NEW YORK STATE | Homeland Security and Emergency Services

2025 Outreach Report

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

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Contents

Introduction 1
Disaster Recovery Outreach 2
Public Facing Communications 5
Training and Educational Forums 6
Funding-Related Outreach 12
Emergency Response & Security-Based Engagement 16
Public Events 20

Introduction

Created in 2010, the New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHSES) is the state agency responsible for leadership, coordination, and support to prevent, protect against, prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate disasters and other emergencies. The Division accomplishes this core mission through its directorates and several cross-cutting support units including Counter Terrorism (OCT), Emergency Management (OEM), Fire Prevention and Control (OFPC), Interoperable and Emergency Communications (OIEC), Disaster Recovery, and Administration and Finance, which coordinate the response of state agencies in support of local government.

The Division is dedicated to working closely daily with all levels of government, including federal organizations such as the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), state agencies, the private sector, and volunteer organizations to improve the readiness and response capabilities of communities throughout the Empire State.

Additionally, it is vital for state and local governments to put forth effective emergency response plans and operations. It is equally important for these entities to educate the public, so they understand the risks and equip themselves with the information they need to successfully prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies.

Therefore, in accordance with Executive Law § 709(7), the Division presents this annual report to the Governor and Legislature to detail its outreach efforts to businesses, not-for-profit organizations, partners, and the public for the 2025 calendar year.

Disaster Recovery Outreach
The Division's Office of Disaster Recovery worked closely with local governments, counties, state agencies and Tribal Nations on numerous events. Throughout the year, the group coordinated with applicants, subapplicants, the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and DHS/FEMA.

Public Assistance
Public Assistance staff offered specialized training to county emergency managers, state agencies and private, not-for-profit organizations. Staff regularly hosted trainings for applicants on required FEMA reporting. A five-part series of real-time training YouTube videos on the Public Assistance damage assessment process was created and published for those impacted by disasters.

Staff conducted and participated in various site visits with FEMA and applicants for the development of Public Assistance projects. Site visits were conducted by staff for large construction projects to submit them for closeout.

Work on the COVID-19 pandemic continued as staff facilitated exchange and interpretation of FEMA policies and deadlines with applicants. Regular weekly meetings were held with applicants and FEMA.

Staff worked on the following disasters in 2025:

- DR-4020 (Hurricane Irene)
- DR-4085 (Hurricane Sandy)
- DR-4129 (Severe Storms and Flooding)
- DR-4180 (Severe Storms and Flooding)
- DR-4348 (Flooding)
- DR-4397 (Severe Storms and Flooding)
- DR-4472 (Severe Storms, Straight-line Winds and Flooding)
- DR-4480 (COVID-19)
- DR-4567 (Tropical Storm Isaias)
- DR-4615 (Remnants of Hurricane Ida)
- DR-4625 (Remnants of Tropical Storm Fred)
- DR-4694 (Late December Winter Storm)
- EM-3589 (Severe Winter Storm and Snowstorm)
- DR-4723 (Severe Storms and Flooding)
- DR-4755 (Severe Storm and Flooding)
- DR-4814 (Severe Storm, Tornadoes and Flooding)
- DR-4825 (Remnants of Tropical Storm Debby)
- DR-4839 (Severe Storm and Flooding)
- FM-5547 (Jennings Creek Fire)

Public Assistance staff also worked with applicants with open projects from legacy disasters, focusing on grants portal changes, close out procedures, and changes to FEMA policies.

Individual Assistance

The Individual Assistance Section (IA) identified, coordinated and/or implemented programs designed to address the needs of individuals and families affected by a disaster or event.

SBA Outreach

Individual Assistance worked with 18 counties on various disaster impacts to determine if SBA assistance would be viable. Staff conducted Preliminary Damage Assessments in conjunction with SBA and each respective county in response to:

- A 5-alarm fire in Bronx County
- Severe storms in Madison County
- A 5-alarm warehouse fire in Brooklyn, and
- A large apartment building fire in Westchester County.

All four assessments resulted in SBA Disaster Declarations.

Additional Training Outreach Efforts

Individual Assistance provided the following external training opportunities:

- Implementing Individual Assistance, Preparedness to Recovery – this course provided a mid-level knowledge of Individual Assistance declarations and a review of each level of government's role before, during and after a disaster. This course was presented three times with 14 counties attending.
- Damage Self Reporting Tool – the Individual Assistance section created a training for counties to simplify and streamline damage data collection after a disaster. The training was given three times with 13 counties attending.

Staff also met with 23 counties individually to discuss operational efforts and needs for Disaster Recovery Centers.

Collaborative Coalition Conference

The 2025 Collaborative Coalition Conference brought together 120 partners from the non-profit, county, state and federal disaster recovery field for two days. The conference featured a variety of speakers with presentations from SBA, local Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD) representatives, as well as the Division's Disaster Recovery and OEM. Topics included COAD formation and subcommittees, federal partner updates, New York State Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) updates, disaster case management, and the Disaster Self Reporting Tool. The conference provided a unique opportunity to foster relationships and share subject matter expertise in support of the 'whole community' approach to disaster recovery.

Hazard Mitigation

Hazard Mitigation staff supported subapplicants and subapplication development by conducting several webinars to discuss project eligibility, benefit-cost analyses, and the subapplication process. Staff focused outreach efforts on various grants under FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, including DR-4814, DR-4825 and DR-4839.

