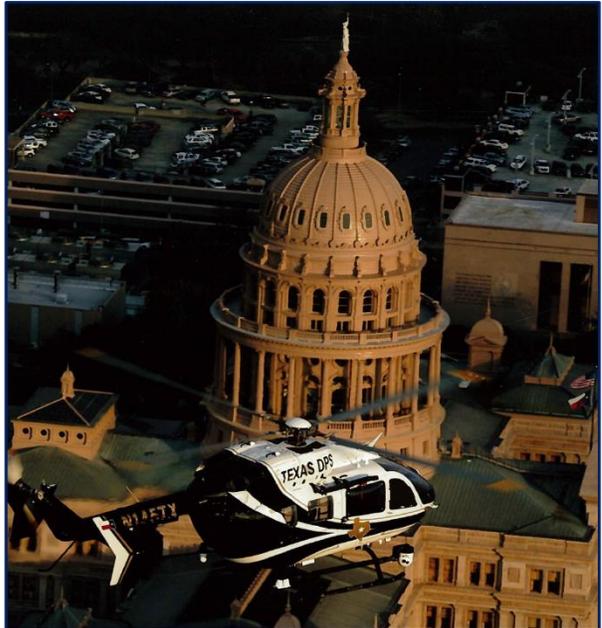




TEXAS HOMELAND SECURITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2030



LETTER FROM THE GOVERNOR

Dear Fellow Texans:

The past five years have demonstrated the breadth and severity of the homeland security challenges facing Texas. Unprecedented numbers of illegal border crossings, a winter storm that left millions of Texans without power, tragic losses of life in Uvalde and Kerr Counties, and many other significant incidents have impacted our communities and yielded crucial lessons. In addition, we face daily threats from transnational criminal organizations, street gangs, cyber criminals, and increasingly hostile foreign nations. Rapid technological advancements in areas such as unmanned systems and artificial intelligence add further complexity to this dynamic threat environment.

The *Texas Homeland Security Strategic Plan 2021-2025* has guided important statewide initiatives to build, sustain, and employ homeland security capabilities. This document, the *Texas Homeland Security Strategic Plan 2026-2030*, supersedes the previous strategy and includes many updates and enhancements. It will serve as a framework for developing capabilities and organizing efforts to prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from attacks and disasters. For it to be effective, Texas must engage the entire homeland security enterprise—including state, local, and tribal agencies; elected officials; private sector partners; and individual citizens—in a continuous process to actively manage homeland security risk and foster a culture of learning and improvement. Our goal is to ensure homeland security partners across the state are ready to deliver the right capabilities whenever and wherever needed to ensure a secure and resilient Texas.

As we work together to implement this strategy, we understand that Texas will continue to face a wide variety of threats and hazards, some of which may be unpredictable, to our people and critical infrastructure. As a team, we will meet these challenges and protect our great state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Greg Abbott". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Greg" being more prominent than the last name "Abbott".

Greg Abbott
Governor of Texas

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The *Texas Homeland Security Strategic Plan 2026-2030* is the state’s framework for establishing homeland security priorities and focusing a wide variety of activities to develop, sustain, and employ homeland security capabilities. It builds upon the foundation established in the *Texas Homeland Security Strategic Plan 2021-2025* and previous homeland security strategies, and it includes many adjustments based on recent progress, new guidance and direction, and changes in Texas’ risk landscape. Effective implementation will require active monitoring, assessment, and management of homeland security risk, with corresponding changes to our priorities and activities.

Section I of the strategy explains its purpose and scope, establishing the state’s vision for homeland security and the fundamental principles that will guide our actions.

Section II summarizes the breadth and magnitude of the homeland security challenges facing Texas. It describes the state’s homeland security environment and discusses threats and hazards, vulnerabilities, potential consequences, and notable trends.

Section III establishes the Goals, Objectives, and Priority Actions that describe our homeland security priorities over the next five years. It includes six Goals (one for each mission area of Prevent, Protect, Mitigate, Respond, and Recover, and a new Goal focused on enhancing enabling capabilities), 31 Objectives, and 158 Priority Actions.

Texas Homeland Security Goals 2026-2030	
Goal 1: Prevent	Prevent terrorist and hostile foreign nation attacks and organized criminal activity in Texas.
Goal 2: Protect	Reduce the state's vulnerability to terrorist, criminal, and hostile foreign nation attacks and natural and technological disasters.
Goal 3: Mitigate	Minimize the impact of terrorist, criminal, and hostile foreign nation attacks and natural and technological disasters through proactive mitigation planning and programs.
Goal 4: Respond	Increase the capability of the state's response system to minimize damage and loss of life from terrorist, criminal, and hostile foreign nation attacks and natural and technological disasters.
Goal 5: Recover	Ensure rapid, effective, and comprehensive community recovery following terrorist, criminal, and hostile foreign nation attacks and natural or technological disasters.
Goal 6: Enable	Develop and enhance the enabling capabilities needed to support statewide efforts across all homeland security mission areas.

SECTION I: PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES

SCOPE

The *Texas Homeland Security Strategic Plan (THSSP) 2021-2025* provided an overarching framework for organizing and prioritizing the state's efforts to enhance its security and resilience. Texas has been effective in implementing it over the past five years, while confronting a wide range of threats, hazards, and catastrophic incidents. This document, the *Texas Homeland Security Strategic Plan 2026-2030*, supersedes the previous strategy. Given the enduring nature of its guiding principles and purpose, the overall structure and some areas of this document are largely unchanged; however, it has been comprehensively updated to reflect progress in implementing the previous strategy, organizational changes, legislative direction, new priorities, evolving risks, and other factors.

This strategy is intended to serve as a guide for managing homeland security risk in Texas by developing and sustaining capabilities, planning for their employment, and coordinating action at the state, regional, local, tribal, and private sector levels. It fulfills requirements established in Chapter 421 (Homeland Security) of the Texas Government Code and is aligned with federal strategic guidance including the National Security Strategy, National Preparedness Goal, National Planning Frameworks, and relevant Presidential Directives. While it establishes priorities that should be addressed through use of homeland security-related grant funding from multiple federal programs, these priorities can also be advanced in a number of additional ways, including state and local appropriations.

Homeland security is inherently a multi-agency, multi-jurisdictional, and public-private effort. The THSSP is a statewide strategy, with applicability for state agencies, regional organizations, local and tribal governments, private sector organizations, and the public. In general, local jurisdictions prepare for their most likely threats and hazards, and state agencies must be prepared to assist with catastrophic events that exceed local capability. Effective public-private coordination is critical to the success of homeland security initiatives and is encouraged in many areas of this plan; however, private sector participation is voluntary, and government agencies must take all appropriate measures to safeguard sensitive private sector information.

Homeland security in Texas is a continuous, statewide effort to prevent, protect against, mitigate the effects of, respond to, and recover from terrorist, hostile foreign nation, and significant criminal attacks and natural and technological disasters.

By design, the THSSP is a high-level, multi-year strategy, and it does not address all important homeland security activities. Implementing the Priority Actions in the strategy to achieve its Objectives and further its Goals will require continuous attention, focused effort, and detailed follow-on planning at the agency and jurisdictional levels. Texas must also be flexible in adjusting priorities as homeland security threats and hazards, and capabilities for addressing them, evolve.

Each state agency with a role in homeland security will continue to develop an annual implementation plan for this strategy that details specific tasks the agency will take during the following year to implement it. Each Council of Governments (COG) will also develop an annual implementation plan detailing significant regional and local implementation tasks. The Texas Department of Public Safety's Homeland Security Division will continue to provide guidance and instructions for these plans and will ensure their completion by appropriate agencies and regions.

VISION

A secure and resilient Texas that actively manages homeland security risk while safeguarding individual liberty.

FOCUS

Texas will achieve this vision through activities conducted across five broad mission areas, each of which has a Goal with corresponding Objectives and Priority Actions in Section III of this plan. An additional Goal focuses on developing and enhancing the enabling capabilities that support all mission areas.

Prevention. Prevent, avoid, or stop an imminent, threatened, or actual attack by terrorists, criminal organizations, or hostile foreign nations.

Protection. Protect our citizens, residents, visitors, and assets against the greatest threats and hazards in a manner that allows our freedom and way of life to thrive.

Mitigation. Reduce the loss of life and property by lessening the impact of future incidents.

Response. Respond quickly to save lives, protect property and the environment, and meet basic human needs in the aftermath of a catastrophic incident.

Recovery. Recover through a focus on the timely restoration, strengthening, and revitalization of infrastructure, housing, and a sustainable economy, as well as the health, social, cultural, historic, and environmental fabric of communities affected by a catastrophic incident.

COORDINATION

Homeland security is a shared responsibility among government agencies, jurisdictions, the private sector, and individual citizens. Overall coordination of Texas homeland security capability development and operational efforts is the responsibility of the Governor, supported by Texas state agencies, the Office of the Governor, and several multi-agency committees. Much of this support is coordinated through the Colonel of the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS), designated by the Governor as his Homeland Security Advisor; the DPS Homeland Security Division (established in 2025 by the 89th Texas Legislature) assists the DPS Colonel in this Homeland Security Advisor role. At the state level, homeland security operations and supporting functions are generally coordinated through entities including, but not limited to, the State Operations Center (SOC) led by the Texas Division of Emergency Management; regional Disaster District Emergency Operations Centers; the DPS Operations Center; the Texas Fusion Center; the State Medical Operations Center; and the Network Security Operations Center. At the local level, operations are generally coordinated through county or city Emergency Operations Centers.

Success in protecting Texas requires close collaboration across a diverse group of partners and functions. Major stakeholders include the Texas Legislature, which authorizes funding for homeland security capability development, steady state agency operations, and emergency operations; federal and state departments and agencies with a role in homeland security; regional organizations including COGs and Urban Area Working Groups; county, municipal, and tribal governments; non-governmental organizations, including private volunteer organizations; private sector businesses, including critical infrastructure owners, operators, and private sector security personnel; community preparedness organizations; and private citizens. Some of the many forums for collaboration among these partners include the Texas Homeland Security Council, Emergency Management Council, Private Sector Advisory Council, Senior Advisory Committee, Governor-created task forces, Port and Transit security groups, and various public-private partnerships at the state, regional, and local levels. It is imperative that these forums be used effectively to identify homeland security challenges and recommend solutions.

PRINCIPLES

Our homeland security efforts across all mission areas will be guided by the following principles, which are woven throughout this strategy and provide the foundation of our approach to securing Texas:

RISK-INFORMED DECISION MAKING

In an environment of constrained resources and competing priorities, we must optimize the use of homeland security funding and assets through identification of risks and prioritization of risk reduction measures. While we can and must ensure minimum levels of preparedness throughout the state, we should not engage in an equal level of effort across all functions and geographic areas. Difficult choices are necessary, and they must be informed by a shared understanding of homeland security risk.

