more than 860 retailers and businesses that sell chemicals, compounds, components, services, or rent space or resources that could be exploited by bad actors. Additionally, teams assessed more than 200 infrastructure locations across the State, including stadiums and arenas, malls and shopping centers, colleges and universities, airports, transit hubs and other mass-gathering locations. The Division has now completed more than 6,400 Red Team exercises since 2016.

More than 2,000 business and infrastructure personnel were educated on indicators and warning signs of terrorism through Red Team engagements. Separately, OCT has trained more than 1,200 stakeholders through at least 44 terrorism awareness presentations, to include the Critical Infrastructure initiative described above.

Domestic Terrorism Prevention Unit

The Domestic Terrorism Prevention Unit (DTPU) was created on May 18, 2022, when Governor Hochul signed Executive Order 18 after the mass shooting in Buffalo that killed ten New Yorkers. Executive Order 18 mandated that each county, and New York City, create and maintain Domestic Terrorism Prevention Plans and submit to the Office of Counter Terrorism by December 31, 2022. \$10 million in grant funding was allocated to assist counties in creating or further developing multidisciplinary threat assessment and management (TAM) teams to confront domestic terrorism and domestic violent extremism.

Since the DTPU was fully staffed in December 2022, it has:

- Delivered National Threat Evaluation and Reporting training to more than 250 stakeholders since June and in each of the five OEM regions;
- Grew to 36 TAM teams and reviewed more than 250 cases since inception;
- Developed New York State TAM team network that has more than 600 multidisciplinary stakeholders involved in targeted violence and terrorism prevention efforts;
- Held first TAM team webinars to showcase different counties' TAM team success stories with more than 90 participants;
- Provided funding and logistical support to a TAM conference in Rochester, New York that had more than 350 attendees;
- Made \$10 million in grant funding available to counties to assist in developing Domestic Terrorism Prevention Plan and TAM Teams;
- Reviewed and provided feedback on all 58 Domestic Terrorism Prevention Plans;
- Created and distributed several Hate Crime/Domestic Violent Extremism briefs to stakeholders focused on key targeted groups (race/ethnicity/national origin, LGBTQIA+, religion); and
- Presented on the DTPU and targeted violence and terrorism prevention efforts to approximately 400 Counter Terrorism Zone professionals across New York State.

Briefings and Information Sharing with Private Sector Partners

As part of an ongoing effort to disseminate relevant and timely information, the Office of Counter Terrorism provided and facilitated briefings for public and private-sector partners as needed. The Office participated in quarterly meetings with the Energy industry and held a briefing for energy sector partners following the December 3, 2022 attack on critical infrastructure in North Carolina. OCT worked with partners in the public drinking water, chemical and pipeline industries to share information on physical and cyber security threats, as well as best practices in physical and cyber security. Additionally, OCT engaged with associations and groups such as the FBI's Infraguard chapters, as well as public safety stakeholders to enhance awareness. Throughout the year, OCT engaged the 120 Intelligence Liaison Officers (ILO) across the State and made presentations at the annual ILO, Emergency Medical Services, and New York State Association of Fire Chief's Conferences. OCT programs and services promoted suspicious activity reporting through presentations to targeted audiences to include the healthcare and commercial facilities sectors, and outreach to security personnel and targeted public messaging in conjunction with public gathering events such as the State Fair.

Office of Fire Prevention and Control

The New York State Office of Fire Prevention and Control (OFPC) delivered a wide range of services to firefighters, emergency responders, State and local government agencies, public and private colleges, and the citizens of New York. OFPC advanced public safety by providing firefighter training and certifications, public fire prevention education, fire and life safety inspections for colleges, universities and certain State agencies, fire investigations, hazardous materials training and response, technical rescue training and response, and other on-scene technical assistance.

Training was provided to more than 48,000 firefighters and other emergency response personnel, including more than 5,000 firefighters who attended training at the New York State Academy of Fire Science in Montour Falls. OFPC issued more than 3,600 national certifications in categories such as Firefighter, Fire and Emergency Services Instructor, and Fire Officer.

OFPC's Fire Operations Center was activated six times, including operating in support of four activations of the State Fire Mobilization and Mutual Aid Plan. Incidents included a coastal winter storm, a wildfire in Orange County, two heavy rain/flooding events, and a water emergency affecting the City of Watertown and neighboring areas.

Fire Protection Specialists responded to 18 requests for technical rescue assistance, including structural collapse, missing person searches, and water rescue incidents. Support included deployment of specialized resources such as Unmanned Aerial Systems, Urban Search and Rescue including Search and Rescue K-9 teams, and specialized response vehicles

Office staff responded to 55 hazardous materials responses and provided technical assistance to local first responders. Technical assistance involved managing incidents including train derailments, highway emergencies, releases in industrial facilities and, both accidental and intentional releases involving the public. OFPC staff provided subject matter expertise at the scene of multiple flammable and combustible liquid and gas emergencies, assisting local first responders with product transfers. Assistance also included support for the growing occurrence of incidents related to lithium-ion batteries including battery energy storage systems.

Fire Investigators conducted 236 fire investigations in support of local and county agencies. 39 percent of these incidents were determined to be intentionally set, 42 percent were the result of an accidental cause, and the cause remained unclassified for 18 percent. These incidents resulted in 44 fire fatalities and nearly \$45 million dollars in estimated property loss.

Division of Homes and Community Renewal

The New York State Division of Homes and Community Renewal (HCR) served as a support agency for State emergency operations and ESF 6 to prepare for and support multi-agency, State-level activity during disaster events, exercises, and training. HCR worked with local, State, and federal partners to develop response and recovery strategies. Other activities included:

- Supported activations of the State EOC and ESF 6 in response to various weather-related events which impacted the State
- Participated in the State annual radiological preparedness program exercise for the James A. Fitzpatrick nuclear power facility.
- Attended a planning meeting to introduce the formation and development of a State Functional Support Team. HCR support included provision of an agency point of contact and development of an agency roster.
- Contributed to updating the New York State Hazard Mitigation Plan agency action database.

Office of Information Technology Services

The New York State Office of Information Technology Services (ITS) provides statewide IT strategic direction, directs IT policy, and delivers centralized IT products and services that support the mission of New York State. ITS operates data centers 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to support statewide mission-critical applications for 53 State agencies, including more than 16 million public accounts.

ITS expanded its support of emergency operations, customer relations, and service delivery, which enabled ITS to better support technology needs for DPC agencies. ITS provided trained staff, operational support, and information technology services to State agencies to strengthen interagency coordination, collaboration, and cooperation during emergencies. ITS embedded emergency operations throughout all ITS technology support functions. During emergencies, ITS ensured the State's critical public health and safety applications and critical support services for residents such as unemployment Insurance and welfare management remained available and operational. ITS provided 130,000 employee accounts, 63,000 VoIP phones and 37,000 mobile phones, 100,000 workstations/laptops/tablets, 16,000 virtual and real servers, 33 petabytes of storage and 35,000 virtual desktop remote connections to ensure State agencies could maintain operations during an emergency.

ITS supported DPC agencies through dedicated emergency management technology support, geospatial services, cyber and information security, telecommunications support, COOP, asylum seeker support, and total solar eclipse planning and preparations.

Emergency Management

ITS provided technology support for State OEM and the State EOC throughout all activities, activations, and emergency responses. ITS provided emergency management coordination and liaison, telecommunications, network, computing and peripheral technology, internet access, and end user services to the EOC and various emergency activation sites throughout New York State. Mobile Command Centers (MCC) with connected access points were vital in providing wi-fi coverage at each site to several different devices such as iPads, laptops, phones, and printers utilizing cellular services and new and existing circuits.

ITS staff supported all four State EOC activations. ITS staff assisted DHSES and State OEM teams in ongoing efforts to enhance EOC functions and improve efficiency and coordination. ITS EOC added eight new State EOC liaisons to its existing staff

ITS provided additional support and equipment to radiological emergency preparedness and other disaster preparedness exercises and planning activities, including regular communications drills with the State Watch Center as well as facility continuity of operations drills, as well as several disaster-simulation exercises, which included the State Watch Center, State EOC and ESFs.

Emergency Management Technology Support

ITS provided management and support of the NY Alert environment. NY Alert is a subscriber-based service; constituents must opt-in to receive notifications related to imminent natural or man-made threats, transportation/traffic, medical and public health, missing persons, Sex Offender relocation notifications, Orders of Protection, Sewage and Pollution Right-to-Know Act Notices for Sewage Spills, as well as consumer protection advisories such as scams and data breaches. The system issued 199,180 Alerts and 5,050 Sewage Bypass warnings.

The State and City Universities of New York used NY Alert to notify students, faculty, and staff of campus closures. NY Alert employs multiple technologies to alert the public, including reverse 911 mass dialers for voice communications, SMS text messaging, email, facsimile, RSS feeds, website, and social media, e.g., Twitter.

As of December, DHSES, State Police, New York City Office of Emergency Management, and 47 county offices of emergency management were authorized to use FEMA's Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) for emergency alerting purposes.

The State employee alert program, including specialized platforms for the Thruway Authority, State Police, Metropolitan Transportation Authority, and State Department of Transportation, experienced its highest activation year with multiple State facility closures due to storms and COVID-19. The success of the platform led to several new agencies to join the program including the Office of the Attorney General, the New York Guard, and the New York Naval Militia.

ITS improved the accessibility of the NY Alert website to remain 508-compliant. ITS provided management and support of NY Responds, the State system of record for emergency management used by DHSES and DPC agencies.

Geospatial Services

The ITS Geospatial Services Bureau (formerly the GIS Program Office or GPO) supported State OEM's Geographic Information Specialist with training and data. ITS worked at the State EOC for two radiological emergency preparedness exercises and the statewide weather exercise in December.

Staff supported ice jam tracking in January and February with field data collection applications and web applications. Work supporting ice jam tracking resumed in December in preparation for the 2024 season. Staff maintained field data collection and web applications to support DHSES' search and rescue efforts and building damage assessment. ITS maintained a mobile data collection and web tools to support the work of DHSES Individual Assistance and Public Assistance teams. ITS supplied accounts to support a new DHSES effort to integrate GIS dashboards in NY Responds, as well as accounts to access FEMA disaster response imagery.

