



PRESS RELEASE

FRANKLIN COUNTY GOVERNMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:
David S. Keller, Commissioner
dskeller@franklincountypa.gov
(717) 261-3812

Six Counties Participate in Law Enforcement Simulation Exercise

November 8, 2018 – Chambersburg, PA – On Wednesday, November 7th, a multi-county Corrections Emergency Response Team (CERT) exercise was held at 14 North Main Street in downtown Chambersburg. Over 90 individuals from six counties participated in the event hosted by Franklin County.

Franklin County Jail Warden Bill Bechtold addressed the participants saying, “This is a great opportunity for our county corrections agencies to get to know each other and work together before a potential event happens where we need each other.”

CERT members from Armstrong, Butler, Centre, Dauphin, Franklin and Somerset counties trained together in simulated hostage situations. The teams practiced mitigating incidents in a variety of scenarios while experienced evaluators observed and provided constructive feedback to CERT members. Evaluating the teams were Chambersburg Borough Police Chief Ron Camacho, Pennsylvania State Police Troop L Reading Commander Gary Carter, Franklin County Captain of Investigations Dave Smith, Franklin County Chief of Adult Probation Dan Hoover, and former Chester City Police Chief Joe Bail.

Leaders from each county agreed that the training fostered team collaboration between the partner counties and highlighted areas to improve. Franklin County Department of Emergency Services (DES) set up a command post at the staging area. DES Director John Thierwechter said, “We constantly prepare for things we hope never happen. Practicing with other county departments is very valuable.”

Public information officers from various county departments worked together to create information updates. A mock press conference was held covering the simulated event and included participation from Dauphin County Prison Warden Brian Clark and Deputy Warden Gregory Briggs, Centre County Prison Warden Christopher Schell and Deputy Warden Glenn Irwin, and Armstrong County Jail Warden Phillip Shaffer.

The Franklin County Commissioners were involved from start to finish. “Warden Bechtold and his staff did a great job coordinating a successful training event. We’re lucky to have such a wide range of leadership expertise locally available to us,” said Commissioner Chairman Dave Keller. “A special thanks to our partner counties—your engagement and participation helps to increase the safety and security of each of our communities,” he added.

The event was sponsored by Combined Public Communications, GTL, PrimeCare Medical, L.R. Kimball, Securis, AFSCME 589, and the Franklin County Jail Employee Club.

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