INFORMATION SHARING

With an ever-increasing amount of data available to decision makers, we must develop and sustain the ability to rapidly analyze and share relevant, actionable homeland security information with public and private stakeholders at all levels, and we must maintain a public safety culture that emphasizes communication and coordination. Effective information sharing requires information and intelligence collection and analysis systems that maximize use of automated processes; electronic systems that ensure the availability of secure data to those who need it; and public information and warning capabilities spanning multiple platforms. Information and intelligence will be developed from multiple sources, including voluntary submission of information from the private sector. Sensitive information will be secured and protected from disclosure using all appropriate methods.

REGIONALISM

Threats, hazards, and capabilities vary widely across Texas, making a regional approach to homeland security a necessity. We must continue to strengthen regional-level capabilities for planning and operational coordination, along with processes for providing mutual aid within and among regions. Where feasible, state agencies should seek to align their regional boundaries within the state to enhance multi-agency collaboration on regional preparedness efforts.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Given that threats, vulnerabilities, and consequences within Texas are constantly evolving, we must maintain a responsive homeland security culture that seeks continuous improvement. We must remain open to new ideas, maximize the utility of after-action reviews and forums for sharing best practices, and actively engage partners such as academic institutions and private sector businesses in homeland security risk assessments and planning.

MEASURING PROGRESS

Effective assessment of capability development and operational efforts is essential to managing resources and making needed adjustments as we move forward. At all levels, we must establish and accurately track meaningful performance metrics to gauge the impact of programs, processes, and initiatives.

STATE PLANNING ARCHITECTURE

Because of its breadth, homeland security planning includes multiple related planning efforts across agencies and jurisdictions. Plan types include strategic guidance, capability development plans, and capability delivery plans. Strategic guidance (including this document) establishes broad principles and priorities, long-term goals, and general roles and responsibilities for homeland security; it informs and guides related capability development and capability delivery efforts. Capability development plans include more specific guidance on how jurisdictions and agencies will prioritize, fund, build, and sustain homeland security capabilities. Capability delivery plans establish the tasks, responsibilities, and coordination requirements needed to effectively employ homeland security capabilities. In the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Comprehensive Preparedness Guide 101, capability delivery plans are classified as strategic (overall priorities and policy guidance for meeting homeland security responsibilities—listed under “strategic guidance” in the table below); operational (broad roles and responsibilities, general tasks, and integration among jurisdictions and agencies); or tactical (specific tasks and responsibilities for teams, equipment, and other resources during an operation).

The following table, which is not intended to be all-encompassing, indicates the plan type and jurisdictional level of several significant homeland security-related plans.

Plan Type Level	Strategic Guidance		
State	<p style="text-align: center;">Texas Homeland Security Strategic Plan Texas Hazard Mitigation Plan Texas Cybersecurity Strategic Plan Strategic Plan for the Texas Emergency Healthcare System</p>		
Regional	<p style="text-align: center;">Urban Area and COG Region Strategic Plans</p>		
Local	<p style="text-align: center;">Local Hazard Mitigation Plans Local Health Department Strategic Plans</p>		
Plan Type Level	Capability Development Plans	Capability Delivery Plans	
		<i>Operational</i>	<i>Tactical</i>
State	<p>State Agency HSSP Implementation Plans</p> <p>State Agency Strategic Plans (for Legislative Budget Board)</p> <p>Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan</p> <p>Texas Cybersecurity Framework</p>	<p>Texas Emergency Management Plan, with Annexes</p> <p>DSHS Public Health and Medical Preparedness and Response Basic Plan, with Annexes</p>	<p>Agency Continuity of Operations Plans</p> <p>Agency or state plans for specific homeland security threats and hazards (e.g. DPS Terrorist Attack and Significant Criminal Attack Response Plan)</p> <p>Plans for specific operations, e.g. border security or violent crime reduction</p>
Regional	<p>COG HSSP Implementation Plans</p> <p>Regional Interoperable Communications Plans</p> <p>Regional Integrated Preparedness Plans</p>	<p>Regional operational plans and concepts of operations addressing specific functions or threats/hazards</p> <p>Public Health Region Standard Operating Guides</p>	<p>Regional Incident Action Plans</p>
Local	<p>Local Emergency Preparedness Plans</p> <p>Local Health Department Medical Countermeasures Distribution Plans</p>	<p>Local Emergency Operations Plans</p> <p>Local Health Department Emergency Operations Plans</p>	<p>Local Government Continuity of Operations Plans</p> <p>Local Incident Action Plans</p>

Texas Homeland Security Planning Architecture

CORE CAPABILITIES

The 2015 National Preparedness Goal establishes 32 Core Capabilities for homeland security, organized under the five homeland security mission areas (Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery). Several Core Capabilities support more than one mission area. The National Planning Frameworks for each mission area provide more detail on these capabilities and the critical tasks associated with delivering them.

The concept of Core Capabilities is supplemented by related guidance, definitions, and standards. For example, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has developed lists of Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Capabilities and Healthcare Preparedness and Response Capabilities; the U.S. Department of Homeland Security has developed a list of 55 National Critical Functions related to critical infrastructure and a set of Critical Operational Capabilities and Enabling Capabilities for Fusion Centers; and the Federal Emergency Management Agency has developed a set of eight Community Lifelines to focus post-incident stabilization efforts. The Core Capabilities and supporting documents serve to orient and organize our homeland security capability development and delivery efforts.

Prevention	Protection	Mitigation	Response	Recovery
Planning				
Public Information and Warning				
Operational Coordination				
Intelligence and Information Sharing		Community Resilience Long-term Vulnerability Reduction Risk and Disaster Resilience Assessment Threats and Hazards Identification	Infrastructure Systems	
Interdiction and Disruption			Critical Transportation Environmental Response/Health and Safety Fatality Management Services Fire Management and Suppression Logistics and Supply Chain Management Mass Care Services Mass Search and Rescue Operations On-scene Security, Protection, and Law Enforcement Operational Communications Public Health, Healthcare, and Emergency Medical Services Situational Assessment	Economic Recovery Health and Social Services Housing Natural and Cultural Resources
Screening, Search, and Detection				
Forensics and Attribution	Access Control and Identity Verification Cybersecurity Physical Protective Measures Risk Management for Protection Programs and Activities Supply Chain Integrity and Security			

SECTION II: THE TEXAS HOMELAND SECURITY ENVIRONMENT

HOMELAND SECURITY RISK

Homeland security fundamentally relates to the management of risk, which is defined as the product of threat (likelihood), vulnerability, and consequences of attacks and disasters. In a resource-constrained environment, we must actively identify and manage homeland security risk at all levels.



Risk management begins with comprehensive risk identification and assessment. Several recurring efforts conducted at the state, regional, local, and tribal levels seek to produce a detailed understanding of the homeland security risk faced by Texas. These efforts include:

- The Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA), a scenario-based process for assessing the potential impacts of major natural disasters, technological disasters, and human-caused incidents and establishing regional and statewide target levels across the 32 Core Capabilities;
- The Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (HIRA), included in state and local Hazard Mitigation Plans, a process for assessing the natural hazards that could impact the state, the regions and populations that are the most vulnerable to each hazard, and the potential losses for each hazard, based on multiple sources including historical data;
- The Texas Public Safety Threat Overview, a state intelligence estimate that identifies and describes the most significant public safety threats to Texas;
- The Texas Gang Threat Assessment, a comprehensive overview and categorization of the criminal gangs that present the greatest threats to the state;
- The Texas Public Health Risk Assessment Tool (TPHRAT), which enables evidence-based assessment at the jurisdictional level of public health hazards, resources, and residual risk;

- Vulnerability assessments of critical infrastructure, which range from large-scale regional assessments to site-specific assessments conducted at the local level; and
- Cybersecurity assessments (including the Nationwide Cybersecurity Review), penetration tests, and vulnerability scans performed on government agency information assets.

The following section of the *Texas Homeland Security Strategic Plan 2026-2030* provides an overview of the homeland security environment in Texas and summarizes the extensive and diverse nature of the homeland security risks we face.

STATE DESCRIPTION

JURISDICTIONS

Texas has three basic layers of governing jurisdictions: municipal, county, and state. In addition, there are three federally recognized tribes in the state: the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas, the Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas, and the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo. There are also a large number of special districts, such as school districts, college districts, public utility districts, water supply districts, and road districts, that are responsible for particular functions.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Texas has over 1,200 incorporated municipalities, each responsible for providing essential homeland security services to citizens through city and/or volunteer capabilities or agreements with counties. There are 254 counties in Texas, the most of any state in the nation, and these counties are similarly responsible for homeland security services in unincorporated areas and, by agreement, in some incorporated municipalities. Texas law designates the presiding officer of municipal and county governments (city mayors and county judges) as the jurisdiction's Emergency Management Director and the governor's designated agent in the administration and supervision of emergency management duties for that jurisdiction. The chief elected official may designate an Emergency Management Coordinator to serve as an assistant to manage homeland security/emergency management programs.

Texas' cities and counties vary widely in size, population, and homeland security resources. Harris County, for example, has a population of over 5 million (3rd highest in the nation), while Loving County's population is less than 100 (lowest in the nation among counties with a permanent population). Brewster County is 6,192 square miles, while Rockwall County is 147 square miles. Harris County has over 12,000 sworn Peace Officer licensees, while several counties have fewer than five. This variation results in dramatic differences in the local-level homeland security environment across the state. Higher-population areas generally have law enforcement and emergency management departments with a significant capacity for planning, coordinating, and directing homeland security operations, along with security, fire, public health and healthcare, and special response capabilities that handle the vast majority of emergencies within their jurisdictions. Cities and counties with limited organic capacity rely on assets available through contract arrangements or mutual aid for effective response to incidents and rely on regional support for planning and coordination of capability development efforts.

REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Particularly in areas of the state where local-level resources are limited, regional planning and coordination are critical to homeland security preparedness, and many regional organizations play an essential role in these processes.

Texas has 24 **Councils of Governments** (COGs), voluntary associations of local governments formed under Texas law. Homeland security-related services provided by COGs vary, but may include:

- Planning for and coordinating regional implementation of the *Texas Homeland Security Strategic Plan*;
- Coordinating regional assessments of threats, hazards, and preparedness levels;
- Operating law enforcement training academies;
- Planning, coordination, and operation of regional radio systems and other communications operability and interoperability efforts;
- Maintaining and improving regional 9-1-1 systems;
- Providing grant management services for member governments;
- Coordinating regional transportation planning, mapping, and prioritization;
- Coordinating regional disaster recovery programs; and
- Providing geographic information system (GIS) mapping of infrastructure and geospatial data.

The Texas Association of Regional Councils is a statewide organization providing policy and program support to help COGs develop the expertise and capacity to meet a variety of regional needs through an efficient and coordinated approach.

Each jurisdiction within Texas is part of a Disaster District. **Disaster Districts**, aligned with COG boundaries, are the state's regional emergency management organizations that serve as the initial source of state emergency assistance for local governments. Disaster District Committees, consisting of state agencies and volunteer groups that have resources within the District's area of responsibility, assist the Disaster District Chair appointed by the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM)—generally the TDEM District Chief—in identifying, mobilizing, and deploying personnel, equipment, supplies, and technical support to respond to requests for emergency assistance from local governments and state agencies. The District Chiefs report to Regional Chiefs in the eight **TDEM Regions**, and County Liaison Officers, appointed by TDEM in many Texas counties, report to the District Chiefs.

