

ATAC

Associated Texans Against Crime

**Proceedings from the Dallas County
Emergency Preparedness and Homeland
Security Hearing Sponsored by ATAC**

September 7, 2006

**Dallas Records Building
Courtroom 409**

Prepared 2:10 pm, September 6, 2006



ATAC

**DALLAS COUNTY EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND
HOMELAND SECURITY HEARING**

When: Thursday, September 7, 2006 10:30am – 11:30am

Where: Dallas Records Building, 500 Main Street, Courtroom 409 (Parking on Elm Street side)

PANELISTS:

- Richard H. Collins - Chairman of the Today Foundation
- Representative Tony Goolsby – State Representative District 102
- Commissioner Kenneth A. Mayfield – Dallas County Commissioner District 4
- Sandra K. Thomas – Vice Chairman of the Today Foundation and President of Kuprion-Thomas PC (professional services firm)

PRESENTERS:

- Councilman Gary Griffith – Dallas City Council District 9 and member of North Texas Emergency Preparedness Council
- Chief David Kunkle – Dallas County Chief of Police
- Director Robie Robinson – Dallas County Director of Security and Emergency Management (County Homeland Security Director)
- Mr. Charles T. Terrell – President of Safer Dallas Better Dallas

Dallas Police Department Disaster Preparedness

The Dallas Police Department recognizes the importance of emergency preparedness for all hazards. Police Officers are frequently the first to respond to the scene of a disaster, and the impact of actions taken by well-trained, well-equipped officers in the early stages of an event can not be overstated. Loss of life, injuries, and property damage can all be minimized by the quick, decisive actions of first responders to address immediate needs.

Lessons were learned, and issues uncovered, as a result of the Katrina and Rita evacuations. The importance of cooperation and coordination with all involved agencies at all levels was highlighted. The logistics of moving tens of thousands of displaced individuals provided a clear picture of how difficult mass evacuations can be. Dallas received positive recognition, both locally and nationally, for its handling of the 28,000 evacuees that were housed here. This was a testament to the coordinated effort put forth by area agencies.

The primary challenges we face regarding disaster preparedness are the same ones we faced prior to 9-11. These include overall capacity of our trauma centers to handle large numbers of casualties. Substantial improvements can still be made in the area of interoperability and the accurate and timely sharing of information between local, state, and federal agencies. Too often we find ourselves planning for the last event rather than the next event.

In preparation of emergencies our officers receive various training and needed equipment, participate in exercises and strategy meetings, and share intelligence to become more aware of the potential disasters we could face as first responders. The Dallas Police Department recognizes that we cannot do this alone. It is a partnership with our citizens and other local, county, state, and federal agencies that work with us and provide us assistance in times of emergency.

Chief David Kunkle
September 7, 2006

To: ATAC Homeland Security Hearing

Re: Community Emergency Response Team

From: Councilman Gary Griffith

I recommend to the City of Dallas Office of Emergency Management in cooperation with the Dallas County Office of Security and Emergency Management that the Community Emergency Response Team program (CERT) be adopted and implemented at the earliest possible date.

The CERT program is key to community preparedness for a natural or man-made disaster when supplementing the work of our First Responders is so critical. Now is the time to prepare our citizens for the uncertainties of the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gary Griffith', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Gary Griffith



About CERT

Introduction

Following a major disaster, first responders who provide fire and medical services will not be able to meet the demand for these services. Factors as number of victims, communication failures, and road blockages will prevent people from accessing emergency services they have come to expect at a moment's notice through 911. People will have to rely on each other for help in order to meet their immediate life saving and life sustaining needs.

One also expects that under these kinds of conditions, family members, fellow employees, and neighbors will spontaneously try to help each other. This was the case following the Mexico City earthquake where untrained, spontaneous volunteers saved 80 people. However, 100 people lost their lives while attempting to save others. This is a high price to pay and is preventable through training

If we can predict that emergency services will not meet immediate needs following a major disaster, especially if there is no warning as in an earthquake, and people will spontaneously volunteer, what can government do to prepare citizens for this eventuality?

First, present citizens the facts about what to expect following a major disaster in terms of immediate services. Second, give the message about their responsibility for mitigation and preparedness. Third, train them in needed life saving skills with emphasis on decision making skills, rescuer safety, and doing the greatest good for the greatest number. Fourth, organize teams so that they are an extension of first responder services offering immediate help to victims until professional services arrive.