ITS GIS Specialists were active members of the New York State Incident Management Team, including two training sessions and support for deployments to the New York Wildfire Incident Management Academy and the Watertown water main break. Staff developed a staff check-in application to help track resources during events.

ITS maintained the Critical Infrastructure Response Information System (CIRIS) data repository, from which NY Responds Common Operating Picture drew many of its datasets.

Support for public safety and law enforcement included maps and support for State Police operations including unmanned aerial vehicle flights, and for State correctional institution security plans, including Department of Corrections and Community Supervision staff. The public safety team maintained a leadership role in GIS for Next Generation 911 working with DHSES and the State Office of Interoperable and Emergency Communications.

Staff supported GIS data for the Statewide CAD system to be used by State Police, Thruway Authority for emergency dispatch, and the Department of Transportation for the HELP truck program with dispatch and vehicle location data. GIS data and map support was provided for the new State Police Records Management System (RMS) to provide highly accurate incident locations.

The ITS Geospatial Services Bureau public safety team supported the State crime analysis center, the New York State Intelligence Center, and the Division of Criminal Justice Services' regional crime analysis centers throughout the State with training, GIS data, and expertise.

Cyber and Information Security

ITS Chief Information Security Office (CISO) developed and maintained uniform State security policies and standards, information asset governance, risk management, compliance protocols, and enhanced proactive defenses, monitoring, detection, and alerting capabilities in the Statewide Data Center. CISO routinely performed cyber security risk and threat and vulnerability assessments to ensure adequate controls and resiliency. CISO developed its Governance, Risk, and Compliance platform to focus on collection and prioritization of cybersecurity risks and to streamline the process of performing system security reviews.

ITS expanded and improved upon the development and expansion of the Joint Security Operations Center (JSOC), and its shared service offerings. The JSOC is a first-of-its-kind hub for data sharing and cyber coordination across New York State, New York City, five major upstate cities, local and regional governments, and critical infrastructure and federal partners.

In partnership with DHSES, the New York State Intelligence Center (NYSIC), and the Executive Chamber, this new initiative was brought together rather quickly. The JSOC was staffed with cyber security analysts monitoring security alerts 24/7/365 providing a higher level of awareness than ever before. Initial customers consisted of ITS and the Cities of Albany, Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, and Yonkers.

CISO continued to provide critical resources and support through the New York State Cyber Command Center. The New York State Security Operations Center and Cyber Incident Response Team worked to identify, triage, contain, and respond to cybersecurity alerts and incidents related to ITS and ITS-served entities. The Red Team engaged on multiple new initiatives to provide advanced testing, leveraging many of the same techniques employed by cyber criminals, to help ensure these systems are free from security flaws before being launched.

CISO maintained a robust awareness and outreach program promoting cybersecurity best practices such as supporting Cyber Security Awareness Month, providing content rich materials for the ITS CISO awareness web pages, and relevant posts for ITS social media sites. CISO coordinated a variety of security training and education programs, including continuing to offer State cyber security awareness training technical training offerings for staff on cyber security, and the New York State “Kids Safe Online” poster contest, which engaged public, private, and home-schooled children in grades K-12. CISO once again conducted an extremely successful in-person, record-breaking 25th annual New York State Cyber Security Conference in downtown Albany with attendance above that of pre-pandemic levels.

Telecommunications Support

ITS networking teams built out multiple networks downstate for Asylum support processing facilities and housing, including sites at JFK and the former Lincoln Correctional Facility building. ITS networking teams working with the cyber remediation teams within ISO have been actively replacing any end-of-life equipment with supported gear. ITS networking provided the World Games EOC DPC partners with networks for localized operations centers to facilitate health and safety efforts.

Continuity of Operations Planning

ITS Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) has 32 business units and portfolios and made updates regularly. ITS focused on maintaining the COOP critical contacts and key contacts in the ITS Master COOP plan. Additional administrators to the Executive Plan and Master COOP plan made positive impacts in organization and maintenance of those plans. ITS organized roles using the NIMS/ICS structure and maintained a critical contact list of senior staff and agency decision makers who could be involved in deploying resources during an incident. COOP incident team and declaration diagrams were updated to reflect key personnel changes in leadership and business unit shifts.

Support for Asylum Seekers

ITS supported readying new locations for asylum seeker temporary housing, providing project management, telecommunications support, and data gathering and reporting capabilities in support of New York State efforts.

Department of Labor

The New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) continued its overall agency mission and commitment to protecting workers, assisting the unemployed, and connecting job seekers to jobs. The Office of Security and Emergency Management was under a single operational structure and carried out its mission of ensuring the health and safety of all those who rely on NYSDOL services. NYSDOL staff supported State EOC staffing, personnel, and equipment and supplies in support of rain events in the Hudson Valley, New York City, and Long Island, and assisted asylum seekers. The Office of Security and Emergency Management and internal NYSDOL partners developed and updated emergency plans, improved employee resiliency, and promoted a safe work environment through multiple efforts. The office worked to update location emergency action or “all-hazards” plans for locations across the State. The office assisted site locations in conducting training and exercises on emergencies in the workplace including fire drills, workplace violence prevention assessments, and facilitating the training of staff on active shooter preparedness. Cardiopulmonary resuscitation and automated external defibrillator training was provided to staff at numerous NYSDOL locations across the State.

Office of Mental Health

The New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH) and its Bureau of Emergency Preparedness and Response (BEPR) participated in several State EOC activations for weather related events, including the July rain and flooding events in the Hudson River region, and December storms in New York City and Long Island. A water main break at Samaritan Hospital occurred in Watertown where OMH had several inpatients. Water was restored to the facility very quickly with resources from Ft. Drum averting an evacuation of patients. BEPR personnel provided support to ESFs 6 and ESF 8 on a 24/7 during this time. Support was provided via WebEx, Virtual EOC, as well as in person. Other emergency response activities included assisting other State agencies with mental health support following traumatic events such as deaths by suicide, fires, etc.

Disaster Mental Health

The Community Mental Health Services Block Grant Supplement funded through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration made available \$4 million beginning October 2022 through the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act. Most of these funds will be used to support a robust response during and after disasters and other traumatic events affecting communities in New York State. Partnering with the Institute for Disaster Mental Health (IDMH) at SUNY New Paltz, as well as with DHSES, the program addresses disaster-influenced mental health needs through teams of trained personnel available for deployment at the regional level.

Disaster Mental Health teams consist of responders trained in Psychological First Aid (non-licensed) and/or Fundamentals of Disaster Mental Health Practice (licensed clinicians). Additional training for all responders in development included ethics in disaster response; impact to seriously emotionally challenged youth and serious mentally ill; vulnerable populations; children and families; mass casualty; understanding culture of first responder; chronic cyclic disasters as opposed to single event; and disaster related grief. Teams are poised for deployment in support of disaster response operations and to serve the needs of individuals with serious mental illness, children with severe emotional disturbance, those experiencing more generalized emotional reactions to disaster or traumatic events, first responders, and the clients and staff of other New York State agencies. When deployed, teams provide a compassionate presence, immediate psychological first aid, and resource referrals in a non-clinical model designed to address the early and expected stress reactions to disaster.

2022 Buffalo Mass Shooting

OMH successfully applied for two U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) grants in response to the May 14, 2022, mass shooting in Buffalo. The grants, referred to in the community as “Reimagine: I Am the Change,” totaled \$6.35 million.

- The SAMHSA Emergency Response Grant (SERG) provided resources that address trauma and emotional wellness in the wake of the shooting with focus on Black/African American communities in East Buffalo, particularly neighborhoods surrounding the Tops Market on Jefferson Avenue. The grant is \$2.35 million for one-year with current six-month no-cost extension; a request for a second six-month no-cost extension was under review
- The ReCAST (Resiliency in Communities After Stress and Trauma) grant focused on assisting high-risk youth and families in East Buffalo. The program model

promoted resilience and equity with evidence-based, violence prevention, and community youth engagement programs through partnership with school, community, mental health, and other key stakeholders in the community. The \$4 million, four-year grant was in Year One or implementation and planning stage.

The Black Mental Health Response Team (BMHRT) was led by community-based provider BestSelf Behavioral Health to promote equity and long-term recovery in impacted communities. The BMHRT is a dedicated team of Black/African American clinicians and mental health staff led by a program coordinator to provide rapid access to professional, culturally appropriate mental health outreach, engagement, and clinical support. Due to the community's level of trauma and reluctance to trust mental health supports, BMHRT Program engaged in ongoing outreach and engagement efforts with the community, including building relationships with pastoral leaders and partnering with several church communities. Since its inception in October 2022, 123 community referrals were made to the program, 212 treatment services were provided, and 537 individuals engaged in BMHRT services.

The Reimagine Non-Traditional Wellness Fund provided one-time funding to support community-based interventions that promoted mental wellness and healing by respecting and integrating Black/African American traditions and culture. There were six community and grassroot providers who received funding.

To date, there have been 79 individual services with 3,279 individuals taking part in at least one of these services.

Providers and programs include:

Cultrve, Inc. – “The New Masters: Healing Buffalo through the Arts”

Workshops centered in arts-based therapy, using creative and expressive arts practices to promote emotional wellness and healing.

Buffalo Federation of Neighborhood Centers – “Healing Together”

Healing Together is a pilot project to engage, educate and increase the knowledge of gatekeepers, trusted residents, faith leaders and other community stakeholders including establishing a cohort of community Wellness Champions – members from community churches that will serve as point persons within not only the ministry, but the community where the ministry serves.

Community Health Center of Buffalo – “Arts that Heal”

Arts that Heal is an arts-based emotional wellness program for individuals in the community 55 and older.

Pappy Martin Legacy Jazz Collaborative – “Celestial Jazz Series”

The Celestial Jazz Series will offer accessible jazz programming which creates opportunities for diverse, inclusive and community engagement through jazz. Jazz is presented to the community as a tool to unite and uplift and as an alternative to achieving wellness.