There are seven **Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) Regions** statewide, each led by a Region Chief with supporting staff. In addition to directing state-level public safety operations within the region, these Region Chiefs may be called upon to coordinate multi-agency homeland security operations including local, state, and federal partner agencies.

Public health and medical operations are coordinated in a similar way. Local health departments oversee public health and medical responses within their jurisdictions. In counties that do not have a local health department, the eight Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) **Public Health Regions** (PHRs) coordinate public health and medical operations, supported by their

Regional Health and Medical Operations Centers (RHMOCs). RHMOCs are staffed with local, regional, and state public health and medical response partners who coordinate with local and regional emergency response entities, serving as the public health and medical coordination points for Disaster Districts and the broader statewide emergency management structure during significant incidents. In addition, **Regional Advisory Councils** composed of medical facility representatives, practitioners, and community groups develop, implement, monitor, and coordinate among regional emergency medical services (EMS) and trauma systems.

Many other state agencies also have **agency regional offices** that work with jurisdictions to coordinate preparedness, response, and compliance activities in functional areas related to the agencies' homeland security authorities and responsibilities. For example, the Texas Department of Agriculture and Texas Animal Health Commission maintain five and six regional offices, respectively.

Homeland security operations focused on preventing attacks and conducting investigations are supported by a network of **Fusion Centers** and intelligence nodes around the state. Fusion Centers establish priorities for intelligence gathering, conduct analysis, and ensure sharing of relevant information and intelligence with law enforcement organizations and the public in their regions. There are eight federally recognized Fusion Centers in Texas: the state-level Texas Fusion Center (Austin); the Austin Regional Intelligence Center; the Dallas Fusion Center; the El Paso Multi-Agency Tactical Response Information Exchange; the Fort Worth Intelligence Exchange; the Houston Regional Intelligence Service Center; the North Central Texas Fusion Center (McKinney); and the Southwest Texas Fusion Center (San Antonio).

In and around Texas' largest cities, **Urban Area Working Groups (UAWGs)** play a central role in coordinating homeland security operational planning and capability development efforts. Four metropolitan areas in Texas currently receive Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) grant funding: Houston, Dallas/Fort Worth/Arlington, San Antonio, and Austin. El Paso is a previous recipient of UASI funding. UAWGs in these areas provide a forum for subject matter experts from member jurisdictions to assess homeland security capability levels and requirements, establish regional priorities, and develop plans for delivering capabilities when needed.

STATE GOVERNMENT

There are over 150 state agencies (not including state-funded higher education institutions) in Texas, each with defined roles and authorities. While all state agencies have a responsibility for internal workforce safety, continuity of operations planning, and cybersecurity, many have specific operational and/or regulatory responsibilities for law enforcement, emergency management, public health, hazardous materials safety, critical infrastructure protection, and other homeland security functions. Standing state-level councils and committees such as the Homeland Security Council, Emergency Management Council, Texas Association of Regional Councils, and Senior Advisory Committee coordinate multi-agency policy, planning, and information sharing efforts.

During incidents of such scope and complexity that state assistance for local or regional emergency management operations may be needed, the Texas State Operations Center SOC is activated to coordinate state agency support and ensure unified action. The SOC, in coordination with entities including, but not limited to, the DPS Operations Center and Texas Fusion Center for incidents with a significant law enforcement or intelligence component, the State Medical Operations Center for incidents with a significant public health and medical component, and the Network Security

Operations Center for cybersecurity incidents, maintains liaison with federal partner agencies and coordinates resources from state agencies and other sources to meet local and regional needs.

GEOGRAPHY

Texas' size and geographic diversity create significant homeland security challenges. At 268,596 square miles, Texas is larger than the states of New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, North Carolina, and all of the New England states combined. For context, El Paso is closer to San Diego, California than it is to Houston, and Houston is closer to Tallahassee, Florida than it is to El Paso. Texas shares 1,254 miles of international border with Mexico (64% of the entire U.S.-Mexico border) and has 367 miles of coastline on the Gulf of America. Natural environments include coastal plains, the semi-tropical Lower Rio Grande Valley, and mountains in far west Texas, all with associated weather hazards. Distance and geographic variation complicate statewide homeland security planning and demand a regional approach to preparedness.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Between 2010-2020, Texas added more population annually than any other state, and Texas has consistently ranked first in the country in numeric population change every year since 2020. There are three main demographic trends at work. First, Texas is growing rapidly and substantially. Second, growth in Texas is not evenly distributed across its geography. Third, Texas continues to diversify, and although Texas is a relatively young state, it is also aging. Each of these dynamics has significant impacts on homeland security preparedness and places demands on public health, infrastructure, and vital public services in Texas.

The first trend is substantial and rapid population growth. Texas continues to be among the fastest-growing states in the country. The Texas population is estimated to be 31,290,831 and has grown 7.3 percent since the 2020 decennial census. The daily numeric increase in the state equates to adding an average of 1,404 new Texans each day from 2020-2024. Since 2020, the main driver of population change (73%) has been from net migration (domestic and international). The Texas Demographic Center's 2024 population projections indicate that the Texas population could reach 33.5 million by 2030 and over 42.5 million by 2060 using the mid migration scenario.

The second trend is uneven population change across the state, continuing a decades-long trend toward urbanization. Concurrent with Texas metropolitan areas and cities leading the nation in population increase and rate of growth, 81 counties (32%) lost population between 2020-2024. Areas of the state adding the greatest population numbers can be found in the triangle anchored by the major metropolitan areas of Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington, Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land, and San Antonio-New Braunfels up to Austin-Round Rock. The fastest-growing areas in the state are the suburban ring counties of these major metro areas. More sparsely populated areas of the state are losing population, particularly in parts of West Texas, East Texas, and South Texas between San Antonio and the Rio Grande Valley.

The third trend is the continued racial-ethnic diversification and concurrent aging of the Texas population. The Texas population increased by nearly four million between 2010 and 2020. During this period, only 5% of the total population change was driven by non-Hispanic White population growth; the other 95% (more than 3.9 million) was driven by other race-ethnic groups. In addition, all race-ethnic groups saw increases in every age group, except for non-Hispanic Whites.

Specifically, non-Hispanic Whites experienced population declines in the under 18, 18-24, and 45-64 year age groups, but had the most significant growth in the 65 years plus age group. In 2024, the Hispanic population makes up 40.2% of the Texas population, and it has surpassed the non-Hispanic White population at 38.6%. The 65-year and older population is projected to be the fastest growing age group in the state for all race-ethnic groups, making up nearly 17% of the total state population by 2030 and over 21% by 2060. In addition, approximately 12.7% of individuals in Texas have a disability, including 49.2% of individuals over the age of 75. The number of Texans with disabilities is therefore likely to increase as the total population grows and ages. The aging and diversification of the Texas population could have significant implications for public safety, emergency response, housing, healthcare, public information, and a range of social services.

ECONOMY

Texas' economy continues to be the engine of its population growth. With a 2024 gross state product of approximately \$2.7 trillion, Texas has the second-largest economy of any state, and it would be the 8th largest economy in the world (ahead of Italy, Canada, Brazil, and Russia) if it were a country. Texas is a national leader across multiple industries, including energy, agriculture, technology, financial services, and healthcare. The economic consequences of terrorist attacks, technological disasters, or natural disasters could be immense, making an understanding of economic trends and vulnerabilities essential to effective homeland security risk management. Highlights demonstrating the size and diversity of Texas' economy include:

- Texas is the leading exporter of all states, with a higher level than California and New York combined, and it is the second-largest importer of all states
- Texas has 11 deep-draft and eight shallow-draft maritime ports, six of which (the Ports of Houston [1st], Corpus Christi [3rd], Beaumont [7th], Freeport [15th], Port Arthur [16th], and Texas City [23rd]) are among the 25 largest in the nation by total tonnage. The Port of Beaumont is also the busiest military port in the United States
- Texas has 32 official U.S. Ports of Entry, the most of any state. The Port of Laredo is the largest inland border port of entry in the country in terms of annual trade
- Texas produces and consumes the most natural gas of any state, accounting for over 25% of U.S. marketed natural gas production
- Texas has the most proven oil reserves of any state and accounts for over 42% of the United States' daily crude oil production
- Texas has the most oil refineries of any state, including five of the ten largest in the country
- Texas leads the nation in number of farms and ranches and in cattle, sheep, goat, and cotton production
- Texas is responsible for over 20% of U.S. chemical manufacturing exports, leading the nation
- Texas is home to 54 of the companies on the 2020 Fortune 500 list, including two of the top ten
- The Texas Medical Center (Houston) is the largest medical complex in the world, with over 100,000 employees and 10 million patient encounters per year

- Texas consistently leads the nation in job creation, adding over 232,000 nonfarm jobs from July 2024-July 2025 (the most of any state)

CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

The Texas Government Code defines “critical infrastructure” as public or private assets, systems, and functions vital to the security, governance, public health and safety, economy, or morale of the state or nation. These assets, systems, and functions can be composed of cyber, physical, or human elements that are organized according to sectors, sub-sectors, segments, sub-segments, and

assets. Texas critical infrastructure entities span all 16 critical infrastructure sectors recognized by the United States government and represent the needs and opportunities associated with a geographically and demographically diverse state.

Critical Infrastructure Sectors:

- Chemical
- Commercial Facilities
- **Communications**
- Critical Manufacturing
- Dams
- Defense Industrial Base
- Emergency Services
- **Energy**
- Financial Services
- Food and Agriculture
- Government Facilities
- Healthcare
- Information Technology
- Nuclear Reactors, Materials, and Waste
- **Transportation Systems**
- **Water and Wastewater Systems**

Sectors listed in red are **lifeline sectors**. All other sectors have dependencies on these lifeline sectors.

The majority of critical infrastructure on which Texans rely is owned and operated by the private sector. The safety and security of critical infrastructure is a shared responsibility between these private sector owners and operators and public sector agencies, which fulfill regulatory roles and provide law enforcement and emergency management support before, during, and after incidents. Efforts to enhance the security and resilience of critical infrastructure in Texas depend on the ability and willingness of public and private sector partners to build understanding and trust, coordinate activities, and share information through a collaborative framework. The two-way sharing of actionable information on threats, suspicious activity, disruption consequences, and dependencies, while protecting business-sensitive data, is the foundation for this relationship.

FEMA Community Lifelines:

1. **Safety and Security** - Law Enforcement/Security, Fire Service, Search and Rescue, Government Service, Community Safety
2. **Food, Hydration, Shelter** - Food, Hydration, Shelter, Agriculture
3. **Health and Medical** - Medical Care, Public Health, Patient Movement, Medical Supply Chain, Fatality Management
4. **Energy** - Power Grid, Fuel
5. **Communications** - Infrastructure, Responder Communications, Alerts Warnings and Messages, Finance, 911 and Dispatch
6. **Transportation** - Highway/Roadway/Motor Vehicle, Mass Transit, Railway, Aviation, Maritime
7. **Hazardous Materials** - Facilities, HAZMAT, Pollutants, Contaminants
8. **Water Systems** - Potable Water Infrastructure, Wastewater Management

The four lifeline sectors for the State of Texas (Communications, Energy, Transportation Systems, and Water and Wastewater Systems) fit within these Community Lifelines.