Background

The Community Emergency Response Team concept was developed and implemented by the Los Angeles City Fire Department (LAFD) in 1985. The Whittier Narrows earthquake in 1987 underscored the area-wide threat of a major disaster in California. Further, it confirmed the need for training civilians to meet their immediate needs. As a result, the LAFD created the Disaster Preparedness Division with the purpose of training citizens and private and government employees.

The training program that LAFD initiated makes good sense and furthers the process of citizens understanding their responsibility in preparing for disaster. It also increases their ability to safely help themselves, their family and their neighbors. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) recognizes the importance of preparing citizens. The Emergency Management Institute (EMI) and the National Fire Academy adopted and expanded the CERT materials believing them applicable to all hazards.

The CERT course will benefit any citizen who takes it. This individual will be better prepared to respond to and cope with the aftermath of a disaster. Additionally, if a community wants to supplement its response capability after a disaster, civilians can be recruited and trained as neighborhood, business, and government teams that, in essence, will be auxiliary responders. These groups can provide immediate assistance to victims in their area, organize spontaneous volunteers who have not had the training, and collect disaster intelligence that will assist professional responders with prioritization and allocation of resources following a disaster. Since 1993 when this training was made available nationally by FEMA, communities in 28 States and Puerto Rico have conducted CERT training.

Starting

We recommend a number of steps to start a CERT:

- Identify the program goals that CERT will meet and the resources available to conduct the program in your area.

- Gain approval from appointed and elected officials to use CERT as a means to prepare citizens to care for themselves during a disaster when services may not be adequate. This is an excellent opportunity for the government to be proactive in working with its constituency.
- Identify and recruit potential participants. Natural for CERT are community groups, business and industry workers, and local government workers.
- Train CERT instructor cadre
- Conduct CERT sessions.
- Conduct refresher training and exercises with CERTs.

Delivery

The CERT course is delivered in the community by a team of first responders who have the requisite knowledge and skills to instruct the sessions. It is suggested that the instructors complete a CERT Train-the-Trainer (TTT) conducted by their State Training Office for Emergency Management or the Emergency Management Institute in order to learn the training techniques that are used successfully by the LAFD.

The CERT training for community groups is usually delivered in 2 1/2 hour sessions, one evening a week over a 7 week period. The training consists of the following:

- Session I, DISASTER PREPAREDNESS: Addresses hazards to which people are vulnerable in their community. Materials cover actions that participants and their families take before, during, and after a disaster. As the session progresses, the instructor begins to explore an expanded response role for civilians in that they should begin to consider themselves disaster workers. Since they will want to help their family members and neighbors, this training can help them operate in a safe and appropriate manner. The CERT concept and organization are discussed as well as applicable law governing volunteers in that jurisdiction.
- Session II, DISASTER FIRE SUPPRESSION: Briefly covers fire chemistry, hazardous materials, fire hazards, and fire suppression strategies. However, the thrust of this session is the safe use of fire extinguishers, sizing up the situation, controlling utilities, and extinguishing a small fire.
- Session III, DISASTER MEDICAL OPERATIONS PART I: Participants practice diagnosing and treating airway obstruction, bleeding, and shock by using simple triage and rapid treatment techniques.
- Session IV, DISASTER MEDICAL OPERATIONS, PART II: Covers evaluating patients by doing a head to toe assessment, establishing a medical treatment area, performing basic first aid, and practicing in a safe and sanitary manner.
- Session V, LIGHT SEARCH AND RESCUE OPERATIONS: Participants learn about search and rescue planning, size-up, search techniques, rescue techniques, and most important, rescuer safety.
- Session VI, DISASTER PSYCHOLOGY AND TEAM ORGANIZATION: Covers signs and symptoms that might be experienced by the disaster victim and worker. It addresses CERT organization and management principles and the need for documentation.
- Session VII, COURSE REVIEW AND DISASTER SIMULATION: Participants review their answers from a take home examination. Finally, they practice the skills that they have learned during the previous six sessions in disaster activity.

During each session participants are required to bring safety equipment (gloves, goggles, mask) and disaster supplies (bandages, flashlight, dressings) which will be used during the session. By doing this for each session, participants are building a disaster response kit of items that they will need during a disaster.

Maintaining Involvement

When participants have completed this training, it is important to keep them involved and practiced in their skills. Trainers should offer periodic refresher sessions to reinforce the basic training. CERT teams can sponsor events such as drills, picnics, neighborhood clean up, and disaster education fairs which will keep them involved and trained.

