



Central Texas Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster

COOPERATION | COMMUNICATION | COORDINATION | COLLABORATION

A meeting of the CENTRAL TEXAS VOAD was held on February 8, 2018 at Disability Rights Texas Offices located at 2222 West Braker Lane, Austin, TX.

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS – Dan Knauff

Dan Knauff – American Red Cross
Katya Howard – American Red Cross
Bob Andrews – Austin Baptist Disaster Relief
Christine Reyes-Paiz – Catholic Charities
Cathy Norman – Church of Scientology
Jill Smith – City of Austin – APH
Sara Record – Disability Rights Texas
Scott Rowe – LDS Church
Damian Morales – OneStar Foundation
Amy Sharp – TCDS
Barbara-Commissioner Brigid Shea’s office
Jim Spence
Jim Jones

Taylor Wolter – OneStar Foundation
Shelby Thomas – OneStar Foundation
Alan Ford – Presbyterian Church USA
Annie Harton – TARG
Anna Tangredi – TARG/DLT/VOAD
Robert Vidaurri – ADRN
J.P. Loh – Tzu Chi
Betty Learned – Volunteer
Holli Tietjen-Hale – Texas Animal Health Commission
Joe Hillis – ITDRC
Debbie Hillis – ITDRC
Laura Stough – Ctr on Disability & Development
Mike Jones, Hayes County

Minutes from previous meeting were sent with meeting invite. Dan asked if there were any revisions/edits. There were none. Anna Tangredi motioned to approve; Cathy Norman gave a 2nd. Minutes were approved unanimously.

Mr. Loh asked about the conferences overlapping (State/National) and the difference between the State VOAD and Central Tx VOAD.

- Anna explained that this year conferences are being held at different times; there will be discounts for members for the TDEM Conference. This info will be sent to everyone.
- The State VOAD is the umbrella over local/community VOADs. If you are a member of Texas VOAD, this means you can respond state-wide. Central Texas VOAD responds in our area.

Anna Tangredi – After Action Review

Intro: Survey was sent out to get an idea of how Central Texas VOAD responded. Based on results, we may need to develop at least 4 committees: Donations, Volunteer Management, Emotional/Spiritual Care, and Case Management. There would be points of contact for each committee, and would follow guidelines of the State and National VOADs.

- Jill Smith noted there is a case management group already – they met monthly prior to Harvey. Could be reconvened.
- Dan K. suggested a committee dealing with the MARC. (City is currently in charge of this.)
- Jill S. said this was an action point from the city and should be coming.

- Betty L. suggested that the city should include reps from Central Texas VOAD to make better cross-communication.

RESULTS OF SURVEY:

Q1: Information was received from VOAD in a regular and timely manner, enabling my organization to respond. 72.22% Yes; 5.56% No.

- Organization needs to develop a messaging policy that is regular and timely.
- More push of information as opposed to responding or limiting it to active participants.
- Participation is encouraged, but what about non-vetted orgs?
- National/State calls were being held and we had to work around those.
- Mailing list was not available for people to get information out. Needs to be central. Will share w/ city/cty.
- Need to have one leader for CTV (Central Texas VOAD).
- If TARG has a seat, this could help.
- Someone from One Star in EOC to send out communications.

Q2: Resources from my organization were available and ready to be put to use immediately. 55.56% Yes; 16.67% No; 27.78 N/A to Organization.

- Some organizations have to coordinate resources through state or national organization. In addition, some services are more long-term.
- Question perhaps should have stated “when needed” instead of “immediately” since some orgs are LTR.

Q3: A representative from my organization was able to attend all (or most) weekly disaster calls hosted by Central Texas VOAD. 66.67% Yes; 5.56% No; 27.76% Comments.

- Not sure whether disaster calls were hosted by Central Texas VOAD or Tx VOAD.
- We attended in the beginning, but unfortunately due to the statewide magnitude of the event, our schedule would not allow. I will work to ensure we attend all calls in the future.
- No cell phone svc in some areas where responders were.
- There needs to be a primary & secondary lead person.
- Taylor (One Star) is Comm. Chr.
- Each org has a representative.
- Could calls be recorded/annotated and sent out? Send to membership after calls or put in centralized place. Include section on current NEEDS. Use colors to show what has changed since last call.

Q4: My organization participated in helping survivors/evacuees. 88.89% Yes; 11.11% No.

Q5: We were given adequate time to prepare for the MARC (Multi-Agency Recovery Center). 58.82% Yes; 41.18% No.