Project management outreach and assistance was provided by staff to previous years' subrecipients of programs, including the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, Pre-Disaster Mitigation, Legislative Pre-Disaster Mitigation, Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities, Flood Mitigation Assistance and Swift Current. Staff also offered support relative to cost increases, time extensions, and appeals.

Staff engaged in continued outreach to municipalities to provide education on the Hazard Mitigation Revolving Loan Fund, a program supported by capitalization grants from FEMA to provide low-interest loans to local governments.

Staff also participated in an interagency effort to plan for the development of a New York State Adaptation and Resilience Plan, one of Governor Hochul's State of the State initiatives. These efforts included ongoing workgroup meetings between state agencies, as well as Adaptation Advisory Panel meetings with non-profits and local government staff. Staff developed and presented a webinar on current Hazard Mitigation planning efforts for a group of several hundred members of the public as part of phase one of the Plan. Additional planning and outreach efforts included presentations at the New York State Floodplain and Stormwater Manager's Association, the Long Island Regional Funding Workshop, and the American Planning Association's New York Metro Conference. Staff participated in bi-weekly meetings with New York State's Department of Environmental Conservation, Division of Homes and Community Renewal, New York Power Authority, and Department of State to provide education on funding opportunities and coordinate provision of assistance where eligibility guidelines overlapped with similar programs operated by these agencies.

Planning staff facilitated and/or participated in virtual and in-person meetings with federal, state, local, nonprofit, and academic partners to accomplish risk assessment, mitigation strategy development, hazard mitigation plan development, and other hazard mitigation related planning activities with dozens of counties across the state.

Finally, staff provided outreach to support annual local hazard mitigation plan maintenance and eligibility for hazard mitigation grant programs, including sending Annual Plan Letters to assist locals in maintaining their plans throughout the five-year cycle. A local government, as a subrecipient, must have a FEMA-approved local hazard mitigation plan including all dam risks and which complies with the Stafford Act to be eligible for these types of grant programs.

Public Facing Communications
The Division's Office of External Affairs coordinated communications that reach the public via the media, press releases and other mediums. Coordinating internally between offices and externally between partner agencies, the information the Division puts out is vital to the public safety of New Yorkers.

Media Interactions
The Division's Office of External Affairs produced or contributed to nearly 80 news releases issued by New York State regarding weather safety and preparedness warnings, including extreme cold, extreme heat, and lake effect snow events; hundreds of millions of dollars in state grant awards to localities to support law enforcement and emergency response operations; and continued availability of federal funding for New York residents and communities recovering from various disasters and emergencies.

News releases this year also featured the following topics:

- A new first responder mental health needs assessment.
- The launch of the Statewide Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan.
- A new emergency and weather alert text system (3-3-3-1-1-1).
- New wildland firefighter training funding.
- New laws to strengthen cybersecurity.
- The addition of 126 names to the New York State Fallen Firefighters Memorial.

The Division held and participated in numerous press conferences, media availabilities, and interviews to disseminate real-time response and recovery information during emergencies. Topics included state emergency preparations; asset deployments; safety information before, during, and after severe weather; training exercises for law enforcement, firefighters and first responders at the SPTC and State Academy of Fire Science; graduation of law enforcement, firefighters; Fire Protection Specialists from state-offered training and certification courses; and the State Fallen Firefighters Memorial.

Most media inquiries focused on fire investigations conducted by OFPC; questions related to emergency operations; federal disaster funding; and questions about federal and State grants administered by the Division.

Social Media
Social media continues to play an important role in public engagement. Followers across all platforms increased in 2025 including Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn and X encompassing more than 3,000 new posts across these platforms.

At the end of 2025, the Division's Facebook page had 59,817 followers, which represents a 74% increase compared to 2024. Additionally, The Division's Facebook average engagements increased by 323% and average impressions increased by 461% in 2025.

At the end of 2025, the Division's Instagram account had 6,664 followers, which is a 40% increase compared to 2024. Overall, the average engagement rate (likes, comments and saves)

increased 81% and average reach (accounts who've seen our content) increase 1,736%. The Division also had its first post hit one million views across Instagram and Facebook, which was a video about cooking safety during Thanksgiving. Instagram continues to be the platform we see the most growth in year over year.

At the end of 2025, the Division's LinkedIn account had an organic following of 13,352 followers, which is a 43% increase compared to 2024. New content was posted 500 times throughout 2025 and the Division's LinkedIn average engagements stayed consistent, only increasing 9%, and average impressions increasing 6% compared to 2024.

In November of 2024, the Division started using Nextdoor. There was an organic membership of 3,155,016 by the end of the year which encompassed all New Yorkers who are on Nextdoor and can receive our content. In 2025, the membership increased to 3,572,357, which is a 13% increase.

By the end of 2025, the Division's X account, formerly known as Twitter, had 18,335 followers, which is a 5% increase compared to 2024. Additionally, The Division's average engagement on X declined by 18% and average impressions declined by 9% in 2025. This decline has been a trend over the last two years due to the change in ownership of the platform, algorithm adjustments and a reduction in active users.

Website

The Division's website had 507,070 total users in 2025, with 493,440 of them being new users, which is a 27 percent decrease compared to the previous year. The Division's website also had a total of 773,176 sessions or the number of times a user interacted on the Division's website, which is a 24 percent decrease compared to 2024, with an average of 1.53 sessions per user. The five most visited pages throughout the year were 'See Something, Say Something;' the Division's home page; Citizen Preparedness Corps (CPC) home page; CPC Training Calendar; and DHSES Training.