Beyond public-private partnerships, another key concept integral to protecting critical infrastructure is risk management, where risk is defined as the potential for an unwanted outcome resulting from an incident, event, or occurrence, as determined by its likelihood and the associated consequences. These negative incidents, events, and occurrences can result from any number of natural hazards, technological failures, industrial accidents, criminal or terrorist activities, cyberattacks, or capacity shortfalls. The examination of infrastructure risk in Texas must account for a wide spectrum of threats, vulnerabilities, and disruption consequences. The state must then manage risk through a well-organized, collaborative, analytical approach and ensure that critical infrastructure assets and systems address vulnerabilities and have the appropriate resilience strategies in place to minimize downtime and quickly restore critical services.

The statistics in the remainder of this section are intended to illustrate the importance of Texas critical infrastructure to the state and nation. These facts focus on the four “lifeline sectors” of Communications, Energy, Transportation Systems, and Water and Wastewater Systems, upon which all 16 critical infrastructure sectors depend to operate.

COMMUNICATIONS SECTOR

- Texas has the fourth highest number of broadband subscribers per state, following California, Florida, and New York
- There are 4.5 million cable subscribers and approximately 90 licensed cable companies operating in Texas
- There are 291 licensed AM stations, 817 licensed full-service FM stations, 386 licensed translator stations, 200 low power FM stations, 9 FM boosters, and 228 FM Auxiliary (backup) stations in Texas
- There are 170 licensed digital television stations, 30 licensed digital auxiliary (backup) facilities, and 4 licensed translator stations in Texas
- There are 1,791 cell towers and 12,853 constructed antennas in Texas
- There are over 150 satellite transmission and 450 receiving earth stations located in Texas

ENERGY SECTOR

- Texas leads the nation in electricity production, generating approximately twice as much electricity as the second-place state (Florida)
- Texas is the only state in the Continental U.S. with its own power grid, the Texas Interconnection. This grid, managed by the Electricity Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT), provides electricity to approximately 90% of the consumers in Texas
- Texas leads the country in wind-powered generation, and in 2024 produced more than 27% of all U.S. wind-powered energy
- Texas is the leading producer of both crude oil and natural gas in the nation. As of April 2025, the state’s petroleum refineries processed over 5.77 million barrels of crude oil per day, accounting for 31% of all domestic refining capability and contributing to an overall U.S. record of 17.47 million barrels per day
- Texas has approximately one-fourth of the nation's operable crude oil refineries and one-third of the total U.S. refining capacity. The majority of the Texas refineries are clustered near

ports along the Gulf Coast, giving that region the largest concentration of oil refineries in the United States

- Texas is home to two of the nation's four U.S. Strategic Petroleum Reserve crude oil storage sites
- Texas is the 7th leading producer of coal and the 2nd largest producer of lignite coal in the nation, with eight active mines in the state

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS SECTOR

- In 2023, Texas Gulf Coast ports handled more than 746.4 million tons of foreign and domestic cargo, more than another state.
- Texas has one of the largest state aviation systems, with 26 commercial service airports, 274 general aviation airports, and 42 air traffic control towers
- Dallas Fort Worth International Airport is the 2nd busiest airport in the nation by enplanements, and George Bush Intercontinental Airport in Houston is the 15th busiest airport in the nation
- Texas has over 55,000 bridges that carry vehicular traffic, the most of any state
- Texas has nearly 314,000 miles of roads and highways (approximately 25 percent of which are state highways maintained by local governments), more than any other state
- Texas has more miles of pipeline than any other state, at roughly 466,600 miles
- Texas has the nation's largest share of rail lines, with more than 10,500 miles of tracks, more than 17,450 freight railroad employees, 52 freight railroads, and 49 freight railroad operators (the 2nd most freight operators located in a state)
- Texas is home to development and test sites for multiple commercial space firms, including Space Exploration Technologies (SpaceX), Blue Origin, Firefly, and United Launch Alliance

WATER AND WASTEWATER SECTOR

- Texas regulates 7,342 public water systems, providing drinking water to 32,282,241 customers
- There are 2,800 active domestic and 642 industrial wastewater treatment permits across the state
- There are nine major aquifers (which produce large amounts of water over large areas) and 22 minor aquifers in Texas. Texas also has approximately 191,000 miles of streams, 15 major river basins, eight coastal basins, and 189 major water supply reservoirs
- Texas currently has 53 municipal desalination facilities with a combined production capacity of 157 million gallons per day

THREATS AND HAZARDS

Texas faces the full spectrum of threats and hazards, and the state's vast size, geography, and growing population present unique challenges for public safety and homeland security. Texas employs a systematic approach to detect, assess, and prioritize threats and hazards to the state. This threat assessment model, which is detailed in the *Texas Public Safety Threat Overview*

published periodically by DPS, is used to assess current and potential threats, incorporating three variables which are commonly used in risk models: likelihood, vulnerability, and consequence.

An evolving threat environment requires a dynamic assessment process to account for new information, changing conditions, and emerging threats. DPS coordinates with federal, state, and local partners to manage the state's threat assessment process, which benefits from proactive information sharing and collaborative analysis. The *Texas Public Safety Threat Overview* provides updated information on, and analysis of, the various threats to Texas, such as crime, terrorism, hostile foreign adversaries, natural disasters, public health threats, and cyber threats. The remainder of this section highlights some of the most significant homeland security threats and hazards facing our state; it is not intended to be an exhaustive list, as Texas' threat landscape may change significantly over time.

CRIME

Mexican Cartels

Mexican cartels remain a continuous national security threat beyond traditional organized crime impacting Texas. The United States and Texas have designated Mexican cartels as foreign terrorist organizations due to their use of extreme violence, to include weaponized drones, as well as military and terrorist tactics that are characteristic of entities engaged in insurgency and asymmetric warfare. Cartels operate international networks that smuggle deadly drugs, dangerous criminals, members of transnational gangs, and suspects on the U.S. Terrorist Watchlist into the United States, further threatening public safety and homeland security. Additionally, cartels engage in human trafficking, stolen fuel smuggling, money laundering, extortion, public corruption, kidnapping, and murder within Texas and elsewhere in the United States. As they expand their presence and control within criminal networks, they coordinate with Texas-based gangs and associates to create degrees of separation between the cartel members, U.S.-based facilitators, and street-level criminals in Texas and elsewhere in the United States, which bolsters the influence and illicit profits of these criminal entities.

Hybrid and Juvenile Gang Membership

Hybrid and juvenile gangs remain a consistent concern for Texas. The avoidance of membership in traditional gang structures presents a continued and varied challenge to law enforcement due to a lack of a centralized leadership structure and concurrent membership in multiple gangs. As a result, hybrid gang members engage in criminal activity with a broad variety of partners to maximize personal gain. Because members of these gangs generally do not adhere to traditional codes of conduct, they are free to act as self-proprietors and to engage in purely incentive-driven criminal activity without respect to alliances. Due to the transitory nature of hybrid gangs, Texas law enforcement agencies face challenges in identifying and tracking the criminal actions of hybrid gang members—particularly juveniles—or initiating large-scale criminal enterprise investigations to render these organizations ineffective. More information about the threat of gangs in Texas is available in the *Texas Gang Threat Assessment* on the DPS website.

Human Trafficking

Human trafficking involves the recruitment, harboring, transporting, or procurement of a person for benefit through force, fraud, or coercion. Human trafficking remains a continuous and

pervasive threat, as traffickers move and/or exploit victims to and through Texas (and other states) for illicit gains from involuntary servitude in various labor and/or sexual industries. Texas remains second in the nation for the number of reports to the National Human Trafficking hotline. Human trafficking is perpetrated by criminal organizations (including Mexican cartels and transnational criminal organizations) and individual criminal actors. Labor industries include, but are not limited to, domestic servitude, agriculture, debt bondage, and construction. Sexual industries include, but are not limited to, street-based commercial sex activities, illicit massage businesses, brothels, pornography, exotic dancing, and cantinas. Human traffickers identify and target vulnerable, high-risk populations, including juvenile runaways, migrants, individuals with substance addiction, and individuals with disabilities and disorders. Once lured or entrapped, traffickers exploit their victims' emotional or financial dependency for food, housing, access to drugs, and other needs, and victims may also be subjected to extreme physical violence.

Internet-Based Sexual Exploitation of Children

Sexual exploitation of children in online environments is a continuous, pervasive, and evolving threat to the state and nation. This form of exploitation includes, but is not limited to, online child grooming, child sexual abuse material (CSAM), sextortion (or financial extortion), and internet-facilitated child sex trafficking, in which child victims are sexually trafficked in a live-streaming environment. Online abusers, including members of violent online groups (who may or may not reside in Texas) target children in Texas and around the world. Online abusers gain access to and groom children through various online platforms, including social media, gaming apps, educational apps, or other platforms with messaging capabilities. These individuals create, distribute, or solicit CSAM content for extortion schemes—often involving threats or doxing—for illicit purposes, for self-interest, or, in the case of violent online groups, for nihilistic acceleration and notoriety. Internet-based sexual exploitation of children has grown with the use of generative AI, enabling online abusers to generate CSAM content from either innocuous images or by further manipulating existing CSAM images.

TERRORISM AND TARGETED VIOLENCE

Acts of targeted violence pose a persistent and ongoing threat to Texas and the nation. Whether motivated by ideology (terrorism), personal grievances, or workplace and family issues, targeted violence has the potential to impact any community. The wide variety of motivations and factors causing someone to enter the pathway to violence presents a distinct challenge for law enforcement. Increased public and law enforcement awareness of the indicators of targeted violence, and the promotion of multi-disciplinary solutions, can empower communities across Texas to identify and prevent these deadly acts.

International and domestic terrorism activities in Texas, as in the rest of the United States, remain a persistent threat. Decentralized radicalization, coupled with the potential for blurred motivations or blended ideologies, makes it difficult for law enforcement to accurately identify terrorist actors and prevent future attacks. Texas-based homegrown violent extremists sympathetic to foreign terrorist organizations continue to aspire to conduct attacks in Texas. Domestic terrorists, international terrorists, and homegrown violent extremists use digital media to facilitate radicalization/recruitment and communicate, and law enforcement detection of planned criminal activity, particularly when secure communication platforms are used, is challenging. More information about the threats of terrorism and targeted violence in Texas is available in the *Texas*

Domestic Terrorism Threat Assessment and Assessing the Mass Attacks Threat to Texas report on the DPS website.