CERT members should receive recognition for completing their training. Communities may issue ID cards, vests, and helmets to graduates.

First responders need to be educated about the CERT and their value to the community. Using CERT as a component of the response system when there are exercises for potential disasters can reinforce this idea.

Resources

FEMA supports CERT by conducting or sponsoring TTT's for members of the fire, medical, and emergency management community. The objectives of the TTT are to prepare attendees to promote this training in their community, conduct TTT's at their location, conduct training sessions for neighborhood, business and industry, and government groups, and organize teams with which first responders can interface following a major disaster.

Conclusion

CERT is about readiness, people helping people, rescuer safety, and doing the greatest good for the greatest number. CERT is a positive and realistic approach to emergency and disaster situations where citizens will be initially on their own and their actions can make a difference. Through training, citizens can manage utilities and put out small fires; treat the three killers by opening airways, controlling bleeding, and treating for shock; provide basic medical aid; search for and rescue victims safely; and organize themselves and spontaneous volunteers to be effective.

Robie Robinson
Remarks to Associated Texans Against Crime
Dallas County Records Building
Dallas, Texas
September 7, 2006

Good morning. I would like to thank the Today Foundation, Associated Texans Against Crime, and all those who put this program together as well as those who are in attendance today. This panel is especially timely as I recently participated in a conversation with George Foresman, Undersecretary for Preparedness at the Department of Homeland Security, concerning the state of preparedness nationwide and what direction we should and likely will take in the future. I have borrowed and incorporated several of Undersecretary Foresman's points from that conversation into these remarks.

One need only read our local paper to see that Emergency Preparedness is in the forefront of our leaders' minds. My invitation to speak at this event mentioned evaluating our preparedness in the war on terror and informing the public of our readiness to deal with any problem. That invitation is a sign that we are winning the battle. The number of people here and their interest in the safety and welfare of our citizens is the foundation on which we will build our future programs. But how do we get there and where is it that we are going? There is an ancient saying which says something like, If you don't know where you are going, no wind is a fare wind. It is up to us, you and me as leaders; elected, corporate, community, public and private, to provide the bearing for all to follow.

Before we can establish that course and affect public attitudes and policies, we must first know our current situation and location, so to speak. We need an understanding of exactly how we got here through the broad range of events, conditions and decisions that have lead us to our current priorities. Think about it, a few years ago there would have been no priorities dealing with emergency preparedness in Dallas County, Texas. Those things happened in earthquake and hurricane territory. Terrorists strike over there or in another place but not here in my jurisdiction. But now we are talking about preparedness in Dallas Texas. We are having that conversation and it isn't in the immediate aftermath of a major event. This is indeed an important event.

Here we are almost on the anniversary of 9/11. A terrorist plot in the UK was uncovered and stopped just a few weeks ago. We must ensure that we prepare for the wide range of risks that have brought us this far.

Prior to 1940, people took care of their own emergency management needs. They didn't do it under that name any more than they went to weight loss centers or supermarkets. People canned food and stored it in root cellars for the cold months to come. They used the cellars as shelters during bad weather and had food to eat when they rain didn't come. In the 40's, things changed and the civilian population became a target. There was an adversary that individuals couldn't oppose alone or by traditional methods so Civil

Defense became an important part of our world. This stayed with us through the Duck and Cover drills in our schools. Some of you may remember stocking bomb shelters in your basements and storerooms. Then we had a sea-change; President Carter created the Federal Emergency Management Agency. This agency was tasked with preparing for all hazards, not just civil defense and nuclear war. As always, there followed an attitude that the federal government would ride to the rescue at a full gallop with the bugler sounding the charge. Katrina brought us all back to the harsh reality that all disasters are local. It is only a storm until the wind destroys a home. It is only a weather event until it causes family businesses to shut their doors. It is up to us to plan and prepare in our communities and across our region if we are to be ready for any event.

We have learned the same lessons over and over, time and again. Under Secretary Foresman pointed out key lessons from the last 7 years:

Y2K - We lacked a complete and expansive understanding of what infrastructure protection truly is;

Enron - Demonstrated our lack of an integrated approach for managing risk;

9/11 - Underscored both public and private weaknesses and illuminated the "ripple effect" of terrorism;

Hurricane Katrina - We still lacked an integrated approach for managing the full range of risk that we face.

