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Press Release

February 7, 2020

[MTA Headquarters](#)

IMMEDIATE

Five Canine Officers Complete MTA PD Anti-Terrorism Training Course

Touching Graduation Ceremony Held at Grand Central Terminal

Video Available [Here](#); Photos Available [Here](#)

Five canine and police officer teams graduated from MTA Police Department explosives detection and anti-terrorism training this morning at a touching ceremony at Grand Central Terminal. The canines are now official officers of the MTA PD and have small police shields affixed to their collars.

The officers, canine and human, successfully completed an intensive 12-week explosive detection course at the MTA PD's 72-acre training center in Dutchess County, New York, the only state-of-the-art mass-transit-specific training center in the nation.

The campus houses nine indoor-scenario training areas and multiple outdoor training fields and obstacle courses and areas with cars, buses, platforms and even a decommissioned train, classrooms, twenty-four kennels, a veterinary room with medical kennels, and administrative offices. The outdoor and indoor training grounds provide the MTA Police with an unlimited number of scenarios to teach, drill and test the dogs.

Only about one in 30 canines tested are deemed skilled enough to join the MTA Police Department's elite unit. The MTA PD has one of the largest canine explosives detection forces in the country, with approximately 50 dogs in service.

Today's graduating teams will enter active service with the MTA, investigating suspicious packages and patrolling the trains, stations, tracks and facilities of New York City Transit, Long Island Rail Road, Metro-North Railroad and Staten Island Railway, a 5,000-square-mile territory covering 14 counties in New York and Connecticut.

"The MTA PD canine unit is crucial to our counter-terrorism efforts and keeping the public safe," said Acting MTA Chief of Police Joseph McGrann. "Our canine officer teams maintain a watchful presence over the MTA's entire system every hour of every day, patrolling our stations, platforms, trains and parking lots."

The canines in the MTA PD's unit, typically German Shepherds or German Shepherd/Belgian Shepherd mixes, are roughly a year and a half old when they go through the rigorous course and can serve in active duty for up to eight or nine years before retiring. Each canine forms a deep, emotional bond with his or her police partner. They not only work together for life, the canine lives with the officer, becoming part of the family.

In keeping with tradition, the canines are named in honor of fallen police officers, firefighters and members of the United States Armed Services. Family members who have a graduating canine named in memory of a loved one attended today's ceremony.

The canines and officers who entered active duty with the MTA PD today are:

- Police Officer Salvatore Surlatti and Canine Goose, honoring FDNY Lieutenant & USAF Master Sgt. Christopher Raguso
- Police Officer Tommy Long and Canine JD, honoring NYPD ESU Police Officer John D'Allara
- Police Officer Richard Denicker and Canine Chris, honoring NYPD Sergeant Christopher Christodoulou
- Police Officer Ashley Torres and Canine Artie, honoring Nassau County ESU Police Officer Arthur Lopez
- Police Officer Daniel Bradbury and Canine Joey, honoring FDNY Firefighter Joseph Henry

An additional service dog was also honored at the graduation. Canine Timo was named in honor of NYPD Detective Russel Timoshenko, who died in the line of duty in 2007. Canine Timo recently passed from a rare medical condition.