Erie Niagara Area Health Education Center – “Student Health Internship Program (SHIP) -- Mental Health Track”

SHIP will recruit 5-7 BIPOC young people who have specifically identified an interest in mental healthcare careers.

Buffalo Prenatal Perinatal Network, Inc. – “Mental Health and Wellness for Boys & Men Initiative”

The Mental Health & Wellness for Boys & Men Initiative is a community-based intervention & partnership that fills the gap in services for men, fathers, sons, and boys and young men of color (BYMoC) in East Buffalo. The program addresses and promotes mental wellness in various ways, including barbershop-based speaker series, workshops, conferences, and small group discussions.

Implementation of “Stress, Resiliency and Psychological First Aid” Train-the-Trainer

Psychological First Aid (PFA) is an evidence-informed approach that aims to reduce stress symptoms and assist in a healthy recovery following a traumatic event. The SERG Reimagine PFA initiative’s goal is to create a local, community-based resource of individuals trained to provide PFA who are knowledgeable and culturally-representative of the East Side community. The IDMH and the SERG Reimagine team recognized the importance of delivering PFA trainings that are respectful of and culturally relevant for East Side community needs. To accomplish this, they met with NTWF first-round awardees to receive feedback about how the PFA training modules would be received by the impacted Black/African American community. In response, IDMH modified trainings to make them relevant to the East Side African American community and assure community buy-in and participation. The modified PFA training was called: “Stress, Resilience, and Psychological First Aid Train-the-Trainer Program.” There was good

reception to the training in the community, including 12 training cohorts provided, 142 individuals trained of which 75 percent were Black/African American.

PFA train-the-trainer initiative will be a long-term community resource after the SERG program ends through the development of a “Training Hub” to support the 142 PFA trained community members. SERG Reimagine will design a digital platform for the Training Hub where PFA trained community members have access to a learning collaborative where they can support each other by sharing success stories, challenges, and effective solutions. Additionally, they will have access to digital copies of training materials. Moreover, in association with the Training Hub work, SERG Reimagine is providing starter kits for all community trainers that include hard copy training materials and other supplies to assure successful implementation.

ReCAST Programs and Program Updates

This \$4 million SAMHSA grant comes from the Resiliency in Communities After Stress and Trauma (ReCAST) grant program, which assists high-risk youth and families and promotes resilience and equity with evidence-based, violence prevention, and community youth engagement programs. ReCAST helps link individuals who have been traumatized and need treatment to trauma-informed behavioral health services. New York State's Office of Mental Health will utilize the ReCAST grant to support a coalition of diverse community stakeholders to develop programming that is recovery-oriented, trauma-informed, and equity-based behavioral health and wellness. The ReCAST grant will be directed by a needs assessment and plan driven by the community. The grant will fund several programs:

- University Psychiatric Practice, in collaboration with SayYes Buffalo and the Buffalo Public Schools, will provide clinical supports for students struggling with community trauma and training for educators.
- Black Mental Health Response Team led by BestSelf Behavioral Health will continue outreach and enhancement with youth and families in the East Buffalo.
- Buffalo Community Non-Traditional Mental Wellness Programs will continue a focus on respecting and integrating Black/African American traditions and culture to include arts-based therapies, coordination with local houses of worship and spiritual-based healing.

The first community meeting was held at the Northland Workforce Center on January 25, 2024, to build out coalition building work and to inform the community needs and resource assessment.

Preparedness

OMH BEPR participated virtually in the annual Integrated Preparedness Planning Workshop held by DHSES in January, including breakout sessions to discuss future training exercises for ESFs 6 and 8. Also in January, OMH BEPR personnel took part in the Winter Weather Readiness Training seminar presented by the National Weather Service (NWS). In June, OMH BEPR personnel took part in the Hurricane Awareness seminar that was presented by NWS and the National Hurricane Center. Representatives from OMH BEPR attended meetings several times throughout the year with ESFs that OMH supports. During the ESF 6 sync and leadership meetings, State agency personnel worked to develop tactical worksheets for mass care and update several ESF Standard Operating Guide Annexes.

Metropolitan Transportation Authority

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) and its operating agencies – Metro North Railroad, Long Island Rail Road, New York City Transit (including departments of Buses, Paratransit and Subways), MTA Bus, MTA Bridges and Tunnels, and Construction and Development – continued to prepare for, respond to, and recover from a wide range of emergencies across its operating territory. The MTA worked towards a more comprehensive response to emergencies, including safety and security (including health services and MTA Police Department), people, procurement, real estate, strategic initiatives, accessibility, audit, labor, and employment relations, legal, diversity, finance, technology, procurement, facilities, health services, and communications (internal, customer, external relations).

The MTA and the operating agencies developed and improved emergency plans, as well as enhanced the skills of staff and leadership through participation in planning, response, recovery, and mitigation activities. The MTA Chairman and executive team engaged in emergency preparedness and response activities such as training and exercises in advance of hurricane and winter weather seasons, as well as a tabletop exercise revolving around an act of terrorism (explosion and power outage) at Grand Central Station. Staff from all operating agencies and headquarters divisions participated in monthly emergency management working group meetings and a hazard assessment to guide future training and exercises. Select staff from the working group participated in a weekly meeting to build out mass notification capacity across agencies during emergencies.

MTA staff participated in numerous training programs to enhance the organization's ability to prepare for and respond to emergencies. Training ranged from cyber awareness, emergency communication training, security awareness training, and location specific

training with partner agencies. MTA staff were involved in numerous exercises including executive-level winter weather and coastal storm tabletops and the following agency specific tabletop, functional and full-scale exercises.

- Department of Subways led multiple functional exercises that tested the deployment of storm mitigation assets, including deploying flood logs at Coney Island Yard, 148th Street Yard, Clifton Maintenance Shop and St. George in Staten Island, which prepared subways to respond to numerous weather events.
- Metro-North Railroad conducted a full-scale exercise simulating a severe injury to a contractor working on an elevated structure and included participation from various external stakeholders in Norwalk. The exercise evaluated Metro-North's Passenger Train Emergency Preparedness Plan and local first responders' abilities to manage an incident on elevated railroad bridge structures.
- Long Island Rail Road led a full-scale exercise with participants from across MTA and external fire and EMS organizations that simulated a train derailment on the Hempstead line involving a vehicle/train strike with a secondary debris collapse. The simulation included a fire in the first car and various passenger injuries and two trapped persons. The exercise allowed for train derailment plans and procedures to be tested, including the proper evacuation of a wheelchair bound passenger.
- Bridges and Tunnels conducted annual flood mitigation drills at the Queens Midtown Tunnel and the Hugh L. Carey Tunnel, where they were able to test all flood mitigation measures, including deployment of flood gates.

The MTA developed plans to prepare for and respond to growing protests that could impact major transportation hubs and locations such as Penn Station, Grand Central Terminal, and Times Square. These efforts included integrating other external agencies and law enforcement entities co-located with the MTA into internal procedures and communication platforms. The MTA's efforts resulted in collaborative responses to the protests between the MTA, the New York City Police Department (especially the Transit Bureau), the New York State National Guard, Amtrak, and New Jersey Transit.

The MTA began multiple updates to technology to improve its posture before, during and after emergencies. First, the installation of FirstNet on all MTA ICS Leadership phones as a backup communication tool to ensure critical communications were never disrupted was started. Second, discussions commenced with external partners to share camera feeds at Penn Station and Grand Central Terminal. Finally, efforts were underway to have camera footage from across operating agencies fed into a centralized database.

The MTA was impacted by a variety of incidents, including multiple weather emergencies and various protests that, at times, appeared targeted at shutting down transportation. The MTA activated its Virtual Situation Room, which included an open communication line and scheduled check-ins with representatives from across all operating agencies to increase situational awareness and provide real-time updates for five weather and four protest events.

The MTA's ICS was activated three times for the extreme rain event from September 28-29, and protests regarding the Hamas Israel conflict on November 8 and 17.

The MTA supported efforts in the migrant crisis. The Department of Buses provided transportation for migrants from the Port Authority Bus Terminal and Roosevelt Hotel in Manhattan to more than 75 drop-off locations across the five boroughs.

Finally, this summer, the MTA supported efforts in response to the Canadian wildfires. The Department of Subways, Metro North Railroad, and Long Island Rail Road fulfilled requests from Governor Hochul to hand out masks during multiple air quality advisory days, which resulted in the distribution of approximately 10,000 masks to customers.

Division of Military and Naval Affairs

The New York State Division of Military and Naval Affairs (DMNA) remained ready to respond, at the direction of the Governor, for civil support operations including all-hazard, emergency incidents, and disasters. DMNA's Joint Forces Headquarters—New York Joint Operations Center located in Latham was staffed 24 hours per day, 7 days a week to monitor ongoing operations, weather conditions, and maintain situational awareness tools to anticipate incidents and manage information flow ensuring military capabilities and units were available to respond as directed. DMNA planners coordinated and attended tabletop exercises for specific events and participated in exercises and meetings with each ESF the agency supported. These coordination measures ensured New York Military Forces maintained the necessary relationships and could assist civilian authorities with understanding of military capabilities to respond effectively in times of need.

DMNA maintained two Civil-Support Teams (CST) capable of deploying on short notice anywhere in the State in support of local law enforcement agencies to detect and identify Chemical, Biological, and Radiological/Nuclear (CBRN) threats. For larger CBRN incidents, DMNA maintained the FEMA Region II Homeland Response Force headquarters and CBRN Task Force for detection, search and extraction, decontamination, and medical support. For all-hazards events, DMNA maintained 25 general-purpose Initial Response Force teams across the State and a Quick Reaction

Force (QRF) assigned to Joint Task Force Empire Shield (JTF-ES) stationed in New York City.

Civil Support Mission Summary

3,360 members of the New York Military Forces, comprised of the New York Army National Guard (NYARNG), New York Air National Guard (NYANG), New York Naval Militia (NYNM), and New York Guard, took part in the following civil support missions dedicated to helping the citizens of New York.

