



# PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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## **Cape May-Lewes Ferry to Host Full-Scale Emergency Exercise** *Disaster Drill Set for Wednesday, April 23, 2025*

**CAPE MAY, NJ** – Today, Delaware River and Bay Authority (DRBA) officials announced that an emergency disaster exercise will be held at the Cape May Ferry terminal on Wednesday, April 23, 2025 starting at 7:30 a.m. The emergency exercise, which is expected to continue through early afternoon, will take place aboard the ferry in a designated operations area on the Delaware Bay. This will be a mass casualty incident response and recovery exercise, specifically to address an active shooter threat on board a maritime vessel. Post-event discussions will occur through Thursday, April 24, 2025.

“Ferry personnel, first responders, and law enforcement professionals are trained to handle all types of emergency situations, and this drill provides a valuable opportunity to collectively test communication, coordination, and rescue procedures,” said DRBA Director of Ferry Operations Heath Gehrke. “Following the drill, there will be an immediate debriefing, allowing the evaluators and participants to offer their critical assessment and feedback.” It is vital to identify strengths, as well as areas for improvement for future exercises.

This emergency preparedness exercise has been crafted in conjunction with 409 Consulting, LLC, a Veteran-owned and operated business specializing in emergency management homeland security and maritime safety and security.

Participating organizations include the United States Coast Guard, Delaware River and Bay Authority, New Jersey State Police, Cape May County, Lower Township, AtlantiCare, local and state first responders. Observing agencies include Delaware State Police and Department of Homeland Security Air Marshals. The full-scale emergency exercise will test emergency response and recovery plans and procedures, communication framework and coordination abilities of the participants and equipment of rescue units and other emergency personnel that would respond to an actual incident. Successful objectives to be considered include operation coordination, tactical response, public information procedures, casualty and mass care services and victim identification and reunification.

“We value and emphasize emergency preparedness and coordination with first responders,” Gehrke added. “This will make us better prepared for any real emergency such as the one the exercise is intended to simulate, although we hope the situation never arises when we must apply what we learn and practice.”

In preparation of this training exercise, a dedicated information hotline and web page has been created and will be activated in the event of a real emergency. If a true safety threat situation were to arise, real-time updates will be made as they become available.

### **About the Delaware River and Bay Authority**

The DRBA, a bi-state governmental agency created by Compact in 1962, owns and operates the Delaware Memorial Bridge, the Cape May- Lewes Ferry, and the Forts Ferry Crossing. The DRBA also manages two airports in New Jersey (Millville Executive Airport and Cape May Airport) and three in Delaware (Wilmington Airport, Civil Air Terminal and Delaware Airpark). All DRBA operating revenues are generated through the bridge, ferry and airport facilities. For more information, visit [www.drba.net](http://www.drba.net).