Communications Coordination Group (CCG)
MISSION

To facilitate interagency coordination and collaboration to provide efficient and effective planning and execution of communications support to joint, interagency, and intergovernmental task forces prior to a disaster and will implement and update communications plans during a disaster.

In other words......

To provide an integrated, state wide approach to communications.

The CCG was formalized under the State of Texas Legislative and Executive Mandates effective September 1, 2009.

TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE
Sec. 418.051
Why was the CCG created?
Why the CCG was created:

KATRINA
In 2005, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita exposed some major flaws in our state and local emergency communications capabilities.

- There were failures in communications systems, telephone service stopped, and backup generators at critical facilities failed or were non-existent.

- Revealed the need to work with community organizations to identify their needs and to maintain effective communications with vulnerable groups.

- Revealed the need for more effective ways to maintain information and communication systems among transport system managers, staff and users under normal and extreme conditions.

- Revealed the need for better ways to communicate with residents and travelers under emergency conditions.
Multiple agencies began addressing issues that were revealed by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

• Failures in communications systems
  • Agencies began acquiring communications platforms and equipment with interoperable radio systems, satellite systems to support phones, etc.

• Generators at critical facilities
  • Since generators either are not in place, or fail, these platforms were equipped with their own power sources.
Addressing needs - continued

• Work with community organizations
• Maintain information and communication systems among transport system managers, staff and users under normal and extreme conditions.
• Communicate with residents and travelers under emergency conditions.

Groups of communications and emergency management personnel began meeting to discuss the needs of community organizations and to begin planning ways to maintain communication during disasters. They also discussed transport systems needs, and came up with better ways to communicate with residents and travelers.
After review of emergency management response efforts to the 2008 hurricane season in the State of Texas, it was determined that the Communications efforts for the state should be further integrated into a combined team of local, city, county, territorial, Tribal Nation and State resources, coupled with MOU from other states and further support from federal partners.
2008
Hurricane Ike swamps Galveston Island
In the spring of 2009, the 81st Texas Legislature mandated the creation of the Communications Coordination Group under the Texas Division of Emergency Management.
What the CCG does

1) Maintains awareness of available commercial, military, and government communications resources.

2) Monitors the current status of commercial communications infrastructures.

3) Reviews all requests for communications assistance sent to the State Operations Center (SOC).

4) Assists the SOC with assigning the mission to the appropriate agency.

5) Coordinates with commercial telecommunications providers to establish priorities on re-establishment of commercial communications infrastructure.
What the CCG does

6) Utilizes a network control center with systems tracking capability to track, monitor the status of, and coordinate the use of all deployed assets.

7) Serves as a “channel of communication” between the stakeholders in Federal, State and local agencies.

8) Provides guidance/recommendations to the TDEM on functional requirements.

9) Reviews information and issues provided by various groups to verify functions, resources, and compliance with statutory requirements and DHS/OEC guidance.

10) Fosters communications, information sharing and working relations with the federal emergency planning representatives.
Who Belongs?

The CCG is comprised of representatives from agencies identified in the legislative mandate, and other agencies and private entities selected by the Texas Division of Emergency Management.

Texas DPS Public Safety Communications Service has been designated by TDEM to operate the CCG.

The members of the CCG cooperate to perform the functions of the Communications Support Group as defined by the U. S. Department of Homeland Security – Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at the state level.

The CCG will coordinate with federal counterparts for Communications Support Group efforts at the national level.
Who Belongs?

The Texas Military Forces (J6)

The Department of Public Safety of the State of Texas

The Federal Emergency Management Agency

Federal Agencies that comprise Emergency Support Function #2, (Comm. Support Group)

Telecommunications Industry, & cable service providers as defined by Section 66.002*

Electric Utilities as defined by Section 31.002*

Gas Utilities as defined by Sections 101.003* and 121.001*

The National Guard’s Joint Continental United States Communications Support Environment

The National Guard Bureau

Amateur Radio Operator Groups

The Texas Forest Service

* Utilities Code
Who Belongs?

