

TARC Joint Public Safety Meeting Minutes

Texas Association of Regional Council-Homeland Security Association of Texas (HSAT)

DRAFT FOR REVIEW

Date: February 4, 2026

Scheduled time: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Location: Cambria Austin Downtown, Waterloo B, Sixth Floor, Austin, Texas

Event: Bi-Annual Staff Training and Board of Directors Meeting

1 Meeting Overview

The Joint Public Safety training and meeting addressed emergency preparedness, alert and warning planning, Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs), hazard awareness, training opportunities, and association business.

2 Emergency Preparedness and Planning

The Texas Division of Emergency Management-Preparedness Division discussed and emphasized the frequency of emergency events in Texas and the importance of maintaining current emergency plans. A change in the plan review cycle from five years to three years was noted.

Discussion addressed a stand-alone alert and warning plan, including local notification procedures, coordinated processes, accessible communication practices, and integration with state systems.

WebEOC and the Lone Star system were referenced for planning and information sharing. The notes indicated that the previously used TARP system was no longer active. Questions regarding local access and jurisdictional authorization were also noted and presented to the Preparedness Division Chiefs on what the expectation for COG Planners were to do and the level of responsibility that would potentially be placed on COG Planners if the need WebEOC access was needed.

3 Local Emergency Planning Committees

The LEPC discussion focused on preparedness for hazardous materials incidents and other emergencies. Membership groups discussed included local government officials, first responders, facility representatives, and community members. The mission emphasized protecting responders and the public through coordination, planning, and hazard awareness.

Characteristics of an effective LEPC included strong leadership and active participation, clearly defined roles and responsibilities, regular engagement between facilities and responders, accurate hazard identification and data management, and transparent public communication.

Administrative topics included appointing a chairperson and information coordinator, processing public information requests, designating a public document location, and maintaining an annual membership update form.

4 Hazard Awareness and Emergency Operations Planning

Emergency operations planning included discussion of lithium-ion batteries in cell phones, e-bikes, electric vehicles, and laptops. Saltwater exposure involving lithium-ion batteries was highlighted as a safety concern.

Additional hazards and facilities identified for planning consideration included:

- Tier II facilities, chemical manufacturing, refineries, ports, rail lines, high-hazard rail transportation, and pipelines.
- Battery energy storage systems, data centers, ammonium nitrate and explosive hazards, and bulk fuel terminals.
- Solar and wind farms and tunnels.

5 LEPC Activities and Regional Collaboration

LEPC activities discussed included community-wide all-hazards planning, public education and outreach, responder training and exercises, support for emergency supply and resource distribution, and addressing community-specific vulnerabilities.

Examples of supporting activities included shelter-in-place education, emergency kits, first aid and CPR training, lithium-ion battery safety education, and household hazardous waste collection events.

Regional collaboration focused on shared training, coordinated planning, mutual aid agreements, and stronger regional response capabilities.

6 Training Opportunities and Announcements

TDEM and TEEEX hazardous materials training was discussed. The training was described as having no tuition cost, with registration through the Blackboard learning portal and a focus on TCFP or Pro Board credentials.

Morgan Dudley was identified as a training coordinator. The contact recorded was morgan.dudley@tdem.texas.gov.

The Texas Emergency Management Conference was announced for May 26-29, 2026, in Fort Worth. The conference contact recorded was conference@tdem.texas.gov.

7 Business Items

Treasurer item: The notes identify Marissa as the first motion participant and Cesar as the second. The specific motion wording and vote result require confirmation.

Previous minutes: The notes identify Marissa as the first motion participant and Sal as the second. The date of the minutes under consideration and vote result require confirmation.

New business: A brief reference to “90% - eGrant” was recorded. The program, meaning of the percentage, and any related action require clarification.

8 Additional Announcements and Next Meeting

Conference calls were noted as occurring every other month, beginning in April 2026.

A retirement announcement concerning Amy was recorded; the full name requires confirmation. A JAG survey was expected to be released soon.

The next Public Safety Committee meeting was scheduled for February 5, 2026, from 10:00 a.m. to 10:50 a.m. in Whiskey River at Cambria Austin Downtown.

9 Adjournment

Adjournment time: To be confirmed.

Approval date: _____