Training and Educational Forums

DHSES Training captures training numbers for all offices and program areas across the Division. This year, for the first time, the Division captured training contact hours, which is the product of number of students multiplied by the number of class hours. By October, the Division exceeded more than one million contact hours.

Law Enforcement Conference

The Division hosted its annual Law Enforcement Conference in Saratoga Springs in March. These events, co-sponsored by DHSES Training and OCT, included the 19th Annual Bomb Squad Symposium, the 14th Annual Explosive Detection Canine Handlers Conference, and the 10th Annual Tactical Team Leadership Forum. Roughly 350 local, state, federal, and international law enforcement officials took part in these events.

State Preparedness Training Center

The Division oversaw training activities at the State Preparedness Training Center (SPTC), located at the former Oneida County Airport in Oriskany, and at stakeholder locations throughout New York State, as part of its commitment to providing cutting-edge, contemporary, and configurable training to a diverse group of public safety

stakeholders. Through the end of November, the SPTC trained more than 7,100 stakeholders in a wide range of topics tailored to address the current and evolving threat environment. The following major events took place at the SPTC and at stakeholder locations, directly supported by DHSES Training.

Canine Week
The Division hosted the 5th Annual Canine Week in Oriskany in late April at the STPC. This event brought together nearly 60 explosive detection canine teams from across the state to train in a series of challenging skills lanes. Feedback from participants was excellent and the next Canine Week is planned for April 2026.

Artificial Intelligence Awareness Workshop for Public Safety Officials
In May, the Division Training hosted the first pilot delivery of the "Artificial Intelligence Awareness Workshop for Public Safety Officials," a new workshop developed in conjunction with local, state, and federal partners. Feedback from the May pilot, along with two subsequent pilots in June and October, were extremely positive. The first full delivery of the workshop was in mid-December.

OFPC Technical Rescue Conference
Over four days in late May and early June, OFPC hosted its annual Technical Rescue Conference at the SPTC and brought together more than 70 participants from New York State and other states to train and learn about the latest technology and developments in the rope, water, collapse, vehicle rescue, and Unmanned Aircraft System rescue fields.

Tactical Week
The Division hosted the 7th Annual Tactical Week during the first week of June at the SPTC. Six advanced tactical teams from across the state competed in a series of scenarios during the week to test their capabilities. As a result of team performance, the Syracuse Police Department's SWAT team earned the 'top team' award. The Division will host Tactical Week in June 2026 at the SPTC.

New York Hope Exercise
In late July and early August, the Division hosted the New York Hope exercise at the SPTC for the sixth time. The exercise supported 45 college students and prepared students for potential careers in the fields of emergency management and homeland security. The four-day disaster response exercise trained students in leadership, teamwork and confidence building, disaster response and medical operations, incident command system, and interoperable communications. The 2026 New York Hope exercise is slated for the end of July at the SPTC.

Disaster Mental Health Response Team Exercise
The Division and the New York State Office of Mental Health hosted two Disaster Mental Health Response Team exercises at the SPTC in July and October. The July exercise focused on the aftermath of a large-scale hurricane and included support from the American Red Cross and the Onondaga County Animal Response Team. The

October exercise included a simulated bus accident with mental health providers offering support at a family assistance center, a friends and family center, and a hospital emergency room. In 2026, a larger Family Assistance Center exercise with the Office of Mental Health is planned at the SPTC in April.

Excelsior Challenge
During the first week of October, the Division hosted its premier training event, the Excelsior Challenge, at the SPTC. This event brough together bomb technicians, explosive detection canine teams, and tactical teams together to participate in scenarios based on the current threat environment. Roughly 160 law enforcement officials from across the state participated.

Unmanned Aircraft System Training and Public Safety Summit
The Division developed a robust Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) training program, with a suite of four specialty public safety UAS courses. To date, nearly 4,300 stakeholders have been trained by these courses. In addition to the core courses, the Division hosted the 7th Annual Public Safety UAS Summit in July at the New York State Fairgrounds with more than 500 local, state, and federal stakeholders in attendance. Through the end of November, 925 public safety professionals were trained through the training program and the Summit. The Division reviewed and developed new and innovating UAS training courses relevant to first responder and emergency management personnel.

Soft Skills Program for Public Safety Professionals
The Division partnered with the State University of New York at Albany's (SUNY Albany) Rockefeller College to develop a new training program focused on enhancing soft skills for public safety professionals. A pilot delivery of this program was administered virtually and culminated with a Capstone Exercise at the SPTC in September 2024. In 2025, the Division and SUNY Albany conducted a second pilot delivery completely in-person at the SPTC. In December, the Division hosted the first full delivery of the program utilizing instructors from within the agency. This full delivery was well-received and provided the foundation for this training program moving forward.

New York City East Side Access Exercise Series
DHSES Training and OCT coordinated a series of regional bomb squad exercises in New York City in the first half of 2025, including:

- An initial education session between the five downstate regional bomb squads, the Division of State Police Bomb Disposal Unit, and local transit security providers in January,
- A tabletop exercise in February, and
- A full-scale exercise at Grand Central Madison in April.

In August, to close out the East Side Access Exercise series, DHSES Training and OCT hosted a two-day crisis communications training and tabletop exercise in New York City, which leveraged the bomb squad exercise scenario to determine how local, state,

federal, and nongovernmental organizations would communicate effectively with the public during a crisis.