- Raising funds & developing adequate number of volunteers to man table.
- There is never enough time to prepare for disasters. Perhaps we could give a “heads up” at the onset of disaster, however.
- Completed damage assessment is always a factor locally. I’m not sure whether there is ever enough adequate time with a major hurricane hit.
- -Work with city/cty on MARC to give time for prep. Presume there WILL be a MARC. Don’t put MARC at a shelter. Dan K. suggested we have a MARC task force & work with local govt.
- There was no vetting at the MARC. No cash in the future as this caused a huge problem.

- People were just walking in to the MARC w/ no FEMA #.
- Timeline for after disaster response. Immediate needs vs needs afterwards.

Q6: My organization participated in the MARC (Multi-Agency Resource Center). 44.44% Yes; 55.56% No.

- Some orgs need approvals before participation. Takes time.
- Provide education so city/county knows what is needed.
- What is needed at a shelter vs MARC?
- Way to track pop-ups and vet them.
- There are several food pantries in Austin (some have restrictions). But evacuees had no transportation. CTX Food Bank was wonderful.
- City couldn't get info on where people were in hotels, but worked hard to help.

Q7: It was unclear how my organization could assist survivors based on the information that was given. 11.11% True; 88.89% False.

- Info that was given out was clear.
- Info changed minute by minute.
- Get the private sector involved to make it a 1-stop shop for survivors. (Cell phone, water co, electricity, etc.)
- Make connections with private sector and city/cty.

Q8: More time was needed to acquire immediate resources before the MARC opened. 50% Yes; 50% No.

Q9: I would be willing to work in the EOC (Emergency Operations Center) during the next disaster. 64.71% Yes; 35.29% No.

- Not enough capacity within orgs to help.
- Need list of people willing to participate, and train prior.

Q10: A list of all VOAD members/resources with contacts would be helpful to my organization. 100% Yes.

- Need resource list with response timetable.
- Contacts/phone #s.
- Members and "Friends" (orgs who respond in time of need, not necessarily all local)

Q11: How could VOAD communicate more effectively in future disasters?

1. More actively pushing out notice of opportunities to receive information. For example, the conference calls. My organization would have participated in many of them, had we known when and how to access them. That was a greater barrier to joining calls than anything else. (Friends of VOAD that pop up during a disaster).
2. I think developing a communication/coordination plan in the very beginning would be very helpful.
3. They do a great job.
4. Start conference calls early & development of an available resource list with persons to contact that can be point person for their organization for that particular disaster. Have this list available to use in EOC in an easily updatable format.
5. Need 3-5 days to request volunteers and set-up coverage schedule. Also need time to collect funds, goods or service commitments.

6. Command Center Person for VOAD to answer questions with number given out to all.
7. Secure multiple levels of organizations' leadership for direct targeted communications.
8. More communication needed regarding what other organizations are actively doing and what resources they already have on hand. (Training on WEB EOC, how to access, etc., so orgs know what is on-hand. Include info in daily communication to VOAD orgs.)
9. Instead of one regular coordination call, break things up into sub-committees like we do for LTR. Less chaos that way. (Have tried; didn't work. Committees overlap and people don't know everything that is happening.) Individuals would need to be on numerous calls.
10. Development of a texting system to alert members. (GroupMe, or other. Emails may be hard to access on phone. Define what gets alerted by text – maybe more immediate needs. Conference Call #/Code.)
11. Email and phone.

Q12: It would be helpful to know city/county personnel & functions. For example, "Who is Incident Commander? Who is the lead for the MARC? Who is the lead for Case Management?" 88.24% Yes; 11.76% No.

- Provide VOAD list to EOC upon arrival, ask for theirs each day.
- City provided a phone number to ADRN each day since their person in charge changed, but the number did not.

Q13: Overall, I believe Central Texas VOAD's response to Hurricane Harvey was: 43.75% Outstanding; 37.50% Adequate; 18.75% In Need of Improvement.

- Always room for improvement.
- Relationships developed are valuable and help achieve the final result.

Stay tuned for actions coming out of this survey.

Announcements:

Katya Howard, Red Cross – There is a **Smoke Alarm installation event** on Saturday, April 28th. Looking for 400 volunteers to go door-to-door in the Quail Creek neighborhood to provide safety/training tips and install smoke detectors. Training will be given in the morning with neighborhood canvassing in the afternoon. Visit www.soundthealarm.org to sign up!

Upcoming Conferences:

Texas Emergency Management Conference is May 15th – 18th in San Antonio. Damian will ask for discount rate (through Susanna).

Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center
900 East Market Street
San Antonio, TX 78205

National VOAD Conference:

NATIONAL VOAD 2018 CONFERENCE
PROVIDENCE, RI | MAY 7-10, 2018

Next meeting: April 12th.

Meeting adjourned: 12:02.