

Texas
Judicial
Academy

2009 Fall Administrative Workshop
Texas Judicial Academy

Monday, November 16, 2009


1:00 – 2:30 pm

**“How Counties
Benefit from their
Councils of
Government (COG)”**

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Overview of Regional Councils of Government and their Programs




*Full Judicial Education Session
Omni Hotel Baytown, Corpus Christi*

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Food for thought: 

"Everything is changing. People are taking comedians seriously and the politicians as a joke." Will Rogers (1879-1935)

"The only thing we really know about the future is that it will be different." Peter F. Drucker (1909-2005)

Today's Objectives 

- Describe background, composition and governance of Regional Councils
- Provide overview of major program areas
- Discuss State-Regional-Local Cooperation Model
- Q & A

What are Regional Councils?



- Voluntary associations of local governments
- Recognized as political subdivisions of the state
- Also known as:
 - Councils of Government (ex.-AACOG)
 - Regional Planning Commissions (ex.-SETRPC)
 - Associations of Government (ex.-SPAG)
 - Area Councils (ex.-H-GAC)
 - Development Councils (ex.-LRGVDC)
- Similar, but reflect each region's special needs

Why do we need regions?




Texas' Vast & Diverse Geography

- ★ 267,338 square miles
- ★ 1,453 jurisdictions (including 254 counties)
- ★ 21 million residents
- ★ 5,206 first responder agencies
- ★ 1,200 mile border with Mexico
- ★ 367 mile coastline
- ★ Coastal plains in southeast Texas
- ★ Hills in central Texas
- ★ Mountains in west Texas
- ★ Forests in east Texas

Why plan with more than one government?



- Aids unified, far-reaching development of region
- Eliminates duplication of services
- Promotes economy and efficiency through coordinated regional solutions to shared problems (economic development, law enforcement training, planning for transportation, water supply, drainage, land use, air & water quality, solid waste disposal, etc.)


Texas Association of Regional Councils 

- ★ Full-time Executive Director
- ★ 6 Staff Members
 - ★ Associate Director/General Counsel
 - ★ Emergency Preparedness Director
 - ★ Citizen Corps Manager
 - ★ Membership Services Coordinator
 - ★ Aging Program Coordinator
 - ★ Economic Development Program Manager

Texas Association of Regional Councils 

Major Program Support

- ★ Emergency Communications
- ★ Health and Human Services
- ★ Homeland Security & Emergency Preparedness
- ★ Transportation
- ★ Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement
- ★ Solid Waste
- ★ Community and Economic Development
- ★ Workforce

Texas Association of Regional Councils 

81st Legislative Session – Successes

- ★ TARC provided information and served as a resource, supporting regional solutions to public policy issues.
- ★ Worked with our partners such as TAC, TML, CJCAT and CUC
- ★ TARC was frequently asked during the session to provide data on certain bills to House and Senate committees and the Legislative Council. We also were often asked to coordinate testimony in support of various bills.

Texas Association of Regional Councils



- ★ Provided information to the Senate Transportation and Homeland Security Committee which led to simplified legislation supporting a statewide mutual aid system;
- ★ Helped insure that the current level of funding for the Municipal Solid Waste Grant Program was maintained at a level of \$21,972,648 distributed statewide among the 24 regions.
- ★ Testified before Transportation and Homeland Security Committee which simplified legislation supporting a statewide mutual aid system
- ★ Testified before House Agriculture Committee in support of SB 684 which would have established a Texas Rural Development Fund
- ★ Worked to insure that rural elected officials would have a more clearly-defined method of providing input to TxDOT transportation planning decisions through RPOs
- ★ TARC ensured that the current level of funding for the Municipal Solid Waste Grant Program was maintained at a level of \$21,972,648 distributed statewide among the 24 regions.

Program Area Highlight:
Homeland Security in Texas



State-Regional-Local Cooperation Model

- ★ Texas utilizes State-Regional-Local Cooperation model for homeland security funding to local governments
 - ★ Incorporates regional planning into state strategies for use of funds
 - ★ DPS Regional boundaries recently redrawn to conform to COG boundaries--simplifies planning and response activities (MACC)
 - ★ 24 Councils of Government tapped by Governor for:
 - Distributing information;
 - Involving local officials;
 - Assisting local governments; and
 - Developing regional plans and priorities

COG Responsibilities in Homeland Security Planning



- ★ Assess regional capabilities and needs
- ★ Develop regional first-responder plans
- ★ Assist local jurisdictions in completing assessment of capabilities and needs
- ★ Assist local jurisdictions with responsibilities as recipients of grant funds
- ★ Assist local jurisdictions in updating/establishing local emergency management plans and mutual aid agreements
- ★ Assist local jurisdictions in meeting and implementing goals and objective of Texas Homeland Security Strategic Plan, 2005-2010 (new 2010-2015 version in development)