New York City Penn Station and Moynihan Train Hall Exercise Series

The Division received funding under the FY2024 Transit Security Grant Program to conduct exercises at Penn Station and Moynihan Train Hall. The first exercise under this new program was a large-scale, regional exercise at Moynihan to prepare for next year's events, including the 2026 FIFA World Cup, Sail250, and celebrations for the 250th birthday of the United States. More than 750 personnel were involved in this exercise, making it one of the largest in the Division's history.

Office of Fire Prevention and Control

The Office of Fire Prevention and Control (OFPC) provides quality training to firefighters and other emergency responders throughout the state. This training is essential for safe and effective emergency response to protect people, property, and environment. For many fire departments, particularly volunteer fire departments, OFPC's firefighter training courses are the only formal training available. The scope and complexity of this training continues to grow in conjunction with the increasing responsibilities of New York State's fire service.

The State Fire Training Program includes approximately 200 courses in firefighting operations, leadership, hazardous materials response, technical rescue, fire investigation, and fire prevention and public education. Training and education courses were conducted for both career and volunteer fire departments statewide, making them available to approximately 100,000 firefighters in nearly 1,750 fire departments.

As of December 11, OFPC conducted 3,396 offerings of these courses statewide this year, resulting in 54,894 student completions. These totals include 151 courses conducted and 3,393 student completions at the New York State Academy of Fire Science in Montour Falls.

OFPC played a leading role in increasing fire safety skills statewide through its coordination of seminars and events, dissemination of educational materials and notifications, and participation in public events such as fairs, open houses, and festivals. More than 38,000 New Yorkers received information through these public fire safety education programs statewide in 2025.

Office of Emergency Management

The Office of Emergency Management (OEM) Training and Exercise Programs facilitate, coordinate, and provide training and exercise to emergency management professionals to strengthen their ability to mitigate against, prepare for, and respond to, and recover from natural and human caused disasters and emergencies.

In 2025, the Training Section coordinated the delivery of 322 trainings to more than 6,820 students. These trainings included 113 different courses in topics such as the Incident Command System, Emergency Operations Center (EOC), Exercise Design,

Incident Response and Coordination, Planning, FEMA's Basic Academy, the Emergency Management Certification and Training, Cybersecurity, Winter Weather Hazards, and Coastal Storms. 20 of these courses were delivered in New York State for the first time.

OEM Training developed and delivered a course regarding access and functional needs in emergency management, a State EOC reporting course, an EOC simulation course, and a "Basics of Exercise Design" course.

The Exercise Section expanded and became a standalone section within OEM, hiring five staff to increase capacity to support OEM and local exercises. The section provided planning, conduct, evaluation, and/or equipment support for 72 exercises across the state, and led planning for 42 exercises, including establishing an evaluation branch to support internal and external exercises at the local level. These exercises included the Regional Mass Casualty Incident tabletop series, the Integrated Public Alerting and Warning System regional series, New York State Task Force II, Monroe County Task Force and Rochester Fire Department, an Averill Park Central School District Transportation tabletop exercise, a State Fair tabletop exercise, and several discussion-based Emergency Support Function exercises, culminating in a functional EOC exercise in November.

Mass Casualty Incident Tabletop Exercises
The Tabletop Exercise program ran 15 unique sessions with counties to engage in more focused, internal collaboration rather than cross-county groups, which resulted in more realistic scenario response, deeper discussions surrounding current response procedures, and improvements in each county's ability to respond. A tabletop exercise will be built on data retrieved from 2025 County Emergency Preparedness Assessment (CEPA) sessions, allowing OEM field staff to target areas most in need of exercising.

Integrated Public Alerting and Warning System (IPAWS) Workshops
OEM created an Integrated Public Alerting and Warning System (IPAWS) workshop with the pilot hosted by New York City Emergency Management. The workshop allowed participants from FEMA, New York State, and counties with alerting authorities and originators to discuss public alerting, development, and coordination of messages, and how to assist each other in public messaging. The exercise provided participants with the opportunity to react to scenarios and develop wireless emergency alerts while working through character limitation issues. Three workshops were completed in 2025.

Citizen Preparedness Corps
The Citizen Preparedness Corps provided New Yorkers with tools and resources to prepare for natural and human-caused disasters, to respond accordingly, and to recover as quickly as possible to pre-disaster conditions. Courses were taught by members of the New York National Guard with support from OEM and local emergency management personnel, or by the American Red Cross. During each course, New Yorkers learned a wide range of preparedness strategies ranging from how to develop a family emergency plan to what supplies citizens should keep in reserve, among other critical precautions.

This year, more than 1,050 trainings occurred across the state with more than 39,000 individuals completing the class. Since its inception in 2014, more than 450,000 New Yorkers have completed Citizen Preparedness Corps training. To date, more than 126,000 kits have been distributed across the state.

Transportation Security and Emergency Preparedness Program
The Transportation Security and Emergency Preparedness (TSEP) program was created in 2018 as a part of OEM to provide direct training to employees working in transportation hubs to increase security awareness and active shooter preparedness. Through November, TSEP engaged 30 different airports/terminals and delivered 81 presentations with 1,182 attendees. The TSEP program was also presented at five bus transit sites and delivered 10 presentations with 483 attendees. This year, the TSEP program partnered with the New York State Bridge Authority for the first time to deliver two presentations at two locations with 28 attendees.

Disaster Preparedness Commission Symposium
In October, the Division and partner agencies reintroduced a multi-day Disaster Preparedness Commission Symposium in Albany to illuminate mass gathering preparedness through components of emergency technology, planning, and communication methods. Knowledge was provided to county and state agency emergency management partners through breakout and plenary sessions lead by experts from across the nation.