HOSTILE FOREIGN ADVERSARIES

Texas faces a broad and increasing threat from hostile foreign adversaries seeking to undermine and harm U.S. national security. Hostile foreign adversaries' goals are to steal protected information and intellectual property, compromise our infrastructure and capabilities, undermine trust in our democratic systems, and influence public policy at all levels. During times of heightened geopolitical tension between the United States and hostile nations, cyber or physical attacks attempting to disrupt critical infrastructure or impact U.S. power projection capabilities may increase in likelihood. Agents of hostile foreign adversaries target dissidents, government agencies and employees, private industry, infrastructure owners and assets, economic interests, and others. Some hostile nations may target current or former citizens or their associates in Texas for the purposes of intimidating and silencing them, a practice known as transnational repression (TNR). Targets of TNR include dissidents, college students, political activists or opponents, journalists, religious groups, or ethnic groups. According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, hostile foreign adversaries engage in TNR by conducting criminal or other nefarious activities such as stalking and spying on dissidents and students, online disinformation campaigns, threats, forcing or coercing victims to return to their country of origin, threatening or detaining family members or friends in the country of origin, freezing assets, withholding legal documents, cyber hacking, assault, attempted kidnapping, and attempted murder.

NATURAL DISASTERS

Texas faces a diverse array of natural hazards and has had more disaster declarations than any other state since 1953. During this time span, Texas has averaged one major disaster every eight months. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Centers for Environmental Information, Texas experienced the highest number of billion-dollar disasters and leads in total cumulative costs from disasters in the United States since 1980. These hazards are particularly concerning in areas with significant vulnerabilities such as Texas rural communities, which may not have the capabilities to cope with natural disasters without significant aid. There are many Texans living below the poverty line, especially in areas near the Texas-Mexico border; these individuals and their communities often lack the resources to build adequate resilience to disasters.

Overall, based on the 2023 Texas State Hazard Mitigation Plan, the hazards resulting in the highest estimated financial losses for 2022-2026 are as follows, in descending order: drought; hurricane; hailstorm; flood; tornado; severe coastal flooding; severe wind; severe winter weather; wildfire; lightning; and extreme heat. Other natural events, like severe geomagnetic solar storms, threaten to damage critical infrastructure and disrupt daily life for millions of Texans. Each of these natural hazards varies significantly from region to region within the state in terms of frequency and consequences, but all may result in loss of life and property and require a large-scale response. For example, in July 2025, severe flooding in Kerrville, Texas and the surrounding Central Texas area resulted in the tragic loss of life and property. More information about the risk of natural hazards is available in the Texas State Hazard Mitigation Plan maintained by TDEM.

PUBLIC HEALTH THREATS

Public health threats to Texas remain a significant concern. Public health threats identified by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention include lung injuries linked to e-cigarettes/vaping; illegal opioid use; antibiotic resistant and antimicrobial resistant microorganisms; foodborne outbreaks; disparities in pregnancy-related deaths; HIV; measles; low rates of immunization and vaccination; and Ebola. These issues have created, or have the potential to create, critical impacts in Texas. In addition, many public safety and homeland security threats often carry public health consequences. For example, a hurricane or wildfire that displaces residents and causes widespread electrical outages could have secondary impacts on the physical and mental health of affected Texans.

Risk of Emerging Infectious Diseases

As shown by the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic and the outbreak of measles in 2025, Texas faces an ongoing risk from emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases, including pandemics. Pandemics can present as waves of disease (sometime multiple waves) that last months and cause hundreds of thousands of illnesses and tens of thousands of deaths. The resulting societal disruptions due to high levels of absenteeism, supply shortages, and disease control measures can cause widespread unemployment and billions of dollars of economic impact. Emerging infectious diseases can enter the state via infected people or animals or via contaminated products at any national or international entry point, including airports, interstate crossings (roads and rail), seaports on the Texas Gulf Coast, or international Ports of Entry along the border with Mexico. Texas is currently monitoring the potential reinfestation of the flesh-eating New World Screwworm (NWS) parasite, which recently spread northward from Central America and was detected in Mexico in November 2024. The spread of NWS to Texas could result in severe economic losses for the agriculture industry, and NWS can also cause potentially life-threatening infections in human hosts.

INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS

Texas is the nation's second-leading producer of both durable and nondurable goods. Furthermore, Texas is the largest chemical producing state in the country and serves as the home of the largest petrochemical cluster in the world. The industrial base in Texas generally operates safely, with minimal homeland security impacts. However, due to the size and distribution of Texas industry and its economic importance, any significant accidents that occur could result in high consequences. Industrial accidents have the potential to threaten the state's security, especially when they result in casualties, the destruction of critical infrastructure, or the disruption of the state's economy. For instance, in October 2024, release of hydrogen sulfide gas during maintenance at the PEMEX Refinery in Deer Park, Texas killed two, injured 13, and resulted in a prolonged shelter-in-place for the surrounding area. Emerging technologies such as commercial space rockets, lithium batteries, and large-scale data centers may also pose potential safety challenges to Texas communities.

CYBER THREATS

Cyberattacks and intrusions can be used by criminals, terrorists, insiders, and hostile foreign adversaries to disrupt delivery of essential services, mask other attacks, lay the groundwork for

future operations, or shake citizens' confidence in government. Cyberattacks are becoming easier to execute, as shown by emerging trends such as Ransomware as a Service (RaaS), in which criminal actors with limited technical expertise work with ransomware developers to initiate cyberattacks. These types of attacks are challenging to disrupt and investigate. AI-powered cyber threats, zero-day exploits leveraging previously unknown software vulnerabilities, and leaked user credentials have emerged as some of the most concerning and potentially damaging attack vectors. As the cyber threat continues to grow and evolve, a particular concern is the potentially severe consequence of an effective cyberattack against critical infrastructure facilities and systems. Cyberattacks could result in the denial or disruption of essential services, including utilities, public health, finance, 9-1-1 call centers, or law enforcement communications networks.

ROADWAY SAFETY

Each year, motor vehicle crashes account for significant loss of life and economic costs statewide. In 2024, approximately 11.4 fatalities occurred daily on Texas roadways. Additionally, motor vehicle crashes resulted in an estimated economic loss of approximately \$56.9 billion. As of December 2024, early estimates of motor vehicle fatalities show Texas had the highest total number of fatality crashes nationwide in 2023, and Texas routinely ranks in the top 15 states nationwide for fatality rates. Texas is consistent with the nationwide crash trend, which shows that while overall nationwide crash totals are lower than pre-pandemic levels, fatality crash totals have increased. With a rapidly growing population, the total number of licensed drivers—including commercially-licensed drivers—and the total number of vehicle miles traveled on Texas roadways continue to rise. The expanding use of driverless autonomous vehicles on Texas roads creates new traffic safety considerations and challenges.

SCHOOL THREATS

Targeted acts of violence remain at the forefront of school safety concerns nationwide, and Texas has experienced several targeted violence attacks at schools in recent years. For example, in April 2025, an armed student entered a high school in Dallas, Texas, and fired upon multiple students, resulting in five hospitalizations. On May 24, 2022, Texas experienced a mass attack against an elementary school in Uvalde, Texas that resulted in the loss of 19 students and two adults. These tragedies, along with other attacks around the country, highlight the persistent threat of attacks on schools. Many campuses also deal with a wide range of other threats including assaults, unauthorized school campus entry, drug use and distribution, bullying and cyber bullying, gang activity, and the use of artificial intelligence to fabricate threats or exploit students.

THREATS TO CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

The security and protection of critical infrastructure in Texas is crucial to providing the state's residents with essential services, such as communications, healthcare, food production and safety, energy, water and wastewater, and transportation. A variety of criminal, ideological, and hostile foreign adversary threat actors have targeted critical infrastructure in the effort to disrupt services and/or facilitate future operations. In 2024, the U.S. Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency advised that hostile foreign adversary-affiliated cyberattacks compromised multiple organizations associated with the communications, energy, transportation, and water and wastewater sectors in the effort to preposition themselves for future operations against these targets. In 2025, there were a total of 19 cyber incidents involving water systems, including nine systems that had their water system infrastructure exposed on the internet; nine water systems that

experienced ransomware attacks; and one water system that had their customer information stolen. Additionally, most ship-to-shore cranes at U.S. seaports are manufactured in China and can potentially be controlled or disabled remotely, giving foreign adversaries the ability to severely disrupt shipping and supply chain operations in Texas. Many electronic components used in Texas critical infrastructure, such as microchips and switches, are also manufactured in China, which could expose these systems to foreign cybersecurity operations.

Physical threats to critical infrastructure also remain an enduring concern for Texas and the nation. Threat actors may attempt to damage or degrade facilities using firearms, explosives, or other means. Targeted attacks against electrical substations in North Carolina and California, and publications promoting similar attacks, highlight the importance of maintaining vigilance in protecting our critical infrastructure through updated physical security measures and awareness of suspicious activity and ensuring owner/operators are prepared to respond to incidents in coordination with law enforcement and emergency management partners.

SUMMARY: TEXAS IN 2030

By 2030, Texas will likely have 33.5 million people, representing a population growth of approximately 7% from the current level. The vast majority of this growth will occur in metropolitan counties, with many rural areas continuing to lose population. This will create challenges for state and local agencies attempting to meet growing demand for public safety, emergency response, healthcare, and other services in some areas while maintaining an appropriate level of capacity statewide. In addition, population growth will increase demands on infrastructure such as roads, bridges, ports, pipelines, and energy production. As an example, the state's demand for electricity is expected to increase by over 40% between 2025 and 2030, driven largely by the rapid growth of data centers.

Texas will likely remain the most natural hazard-prone state in the nation. Drought will pose a challenge across much of the state, with wildfires in Central Texas, tornadoes in North Central Texas, flooding in East Texas, and hurricanes/tropical storms along the Gulf Coast continuing to be the most frequent and destructive natural hazards. Extreme cold weather will continue to create challenges for Texas infrastructure, including the ERCOT electrical grid. Texas will also remain vulnerable to infectious disease outbreaks and pandemics, and the agriculture industry will continue to be threatened by plant and animal disease.

While illegal border crossings have been significantly reduced in 2025, future surges remain a possibility, particularly if there are major changes in federal enforcement policy and resourcing. Border-related crime, including drug smuggling, human trafficking, and associated violence will continue to pose a threat not only to border communities, but to the state and nation. The threat of mass shootings and targeted violence, particularly by self-radicalized individuals, is likely to continue to increase, demanding constant vigilance and coordination by law enforcement agencies and the public. Soft targets such as schools, commercial facilities, places of worship, and public gatherings will remain a significant vulnerability across the state, particularly in areas of large population growth, and the use of drones for attacks (using lessons learned from the war in Ukraine and other conflicts) will be a growing concern. Cyber threats to government agencies and private businesses will continue to increase in frequency, scope, and complexity.

During the past five years, Texas has been impacted by multiple mass shootings including the attack at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde; natural disasters including Central Texas flooding

resulting in the tragic large-scale loss of life, and Winter Storm Uri, which threatened the Texas electrical grid and left many without power for an extended time; a growing number of cyberattacks on government, businesses, and infrastructure; and a global pandemic. We expect the Texas homeland security environment in the next five years to be equally challenging. Securing Texas will continue to demand a thorough understanding of threats and hazards, vulnerabilities, and consequences as the foundation of effective risk management in a resource-constrained environment. We must continue to enhance the resilience of our communities and the state as a whole, with the knowledge that new attacks and disasters will inevitably take place. Success will require unprecedented levels of multi-agency, multi-jurisdictional, and public-private planning and coordination; technology integration; information sharing; a vigilant and prepared public; and a shared commitment to constant improvement.