Preparedness, education, and communication are the critical links to prevent, protect and secure our critical infrastructure. Preparedness is not simply an emergency management/homeland security activity. It is not limited to federal agencies or county or municipal agencies; rather it is a national effort that requires commitment from each and every individual. Vince Lombardi once said, "Individual commitment to a group effort—that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work." We, as leaders and experts, must communicate with those in need of information to prepare. We must teach those who are willing to learn how to prepare.

But where are we in Dallas County?

This isn't a long question but the answer could take a while. I will keep it brief. The simple answers are these:

When I started with Dallas County on January 1st of this year, the county only had one person in an emergency management role. I told the Commissioners Court that we needed 6 more and they created the positions. All of those positions are filled and the folks are doing great work as we speak.

I told the Commissioners Court that our Emergency Operations Center was inadequate and they said fix it. In just a few months, we have dramatically

changed the Emergency Operations Center. More improvements are ongoing and all these are only temporary while we complete plans for our permanent Emergency Operations Center.

I told the Commissioners Court that we needed to upgrade our plans and that, too, has begun and continues on a daily basis. It is a long process and one that will never be complete as we continue to get better and better with each new rendition.

The more difficult answers are what I really think you want to hear about. They aren't simply whether we have more people and new equipment but rather, have we made any changes that will impact safety and security.

The answer is yes. We are committed to filling our role as a county in the State of Texas and as one of the ten largest counties in the nation. These are some of the specific projects that we are working on:

We are leading a regional project to implement an emergency management incident management program across the North Central Texas Region. This Web-based system will allow all jurisdictions throughout our region to more efficiently manage resources together for the benefit of all their citizens. We will be able to share data and monitor each other's progress in real time. It will put big cities and small towns on equal ground for requesting resources while providing the necessary information to make decisions concerning deployment of limited resources.

I am chairing the North Texas Regional Shelter Committee so that we won't be working alone to shelter evacuees from catastrophic events on the Gulf Coast or elsewhere in the future. I have met with representatives from the Gulf Coast to share concerns and offer assistance where needed. We have put in place a clear process by which evacuees will be received into our region and my office will coordinate their distribution among 6 counties.

Our office is working with Texas state agencies to bring about an incident management academy so that emergency management professionals from across the nation can come together to learn and hone their skills prior to a real event.

Our planning is driven by a systematic evaluation and analysis of the hazards to which we are subject throughout the county. Many across the country have responded simply to the latest event but we are looking forward to identify the key areas of concern. We are planning to maximize our ability to bring together the resources of our many municipalities and partners at all levels of government.

We are also increasing our involvement with the private sector through a stronger and more active Local Emergency Planning Committee. Look around when you leave this meeting. There are plenty of private sector and non-profit organizations here with immense resources and an earnest concern for their community and neighbors. It is our goal to reach out to them and give them an opportunity to become involved. Planning is the key. A strong planning program involves all those who will later have to follow the plan. It is practical, realistic, and well thought out. A good plan is tested and amended regularly to ensure that it is up to date. We have worked on our plans every day since Jan 1 and continue to do so.

We have many other ways in which Dallas County is moving forward. We require that all our new emergency managers achieve Certifications under the International Association of Emergency Managers. We participate in evaluations of other jurisdictions in order to bring knowledge and best practices back to Dallas County. We expand our networks for Citizens' Corp programs and training opportunities every day.

Dallas County cannot and will not sit back and wait for direction to be handed down from the state or federal government. We can and must play a role in crafting that direction. That is why I serve on the executive committee and Board of Directors for the Emergency Management Association of Texas. That is why I serve on the National Fire Protection Association's technical committee for the Emergency Management Standard. That is why I am participating in programs with the Center for Homeland Defense and Security at the Naval Post Graduate School, to train leaders in Homeland Security and to direct the Department of Homeland Security's programs.

In the end, Dallas County now meets the required standards. We will soon exceed those standards. Then we will write new standards for others to follow.

**COMMENTS BY:
CHARLES T. TERRELL
PRESIDENT & CO-FOUNDER
SAFER DALLAS BETTER DALLAS
9-7-06**

Before Jack Hammack and I founded “Safer Dallas Better Dallas” over one and 1/2 years ago, we spent several months visiting with dozens of Dallas leaders, getting their viewpoints on how we could best make Dallas safer. Our goal to do so was motivated by our much too high local crime rate and the need for better emergency preparedness.