County and State Outreach
The OEM Director traveled throughout the state to meet with emergency managers from 48 counties to assess how OEM could assist them and maintain strong communication and collaboration in an emergency. The Director also met with the states of Vermont, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Ohio to better understand how they prepare, respond, and recover from natural and man-made disasters.

<u>Office of Interoperable and Emergency Communications</u>
The Office of Interoperable and Emergency Communications (OIEC) coordinated delivery of 17 training events and trained more than 333 individuals in the topic of emergency communications. Training provided planning, conduct, and support for two exercises including a full-scale exercise at the SPTC and a regional functional exercise in Broome County. Exercises allowed the state's stakeholders to test and exercise communications equipment in objective-based scenarios. COMU trainees were also provided the opportunity to complete tasks in their position task books and work towards becoming credentialed.

OIEC maintained a robust and involved Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) program by working with strategic stakeholders and volunteer networks, enhancing communication capabilities, and ensuring readiness and seamless transitions to support emergency response communication efforts.

Finally, OIEC supported and attended four outreach events, and field staff supported 19 planned events and assisted in multiple unplanned events, such as the strikes at prison facilities.

Policy Education Forums

The Division partnered with the SUNY New Paltz Institute for Disaster Mental Health (IDMH) on the 20th annual IDMH Conference held at SUNY New Paltz on October 14. The conference brought together more than 300 mental health and public safety professionals to learn about the latest research, case studies, and best practices related to disaster mental health.

Additionally, the Division partnered with IDMH on the development of a Managing Stress Workshop to help public sector personnel, including first responders, identify and understand operational and traumatic stress and promote workforce resilience. The Division conducted four of these workshops in 2024.

The Division also continued to focus on first responder wellness, building upon the release of the First Responder Mental Health Needs Assessment in 2024. The Division held an Officer Wellness Roundtable event in June at the SPTC, which brought together wellness officers and coordinators from around the state to share information about creating and maintaining responder wellness programs. This insight was used to create a Wellness Program Primer intended to help responder organizations develop or enhance their wellness programs. Additionally, the Division released a first responder mental health video and created a new responder wellness webpage, which will also serve as a resource for first responder organizations, and the public.

Funding-Related Outreach

The Grant Program Administration (GPA) Unit was responsible for management and administration of more than $1.5 billion in federal homeland security grant funding covering 10 separate programs over five federal fiscal years (FY2021-FY2025). The Unit also managed more than $600 million in state funding including the Statewide Interoperable Communications, Domestic Terrorism Prevention, and Volunteer Fire Infrastructure and Response Equipment grant programs. GPA had more than 3,000 active contracts with state, local and nonprofit stakeholders. GPA regularly conducted monitoring activities, including on-site visits. As of December, GPA completed more than 165 monitoring visits and reviewed more than 320 contracts for programmatic and fiscal compliance.

GPA staff communicated with local, state agency, and nonprofit stakeholders daily to effectively manage grant programs. In addition to routine outreach, additional stakeholder engagement efforts included:

Bomb Squad Outreach and Partnerships

GPA worked with bomb squads across New York State and managed the Bomb Squad Initiative Grant Program to build capabilities of local, FBI-accredited bomb squads. GPA coordinated routinely with OCT and the SPTC as well as various local, state, and

federal subject-matter experts on development and implementation of this program. GPA provided program briefs at the March Law Enforcement Conferences and attended the Excelsior Challenge at the SPTC in September to provide technical support to bomb squads requiring assistance. This event was also used as a monitoring opportunity for grant-funded equipment and to provide an overview of equipment standards and technology advancements.

Explosive Detection Canine Team Outreach and Partnerships

The focus of this program is to enhance and sustain the explosive detection canine team capabilities across the state and was developed in consult with federal and state explosive detection canine subject-matter experts. GPA provided program briefs on the Explosive Detection Canine Team Grant Program to canine handlers across the state at the March Law Enforcement Conferences and Excelsior Challenge at the SPTC in September. The purpose of the brief was to educate the stakeholders on grant programs, discuss administrative requirements and objectives, highlight best practices, and collect feedback to ensure programs are meeting needs. Awards for the FY2022 grant program were issued totaling $750,000.

Tactical Team Outreach and Partnerships

The focus of this program is to improve tactical teams' capabilities and help develop new response capabilities related to high-risk incidents including active shooter events and other counter-terrorism missions. GPA provided program briefs on the Tactical Team Grant Program to team leaders across the state at the March Law Enforcement Conferences and the Excelsior Challenge at the SPTC in September. The purpose of the brief was to educate the stakeholders on the grant programs to include administrative requirements and objectives, highlighting best practices, and collecting feedback to ensure our programs are meeting the needs of this important law enforcement community. Awards for the FY2022 grant program were issued totaling $1,250,000.

Law Enforcement Conferences

Local, state and federal bomb squads, explosive detection canine handlers, and tactical teams from across the state participated in the March Law Enforcement Conferences. GPA participated in all three events providing updates on the grant programs, discussing programmatic requirements, sharing some of the successes of the programs and the resources the Division can offer communities as well as discussing next steps. GPA participated in the Excelsior Challenge at the SPTC in September to provide an overview of grant funding available to support these specialized law enforcement communities.