SECTION III: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

INTRODUCTION

The Goals and Objectives listed and described in this section are aligned with the five homeland security mission areas: Prevent, Protect, Mitigate, Respond, and Recover. They reflect the state’s most significant homeland security priorities and will serve to focus our homeland security activities, to include investment and resourcing efforts. It is important to note that these Goals and Objectives do not constitute an exhaustive list of all important actions within each mission area; for example, preparedness activities such as planning, training, exercises, and public outreach provide a foundation for long-term success across all mission areas.

Goals are the general strategic ends toward which Texas will continually work; they serve to orient our long-term homeland security efforts.

Objectives support each Goal and describe a result, event, or outcome to be achieved over the next five years. Objectives serve to focus the application of resources.

Priority Actions support each Objective and describe specific initiatives and activities needed to accomplish the Objective.

In almost all cases, implementing Priority Actions, achieving Objectives, and furthering Goals will require coordinated effort among multiple state agencies, jurisdictions, and the private sector.

EVALUATION PLAN

For this strategy to be impactful, it must remain a dynamic document used to assess progress and guide course corrections. The Texas Department of Public Safety’s Homeland Security Division will be responsible for developing and managing a process to assess statewide implementation of the THSSP. The Division will work with stakeholders to develop metrics to gauge progress on each Objective and Priority Action and to develop an annual summary of implementation progress and remaining tasks. This process will involve assignment of a “lead agency for reporting” on each Priority Action. In most cases, these leads are not solely responsible for achieving all aspects of the designated Priority Action, but they are expected to maintain a statewide perspective on THSSP implementation in the assigned area through coordination with all stakeholders.

Goal 1: Prevent

Prevent terrorist and hostile foreign nation attacks and organized criminal activity in Texas.

Objective	
1.1	Expand and enhance the statewide intelligence capability that reduces the threat of terrorism and criminal enterprises, with an emphasis on proactive intelligence.
Priority Actions	
1.1.1	Enhance intelligence coordination and collaboration across the state's network of intelligence nodes and with federal partner organizations, to include continued implementation of common processes and standards for recognized fusion centers.
1.1.2	At the state and local levels, ensure close integration of intelligence analysis into all homeland security operations, to include use of technical situational awareness platforms.
1.1.3	Enhance the state's capacity to identify, assess, monitor, and disrupt potential acts of terrorism and targeted violence, including mass casualty threats, with a focus on threats that could impact special events, soft targets, and crowded places.
1.1.4	Expand and enhance federal, state, local, and private sector partner participation in statewide efforts to analyze and share actionable intelligence on cybersecurity threats, with a focus on increasing automation and coordination.
1.1.5	Expand and enhance law enforcement intelligence and crime analysis training available to all law enforcement agencies in the state through development of common training standards, programs, and certification processes.
1.1.6	Ensure a continuing public-private dialogue on issues associated with monitoring terrorist and criminal communications on social media and other platforms to disrupt potential attacks.
1.1.7	Expand and enhance the network of human sources that can provide detailed and relevant information on known or suspected terrorist and criminal enterprises.

Goal 1: Prevent

1.1.8	Expand and enhance the state’s ability to identify, analyze, and counter threats from hostile foreign nations to public safety and critical infrastructure.
1.1.9	Ensure proactive awareness and analysis of potential public safety threats from new technologies, including artificial intelligence and unmanned aircraft systems.

The homeland security threat in Texas is evolving. While Texas communities continue to suffer from the consequences of terrorism and targeted violence, recent international developments have highlighted threats to the state from hostile foreign nations, as these adversaries or their proxies work to undermine the United States by targeting critical infrastructure and other assets. Cybersecurity is a critical and growing concern. Artificial intelligence (AI), unmanned aerial systems (UAS), autonomous vehicles, and other emerging technologies pose new challenges to public safety and homeland security. Texas must address this dynamic threat landscape through effective information and intelligence sharing among all relevant stakeholders. To best equip law enforcement for successful threat mitigation, shared information and intelligence must be accurate and timely, while complying with privacy, civil rights, and civil liberty requirements.

Texas continues to prioritize coordination and collaboration across the state’s network of intelligence stakeholders. Collaboration between local, state, and federal partners has resulted in successful prevention and investigative action, such as the investigation of the January 2025 terrorist attack in New Orleans perpetrated by a Texas resident. Intelligence coordination and collaboration have increased statewide through continuous meetings and information sharing opportunities among the eight federally recognized fusion centers in Texas; Texas law enforcement agencies; law enforcement and intelligence stakeholders in other states; and federal partners throughout the intelligence community. Texas fusion center personnel support U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) task forces, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Joint Terrorism Task Forces (JTTFs). Texas adopted fusion center operation rules in 2021 to define standards for fusion center operations, intelligence sharing requirements, and annual assessments of capabilities.

State partners have worked diligently in recent years to investigate thousands of Threats to Life (TTLs) with local and federal agencies, including threats to special events, soft targets, and crowded places, successfully preventing planned mass casualty attacks. In July 2025, the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) arrested an individual plotting to attack Independence Day festivities in Canyon, TX, the result of weeks of local, state, and federal agencies investigating the individual’s online and in-person behavior. Law enforcement agencies in Texas have held multiple conversations with private sector stakeholders in recent years regarding potential partnership opportunities, and all state agencies will continue to work with national entities such as the National Fusion Center Association, the Association of State Criminal Investigative Agencies, and the International Association of Chiefs of Police to share best practices on public-private dialogue to prevent terroristic and criminal acts.

In the past five years, Texas has conducted multiple analyst academies aligned with federal Minimum Criminal Intelligence Training Standards and the Analyst Professional Development

Goal 1: Prevent

Road Map, further professionalizing and standardizing the analyst role within Texas law enforcement agencies. Expanded training on the iWatchTexas program for School Safety Network users has empowered educators and school district police officers to identify suspicious activity or behavior and report and investigate school-related threats. Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention (TVTP) training increases awareness of suspicious activity indicators throughout Texas communities. DPS will continue to host Texas law enforcement analysts at the DPS Analyst Academy at no cost to their agencies. To increase analytical partnership with federal partners, Texas will work with the FBI Office of Partner Engagement to facilitate and deliver analytic tradecraft training to state law enforcement personnel.

Texas has taken several key steps to strengthen cybersecurity threat intelligence capabilities in recent years. The state has established protocols with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to share sensitive information using the Traffic Light Protocol; implemented reporting processes in response to Texas Government Code Chapter 2054; and deployed tools to monitor dark web activity. The Texas Department of Information Resources (DIR) has expanded its stakeholder collaboration through the Statewide Incident Response Workgroup and enhanced account compromise and threat notification processes. As of July 2025, there were 26 organizations engaged in the Texas Information Sharing and Analysis Organization (TX-ISAO) automated cyber threat intelligence sharing platform. The 89th Texas Legislature established the Texas Cyber Command (TXCC), which will include a cybersecurity threat intelligence center; collaborate with federal cybersecurity intelligence and law enforcement agencies; further automate threat intelligence sharing with TX-ISAO members; expand Regional Security Operations Center automation; and improve incident reporting and threat awareness across the public and private sectors. TXCC will develop a data sharing agreement to support the secure sharing of actionable intelligence and continue to evaluate the utility, accuracy, and effectiveness of threat intelligence sources to offer the best detection of and protection against complex and emerging cyber threats.

Texas faces a broad and increasing threat from hostile foreign adversaries, and state leadership has taken steps to address this threat. In November 2024, Governor Abbott issued Executive Order GA-47 relating to the prevention of harassment or coercion of Texans by foreign adversaries and Executive Order GA-48 relating to the hardening of state government against foreign adversaries. The Texas Legislature passed Senate Bill 1349 and Senate Bill 2514 in 2025; Senate Bill 1349 establishes offenses for transnational repression of Texas residents, and Senate Bill 2514 establishes a Hostile Foreign Adversaries Unit at DPS. State agencies will continue to engage with private sector partners within critical infrastructure sectors to increase awareness and reporting and to harden critical infrastructure against these threats. The state will train law enforcement personnel and other stakeholders on foreign adversary activities and collaborate with partners to collect intelligence, analyze threats, and support related investigations.

AI, UAS, and autonomous vehicles also pose a potential threat to public safety and homeland security in Texas. Criminals use AI to conduct fraud, identity theft, child exploitation, and other illicit activities; hostile foreign adversaries and terrorist organizations could use AI to spread disinformation and misinformation or to conduct cyberattacks against critical infrastructure. UAS platforms pose a threat to critical infrastructure, mass gatherings, elected officials, military installations, and other targets. The increasing deployment of autonomous vehicles may result in crashes, blocked traffic, and other public safety concerns. In the maritime sector, autonomous surface vehicles (ASVs) and autonomous underwater vehicles (AUVs) pose a potential threat to

Goal 1: Prevent

Texas waterways. In 2023, Texas created the Artificial Intelligence Advisory Council, and in 2025 the Texas Legislature passed new laws to regulate the use of AI systems in Texas and establish new penalties for the use of AI in illegal activities. Texas has established state offenses for the operation of UAS platforms over airports, military installations, and correctional or detention facilities. Legislation passed in 2025 updates the Transportation Code to address autonomous motor vehicle operations. Moving forward, state agencies will take a proactive stance in bringing awareness to potential threats from emerging technologies and adopt protocols ensuring safe, legal, and ethical use of these technologies.

Goal 1: Prevent

Objective	
1.2	Combat the activities of criminal enterprises through coordinated law enforcement operations, investigations, and supporting programs.
Priority Actions	
1.2.1	Conduct and support integrated multi-agency, multi-jurisdictional investigations to disrupt and dismantle criminal organizations operating in Texas.
1.2.2	Expand and enhance statewide law enforcement efforts to combat human trafficking, to include joint operations against human trafficking organizations, specific training for agents and officers, and information sharing with public and private partners.
1.2.3	Integrate the counter-gang efforts of law enforcement agencies at all levels through coordination at Texas Anti-Gang Centers.
1.2.4	As needed, conduct coordinated state and local law enforcement surge operations to target identified high-crime areas across the state.
1.2.5	Enhance programs to counter radicalization and gang recruitment in correctional facilities and ensure sharing of relevant intelligence on potential threats with law enforcement agencies.
1.2.6	Expand and enhance capabilities to conduct investigations on groups and networks advocating domestic terrorism.
1.2.7	Expand and enhance statewide law enforcement efforts to investigate and disrupt the development and distribution of fentanyl and other deadly synthetic drugs.
1.2.8	Combat and reduce organized retail theft, oilfield theft, and other targeted criminal activities through coordinated law enforcement operations, investigations, and collaboration with private sector partners.
1.2.9	Combat and reduce cyber crime through coordinated law enforcement operations, investigations, and supporting programs.

Transnational criminal organizations (TCOs), gangs, human trafficking networks, foreign terrorist organizations (FTOs), drug cartels, and other criminal groups are involved in a variety of illicit activities in Texas. Law enforcement agencies at all levels across Texas must work together to effectively disrupt and dismantle these organized criminal enterprises through coordinated investigations and operations.