- Asylum Seeker Resource Support: DMNA provided administrative and logistical support to shelters housing migrants seeking asylum at locations in New York City, Buffalo, and Rochester. New York Military Forces from all components were mobilized to provide support at 72 shelter hotels and humanitarian relief centers, assisting more than 11,000 migrants. At the close of the year, 2,133 servicemembers remained on duty.
- March Winter Weather: From March 13-14, DMNA mobilized 103 servicemembers from both the NYARNG and NYANG in preparation to respond to severe winter weather in the Hudson Valley and Capital Region.
- Orange County Wildland Fire: From April 14-16, DMNA mobilized ten servicemembers and two rotary wing aircraft from the NYARNG to support the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and Office of Fire Prevention and Control in response to a wildland fire in vicinity of the Towns of Blooming Grove and Port Jervis in Orange County.
- Support to District of Columbia National Guard: DMNA was prepared with forces from the NYARNG and the NYANG to support the District of Columbia National Guard in the event of an emergency or call for a major operation. The NYNG was prepared to respond (if approved in advance by the Governor) with a joint task force headquarters, one multi-purpose response force, logistical support capability and an augmentation force of 30 servicemembers. There were no incidents and the force deactivated on October 1.
- Support to the New York State Police: From May 9-11, DMNA supported the New York State Police with four servicemembers and one naval craft from the NYNM to conduct CBRN detection training and improve interoperability between federal, State, county, and local agencies in the Capital Region.
- Special Olympics: From June 10-11, DMNA provided a Color Guard and a 14-member support detail from JTF-ES for the U.S. Special Olympic Team departure ceremony at John F. Kennedy Airport.
- Operation Lake Thunder: From July 28-31, DMNA supported the U.S. Coast Guard and multiple State agencies on Lake Ontario with nine servicemembers, two naval

craft, and one command post from the NYNM. The operation increased interoperability effectiveness between the NYNM and partnered agencies.

- Eastern New York Rain Event: On July 10, DMNA mobilized a Swift Water Rescue Team consisting of five servicemembers and one vehicle from the NYANG in response to severe flooding. The force was utilized as a backup to first responder teams.
- Hurricane Lee: From September 14-20, DMNA mobilized 69 servicemembers and 12 vehicles from the NYANG and NYARNG to two locations in Suffolk County to prepare for potential flooding and storm surge.
- Watertown Water Main Break: From October 19-20, DMNA mobilized 18 servicemembers and eight vehicles from the NYARNG to assist local and State agencies in the response to a large water main break. New York Military Forces transported ten pallets of canned water from the Capital Region to a staging area in Watertown.

Empire Challenge

From October 2-5, DMNA supported the Empire Challenge exercise with 51 servicemembers from the New York Guard, NYNM, and JTF-ES. The annual interoperability exercise was conducted at locations across New York State with a command post in Brooklyn. The purpose of the event was to practice, refine, and validate communications platforms and devices between New York Military Forces, DHSES, the Civil Air Patrol, and other State and federal agencies.

Joint Task Force Empire Shield

The Joint Task Force Empire Shield JTF-ES was staffed by 753 servicemembers from the NYARNG, NYANG, and NYNM. JTF-ES conducted persistent counter terrorism and homeland security operations, reinforcing law enforcement at two airports, seven transportation infrastructure hubs, nine bridges and tunnels, and two DMNA facilities. The NYNM provided patrol boats to conduct maritime security operations at the Indian Point Energy Center and in New York Harbor in collaboration with the U.S. Coast Guard, participating in randomized antiterrorism screening programs.

Over the past year, JTF-ES conducted daily operations at two airports, seven transit hubs, nine river crossings, and two DMNA facilities, resulting in 4,124 shifts of security augmentation. Additionally, they conducted 522 Military Boat Service missions and positioned themselves to support one civil support operation in anticipation of Hurricane Lee's impact on the New York City and Long Island regions. JTF-ES participated in nine Multi-Agency Super Surges / Regional Alliance Incorporating Local, State, and Federal

Efforts (MASS/RAILSAFE) events, which provided personnel to detect potential threats and coordinate patrols of railroad stations, subway stations, and rights-of-way with other agencies. JTF-ES maintained a QRF consisting of 20 servicemembers readily prepared to deploy.

Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Teams

DMNA maintained two Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Teams (CSTs) including the 2nd CST based at Stratton Air National Guard Base in Scotia and the 24th CST based at Fort Hamilton in Brooklyn. The 2nd CST conducted 11 stand-by missions and 18 training exercises. The 24th CST conducted 14 stand-by missions, 19 Secure the Cities Maritime missions, 90 advise-and-assist events, and 25-unit training events and exercises.

Homeland Response Force

The DMNA staffed a force of 570 servicemembers to the FEMA Region II Homeland Response Force (HRF). If activated, the HRF increases the operational capability available to the Governor. Members of the HRF conducted specialized training to familiarize members with comparable civilian hazardous materials response equipment, as well as the incident command structure that enables the HRF element to integrate with civilian first responders. The HRF augments civil authorities by providing enhanced response, rescue, relief, and recovery capabilities that local, State, and federal agencies may lack in a CBRN event. Over the course of this year, HRF units conducted a multi-phase large scale exercise validating their ability to deploy and respond to a CBRN event and provided support to the 78th United Nations General Assembly with 26 servicemembers. The HRF conducted two large-scale training events with 187 and 353 servicemembers respectively, a staff exercise with 31 servicemembers, and a search and rescue course with 19 servicemembers.

Critical Infrastructure Protection Mission Assurance Assessments Detachment

The federally funded New York Critical Infrastructure Protection Mission Assurance Assessments Detachment was composed of 21 Army National Guard Soldiers who conducted assessments of critical defense assets involving transportation, defense, energy, and communications infrastructure. The Detachment worked in support of the U.S. Department of the Army Mission Assurance Program and included multiple specialties including analysts, electrical, cyber, transportation, water, communications, and petroleum. The Detachment conducted assessments at five sites nationally and one European location.

Cyber Security Support

DMNA provided five servicemembers to the DHSES Cyber Incident Response Team. The team completed 46 mission assignments ranging from securing State critical infrastructure assets, cyber security assessments, legislative reporting, cyber exercises, and incident responses.

Titanic Submersible Accident

From June 19-21, the NYANG's 106th Rescue Wing in Long Island supported the federally directed response for search operations in the Atlantic for the lost submersible diving near the wreck of the Titanic. The 106th Rescue Wing used its HC-130J Combat King II aircraft on three missions to search the ocean. These flights lasted more than 14 hours each and were directed by the Air Force Rescue Center.

Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) responded to the massive flooding which devastated Bear Mountain State Park, supported severe winter storm responses in Western New York, and several additional flood and coastal storm events. Parks conducted internal and external training to ensure it was prepared to support the State's disaster and incident response and recovery.

In preparation for the busy summer concert schedule, the OPRHP Emergency Management Bureau and New York State Park Police designed and hosted a full-scale, multi-jurisdictional mass casualty training exercise at Saratoga Spa State Park. The exercise was the capstone of a three-year process that included workshops, table-top and functional exercises. The full-scale exercise tested existing plans for the Saratoga Performing Arts Center (SPAC) / Live Nation concert season. More than 300 personnel from multiple State agencies, local government, local colleges, and area hospitals participated in this evaluated exercise, which was observed by FEMA. The scenario included volunteers serving as victims with varying degrees of injuries needing medical attention. Building on lessons learned from the above exercise, OPRHP, SPAC and Live Nation worked to identify a location and develop a plan for reunification should it be needed for a critical incident.

During the summer, OPRHP facilitated the Governor's initiative to support local government's ability to conduct aerial monitoring of Long Island municipal beaches through use of drones because of increased levels of shark related incidents.

Additional OPRHP activities included:

- Support for the Jones Beach Air Show.
- April 2024 eclipse planning support.
- Continued expansion and development of OPRHP's Park Safety Ranger Program to support park patron safety and regional operations.
- Participation in response to child abduction at Moreau Lake State Park in October.
- Distribution of N95-style masks at Roberto Clemente and Denny Farrell Riverbank State Parks to protect New Yorkers from smoke and haze from Canadian wildfires.
- Successful submission and awards from FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program for:
 - Dam decommissioning design study projects for dam decommissioning on the Dunham Reservoir in Grafton Lake State Park and Lake Treman in Buttermilk Falls State Park.
 - Installation of an emergency generator for the Agency Operations Center and Joint Incident Command Post.
 - NOTE: These grants totaled more than \$1,086,207 in federal funds.
- Park Police Academy opened a new class with 20 recruits in September.

Office for People with Developmental Disabilities

The Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) completed an update of all agency-level emergency plans and initiated a statewide review and reconfiguration of its facility-based emergency response plans. OPWDD initiated the design of an outreach program that would offer provider agencies information on how to develop and implement a facility-based emergency response plan.

OPWDD increased the number of staff capable of supporting ESFs 6 and 8 when activated, and refined protocols to deploy staff and resources to the State EOC to support local municipalities. OPWDD assigned staff members to the New York State Incident Management Team, which supported Emergency Management Assistance Compact requests and the New York State Wildfire and Incident Management Academy.

OPWDD built a long-term training and exercise strategy enhancing the agency's readiness to respond to a crisis. The focus of OPWDD's training and exercise program this year was to increase the number of internal and external stakeholders participating in the exercise program. Building these relationships increased the overall safety of individuals served and better prepared local first responders to respond to an incident at OPWDD facilities.

The OPWDD Communication Center was a critical asset for consolidating the collection and dissemination of emergency information received from OPWDD facilities statewide. This allowed for accurate and timely reporting to the State EOC and the Governor's Office during emergencies. One significant enhancement was the establishment of secondary location providing increased call taking ability and greater redundancy, hardening in the communications system.

Port Authority of New York and New Jersey

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PANYNJ) monitored eight potential winter weather events predicted for the Port Region. Of these, only two had accumulation that had very minor impacts on facilities and properties. There was very good coordination and information sharing with State personnel and no assistance from State agencies was requested or needed.