Technical Rescue and Urban Search & Rescue (USAR) Outreach and Partnerships

The focus of this program is to enhance statewide Technical Rescue and Urban Search and Rescue partnerships and capabilities across the state. GPA and OFPC staff coordinated the administration of the Technical Rescue/USAR Grant Program. Awards for the FY2022 grant program were issued totaling $500,000.

Hazardous Materials Regional Partnerships

GPA continued to work with OFPC to enhance statewide Hazardous Materials (HazMat) Regional Partnerships in the state through the funding of the 18 Regional HazMat Partnerships. Counties were required to coordinate through HazMat regional partnerships to apply for projects to support regional HazMat preparedness activities through the FY2024-25 Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness (HMEP) Grant Program, which is funded by the U.S. Department of Transportation. Awards for the FY2024 HMEP Grant Program were issued totaling $127,283.

Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Services Organizations Outreach

The Volunteer Fire Infrastructure and Response Equipment (V-FIRE) Grant Program seeks to provide funding support to New York State volunteer fire districts in renewing aging infrastructure via construction, renovation or purchase costs, as well as funding support of allowable fire service equipment to improve response capabilities. Fire districts comprised of 100 percent volunteer firefighters are eligible and municipalities are also eligible to apply on behalf of local volunteer fire departments. Materials for the next application period of the program were drafted.

Cybersecurity Grant Programs Outreach and Partnerships

The focus of this program is to provide local jurisdictions with the resources and equipment necessary to prevent disruption of the confidentiality, integrity and availability of their information systems. GPA staff, along with OCT's Cyber Incident Response Team (CIRT) work collaboratively to manage and execute this grant program, which is available via a competitive application process to counties and units of local government including cities, towns and villages. Awards for the FY2022 Cybersecurity Targeted Grant Program were issued totaling $2,000,000.

Additionally, GPA participated in state Cybersecurity Planning Committee meetings which is inclusive of the Executive Chamber Cybersecurity Planning Chief, OCT, CIRT, ITS, and other state and local jurisdictions. This group was responsible for the implementation of the federal State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program (SLCGP). The FY2022 and FY2023 local-share SLCGP application process took place in October and November resulting in 186 applications from various educational and governmental organizations totaling $9.6 million in requests for the shared service offering of multi-factor authentication tokens.

Critical Infrastructure Grant Program Outreach and Partnerships

GPA administered the Critical Infrastructure Grant Program in partnership with the Office of Counter Terrorism's Critical Infrastructure Unit. The focus of this program was to provide local jurisdictions with the resources and equipment necessary to mitigate vulnerabilities identified at government-owned critical infrastructure, special events, and mass gathering sites. Awards for the FY2022 grant program were issued totaling $500,000.

Nonprofit Security Grant Program Outreach

GPA staff continuously conduct monitoring visits with nonprofit organizations which were awarded Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP) funds from DHS/FEMA. In November, the Division conducted a new grantee orientation workshop for the subrecipients of NSGP-National Security Supplemental funds to provide technical assistance regarding grant contract compliance requirements.

Support for the Domestic Terrorism Preventing Grant Program and Related Outreach

GPA serves on the Domestic Terrorism Prevention Workgroup in coordination with various other division offices to focus on the implementation of Governor Hochul's Executive Order 18 issued on May 18, 2022 following the Tops Market mass shooting in Buffalo. GPA participated in several technical assistance webinars hosted through the Domestic Terrorism Prevention Unit to educate jurisdictions on grant program funding, identify best practices, and provide guidance on requirements. GPA staff also attended the Threat Assessment and Management Summit in October hosted by the Domestic Terrorism Prevention Unit.

Interoperable and Emergency Communications Outreach and Partnerships

GPA managed emergency communications grants in coordination with OIEC including the Statewide Interoperable Communications Grants and Public Safety Answering Point Grant Programs. Two new state-funded communications grants were developed to support Next Generation 911 technologies – the Next Gen 911 Grant Program and the Emergency Services IP Network Readiness Grant Program. Program funds for both grants were offered to counties noncompetitively. Next Gen 911 award letters were issued on September 25, 2025. In addition to grant programs, GPA staff also attended quarterly State Interoperable and Emergency Communication Board Meetings hosted by OIEC.

National Homeland Security Conference – Washington, D.C. – National Outreach

In August, the GPA Director and unit managers attended the National Homeland Security Conference in Washington, D.C. The conference was attended by more than 2,000 homeland security professionals across the nation to include many state administrative agencies responsible for management of various DHS/FEMA preparedness grant programs. GPA delivered a presentation on the New York State administrative process of managing the Nonprofit Security Grant Program.

Support for the Division's Strategic Policy Initiatives and Related Outreach

GPA worked closely with the Division's Senior Policy Advisor on major agency initiatives including federal requirements such as the Threat/Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA) and the Stakeholder Preparedness Report (SPR). These efforts required outreach with state and local stakeholders to be successful. Coordination with these groups regularly occurred in 2025. Completion of both the THIRA and SPR remain a requirement to receive federal funding.

Urban Area Working Groups
GPA participated in Urban Area Working Group meetings held by area homeland security and emergency responder partners in the New York City and Buffalo regions. GPA provided outreach regarding available grant opportunities and other important updates as well as providing valuable technical assistance to grantees.

New York State Emergency Management Association – Local District Meetings
GPA staff attended local district meetings of the New York State Emergency Management Association, including its Western, Lake, Central, Northern, Eastern, and Southern districts. This outreach enhanced communication and information sharing with local stakeholders, including information on available grant opportunities and technical assistance on open contracts.