Over the past five years, Texas has made significant strides in fostering integrated investigative efforts. Texas Anti-Gang (TAG) Centers are active across major metropolitan areas, facilitating

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interagency intelligence sharing and joint operations among federal, state, and local partners. TAG Centers help eliminate siloed investigations and maximize the impact of limited resources to address the persistent gang challenge in Texas, while also integrating communication exploitation platforms to enhance intelligence sharing and multi-agency investigations. Recurring state funding allows TAGs to support long-term investigations and proactive enforcement. Advanced communication platforms and the TxGang database enable the disruption of violent gangs and affiliated criminal enterprises. The state will continue to improve intelligence sharing by integrating new technologies such as AI-assisted link analysis, dark web monitoring, and digital forensics into investigative operations.

Human trafficking exploits men, women, and children for forced labor or forced sex by a third party for profit, and Texas law enforcement operations have targeted domestic sex traffickers, identified victims of human trafficking, and disrupted the solicitation for prostitution of minors. The Texas Office of the Attorney General (OAG) Human Trafficking Unit works closely with the OAG Human Trafficking and Transnational Organized Crime Unit to conduct investigations and deliver human trafficking prevention training to local, state, and federal law enforcement personnel and prosecutors across the state on a quarterly basis. The OAG Human Trafficking Unit will continue to expand proactive partnerships with federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies to rescue victims of human trafficking and arrest and prosecute traffickers.

Coordinated law enforcement surge operations enable a targeted, rapid, and organized response to violent crime, gang activity, human smuggling, and other criminal actions. Texas DPS works with other state and local law enforcement agencies to deploy Violent Crime Task Forces, Violent Crime Units, and Criminal Interdiction Units to address areas experiencing high levels of criminal activity around the state and to support ongoing missions such as Operation Lone Star. In 2025, Texas provided resources to address outlaw motorcycle gang activity in Northwest Texas; supported anti-crime surge operations in Harris County; and contributed to operations targeting migrant gangs including Tren de Aragua. Texas law enforcement personnel continue to receive training to enhance efforts and leverage advanced technology including expanded license plate reader coverage, predictive crime mapping, and travel pattern analysis. Moving forward, Texas will continue to be proactive and aggressive in surging law enforcement and supporting resources to address emerging trends in criminal activity.

Since 1985, over 53,000 gang-affiliated inmates have been positively identified by Texas corrections facility staff. In addition to the dangers posed by gangs inside these facilities, prison gangs organize and command street-level crime throughout the state. Through interviews, programming implementation, and cross-agency collaboration, juvenile justice professionals create lasting behavior changes among the state's highest-risk youth to improve public safety. Since 2021, Texas has revised its tiered prison gang ranking system to more effectively address the prison gang threat and has overhauled the methods through which inmates are empowered to disassociate from prison gangs through separate housing and other strategies. The Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) is part of the Texas Violent Gang Task Force Advisory Committee and provides training at law enforcement gang conferences; delivers expert testimony for gang related court cases; shares information with other gang investigators; and manages the Texas Anti-Gang Information Tracker. The Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJJ) provides regular training on youth gang awareness, assessment, and intelligence to local juvenile justice stakeholders. Texas will continue to leverage technology to proactively monitor prison gang

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activity, and TDCJ will continue to train and educate gang specialists across the state to identify gang-affiliated inmates and provided a pathway to break from gangs. TJJD will provide programming to incarcerated youth with confirmed or suspected gang involvement and will update this programming based on best practices and lessons learned.

Lone actors and loosely affiliated networks driven by violent ideologies—such as racially motivated violent extremism, anti-government extremism, and accelerationist doctrines—have demonstrated the capacity to carry out mass violence and infrastructure sabotage in Texas. National threat assessments consistently identify domestic violent extremists as a top homeland security concern, reinforcing the need for integrated investigative capabilities statewide. Texas law enforcement agencies work with the FBI’s JTTFs and participate in statewide trainings on pre-attack indicators, radicalization pathways, and domestic threat actor profiles. Texas fusion centers track domestic terrorism indicators and share information with law enforcement partners at all levels. Exercises like the 2023 Texas Statewide Complex Coordinated Terrorist Attack Response Full-Scale Exercise provide an opportunity for multi-agency stakeholders to collaborate on incident response. Moving forward, Texas will deploy advanced technologies such as AI-enhanced threat detection; chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosives detection; geospatial analysis; and dark web monitoring to support early identification of domestic extremist threats while promoting coordinated community outreach and prevention strategies supporting radicalization intervention efforts.

Fentanyl and other synthetic opioids are responsible for an unprecedented surge in overdose deaths in Texas. TCOs, including Mexican cartels and FTOs, exploit Texas’ geographic location as a primary trafficking corridor for bulk shipments of precursor chemicals and finished product statewide. The highly adaptable nature of synthetic drug production, including counterfeit pill pressing operations and clandestine lab activity, requires coordinated investigative and information sharing efforts across all levels of law enforcement. Texas is implementing Governor Abbott’s Executive Order GA-42 and state-level initiatives prioritizing fentanyl as a homeland security threat. Multi-agency operations—enhanced by legislative support to Texas law enforcement agencies—and the deployment of drug-testing devices and other technologies will continue to result in record fentanyl seizures and disruption of cartel-linked supply chains.

Organized retail and oilfield theft operations represent significant threats to the Texas and U.S. economic security and critical infrastructure, amounting to hundreds of millions of dollars annually in stolen products. Texas law enforcement agencies have targeted organized theft by leveraging strong partnerships with industry groups such as the Coalition of Law Enforcement and Retail and the National Retail Federation to improve information sharing and joint operations. The Permian Basin Oil Theft Task Force brings local, state, and federal partners together to combat oilfield theft in West Texas. The 89th Texas Legislature created an Organized Oilfield Theft Prevention Program at DPS; created a new Railroad Commission of Texas task force to study oilfield theft; and granted Texas law enforcement new authorities to investigate and prosecute oilfield theft, which will enhance law enforcement effectiveness and efficiency in combating these growing threats.

Since cyber criminals operate across national borders, international law enforcement collaboration is essential. Joint operations enable agencies to share intelligence, track suspects across borders, seize criminal infrastructure, and make arrests. Investigations also reveal emerging attack methods,

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informing public advisories and security updates. Texas has continued its collaboration with local and federal partners to investigate cybersecurity incidents. The Texas DPS Cyber Security office includes a Security Operations Center and a Computer Security Incident Response Team, and the Texas Military Department (TMD) maintains a Cyber Branch. These units provide critical support to state and local agencies in responding to cyber incidents. Texas law enforcement agencies will work closely with Texas Cyber Command, established in 2025, to investigate and prosecute cyber crimes across the state.

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Objective	
1.3	Prevent terrorists and criminal enterprises from exploiting Texas' international borders, including land, air, and sea.
Priority Actions	
1.3.1	In conjunction with federal agencies, conduct unified state and local law enforcement operations to deny the use of the Texas border region to terrorists and criminal organizations, particularly between the ports of entry.
1.3.2	Employ appropriate technology to detect and monitor potential threats in the border region, particularly in remote areas, and ensure shared situational awareness among law enforcement partner organizations.
1.3.3	Enhance the security of Texas seaports through integrated federal, state, local, and private sector planning and coordination of security and protection activities.
1.3.4	Build and maintain coordinating relationships with all critical partners in border security operations, including federal agencies, landowners, and Mexican law enforcement agencies.
1.3.5	Where appropriate for operational needs, emplace permanent or temporary barriers to deter and prevent illegal entry into Texas.

In early 2021, Texas launched Operation Lone Star to address significant increases in illegal immigration and associated crime along the state's 1254-mile border with Mexico. While this effort, supported by recent changes in federal resources and policy on border security, has dramatically reduced illegal crossings between the ports of entry, many challenges remain. Mexican cartels, in coordination with transnational trafficking organizations and Texas gangs, continue to move illegal drugs across the border, engage in human trafficking operations with tragic consequences for victims, and support these operations through money laundering, stash houses, weapons smuggling, vehicle thefts, and attempts to intimidate communities. Texas' air and sea borders pose similar security challenges due to the risk of illicit vessels entering the state undetected. Terrorists and criminals attempting to exploit border security vulnerabilities remain a major threat to homeland security and public safety throughout Texas and the United States. The recent reduction in illegal immigration presents an opportunity to further focus law enforcement operations and investigative efforts on detecting and eliminating the criminal infrastructure that enables and supports border-related crime.

Securing the state's international borders requires interagency coordination and cooperation and the effective deployment of equipment and technology. Texas state law enforcement agencies work with U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), FBI, the Drug Enforcement Administration, HSI, local law enforcement agencies, and landowners to interdict narcotics and human smuggling activities and conduct tactical operations along the Texas-Mexico border 365 days a year. The Texas Border Security Operations Center and Joint Operations Intelligence

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Centers collect, analyze, and share intelligence with all border security stakeholders. Law enforcement liaisons in Mexico and confidential informants on both sides of the border enhance border security operations. In 2025, U.S. Northern Command established Joint Task Force-Southern Border as the primary command and control node for Title 10 forces to conduct all-domain operations to secure the U.S. southern border in support of CBP. Texas will continue to work in close collaboration with all partners in planning and executing joint border security operations.

The DPS-administered Drawbridge camera program, enhanced by AI tools and deployed across the Texas-Mexico border, has prevented the entry of tons of illegal narcotics and thousands of undocumented migrants. Providing over 250,000 images a day, Drawbridge cameras enhance situational awareness, but additional technologies and capabilities could also be beneficial. For example, long-range fixed wing unmanned aircraft systems can enhance the detection and tracking of ground and air incursions by criminal organizations. Drone mitigation technology (and appropriate mitigation authorities) could combat the criminal drone incursions that occur along the border each day and reduce the growing threat to officer safety of drone weaponization. Mobile ground-to-air radar could enhance the tracking of low flying clandestine aircraft, while additional human intelligence could help identify airstrips in Texas used by those aircraft so that they can be targeted by law enforcement strike teams.

Texas' Gulf Coast presents another significant vulnerability due to its physical size, the presence of critical seaports and the Intracoastal Waterway, and the magnitude of goods flowing into and out of the state. Port security must be achieved through a collaborative effort among private sector organizations and partner agencies at the federal, state, and local level. Texas will continue to enhance the security of its seaports by increasing multi-jurisdictional participation on local planning and security committees, actively sharing threat and vulnerability information among all stakeholders, providing support as required to port managers and operators, and investing in proven technology to assist with early detection and interdiction of potential threats.

Since 2021, TMD's Joint Task Force-Lone Star has installed more than 287 miles of permanent or temporary barriers along the Texas-Mexico border, consisting of over 161 miles of concertina wire, 72 miles of chain link fence, and nearly 54 miles of anti-climb barrier. The locations of these barriers have been prioritized according to a variety of factors including the locations of mass illegal border crossings, the presence or absence of existing natural and man-made barriers, the availability of land-use agreements, and other operational considerations. TMD will continue to emplace and repair permanent or temporary barriers in support of Operation Lone Star as needed.