On September 29, there was significant flooding at LaGuardia Airport. Initial assessments indicated a potential breach of a seawall. The high-volume pumps were functioning but not clearing floodwater. As a result, the Port Authority requested and obtained two high-capacity pumps through State OEM, which were rapidly deployed and provided exceptional support to the flooding and dewatering operations. As a direct result, the airport was able to continue flight operations with limited disruptions. It was later determined the flood was the result of a construction project adjacent to the airport.

Other activities included:

- Preparedness activities for events involving active shooter and hostile actors, including participation in the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's "Run, Hide, Fight" training, and development of internal resources to maintain the program throughout the year.
- Utilized support through the Urban Areas Security Initiative in numerous ways, including risk assessment, business continuity, the exercise program, and the emergency operations center.
- Utilized the Port Authority Flood Advisory System in collaboration with Stevens Institute in Hoboken and using complex analytical tools and algorithms to model potential flooding at Port facilities and properties. The program included several buoys in the area that provided flood data to allow for greater analysis of the models.
- Used FEMA's Public Assistance program and recently closed out applications for COVID-19 funding.

FEMA selected the Port Authority for a transportation exercise in preparation for the World Cup at the Meadowlands Complex in New Jersey. The planned exercise was expanded as the volume of traveling customers and fans is expected to significantly increase during this period.

Port Authority's Office of Emergency Management captured financial information related to a ship fire in Port Newark that included the loss of two Newark, New Jersey firefighters. There were concerns that the fire was caused by electric vehicles on board. However, after a federal investigation, it was determined the ship fire was a result of a forklift used to move vehicles onto the vessel. The Port Authority reviewed internal processes to determine lessons learned for use in similar events.

Public Service Commission | Department of Public Service

The Department of Public Service (DPS) ensured utilities in New York provided electric, natural gas, steam, water, and telecommunications services in a safe and reliable manner. Emergency response oversight occurred in three phases: storm preparation, active monitoring of utility impacts and system restoration, and post-storm analysis. To ensure electric utility companies were prepared for emergencies, Public Service Law §66(21)(a), Part 105 of Title 16 on the New York Codes, Rules, and Regulations, and the LIPA Reform Act, collectively required each major electric utility to submit annually a comprehensive Emergency Response Plan to the Public Service Commission (PSC), or, in the case of Long Island Power Authority (LIPA), to DPS. The Plans were reviewed by DPS staff and approved by PSC, or, in the case of PSEG Long Island (PSEG LI), as LIPA's service provider, reviewed annually by Staff and approved by the LIPA Board of Trustees.

The Emergency Response Plans detailed procedures and define roles, responsibilities, and required training to reduce confusion and promote common understanding of the restoration process. Each utility was required to perform restoration efforts in compliance with its Plan, and to update its Plan after a major event, to capture lessons learned or new legislation. DPS worked closely with electric utilities to ensure they were prepared, including obtaining outside resources through mutual assistance agreements and other means. Utilities reached out to DHSES to facilitate the passage of crews entering the United States from Canada who were assisting with restoration efforts. Utility Plans defined methods to coordinate information sharing to public officials and the public, as well as detailing utilities' required interactions with critical facilities and customers on life support equipment. PSC maintained the legal authority to approve a utility's Plan or to direct the electric corporation to amend it.

DPS oversaw utility cyber and physical security preparedness to ensure critical facilities of regulated utilities were protected from possible malicious threats and manageable risk. Staff conducted thorough inspections, audits, and program assessments of the physical and cyber security posture of utility facilities, sites, and assets. Cybersecurity staff performed on-site evaluations of cyber security measures, practices, and procedures at each regulated utility to ensure that critical digital control systems were well protected against malicious external and internal hacking attacks and other forms of potential cyber system disruption. Cyber-audits were scheduled quarterly at each utility, with a concentrated focus on a specific area of cyber security diligence. Cyber security oversight included regular review of utility company measures to protect confidential customer information from compromise by cyber breach. Recommendations for utility company response or remediation were communicated to the utility to ensure proper corrective steps were taken. Physical security staff conducted visual inspections of the physical security posture of each facility, scheduled annually, on a revolving basis. Unscheduled and unannounced site inspections were conducted to ascertain the quality of the physical security at critical infrastructure; and attention was given to the hundreds of lower voltage distribution level electric facilities and inspections are conducted by staff on an ongoing basis.

New York's utilities maintained an existing base of workers available for response, repair, and restoration efforts. Utilities were on alert during events and deployed restoration crews where needed. Utilities were prepared to respond to power disruptions and are mandated to implement emergency response plans. Significant plan requirements were as follows:

- Estimated Time of Restoration (ETR) Protocols: Activated when more than 5,000 customers are out of service in a division, or more than 20,000 customers are out of service companywide for more than 30 minutes. Protocols are considered minimum requirements necessary to ensure the public and DPS are adequately informed. During restoration, utilities are to continuously refine ETRs and update DPS Staff and the public, customer representatives, IVR systems, and websites. Utilities provide restoration information such as outage counts and ETRs to the press/media outlets and public officials in the affected areas. Utilities issue at least one press release daily for all outage events with an expected restoration period longer than 48 hours.
 - Regional and local ETRs will be used and applicable to at least 95 percent of the affected customers in the reported level. Regional ETRs are to be provided on a county basis and local ETRs are to be provided on a town or municipal basis. Global ETRs may be used initially for outage events expected to last greater than 48 hours and applicable to at least 90 percent

of the affected customers. Once all regional ETRs have been issued references to the global ETR will be eliminated.

- Specific requirements are in place for outage events expected to last 48 hours or less and for outage events expected to last 48 hours or greater.
- Life Support Equipment (LSE) Customers: Defined in 16 NYCRR §105.4(b)(9) as those customers who require electrically operated equipment to sustain basic life functions. Within 12 hours of the start of the event, Utilities are required to contact 80 percent of LSE customers impacted by the event and required to contact or refer to an EOC or other third party for 100 percent of impacted LSE customers within 24 hours.
- Dry Ice: Per PSL§66 and 16 NYCRR, § 105.4(b)(9), for areas anticipated to be out of power for more than 48 hours following an emergency, each Utility is required to estimate dry ice needs. arrange for obtaining and distributing dry ice within 24 hours of the beginning of restoration, coordinate with county and local emergency management officials, and communicate dry ice availability, locations, times
- Critical Facilities (Customers): Those facilities from which essential services and functions for the continuation of public health and safety, and disaster recovery are performed or provided, including hospitals, water treatment plants, mass transit, fire and police stations, ambulance services, ALS first response, etc. Each facility is responsible for back-up generation and fuel contingencies. Like LSE Customers, pre-event notifications and continuing communications are required.
 - PSL § 73-A – Prioritization of Emergency Services requires if, during a widespread prolonged outage that affects at least 20,000 customers in the service territory, and power is unable to be restored within 24 hours to any affected police department, fire department, ambulance service, or ALS first response that is prewired with an appropriate transfer switch, the utility must notify the village, town, or city in which the facility is located.

There were numerous significant weather events throughout New York State in which DPS staff worked with utilities to ensure they prepared for, activated emergency response plans, established incident command structures, and secured appropriate staffing prior to and during these service impacts. Including providing mutual assistance to one another when able to do so. DPS tracked forecasts with severe or extreme weather potential to monitor Utility Infrastructure exposure prior to weather events reaching New York State.

DPS's Office of Resilience and Emergency Preparedness assessed the likelihood of an event to affect the State and prepares internal correspondence for those weather events that may cause damage or issues to utility infrastructure. The Office communicated regularly with utilities to ensure preparedness activities were underway,

utility incident command structures were established, pre-incident classifications were discussed and assigned and, as necessary, appropriate external staffing were secured prior to impact. State utilities made preparedness decisions based on forecast tracking for their respective service territories, internal modeling, and previous experience. The Office also ensured that utilities established a schedule for pre-event and during event municipal officials calls.

Throughout the year, DPS participated in key State agency activities through various weather event activations, including multi-agency coordination calls, and support coverage for the State EOC during activations and exercises.

Impactful storm events began in mid-January with a NYSEG gas emergency in the Finger Lakes Region due to a loss of pressure from the Columbia Pipeline supplier as it incurred a freeze-up on its station. The event caused the loss of gas supply to approximately 700 distribution customers. In early March, a significant winter weather event impacted more than 100,000 New York State electric customers. Utilities activated required emergency response plans and initiated incident command structures. Approximately 6,200 internal and external contract electric workers were utilized to respond, repair, restore and recover from the winter weather system.

The next significant winter weather event occurred two weeks later in Mid-March when approximately 190,000 New York State electric customers were impacted by a weather system. Approximately 8,500 internal and external contract electric workers were utilized to respond, repair, restore and recover from impacts. This event saw the use of mutual aid between New York State utilities. Once repair and restore operations were completed in their service territories, crews were released to assist New York State partners.

In July, DPS and utilities prepared for four consecutive weeks of extreme heat, as well as numerous severe weather events. There were no significant electric customer outages incurred during the first three weeks. The July 26-29 extreme heat event caused approximately 50,000 electric customer outages statewide, mainly downstate. During each heat event, peak loading approached and exceeded at times 30,000 megawatts statewide, an unofficial trigger point where DPS closely tracked system conditions in relation to demand/loading on the system. The PSC also approved policies for each utility that limited service terminations for non-payment during periods of extreme heat.

DPS tracked the electric system through these events and there were no operational problems on the transmission system. The New York Independent System Operation had sufficient generation scheduled to meet daily peak loading throughout each heat wave. Although there were localized outages due to equipment issues and a few severe

thunderstorms that rolled through during the final heat wave event, the electric system remained stable and performed well statewide.

September was another active storm preparation and response month with a heat wave event, multiple severe thunderstorm events, a significant downstate rain event, and tracking of Hurricane Lee. DPS and the utilities maintained direct contact to ensure proper planning and preparations were taken. In December, a coastal winter weather system impacted downstate regions and led to approximately 100,000 electric customers interruptions. The utilities secured additional external contract resources and utilized approximately 6,100 electric workers to respond, repair and restore customers.

