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New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services
Joint Legislative Budget Hearing on Public Protection
January 31, 2017

Testimony of Commissioner John P. Melville

Good morning. Thank you Chairwoman Young, Co-Chairwoman Savino, Chairman Farrell and distinguished members of the Joint Committee.

I am John Melville, Commissioner of the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services.

I appreciate the opportunity to discuss with you today some of the great work of the agency over the past year as well as a few of the highlights of Governor Cuomo's public safety budget.

The Division is charged with an enormous responsibility - which includes an all-hazards prevention, preparedness, response and recovery mission. The Governor's budget provides the resources needed to accomplish our mission and protect public safety. Total appropriations are \$1.6 billion, up \$58 million over last year. The increases include:

- \$1.3 million to support a new Cyber Incident Response Team;
- \$3.0 million to provide transportation security training to civilian employees at airports;
- \$500,000 to support swift water training at the State Preparedness Training Center; and
- \$3.0 million in Capital financing for health and safety improvements and preservation of Montour Falls and the State Preparedness Training Center.

Taken together, these proposals will strengthen our all hazards approach to prevention, preparedness, response and recovery.

A key recommendation in the Governor's fiscal year 2018 budget is the proposed Cyber Incident Response Team, which will serve as a resource to local governments, public authorities and non-Executive agencies in better protecting their information technology assets, critical operating systems and data from cyber-attacks, malware and ransomware. The team will conduct vulnerability assessments, network scans, and review of cybersecurity policies to ensure local governments and state entities have the appropriate plans, procedures, and cyber infrastructure in place. This initiative will include a single number to call to report cyber incidents, streamlining response efforts. The team will be supported by members including the National Guard, the State Police, and the Office of Information Technology Services.

The Division's focus on preparedness and response training will be greatly enhanced through the proposed transportation security and swift water training initiatives in the Governor's Executive Budget.

The response to mistaken reports of active shooters in several terminals at John F. Kennedy Airport on August 14, 2016 resulted in panic and the self-evacuation of thousands of travelers and employees. The Governor, as a result of recommendations outlined by a joint state and federal multi-agency team reviewing the incident, ordered the Division to develop a new mandatory training to civilian airport workers to provide them with the skills necessary to assist passengers during emergencies and with skills for increased awareness and the identification of and reporting of suspicious activities related to terrorism. As proposed in the Governor's Executive Budget, the Division will provide this critical, full-day training to civilian airport workers across the State.

The State Preparedness Training Center, or SPTC, is a state-of-the-art multi-disciplinary facility in Oneida County that supports training to over 16,000 State, local, and Federal emergency first responders on an annual basis. The Swift Water Rescue Simulator is slated to be completed by Spring of 2018 and the Executive Budget includes resources to support this one of a kind training for swift water rescue missions. Staff will be brought on in the fourth quarter of the 2018 fiscal year, enabling training to first responders as soon as the facility is complete.

In the upcoming budget year, the Division will provide regionally focused active shooter scenario courses at the SPTC. The key objective of this course is to integrate emergency medical services into law enforcement's response to an active shooter situation. The new regional model requires the law enforcement and EMS participants to be from the same city or county departments, so the techniques and concepts learned can be better leveraged in emergencies.

Finally, at the Governor's direction, the Division will work with the New York State Emergency Management Association to develop an accreditation program for local emergency management offices in the upcoming budget year. It will be the first state-led initiative in the nation designed specifically for local emergency management offices – leading advancements in emergency management and the protection of the people of this State.

These Executive Budget recommendations build upon the work of the Division over the past year.

In 2016, the Governor directed the Division to increase the number of Red Team exercises across the State to determine if businesses detected and promptly reported unannounced suspicious activity. This past year, the Division significantly increased the number of Red Team exercises, evaluating and enhancing the State's overall counter terrorism posture. Through the end of December, Red Teams exercises had been conducted in all of the 16 Counter Terrorism Zones, across over 600 locations and businesses in conjunction with over 100 law enforcement agencies.

As a target-rich state, New York continues to rely on federal homeland security funding. In 2016, New York State received over \$262 million from the Homeland Security Grant Program, which has been used in communities throughout the state to prevent, protect and prepare for terrorism and other catastrophic events.

I'd like to quickly touch upon a few ongoing initiatives.

Launched in 2015, NY Responds is a single, unified online electronic, comprehensive incident management system. This transformative approach to disaster management connects every county across New York State with the State Emergency Operations Center.

The Governor's vision related to public safety and emergency preparedness education is rapidly becoming a reality through the College of Emergency Preparedness, Homeland Security, and Cybersecurity at UAlbany. I am happy to report that the College's major, which began being offered in the Fall semester, now has 300 declared students. Another 350 students have declared the minor. The enthusiasm for the program has far exceeded expectations.

With respect to Citizen Preparedness training, in conjunction with the National Guard, the Red Cross and together with our partners in the legislature, we have been able to train over 140,000 residents.

I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today and I am pleased to answer any questions you may have.