Public Safety Exercise to Be Conducted This Week to Test Regional Interoperability Among First Responders

ETCOG to Host Workshop & Communications Exercise May 17-19 in Tyler

Tyler, TX, April 14, 2019: East Texas first responders in the ETCOG region have been invited to take part in a regional public safety exercise and workshop testing interoperability among emergency communications systems. The Regional Exercise / Workshop will be held at the Tyler Junior College West Campus (1530 S SW Loop 323) beginning on Friday, May 17th, at 2:00 PM and go through 3 PM on Sunday, May 19th. Radio communications tests will be conducted throughout the three-day exercise and are scheduled among workshop courses on the communication systems and technology capacities, and on the future of emergency communications.

The event is coordinated in partnership with the Texas Department of Public Safety – Texas Division of Emergency Management, the RAC-G Pineywoods Regional Advisory Council, and the East Texas Council of Governments. First responders from Anderson, Camp, Cherokee, Gregg, Harrison, Henderson, Marion, Panola, Rains, Rusk, Smith, Upshur, Van Zandt, and Wood Counties will be participating in the public safety exercise which has a purpose of improving the coordination of communications to provide better emergency service response.

“Communications and interoperability challenges continue to plague our emergency responses,” said Russell Marshall, event coordinator and Fire Chief/EMC for the City of Athens. “The number one topic that is present in every after-action review is problems with communications. The only way we are ever going to fix this is for all of us to consistently train and be abreast of current trends, plans, protocols, and technologies. Attendees of our training will have an opportunity to see regional assets and talk with the colleagues that manage them. They will learn what is included in the Texas Statewide Interoperability Channel Plan and how that affects their organization. And hopefully, they will leave knowing how to train others in their organization how to communicate properly.”

The event will take place at the Tyler Junior College West Campus Friday and Saturday, and then agencies will travel to command platforms on Sunday to test operational capacities. An agenda and map for the event are linked. Registration is needed to participate at www.preparingtexas.org/.
For questions and on-site inquiries, contact ETCOG’s Public Safety Manager, Donetta Miller, at 903-983-6814, or Deaun Stinecipher, District Coordinator for the Texas Department of Public Safety - Texas Division of Emergency Management, at 903-939-6072.

About ETCOG
The East Texas Council of Governments (ETCOG) is a voluntary association of counties, cities, school districts and special districts within the fourteen-county East Texas region. ETCOG assists local governments in planning for common needs, cooperating for mutual benefit and coordinating for sound regional development. Established in 1970, ETCOG, either directly, or through its contractors, provides programs and services for East Texas seniors, employers, and job seekers. ETCOG and its contractors also build the 9-1-1 emergency call delivery system, provide peace officer training and homeland security planning services; and deliver rural transportation services, business finance programs, and environmental grant funding for the region.

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