Homeland Security Senior Advisory Committee
The GPS Director, in coordination with the Division's Commissioner, chaired the New York State Homeland Security Senior Advisory Committee (HSSAC), comprised of subject-matter experts who meet to discuss homeland security grants and strategic planning issues. The HSSAC consists of mid-to-senior level managers from more than 30 state agencies and includes high-level representation from New York City including the city's fire and police departments, and its office of emergency management. New York State met the FEMA requirement to maintain a Senior Advisory Committee through the HSSAC, which held its most recent meeting on January 8, 2025.

Emergency Response & Security-Based Engagement

Cyber Incident Response Team
The Division's Cyber Incident Response Team (CIRT) assisted state, local, tribal, and territorial government organizations to prepare for, prevent, and respond to cyber incidents by providing cyber incident response, phishing campaigns and training, tabletop exercises, cybersecurity risk assessments, cyber capability workshops, penetration testing, rapid risk assessments, and through managing the Statewide Cyber Shared Service Program. All CIRT services were provided at no cost to eligible government entities.

The Team conducted the following activities in 2025:

- Responded to 124 cyber incidents in the government community, helping customers with identification, containment, eradication, and return to normal operations in a secure manner. All related cyber intelligence gathered during incidents was de-identified and disseminated to state partners for proactive and preventative actions.
- Designed, developed, and launched the Mandatory Cyber Incident and Ransom Payment Reporting Portal in partnership with New York State Information Technology Services because of state legislation requiring all municipal corporations and public authorities to report any cybersecurity incident and/or any demand for ransom within 72 hours, a ransom payment within 24 hours of

payment, and a ransom payment explanation within 30 days of payment. Since the portal was launched, 54 incidents have been reported to the Division.

- Provided threat briefings and cyber basics presentations at 27 conferences and events for organizations including New York State Local Information Technology Directors Association, Government Finance Officers Association, New York State Town Clerks Association, New York State Association of Counties, New York State Community Colleges Business Officers Association, and BOCES' Monroe Regional Information Center. Presentations reached more than 4,100 state and local governments leaders.
- Sent more than 13,700 simulated phishing emails to government professionals and conducted 13 tabletop exercises with follow-on reports to guide organizations' security planning efforts. The program walked entities through a mock cyber incident, tested response plans, identified and documented gaps, identified areas of strength, and highlighted areas for improvement.
- Executed two full cybersecurity risk assessments to evaluate customers' technical and policy cybersecurity programs and provide a report with prioritized, actionable recommendations to improve overall cybersecurity posture. Each assessment report provided steps for decreasing cyber risk with a two-year roadmap.
- Led 16 Rapid Cyber Risk Assessments to provide more accessible cyber risk assessments to customers who may not have time or resources for full-length engagement. The rapid assessment is a starting point for entities who may not yet be able to use the full assessment process.
- Carried out six Penetration Tests to help customers discover attack paths a threat actor could use to compromise their environment. Customers were provided with an actionable report to help guide mitigation planning.
- Delivered two Cyber Capability Workshops for more than 200 local government leaders throughout the state. Workshops were designed to bring together non-technical leaders through government to learn more about cyber basics and assess cyber knowledge regarding procurement, governance, risk management, data, incident response, and general technology modernization readiness.

CIRT also managed the New York State Cyber Shared Services Program where Endpoint Detection and Response was deployed to approximately 100,505 endpoints in counties, cities, towns, and villages. The Attack Surface Management program monitored approximately 100,086 assets in New York State counties and cities.

<u>Outreach and Engagements with Critical Infrastructure</u>

The Division's OCT's Critical Infrastructure Unit (OCT-CIU) worked with public and private sector partners to identify and assess physical and cyber security risks at critical infrastructure across New York State. OCT-CIU regularly conducted targeted outreach, supported threat information sharing, and provided risk assessment services to our broad constituency.

OCT-CIU completed 64 site visits and risk assessments at critical infrastructure sites throughout the state. During this period, OCT-CIU collaborated with federal, state, local,

and private sector partners to enhance the overall security of the state's most critical assets. OCT-CIU conducted assessments of infrastructure in the commercial, chemical, education, energy, government, pipeline, public drinking water, wastewater, and critical manufacturing industries.

Two new sets of temporary vehicle barriers were added to OCT-CIU's Hostile Vehicle Barrier Mitigation Program's inventory, further expanding regional reach and availability. There are now 10 sets strategically staged at five of the state's emergency equipment stockpiles. Barrier usage was up 100 percent this year counting days deployed in support of special events and mass gatherings. Additionally, the team trained more than 150 government employees on proper use of the vehicle barriers.

OCT-CIU strengthened and continued to promote the sharing of threat related information, including updating and enhancing processes to develop and distribute threat advisory information for public and private critical infrastructure stakeholders. In partnership with team members from the Public Safety Unit, OCT-CIU delivered "Indicators and Warning" briefings to educate critical infrastructure owners and staff on signs and indicators of terrorism, reporting suspicious activity and countering foreign malign influence.

Red Team Exercises and Terrorism Awareness Outreach

OCT partnered with law enforcement from more than 70 agencies throughout the state to conduct 'Red Team' exercises involving federal, state, local and tribal personnel to assess effectiveness of the "See Something, Say Something" training program on businesses. During each exercise, personnel from state and local agencies concealed their identities and assessed the ability of businesses to recognize and report suspicious activity. Following each exercise, officials provided training on identifying and reporting suspicious activity.