DPS completed its review of National Grid's preparation and response to the 2022 December Blizzard. DPS staff issued an investigation report (DMM Matter 23-00209) concluding that, while enduring an unprecedented set of complications caused by the historic blizzard conditions of December 23, 2022, National Grid adapted efficiently to provide effective restoration activities where possible given the extreme circumstances. Some areas for improvement were identified as well as lessons learned and best practices, which were memorialized in all New York State utility emergency response plans. For example, National Grid retrofitted indoor substations with louvres to protect transformer bays and avoid snow and ice accumulation that occurred during previous, extreme blizzard conditions.

New York State Police

The Special Operations Response Team (SORT) served as both the New York State Police's (NYSP) tactical team as well as search and rescue, including high angle rescue and helicopter hoist rescue capabilities. SORT began the selection phase for a 22-week long Basic Operator School to onboard seven new operators. SORT executed 382 operations, including 39 barricaded subjects, 65 search warrant executions, 35 searches for wanted or lost subjects and two rope rescue/recoveries.

The Mobile Field Unit (MFU) served as NYSP's mobile field force to provide a law enforcement surge to areas experiencing civil disorder. Within the MFU, there was a canine contingent and a chemical munitions detail. Due to the increase in civil unrest during nationwide protests in 2020, three teams were added to increase response capabilities. There were eight MFU teams comprised of approximately 40 members each in Troops A, B, C, D, E, F/K, G, and L/NYC which trained quarterly. In October, the annual "Clean Sweep" consolidated exercise was conducted where five selected teams trained together in multiple exercises at the State Preparedness Training Center in Oriskany.

NYSP Bomb Disposal Unit (BDU) was responsible to direct post-blast investigations at any explosion, arrange for disposal of explosive materials, and to provide subject matter experts on investigations involving explosives. The BDU handled 463 calls for service, including the recovery of 181 explosive devices, the investigation of 33 suspicious packages, and the investigation of 8 bomb threats. In October, the BDU helped to plan and participated in the Excelsior Challenge at the State Preparedness Training Center in Oriskany. BDU members also attended and completed the FBI Hazardous Devices Training School.

The NYSP Canine Unit included canine teams such as narcotics and explosives detection, and bloodhounds throughout New York State. The Canine unit handled 4,996 calls for service, including 363 total tracking calls, 70 building searches, 913 explosive/weapons searches, 507 narcotic searches, and 169 cadaver searches. Other calls for service included site security details, canine speeches and demonstrations, and VIP protection details.

The NYSP Contaminated Crime Scene Emergency Response Team was requested 40 times statewide to respond to clandestine drug labs and suspicious CBRN substance calls.

The Underwater Recovery Team (URT) conducted a novice dive school that graduated 14 new divers and brought the number of total divers up to 58. The URT played a major role in the Flood Incident Strike Team with their inclusion in the swift water rescue mission. The URT deployed as swift water rescue teams for multiple heavy rainstorms throughout New York State. The URT conducted 3,459 dives and recovered 26 drowning victims, 23 pieces of evidence, eight vehicles, and 13 weapons. The URT remained on high alert with one airboat and one rigid hull inflatable boat strategically located in each of the eight NYSP Troops. The URT also provided oversight of the NYSP Marine Patrol.

Radiological Interdiction Detection and Enforcement

As part of the Radiological Interdiction Detection and Enforcement (RIDE) program, radiation and nuclear detection training was conducted for State Police Contaminated Crime Scene Emergency Response Team, K-9 handlers, emergency managers, bomb disposal technicians, and commercial vehicle enforcement personnel.

In January, NYSP personnel with radiological/nuclear detection capabilities deployed to a large-scale event at the World University Games. Under the direction of the Governor, the NYSP was the Security Working Group lead for all State and federal law enforcement agencies. NYSP coordinated radiological/nuclear detection and interdiction teams from

the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, military Civil Support Teams, and other working partners to make the events safe.

In May, seven members of the NYSP attended radiation detection courses at the State Preparedness Training Center, including two NYSP instructors. In June, the NYSP sponsored a maritime-based radiological/nuclear exercise with the U.S. Coast Guard on the Hudson River, which was supported by the U.S. Department of Energy's Center for Radiological Nuclear Training team. The exercise included working partners with maritime and radiological detection capabilities with more than ten different agencies participating in the training exercise. In October, the NYSP and FBI jointly investigated a credible radiation/nuclear investigation in Binghamton originated by a U.S. Department of Energy employee. Both agencies documented the case. NYSP participated in the Atomic City Challenge practical exercise at the State Preparedness Training Center. In November, State Police members were invited to West Point by the U.S. Department of Energy's Center for Radiological Nuclear Training to participate in radiological and nuclear training.

NYSP Members conducted "real world" radiological interdiction and detection details in support of the following events:

- World University Games
- NYC Fourth of July celebration
- New York State Fair
- Cooperstown Hall of Fame ceremonies
- 9-1-1 memorial ceremonies
- Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade
- Woodbury Commons
- New York City New Year's Eve Time Square celebration

OEM Liaison Program

The State Police OEM Liaison Program consisted of a Captain, three Lieutenants and one Technical Lieutenant assigned to work with State OEM. State Police maintained a cadre of Emergency Management Non-Commissioned Officers with one in each Troop to supplement the liaison program. The lieutenants served in field-level working groups planning for future large-scale events and responding to emergencies with State OEM counterparts. The lieutenants routinely assisted their respective troops and other State, county, and local agencies with major event planning, including the Great New York State Fair, the National Baseball Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony, and the Jones Beach Air Show.

The Captain and Technical Lieutenant, Emergency Management, were detailed to State OEM headquarters and routinely assigned to executive level planning groups. The Captain and Technical Lieutenant were assigned as Division Liaison Officers to the DPC with responsibility for State Police personnel assigned to the State EOC and coordinating activities of State Police personnel assigned as liaison to State OEM field offices. NYSP members staffed ESFs in the State EOC for all activations and NYSP liaisons supported responses to various weather and significant events across the State.

Department of State

The New York State Department of State (DOS) supported New York State's efforts in responding to and recovering from disasters. The agency strived to ensure that it could effectively assist in all areas of preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation from potential hazards across the State.

In July, the Division of Building Standards and Codes, along with OFPC, deployed damage assessment teams to Ontario and Orange counties following heavy rain and historic flooding. DOS deployed agency representatives to support the activation of ESFs 3 and 6 at the State EOC.

The Division of Building Standards and Codes was part of an interagency workgroup Governor Kathy Hochul ordered to be formed in response to three fire incidents at battery energy storage system facilities. During the summer, the workgroup was created to develop recommendations for modifying the Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code to manage the risks associated with battery energy storage systems.

DOS' Office for New Americans assisted in the emergency response to the unprecedented increase in asylum seekers arriving in the State and New York City through the creation and implementation of the Welcoming NY Program. The Welcoming NY Program is a grant-based partnership with the New York Immigration Coalition and the Hispanic Federation to mobilize and coordinate a network of not-for-profit organizations throughout the State to provide immigration-related legal services and other supportive services to newly arrived immigrants and asylum seekers. Services include application assistance with Temporary Protected Status, asylum, and employment authorization documents.

The Code Enforcement Disaster Assistance Response or CEDAR program played a central role in disaster response efforts for DOS. The program provided training to code enforcement officials and design professionals to enable them to serve as State-led volunteers. They were tasked with conducting post-disaster building safety evaluations on structures impacted by a disaster.

Thruway Authority

The New York State Thruway Authority (NYSTA) responded to multiple storms and emergencies on a local and system-wide basis. NYSTA supported the State EOC in person and virtually, for several events including the Watertown water main break, relocation of State stockpiles and multiple weather events, and assisted with cleanup efforts in multiple localities. NYSTA activated its headquarters and/or division operations centers for five weather events and one emergency bridge demolition event. Operations centers were staffed by trained NYSTA personnel, State Police, and representatives from partner agencies when necessary. NYSTA supported and participated in the Drought Task Force, Ice Jam Task Force, and ESF 1.

NYSTA coordinated and participated in statewide preparation and planning activities with partner agencies including the Department of Transportation, Department of Environmental Conservation and Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation and DHSES. As a member of the transportation group, the Thruway participated in meetings and planning activities for the April 2024 solar eclipse. NYSTA participated in exercises with State and local partners including National Grid electrical tabletop exercises, DHSES winter weather tabletops, DHSES EOC functional exercise, as well as a water supply drill and a multi-agency drone demonstration with Rockland County.

In-person highway safety awareness training was conducted for fire companies that responded to incidents on the Thruway system and outside response partners, including authorized towing garages and emergency medical personnel, to enhance critical incident response safety.

Executive staff conducted site visits of maintenance locations and operation centers and a review of all snow and ice equipment. Staff performed an annual review of winter maintenance operations and conducted meetings with winter maintenance personnel to discuss operations and response. NYSTA ensured all key staff remained current in both ICS and NIMS, NY Responds, and EOC trainings.

NYSTA supported, coordinated, and communicated with traffic management partners including Niagara International Transportation Technology Coalition and the Transportation Operations Coordination Committee, as well as NYSDOT Transportation Management Centers on current traffic management issues, incident management, roadway closure coordination and planning, and coordinated messaging to motorists.

NYSTA coordinated with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, Vermont Agency of Transportation, Massachusetts Department of Transportation, and Connecticut Department of Transportation routinely on snow and ice response, highway messaging,

and preemptive truck restrictions and potential closures for planned and unplanned events.

Department of Transportation

The New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) responded to multiple storms and emergencies and assisted in various asylum seeker resource support missions. The Emergency Transportation Operations (ETO) program conducted preparedness planning, coordination, training, and exercise activities.