After all of those months of research, we determined that we could do a better job of making Dallas safer if we concentrated our efforts on helping the Dallas Police Department in both their equipment needs and the number of officers on our streets.

What America found out on 911 was that the first responders to an emergency – whether a natural disaster or terrorism – are the men and women of local police and fire departments. This lesson was learned again after the hurricanes last year.

The response of police officers and fire fighters in New York was awe inspiring, and one of the reasons they were able to answer the call in such a valiant fashion was the number of officers in New York City – which totals 4.8 officers per 1,000 of population in the police department.

In my opinion, during the years since 911, our federal government has failed us. Our borders are not much safer, our ports are not safer, and federal funding for equipment for the police departments in the major cities, such as Dallas, that are targets, has eroded due to the billions of dollars spent on the war in Iraq and the dollars that were wasted by federal grants to non-targets such as Idaho, Montana, and Muleshoe.

With all of this in mind, Jack Hammack and I initiated “Safer Dallas Better Dallas” with a mission statement to be a communicator and direct conduit to assist the Dallas Police Department by developing private funds to:

1. Acquire new equipment for the DPD.
2. Improve recruiting results of the DPD.
3. Motivate the Dallas City Council to provide more resources toward crime prevention by offering matching resources.
4. Improve recidivism of a parolees returning to Dallas.
5. Inspire Public Safety Personnel and Dallas citizens to embrace the basic concept that a safer life for any individual is a better life for that individual, and hence a Safer Dallas will be a Better Dallas.

We found that the Dallas Police Department had only 2.4 officers per 1,000 of population when we actually have a City ordinance passed in 1998 that requires 3 officers per 1,000. We found that we had a short fall of 700 to 750 officers.

We found that too many people in Dallas are not safe in their homes or on the street, and that many organizations in Dallas made up for the shortage in police officers with their own private police forces or security services. Examples are the major hospitals, DISD, SMU, DART, and the Meadows District.

“Safer Dallas Better Dallas” now has over 75 members on our Steering Committee.

We were instrumental in developing a \$15 million grant from the Caruth Fund of the Communities Foundation of Texas last August. In the first year \$5 million was spent for Wish List #1 from the Dallas Police Department and included camera systems for our police cars, barriers in police cars to protect our police officers, cell phones for investigators, and technical equipment and licensing. This was followed by a grant of approximately \$860,000 from the Meadows Foundation to install digital, elevated cameras over our downtown area.

We have a Wish List #2 of \$4 million and we have a separate goal of raising \$850,000 for the 550 AR 15 automatic weapons that the DPD needs in addition to the 300 in the City Managers' last budget. We now have on hand or pledged \$550,000 toward that goal. These weapons are needed to give our police officers the fire power to match that of the drug lords and gangs.

We will soon implement a Public Information Campaign with Safer Dallas information for billboards, newspaper, TV and radio to advise all of our citizens of what we are attempting to do and directly solicit their help. We will also soon have available a 6 minute film on “Safer Dallas Better Dallas” and will be distributing thousands of “Safer Dallas Better Dallas” bumper stickers. This information is intended to lead our citizens to our Safer Dallas web site so that they can determine if they want to help in this fight. Our theme on this is that “we are all in this fight together”. This campaign will be kicked off with a big meeting in October at the Andrews Distributing Warehouse.

We are truly all in this fight together. Our citizens must band together to insist on having an adequate number of police officers on our streets. Police presence prevents crime, and it is much cheaper and less traumatic than dealing with the results of crime. We also must provide the equipment our officers need beyond what is in the City Budget. Our City Manager has taken an aggressive stance on Public Safety in her budget recommendations this year, but only so much can be added in each budget year to bring us to what we need to be. Our leading foundations have paved the way. Citizens like our Dallas Rotarians, Scott Walker, and Ray Hunt have also done so. Borden's Dairies gave AR 15s to officers in the sub-station in their area and is the first company to offer to put Safer Dallas bumper stickers on all of their vehicles. It is our great hope that many multitudes of our citizens – will join in our effort as we truly are in a fight together to make our City a "Safer Dallas Better Dallas".

We hope that 100,000 families will give \$25.00 each to help fund Chief David Kunkle's Wish List #2.

Crime is not going to go away and neither is the threat of terrorism or adverse weather. Our investment in the men and women of the Dallas Police Department is our surest way of being prepared for emergencies in our area.