OCT conducted Red Team exercises at nearly 1,000 locations in each of the state's 16 Counter Terrorism Zones. Teams assessed suspicious activity reporting and recognition at more than 725 retailers and businesses selling chemicals, compounds, components, services, or rent space or resources which could be exploited by bad actors. Teams also assessed more than 225 infrastructure locations across the state, including stadiums and arenas, malls and shopping centers, colleges and universities, airports, transit hubs and other mass-gathering locations. Fifty-seven percent of the locations were new and not visited in previous years.

Since 2016, the Division has completed more than 8,300 Red Team exercises. In 2025, more than 1,800 business and infrastructure personnel were educated on indicators and warning signs of terrorism through Red Team engagements. Separately, OCT trained nearly 1,860 stakeholders through approximately 30 terrorism awareness presentations including the Critical Infrastructure initiative.

Additionally, OCT engaged with associations, groups, and public safety stakeholders to enhance awareness. Throughout the year, OCT engaged 120 Intelligence Liaison

Officers across the state and made presentations at the annual Intelligence Liaison Officers', Emergency Medical Services', and New York State Association of Fire Chiefs' conferences. OCT programs and services promote suspicious activity reporting through presentations to targeted audiences, including healthcare and commercial facilities sectors, outreach to security personnel, and targeted public messaging in conjunction with public gathering events such as the New York State Fair.

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 racially motivated domestic terrorist attack in Buffalo resulting in the death of 10 New Yorkers. Executive Order 18 mandated each county and New York City create and maintain Domestic Terrorism Prevention Plans and submit to OCT 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 comprised of local organizations such as law enforcement, schools, mental health professionals, and others to confront domestic terrorism, domestic violence extremism, and targeted violence.

In 2025, the DTPU:

- Supported the establishment of county-led TAM teams across New York State, growing the network to 53 jurisdictions as opposed to 47 teams in 2024 and 21 teams in 2023. Prior to May 2022, only three counties had TAM teams.
- Delivered 58 National Threat Evaluation and Reporting curriculum trainings: 23 one-day, 18 three-day, and 17 community-awareness focused two-hour trainings, including virtual options to increase accessibility, with every county represented, 140 higher education institutions, and more than 1400 participants across the state.
- Developed and maintained a distribution list of approximately 930 stakeholders involved in targeted violence prevention. This is an increase of more than 15 percent from 2024 who routinely engaged with information on trainings, products, and recent events.
- Delivered two large-scale policy and education events for the second year attended by more than 380 people.
- Trained nearly 200 New York State prevention practitioners through partnership with mental health experts on recognizing signs of radicalized and exploited youth.
- Created and distributed four new research products tailored to TAM Teams focused on the New York State threat environment.
- Attended, facilitated, or presented at more than 60 in-person events/meetings, e.g., TAM Team regional meetings, conferences, etc., across the state with a reach of more than 2,200 TAM interest holders representing a 20 percent increase in the number of outreach events compared to 2024.

- Hosted Domestic Terrorism Prevention Plan Working Sessions in 24 counties with more than 120 multidisciplinary attendees in total to support the plan revision process for a total of 36 sessions over the past two years.
- Conducted four quarterly TAM team webinars with more than 200 participants.
- Presented and facilitated working groups at the “Eradicate Hate” event regarding the state’s approach to preventing targeted violence; the conference is considered the world’s most comprehensive anti-hate conference and had more than one thousand attendees.

Briefings and Information Sharing with Private Sector Partners

As part of an ongoing effort to disseminate relevant and timely information, OCT provided threat products and facilitated briefings for public and private-sector partners, including quarterly meetings with the energy industry, and regular engagements with the New York State Intelligence Center and the pipeline industry. OCT worked with partners in the faith-based community, public drinking water, wastewater, and chemical industries to share information on physical and cyber security threats, as well as best practices. OCT engaged with associations and groups such as the Municipal Electric Utilities Association, the FBI’s Infraguard chapters, and public safety stakeholders.

Communications Consortiums and 911 Outreach

OIEC attended meetings of the eight Interoperable Communications Consortiums, which are regional associations of counties across the state with common communications needs or projects. The chairpersons of these eight consortiums met four times prior to the annual State Interoperable and Emergency Committee board meetings to discuss concerns and benchmarks, and to highlight work done within their consortiums.

In April, OIEC held the annual four-day Communications Symposium in partnership with the New York State 911 Coordinators Association, which brought together approximately 145 public safety leaders from across the state. Various topics included First Responder Mental Health Needs Assessment Results; Artificial Intelligence Training Update; National Emergency Response Information System Update; Communications Consortiums Updates; Mutualink Demo LNK360; and Keynote Speaker L. V. Pokey Harris.

Public Events

Below is a listing of some public-facing events in New York State at which the Division conducted outreach in 2025:

- Baseball Hall of Fame Induction Weekend (Otsego County)
- Belmont Stakes (Nassau County)
- Boilermaker Road Race (Oneida County)
- Ironman Race (Long Island)
- Jones Beach July 4th Fireworks and Air Show (Nassau County)
- NASCAR Racing (Watkins Glen)
- National Football League – Buffalo Bills (Erie County)

- New Year’s Eve (New York City)
- New York Air Show (Orange County)
- New York City Marathon
- New York State Fair (Syracuse)
- Ryder Cup (Nassau County)
- Suffolk County Marathon
- Thunder of Niagara International Air Show (Niagara Falls)
- United Nations General Assembly (New York City)
- U.S. Open (New York City)