Texas Homeland Security Grants to Local Governments



- ★ \$ 61.8 Million awarded from Federal FY 2002 funds
 - ★ \$ 178.5 Million awarded from Federal FY 2003 funds
 - ★ \$ 187.5 Million awarded from Federal FY 2004 funds
 - ★ \$ 111.2 Million awarded from Federal FY 2005 funds
 - ★ \$ 115.7 Million awarded from Federal FY 2006 funds
 - ★ \$ 105 Million awarded from Federal FY 2007 funds
 - ★ \$118 Million awarded from Federal FY 2008 funds
 - ★ \$116 Million awarded and in process for FY2009
- TOTAL \$993.7 Million (8 years)

Texas Homeland Security Milestones



- | | |
|------------------|---|
| May 2002 | Activated Regional Response to Governor's Request <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •To provide information, involvement, assistance to cities and counties •To develop regional homeland security strategic plans |
| September 2002 | Regional strategic plans completed |
| January 30, 2004 | Texas is the first state to receive unqualified approval from the United States Department of Homeland Security for its initial State Strategic Plan |
| November 2005 | Texas Homeland Security Strategic Plan 2005-2010 released by Governor |
| January 2007 | Statewide Level 4 Interoperable Radio Communications |
| August 2007 | State receives one-time \$65 million grant through the Public Safety Interoperable Communications Grant from the Department of National Telecommunication and Information Administration (NTIA) |

Texas Homeland Security Milestones (cont.)



- September 2008 Texas Disaster Districts aligned with COG boundaries
- September 2009 Texas DPS District boundaries redrawn to follow COG boundaries (no more than 4 per COG region)
- October 2009 Texas Homeland Security Strategic Plan 2010-2015 developed by Stakeholders
- November 2009 Texas Homeland Security Strategic Plan 2010-2015 to be released by Governor Perry

Homeland Security & Emergency Preparedness Overview



FY2009 HSGP State Priorities

1. Measure progress in achieving the National Preparedness Guidelines
2. Strengthen planning and citizen preparedness capabilities
3. Strengthen Chemical, Biological, Radiological/Nuclear and Explosive detection, response and decontamination capabilities
4. Strengthen information-sharing and collaboration capabilities.
5. Strengthen medical surge and mass immunization capabilities

Homeland Security & Emergency Preparedness Overview



Public Safety Interoperable Communications Grant

- ★ The Councils of Government were an integral part in the successful completion and submission of the 2008 Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan (SCIP) resulting in a federal grant of \$65 m. to Texas, with \$48 m. allocated to local jurisdictions
- ★ The Councils of Government continue to be key partners in the planning, revision and execution of Texas Strategic Interoperable Communications Plan (T-SCIP).
- ★ The Councils of Government are actively engaged in completion deliverables related to the FY2008 PSIC Grant and the FY2008 Interoperable Emergency Communications Grant Program (IECGP).
- ★ The T-SCIP continues to be the primary guidance document for Texas in determining funding priorities for interoperable communications technologies.
- ★ Regional Interoperable Communications Plans (R-ICPs), Communications Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and Governance Documents are being generated by the COGs utilizing IECGP funds. Once these initiatives are complete, future IECGP funds may be used to purchase approved interoperable communications equipment.

Homeland Security & Emergency Preparedness Overview



Ongoing State Priorities

- ★ Training and Exercises
 - ★ Availability of adequate training to first responders, volunteers, elected officials as well as training to address requirements of special needs populations;
 - ★ Statewide exercises to address different scenarios and identify shortfalls for improvement, such as the recent hurricane evacuation exercise.
- ★ Citizen Participation in Statewide Preparedness
 - ★ Citizen Corps
 - ★ CERT – Community Emergency Response Teams
 - ★ VIPS – Volunteers in Police Service
 - ★ MRC – Medical Reserve Corps
 - ★ NW – Neighborhood Watch
 - ★ FC – Fire Corps
- ★ Include School Districts and Private Sector in all Preparedness Planning

Texas Citizen Corps Program



★ The Citizen Corps' mission is to actively involve all citizens in hometown security through personal preparedness, training, exercises, and volunteer service.

- ★ 82 Citizen Corps Councils
- ★ 442 CERT Teams
- ★ 89 Fire Corps Programs
- ★ 82 Volunteers in Police Service Programs
- ★ 34 Medical Reserve Corps Programs
- ★ 1,599 Registered Neighborhood Watch Programs

Texas Citizen Corps Program

Goals



- ★ Statewide Media Campaign
 - ★ Create awareness of and participation in the Texas Citizen Corps Program
- ★ Expand Neighborhood Watch /Volunteers in Police Service
 - ★ Emphasis on the Texas-Mexico border
 - ★ Enhance the capacity of state and local law enforcement to utilize volunteers to make communities in Texas safer, stronger, and better prepared to respond to any emergency situatio.
- ★ Expand TEEN CERT
 - ★ Empower students with skills to respond to emergency situations in their schools and communities
- ★ Expand Fire Corps
 - ★ Emphasize smoke alarms & promote fire prevention
 - ★ Enhance cross-training opportunities

Community & Economic Development



TARC is targeting its first economic development summit for South Texas in the coming months.