Planning

NYSDOT worked to ensure plans were in place and that its team was well-trained to execute its mission safely and efficiently. Key to the planning process were activities of committees such as:

- ICS Community of Practice (CoP) Group
- Road Status and Damage Assessment (RSDA II) Tool CoP Group
- NY Responds Working Group
- ESF 1 Transportation Working Group
- Emergency Response System (ERS) Working Group
- Traffic Incident Management Steering Committee

The ICS CoP group was established to ensure standards were developed for efficient emergency response. The team developed comprehensive training programs, procedures, and tools for emergency response. A major accomplishment this year was reporting improvements made to NYSDOT's situational awareness reporting process used during emergency activations.

DOT's Pandemic COOP included guidance on essential personnel, telecommuting, work shifts/schedules, use of personal protective equipment, social distancing, cleaning/disinfection protocols, and other guidance.

Statewide Transportation Information Coordination Center (STICC) incident reporting procedures were reviewed, verified, and updated. To improve situational awareness, the STICC created an Incident Analysis Dashboard, which was fine-tuned to relay key metrics such as incident duration, frequency, and location.

A major preparedness element was further development of the RSDA II tool, including a major update to the mobile application. The RSDA II CoP group modified web and mobile application training material to highlight the software's evolving features and

reporting capabilities, including PowerPoint presentations, best practices documentation, and written user guides. The team provided feedback to the software vendor for product modifications and served as trainers for the software. An enhancement currently being explored is how to utilize RSDA II data to help satisfy documentation needs for federal emergency funding reimbursement. NYSDOT developed a Request for Proposals for the next generation of the RSDA tool and worked to evaluate how that tool would integrate into the traffic system management data engine.

NYSDOT Fleet Administration consistently maintained a 98 percent uptime or better for priority equipment during the season most needed, including snow and ice equipment used primarily during the winter season. NYSDOT placed a high priority on “in service” or uptime on needed equipment, including coordination of Fleet personnel, working with vendors, overnighting of parts, and ensuring prompt availability of Fleet equipment. Every effort was made to ensure as close to 100 percent uptime, regardless of local weather conditions, since all assets might be needed at a moment’s notice.

The ETO unit added or updated various training materials, documents, and linkages to the SharePoint site, making it a “one-stop-shop” for emergency-related preparedness and training resources. With the assistance of ITS, the ETO unit released an upgrade to its SharePoint site that enhanced usability and streamlined the process in which ETO and regional staff added and updated information.

Outreach and Coordination

NYSDOT participated in several conferences, meetings, and presentations. Along with internal coordination among regions, the ETO unit interacted with numerous State and local agencies, and emergency response partners. NYSDOT held several virtual meetings to discuss agency capabilities, as well as communication and collaboration during response activities, including meeting participants such as local police, the National Weather Service, the Niagara International Transportation Technology Coalition, and the Transportation Operations Coordination Committee.

NYSDOT participated in severe weather event coordination calls with NWS, State OEM, transportation management centers, and other State and local emergency response agencies. To help improve efficiency for the NWS, NYSDOT worked to consolidate statewide weather calls for various agencies and hosted multi-agency calls with the National Weather Service. NYSDOT continued its partnership with the newly formed State Weather Risk Communication Center to provide enhanced weather briefings and forecasting data. NYSDOT maintained a strong working relationship with DEC and OPRHP who provide sawyer crews to augment NYSDOT’s storm response capabilities related to road-clearing operations.

NYSDOT's Regional Emergency Managers (REMs) coordinated with various State and local agencies, within their regional boundaries. REMs provided Traffic Incident Management training for tow companies, participated in dam drills and tabletop sessions with various airports, and held winter operations meetings with other State and county partners.

In Western New York, NYSDOT's coordination with NITTEC included daily coordination and communication regarding traffic management issues for incident management, construction coordination, and special event planning. NYSDOT and NITTEC utilized past experiences to refine the Regional Expressway Closure Guidelines for transportation agencies and first responders, including State OEM, NYSTA, county DPWs, county and local emergency management, law enforcement agencies, and fire departments. The installation of closure gates at expressway access points was one example of leveraging this partnership to utilize limited NYSDOT and first responder resources available during major incidents more effectively. Coordination and participation in regional stakeholder workshops and Traffic Incident Management training for first responders were part of the collaborative partnership between NYSDOT and NITTEC. NITTEC served in organizing and facilitating conference calls during major incidents, including weather events, where agency planning, and response coordination takes place between local stakeholders. TRANSCOM served as a conduit for coordinating response plans between the 16 transportation agencies and first responders located in the tri-state area downstate. Through the TRANSCOM Operations committee, NYSDOT worked with various agencies and surrounding states to develop plans to address emergency closures on bridges and highways, including mitigating the impact to connecting routes in the system both within the State and across State boundaries. This served as a critical conduit for ensuring coordinated messages were relayed to the public and motorists across all jurisdictions.

NYSDOT coordinated with PennDOT, NJDOT, ConnDOT, and Vermont Agency of Transportation in peer exchanges to review snow and ice response and traffic management strategies. NYSDOT coordinated with partners on messaging, preemptive truck restrictions, and potential closures for planned and unplanned events. This information was relayed to the Trucking Association of New York, the American Trucking Association, and independent truckers.

The New York State Traffic Incident Management Steering Committee provided a forum to bring together the State agencies typically involved in emergency response as well as the organizations associated with the first responder community. The committee provided outreach on incident management principles and practices across numerous disciplines involved in emergency response. The Steering Committee provided multi-

disciplinary traffic incident management training to responders across the State and coordinated training classes. More than 12,000 first responders in the State were trained in traffic incident management principles and safety.

To expedite the reopening of roads closed due to severe weather events, including downed poles and wires, NYSDOT maintained a statewide utility contact list for department storm managers to ascertain the status of utilities' response and estimated timeframes for clearing infrastructure. NYSDOT maintained a list identifying all utility owners at each location where a utility crossed over a major State highway. NYSDOT created the Utility and Energy Management Bureau to improve coordination between NYSDOT and various utilities. The ETO program built a relationship with the Public Service Commission to ensure seamless coordination during large-scale events.

The Department worked with municipalities to update existing and enter into new Shared Service Agreements, which could be used to assist municipalities during emergencies in the absence of an official disaster declaration. Agreement language included description, cost of services, and materials and/or equipment to be shared.

Training

NYSOT provided statewide training in the following emergency response topics:

- Basic ICS for all employees
- Asset Management System
- RSDA II
- Snow University – snow and ice operations training for managers
- ICS Environmental Permitting and Damage Assessment Documentation and Reporting
- ICS Communications and Reporting
- Statewide Emergency Event Resource Tracker (SEERT)
- COOP

Additional training by the ETO unit was provided related to the SharePoint site and Emergency Response System to help improve event reporting, including REMs and Deputy REMs, Main Office Logistics and Planning section staff, and Advanced SharePoint.

NYSDOT developed a five-year training matrix to ensure compliance with FEMA's updated NIMS training requirements. A memorandum was issued in December outlining

requirements to all NYSDOT staff. The ETO program, in coordination with Workforce Learning Development Bureau, developed a plan to track new training requirements.

To mitigate potential COVID-19 impacts on snow and ice operations, NYSDOT developed a program to train CDL holders from inside the Department and other State agencies whose normal duties did not include operating a plow to serve as backup emergency plow nor as loader operators during extreme weather events.

Exercises

NYSDOT conducted numerous statewide and regional drills. Regions held localized exercises and training in areas such as SEERT, RSDA II, staging areas, NY Responds, ICS 100, 200, 300, 400, 700, and 800, Planning and Logistic Section Chief roles and responsibilities, COOP activation, and establishing remote workstations. NYSDOT conducted a staging area drill and a statewide COOP drill.

Response

NYSDOT responded to eight significant events, out of which five were for winter storm response, including ice jam monitoring and clearance activities. Other responses were for high winds, hurricanes, and flooding.

The Department ensured continuity in the delivery of Mission Essential Functions, including ensuring employees had the technology needed to work from home such as RSA tokens, network connectivity, and computers. The Department offered an interim voluntary telecommuting program to allow employees to work from home up to five days per pay period when operationally feasible and enhanced program needs.

NYSDOT staged two long-reach excavators at various locations across the State in anticipation of river ice jams that could cause flooding and detrimental impacts to State highway infrastructure. NYSDOT deployed excavators with operators to break up several ice jams.

NYSDOT maintained a strong partnership with the University at Albany Center of Excellence and the newly announced State Weather Risk Communications Center. The Center provided the Department with custom webpages, dashboards, and weather forecast briefings that leveraged information collected from the 126 Mesonet stations across the State. The information was vital in the Department's operational planning. The data, including predicted precipitation, snowfall, freezing rain and sleet amounts, wind speeds, and pavement and /surface temperatures, was used to produce roadway condition risk assessment tables and maps showing severity and time ranges.

Storm and winter Season Severity Indices were expanded for program performance analytics and cutting-edge AI machine learning to determine winter road conditions. This work was part of the University at Albany's collaboration with the NSF (National Science Foundation) and AI2ES (Artificial Intelligence to Environmental Science) program.

In 2019, NYSDOT began an initiative to install electrical disconnects for priority traffic signals to allow the signals to be powered by generators in the event of a prolonged power outage. To date, the Department has installed 3,246 out of a total of 3,769 disconnects included under this initiative.

Recovery/ Mitigation

The NYSDOT Emergency Relief Unit sought reimbursement for approved FHWA Emergency Relief and FEMA Public Assistance events on behalf of NYSDOT, NYSTA, and local governments.