The Texas Department of Transportation

The General Land Office

The Texas Engineering Extension Service of the Texas A&M University System

The Public Utility Commission of Texas

The Railroad Commission of Texas

The Department of State Health Services

The Judicial Branch of State Government

The Texas Association of Regional Councils

The United States Air Force Auxiliary Civil Air Patrol, Texas Wing

Each trauma service area regional advisory council, & agencies, counties, & municipalities affected by the emergency

Other agencies and organizations as determined by the Texas DEM
There are 12 State Agencies named in the statute.

Partners and other members include approximately 75 private organizations, and up to 200 Local, Volunteer, and Federal Agencies.

These include Commercial Communications providers, Councils of Governments, Fire Departments, Police Departments, Sheriff’s Departments, Amateur Radio Organizations, Disaster Relief Organizations, and several Federal Agencies.
CCG Operating Principles

The CCG will coordinate all Communications Support Group tactical and infrastructure communications, only if the emergency has exceeded the capabilities of the local first responder organization, and at the request of the local DDC to the SOC.

This organization will provide a combined coordination and control, coupled with funding, for consolidated first responder efforts for the State of Texas or for Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) for efforts outside the state.

All Industry Providers for communications within the State of Texas will work within the structure of the CCG Coordination and Control. Industry Providers may be considered “first responders” and may be represented in the CCG Command Center.
When was the CCG Utilized?

Ike – 2008
• CCG not yet created
• TDEM worked with DPS Communications to coordinate a response among several agencies.
• The concept of a Communications Coordination Group was born.

Alex – 2010
• CCG coordinated the Communications Response

T S Hermine – 2010
• CCG prepared to deploy assets, but deployment was not needed

Texas Fires – 2011 & 2012
• CCG has coordinated communications response to several wildfires.
HOW IT WORKS

CCG is a part of the SOC and operates from within the Infrastructure Branch.

When state-level coordination of telecommunications is required, the SOC will activate the CCG.

Based on situational requirements, a CCG Representative may be assigned to the SOC, usually a Texas DPS Communications COML.
Other CCG members are called to fill certain positions at Camp Mabry, where tracking and status monitoring are conducted, and plans are developed and implemented to conduct a well organized response.

CCG will contact supporting state agencies to report the current situation, and request status of ability to deploy.

CCG will provide coordination and control of radio, cellular, and satellite communications requests in support of first responders.
At level 4, CCG members should review, evaluate and update operating procedures, update call lists, and train personnel, etc.

At level 3, CCG members may receive an e-mail or phone call to ensure that they are ready to respond. Some incident specific planning will begin.

At level 2, the CCG will be activated if required. May begin staffing the CCG Command Center at Camp Mabry.

At level 1, the CCG will implement actions to accomplish mission assignments. Personnel will be assigned to the SOC and the CCG Command Center at Camp Mabry.

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<tr>
<th>EMERGENCY READINESS &amp; RESPONSE LEVEL</th>
<th>HAZARD</th>
<th>AGENCY</th>
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<td>Escalated Response Conditions</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Emergency Conditions</td>
<td>All CSF Agencies</td>
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STATUS REPORTING

**CCG** - apprise the SOC of actions to restore state government telecommunications service, including estimated completion times.

**Support organizations** - report to the CCG when the assets are prepared for movement, when the assets have deployed, and when the assets are operational.

**PUC** - monitor the status of commercial telecommunications companies to restore service within affected areas, report the status to the CCG.

**Support agencies** - maintain a financial accounting of resources for federal reimbursement purposes.
ONWARD FROM HERE

Reimbursement – A working group has developed resource typing standards that allow us to work with TDEM to determine appropriate FEMA reimbursement rates. (RASP System)

Commercial Communication Providers – Working to build relationships with key personnel through the Public Utilities Commission, developing reporting and collaboration strategies.

Charter – Edit the current charter, and pursue final ratification.

CCG MOU - Secure final approval, distribute for signatures.

TERT – Telecommunicator Emergency Response Taskforce
Include as resource.
RESOURCES

State of Texas Emergency Management Plan – Annex B (Communications)
http://www.dps.texas.gov/dem

Texas Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan
http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/LawEnforcementSupport/communications/interop/documents/texasSCIP.pdf

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