TARC is also working closely with US Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA), and the Governor's Office to enhance the economic development capabilities of each of the COGs which also function as Economic Development Districts (EDDs) --- 22 of the 24 COGs.

Community & Economic Development



- 1) TARC works closely with US Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA), Texas Comptroller, Texas Department of Rural Affairs (TDRA), State Energy Conservation Office (SECO) and the Governor's Office to enhance the economic development capabilities of each of the COGs.
 - 22 of 24 Councils of Government are recognized by US DOC, EDA as Economic Development Districts (EDDs) --- 22 of the 24 COGs.
 - EDDs are incorporated public nonprofit organizations organized to represent the general economic interests of the region's membership.
 - EDDs provide professional economic development, planning, and business development services and financial products to its membership and an understanding of the impact of public programs, available options and alternative decisions.
- 2) TARC is targeting its first regional economic development summit for South Texas in the coming months with the South Texas Development Council.
- 3) TARC assists EDDs and regions with meeting EDA Investment Program goals.

EDA Investment Programs



- Public Works and Economic Development investments help support the construction or rehabilitation of essential public infrastructure and facilities.
- The Economic Adjustment Assistance Program provides a wide range of technical, planning and infrastructure assistance.
- The Research and National Technical Assistance Program supports research of leading, world class economic development practices, and funds information dissemination efforts.
- The Local Technical Assistance Program helps fill the knowledge and information gaps that may prevent leaders in the public and nonprofit sectors in economically distressed regions.
- The Planning Program helps support planning organizations, including District Organizations and Indian Tribes, in the development, implementation, revision or replacement of comprehensive economic development strategies (CEDs).
- EDA's Global Climate Change Mitigation Incentive Fund (GCCMIF) was established to strengthen the linkages between economic development and environmental quality.
- EDA administers the Trade Adjustment Assistance for Firms Program through a national network of eleven Trade Adjustment Assistance Centers to help manufacturing and production firms.

EDA-Approved Investments FY2008-Texas



EDA-approved Investments in Texas Totaled \$14,595,000

- \$8,788,000 – Public Works & Economic Development (60% of Funding)
- \$2,600,000 – Economic Adjustment Assistance Program (18% of funding)
- \$1,741,000 – Global Climate Change Mitigation Fund (12% of funding)

Sample Projects:

- Tyler EDC - \$100,000 – Economic Adjustment Strategy
- Clarksville - \$1,000,000 – Public Works
- Texarkana - \$1,200,000 – Public Works
- Capital Area EDD - \$150,000 – Economic Development District Planning
- TEEEX - \$437,000 – Economic Adjustment Strategy
- Cameron County - \$200,000 – Economic Adjustment Implementation
- UT El Paso - \$198,000 – University Center Assistance

Area Agencies on Aging



- Each COG is the Area Agency on Aging for the region and coordinates a variety of aging programs (Meals-on-Wheels, congregate meals, nursing home ombudsman, etc.)
- AAAs participate in the "Texas Falls Prevention Coalition" to help our elderly population avoid life-threatening falls through proper training, exercise and education.

Criminal Justice Planning & Training



- Many COGs operate regional law enforcement training academies or contract with local colleges to provide law enforcement training.
- Counties and cities benefit from the cost-effective local programs.

Solid Waste Planning



- A solid waste coordinator at each COG (funded by portion of landfill tipping fee through TCEQ) coordinates municipal solid waste planning....with the goal of reducing the stream of solid waste to our landfills.
- Focus: recycling, composting & illegal dumping
- Educational programs on waste diversion & household hazardous waste collection
- Approximately 500 local projects, 3600 events

Emergency Communications/9-1-1



- Many COGs train emergency dispatchers and operate 9-1-1 call centers for their regions in a cost-effective approach to high-quality emergency communications service.
- TARC works closely with the Commission on State Emergency Communications to insure that as the fields of emergency communications and interoperable communication move toward a point of convergence, all stakeholders remain well informed and engaged.

Food for Thought:



“The successful organizations of the next decade will be those who learn to collaborate and build partnerships.” *Tom Peters*

“If you want to be incrementally better, be competitive. If you want to be exponentially better, be cooperative.” *Unknown source*

Upcoming TARC Events in 2009-2010



- ★ Quarterly Meetings
 - ★ December 9-11, 2009 – Austin
 - ★ March 10-12, 2010 – Austin
 - ★ July 14-16, 2010 – Austin
- ★ Annual Conference
 - ★ Save the Date: September 15-17, 2010
 - Omni Colonnade Hotel, San Antonio
- ★ Check the TARC website for updates: www.txregionalcouncil.org