For FEMA PA events:

- DR 4020 (Hurricane Irene): DHSES closed this event. Nothing open, they are closed as an applicant. Disaster is still open.
- DR 4472 (2019 Halloween Winds and Flooding): Active event. Several PWs written for FEMA's review/approval.
- DR 4480 (COVID-19): Active event. Working with DOB to complete submission of the last project. FEMA is reviewing all projects submitted. The event is nearing the final stages of FEMA reimbursement.
- DR 4567 (2020 - Tropical Storm Isaias): Active event. FEMA is reviewing all projects submitted. This event is in the middle stages of FEMA reimbursement.
- DR 4615 (2021 - Tropical Storm Ida): Active event. FEMA has approved/obligated all PWs. This event has PW111 that NYSDOT is still working with. This is a temporary bridge rental cost until the town builds a permanent structure (Fall of 2025).
- DR 4625 (2021 - Tropical Storm Fred): Event has transitioned to DHSES. FEMA has approved/obligated all PWs. Awaiting close out.
- EM 3589 (Nov. 2022 Buffalo Lake Effect Snowstorm). NYSDOT withdrew from this event.
- DR 4694 (Dec. 2022 Buffalo Blizzard). Working with DHSES to provide documentation for proposed projects. This event is in the middle stages of FEMA reimbursement.
- DR 4723 (July rain event). Working with DHSES to provide documentation for proposed projects. This event is in the beginning stages of FEMA reimbursement.

For FHWA ER events:

- NY 01-02 World Trade Center attack: Active Event. Final Project is progressing. NYSDOT has fully obligated the final project. FHWA has allocated additional funds beyond the original amount to fund ongoing projects. FHWA has capped participation at approved funding levels and is no longer funding cost increases.
- NY 11-02 Hurricane Irene: Active event. Final billings are being closed out. One project remains active.
- NY 13-01 Hurricane Sandy: Active event. Projects for NYCDOT and Nassau County are progressing. Additional funds being sought to complete project. Source of funds unclear.
- NY 18-02 August 2018 storms: Active Event. FHWA has approved/obligated all eligible projects. The event is nearing the final stages of FHWA reimbursement.
- NY 20-01 October 2019 storms: Active event. FHWA has approved/obligated all eligible projects. The event is nearing the final stages of FHWA reimbursement.
- NY 21-01 (2021 - Tropical Storm Ida): Active event. FHWA has approved/obligated all eligible projects. The event is nearing the final stages of FHWA reimbursement.
- NY 21-02 (2021 - Tropical Storm Fred): Active event. Most documentation has been provided. DDIRs being prepared for upload to FHWA ER portal. This event is in the beginning stages of FHWA reimbursement.
- NY 23-01 July Rain Event: Active Event. Some documentation has been submitted to Main Office from Regions. FHWA has approved future funding for event once documentation has been provided and approved.

After action reviews for major events, as well as statewide and regional exercise activities, were crucial in improving upon NYSDOT's future response capabilities. Strengths and weaknesses in the planning and response/recovery actions were reviewed and improvement needs were documented. Best practices and improvement plans were developed and distributed to main office and regional personnel.

Cybersecurity

NYSDOT hired a Chief Information Security Officer. Several cybersecurity initiatives were initiated or accomplished. NYSDOT conducted a phishing campaign to test the effectiveness of its cybersecurity training and awareness program. This campaign was successful in identifying employees who are susceptible to phishing attacks and additional cybersecurity training was provided to these employees. An Incident Response plan was developed to outline how the agency would respond to cybersecurity incidents. Risk assessments for several NYSDOT projects were conducted to help identify and

assess cybersecurity risks, and mitigation plans were developed. CrowdStrike EDR was installed at all ten TMCs.

Office of Victim Services

The New York State Office of Victim Services (OVS) engaged with DHSES and local emergency management professionals across the State to make them aware of the agency's services in the event a mass casualty incident is determined to be a crime. The agency had approximately 250 contracts with approximately 230 victim assistance programs across the State to provide services to victims of crime and, in partnership with other State agencies, could mobilize and provide assistance onsite in the event of a criminal mass casualty incident. The agency's Director and senior staff continually monitored for mass incidents and other high-profile victimizations, using such incidents to activate, test, and/or update OVS' Emergency Management Operations Protocol (EMOP). Staff operating through telework has proven successful and the Office implemented a hybrid telework/in-office schedule.

In December, OVS was invited by the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation in two trainings for both Nassau and Suffolk counties' respective offices of emergency management, law enforcement, first responders and others who would respond in the event of an incident of mass violence. Topics included preparedness, first response, family assistance centers, and long-term care for the community and persons impacted.

OVS also funded an ongoing resiliency center to provide support for the communities in the wake of the May 2022 Buffalo mass shooting.

American Red Cross

The American Red Cross served State residents by meeting its core mission of, Prepare, Respond and Recover. Staff and volunteers assisted New Yorkers to prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters, and the Red Cross provided lifesaving blood products and health and safety classes.

Red Cross provided in-person training to New Yorkers through the Governor's Citizen Preparedness Corps program, Red Cross Volunteers, and AmeriCorps members. Instructors trained approximately 3,800 people bringing the total since 2014 to more than 156,800.

The Red Cross continued its highly successful Home Fire Preparedness campaign. First launched in 2014, this initiative focuses on providing education on how to prepare for and what to do in case of a home fire. In addition to training and education, Red Cross

personnel continued to install free smoke alarms in homes. Smoke alarm installations occurred throughout the year and were a focus of the signature city installation program in the spring of each year. The success of the program was measured by the number of alarms installed and in 204 New Yorker's lives saved.

Another initiative was the Pillowcase Project, a program focused on children creating go-kits with pillowcases and teaching them to prepare for disasters. The "Prepare with Pedro" educational program focused on kindergarten to second grade students.

Red Cross supported State EOC activations and local responses, including local home fires and disasters, responding to nearly 3,584 local disasters of which 90 percent were single and multifamily fires. Responders assisted families with varied needs, including temporary housing, health and mental health needs and condolence care. Volunteers helped support immediate needs by providing shelter and financial assistance for items such as food, clothing, and bedding. Red Cross participated in multi-agency coordination calls, Homeland Security Senior Advisory Committee, and ESF 6 planning and leadership meetings.

The Red Cross also assisted New Yorkers during the June and July flooding in Orange County. The Red Cross managed a shelter, opened two points of distribution for emergency supplies, and provided immediate financial assistance to families residing in destroyed or major damaged homes.

Responders from New York supported national disasters such as wildfires in Lahaina, Hawaii, a mass shooting incident in Maine, Hurricane Idalia in Florida, and Typhoon Mawar in Guam, as well as atmospheric rivers in California and multiple tornadoes across the States of Arkansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Missouri, and Mississippi.

In June, more than 100 Red Cross staff and volunteers participated in a disaster training institute at Onondaga Community College in Onondaga County, which focused on offering classes in sheltering, logistics and other disaster related positions, and finished with a full-scale exercise.

The Red Cross is a full-service blood center providing blood to meet normal, special, and emergency needs in large trauma centers and small local hospitals in the quantities necessary and by blood types required to save lives. Blood donations were collected to provide blood products to individuals in need. Red Cross health and safety programs continued to train New Yorkers in hands-only CPR, First Aid, use of automated external defibrillators, aquatics and other health and safety courses.

211NYS

2-1-1 New York, Inc. (211 NY), a subsidiary of United Way of New York State, under assignment from the New York State Public Service Commission, administers the three-digit N11 dialing code “2-1-1,” which was designated by the Federal Communications Commission for community information and referral services.

211 answered 2.5 million requests for assistance from New Yorkers and connected them with resources in their local communities. Most of these requests were for assistance meeting basic needs, including housing, food, and utilities. Some of this persistent high volume for basic needs can be attributed to COVID-19 era benefits ending without economic recovery extending to all households.

In December 2022, 211 NY was added to the DPC by legislation. Subsequently, 211 NY began to engage in trainings to gain understanding and skills to support the State’s response to emergency incidents, including NY Responds, ICS-100, basic EOC functions, and social media engagement strategies.

211 NY began participating in ESF 6 and 15 training and preparedness activities, as well as supporting DHSES efforts to restart Community Organizations Active in Disaster post-COVID-19, leveraging 211’s community resource directory to update member contacts and identify potential member agencies. Through ESF 6, 211 NY connected with New York State Office of Mental Health Bureau of Emergency Preparedness and Response to become a subgrantee on their Disaster Mental Health Program, funded through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Mental Health Block Grant made available through the 2022 Bipartisan Safer Communities Act. Informal, bi-directional training and awareness between 211 and State agencies occurred during its first year in DPC. As 211 NY has engaged in ESF meetings, information is shared about 211’s core services, capacities to support response, and recovery, as well as how strengthening awareness of 211 fosters stronger, more resilient, and connected communities, especially among households with high social and economic vulnerability.

211 NY supported 211 WNY’s efforts in long term recovery from the 2022 Buffalo Blizzard, including supporting the restart of the Erie County COAD. 211 WNY was a primary point of intake and assessment, and application for community funded financial assistance grants available to households that experienced financial hardship directly related to the Buffalo Blizzard.

211 is a primary point of public information for Code Blue, the executive order authorizing additional shelter options for individuals not otherwise eligible for services

when the temperature or wind chill is at or below 32 degrees Fahrenheit. 211 WNY makes this determination daily for Erie County, pushing out a text alert to subscribers.

211 NY offered support to NYC Office of the Mayor, connecting to resources in communities Upstate. 211 NY regional providers reported that they saw an uptick in call volume around shelter requests related to the migrant crisis. 211s continue to triage these individual assistance requests and connected community members to local supports.

211 NY supported responses in both Orange and Ontario Counties. 211 Hudson Valley (211 HV) worked with Orange County Emergency Management and the Orange County COAD to support community members affected by the floods. 211 HV served as a point of information, allowing the county to redirect community residents to 211 for flood related needs, especially afterhours when Orange County 311 was not available, and 211 HV conducted follow up calls to provide additional supports and collect individual damage assessments to those who had previously contact the county. 211 HV handled 268 interactions identifying 358 needs, with the top needs being disaster information, disaster related cash grants, and post disaster clean up. 211 HV connected community members to Crisis Cleanup to request assistance with post disaster clean up from NYVOAD, & COAD volunteers. 211 / LIFE LINE (211 LL) supported Ontario County and its COAD conduct outreach and serve as a point of information and requests for assistance related to the floods. 211LL collected individual damage assessments as well as input assistance requests directly into Crisis Cleanup's disaster clean up ticketing system, relieving affected community members from making another call. 211 LL supported the COAD's transition from response to long term recovery.