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Objective	
1.4	Increase statewide awareness and reporting of suspicious activities related to crime and terrorism.
Priority Actions	
1.4.1	Conduct outreach activities to raise public awareness and understanding of the importance of suspicious activity reporting and methods for reporting, including the iWatch Texas system.
1.4.2	Expand the number and scope of Fusion Liaison Officer and similar outreach programs statewide to increase the amount of law enforcement and other personnel trained on recognizing and reporting suspicious activity.
1.4.3	Enhance law enforcement collaboration with schools to facilitate reporting of suspicious activity and potential threats to students and staff members.
1.4.4	Increase retail sector awareness and reporting of suspicious transactions through continued expansion of the Bomb-Making Materials Awareness Program throughout the state.

Law enforcement agencies depend on information from community partners to improve public safety. Suspicious activity reporting directly supports crime prevention, enabling law enforcement to mitigate threats through the identification and assessment of planned criminal and terroristic activity. Increasing public awareness about the important role of suspicious activity reports (SARs) helps make our communities safer. Expanding public reporting through the iWatchTexas SAR program enhances the overall threat picture for law enforcement partners and enables early interdiction operations. Law enforcement outreach programs build partnerships and collaboration with schools, the private sector, and other homeland security stakeholders.

The iWatchTexas program has grown significantly since 2021. In 2023, the 88th Texas Legislature amended the Texas Labor Code to require all employers to notify employees of their ability to report workplace violence suspicious activity through iWatchTexas, and the platform now includes a specific question that routes any reports regarding workplace violence issues to DPS for processing. In 2024, increasing threats from foreign adversaries prompted Executive Order GA-47, which directs updates to iWatchTexas to allow members of the public to report foreign influence threats such as assassination, assault, physical surveillance, harassment, abduction, familial intimidation, digital threats, passport revocation, consular services denial, unlawful detention and deportation, and forced rendition and repatriation. The iWatchTexas program has expanded the availability of promotional materials, including the creation of reference cards, brochures, and posters. All promotional items are available online in both English and Spanish and can be used during community events and public trainings.

To increase public awareness regarding role of SARs in public safety, Texas DPS created the Texas Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention (TVTP) Program in 2024. A community-oriented training, the TVTP Program seeks to educate members of the public about the indicators of targeted violence and terrorism, the pathway to violence, and available community resources to

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combat these threats, including SARs. From June 2024 to July 2025, TVTP trainers conducted over 30 training courses across Texas. Additionally, the TVTP Program, in conjunction with the DPS Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management Program, hosted the 2025 Targeted Violence Prevention and Behavioral Threat Management Conference in San Antonio, TX. This three-day event educated over 300 community stakeholders about preventing acts of targeted violence, the importance of behavioral threat management, and the role of SAR in supporting both activities.

Recent attacks nationally and in Texas show that there is a continuing need to further expand awareness of and education on pre-attack indicators among the law enforcement and first responder community and the public. Liaison officer programs can create new channels for information and intelligence sharing between law enforcement and civilian communities, adding “eyes and ears” to threat monitoring operations and helping law enforcement detect and deter attacks before they take place. Texas law enforcement agencies have established Threat Liaison Officer (TLO), Fusion Liaison Officer (FLO), and Infrastructure Liaison Officer (ILO) programs to encourage suspicious activity reporting. These programs enhance information and intelligence sharing between law enforcement agencies and public, including private sector critical infrastructure owners and operators. Texas will continue to work to expand the number and scope of TLO, FLO, ILO programs over the next five years.

Following the 2022 Uvalde school shooting, Texas strengthened existing collaboration activities and created new collaboration opportunities between law enforcement and schools. DPS worked closely with the Texas Education Agency and Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to increase awareness within the academic community about iWatchTexas; delivered virtual and in-person iWatchTexas School Safety Network briefings and trainings; licensed school safety personnel from campuses across Texas for direct access to iWatchTexas reporting; and incorporated iWatchTexas presentations into school safety conference events. As a result, school safety reporting into iWatchTexas has steadily increased each year since 2022, with September 2024 recording a record monthly high of over 200 school safety reports.

The Bomb-Making Materials Awareness Program (BMAP) is a U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) initiative (with no cost to the state) designed to increase public and private sector awareness of everyday products for sale at retail establishments that threat actors can use to make improvised explosive devices (IEDs) or homemade explosive (HMEs). Trained BMAP partners visit retailers and educate them about suspicious buying patterns and behaviors and processes for reporting suspicious activity, empowering our private sector partners to help detect and disrupt potentially lethal attacks before they can be set in motion. In Texas, we have seen this approach prevent terrorist activity: In 2011, Nasser Jason Abdo was arrested near Fort Hood while preparing to launch a terrorist attack against U.S. soldiers stationed there; his arrest was the result of a gun store owner alerting police to Abdo’s suspicious behavior in his establishment. Currently, over 300 individuals drawn from law enforcement, emergency management, and other stakeholder communities support Texas BMAP. DHS recognizes Texas as a leading BMAP partner and works closely with DPS to promote the program, support trained BMAP personnel, and deliver in-person BMAP training events in Texas each year. In 2024, the City of Austin conducted a large-scale BMAP outreach project, visiting retailers throughout the Austin metropolitan area, and this initiative serves as a model for other municipalities across the state. Moving forward, Texas will continue to work to increase the number of trained BMAP partners in the state and increase the number of visits to retail establishments by these personnel. In addition, Texas will engage with

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the DHS Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency to ensure the state is prioritized for BMAP training opportunities and coordinate with Councils of Governments and other homeland security partner agencies to schedule training events. DPS will maintain regular contact with BMAP partners, providing resources and information and encouraging them to visit retailers and track those visits in TRIPwire.

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Objective	
1.5	Develop a comprehensive Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management (BTAM) program and Threat to Life (TTL) program in Texas.
Priority Actions	
1.5.1	Build multi-agency, multi-functional BTAM and TTL Teams throughout Texas, ensuring statewide coverage.
1.5.2	Ensure consistency across BTAM teams in policies and procedures for threat assessment and management, including processes and technology for tracking and sharing information on subjects.
1.5.3	Develop and implement training programs for BTAM team members representing law enforcement, mental health, social services, and other organizations.
1.5.4	Conduct prompt and thorough investigations of threat to life incidents throughout the state.

Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management (BTAM) and Threat to Life (TTL) teams enable law enforcement and partner agencies to identify, assess, and manage individuals or groups posing credible threats to life before they escalate into acts of violence. Coordinated, multi-agency teams allow proactive mitigation of targeted violence incidents, school shootings, workplace attacks, and extremist threats and provide a formal structure for sharing intelligence among law enforcement agencies, schools, mental health service providers, and community stakeholders while protecting privacy rights. These programs ensure uniform standards and protocols across Texas for statewide reporting, eliminating gaps in threat assessment and facilitating a coordinated statewide response.

Recent legislative actions have expanded school-based threat assessment teams, while DPS has piloted Threat to Life protocols tied to social media and digital platforms, enabling real-time intervention in imminent threat cases. In 2024, Texas finalized the *Texas Behavioral Threat Assessment, Intervention, and Prevention Program Strategy* to prevent targeted violence through a coordinated effort to receive and assess threat information, recommend intervention measures, and monitor potential threats over time using an approach that emphasizes multi-agency coordination, early intervention, information sharing, and privacy and civil liberties protection.

Through this strategy, Texas will build a coordinated stakeholder network to prevent targeted violence in Texas communities, increase stakeholder capacity, ensure effective operation of behavioral threat assessment teams, sustain the program through professional development and governance, and conduct outreach to enhance behavioral threat assessment, intervention, and prevention activities. Texas currently has 10 DPS-led BTAM teams across Texas, and DPS is actively participating in 13 other BTAM teams in the state, all of which have been established in accordance with recognized federal standards.

Consistency in BTAM protocols ensures that all teams—whether local, regional, or statewide—are aligned in identifying, assessing, and managing potential threats. Standardized policies and

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interoperable technology platforms allow for seamless information sharing between agencies, reducing duplication, preventing gaps in threat monitoring, and enhancing early intervention capabilities. Unified processes are critical to maintaining legal compliance, safeguarding civil liberties, and ensuring a coordinated response to targeted violence and other public safety threats. Texas will launch focused awareness and marketing material regarding targeted violence threat reporting, intervention, and prevention to ensure a consistent and coordinated approach. The Safe Approach to Violence Elimination (iSAVE) Texas platform will facilitate external BTAM stakeholders' threat information reporting in a standardized format, while annual reports to DPS leadership and external stakeholders will ensure a common understanding of the BTAM mission and progress.

BTAM relies on a multidisciplinary approach, requiring collaboration among law enforcement, mental health providers, social services, and other stakeholders. Consistent, high-quality training ensures that all members share a common understanding of threat assessment principles, legal considerations, privacy rules, and intervention strategies. Standardized training strengthens statewide capacity to identify, assess, and manage potential threats before violence occurs, while promoting early intervention and rehabilitation where appropriate. Texas will continue to support multidisciplinary training, conferences, and other activities to expand stakeholders' understanding of legal frameworks, case management protocols, and information-sharing practices in support of the BTAM mission. DPS will work with partners to develop and refine BTAM certification standards that reflect a unified curriculum supporting law enforcement, mental health, and social services partners.

Ensuring a rapid and coordinated response to TTL incidents is critical to protecting public safety and preventing mass casualty events. Texas faces a range of TTL threats including targeted violence, school and workplace threats, domestic terrorism plots, and threats against public officials. The DPS Criminal Investigations Division (CID) is uniquely positioned to leverage statewide intelligence networks, the Texas Fusion Center, and specialized investigative units to identify credible threats early and mitigate them before they escalate to violence. CID collaborates with the Texas School Safety Center, BTAM teams, and FBI JTTFs for rapid information sharing. TTL investigations are tracked through the Kaseware with regularly reporting through CID restricted briefs to executive leadership. CID special agents receive ongoing training in behavioral threat assessment threat management for the prevention and intervention of targeted violence and investigative techniques specific to imminent threat cases. Texas will continue to establish DPS-led regional BTAM and TTL teams covering every DPS Region, integrating these teams with existing school threat assessment programs, fusion centers, and mental health crisis teams. Existing intelligence platforms, fusion center data, and social media monitoring tools will support real-time threat detection, while performance metrics such as number of threats assessed, interventions completed, and acts of violence averted will help Texas refine intervention strategies.

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Reduce the state's vulnerability to terrorist, criminal, and hostile foreign nation attacks and natural and technological disasters.

Objective	
2.1	Enhance the security and resilience of the physical, cyber, and human components of Texas critical infrastructure, with particular emphasis on the lifeline sectors of Communications, Energy, Transportation Systems, and Water and Wastewater Systems.
Priority Actions	
2.1.1	Build awareness and understanding of infrastructure throughout Texas by identifying infrastructure assets, systems, networks, and functions and by assessing criticality, threats, vulnerabilities, disruption consequences, and dependencies/interdependencies.
2.1.2	Implement and support efforts to manage critical infrastructure risk, including activities to address physical and cyber security gaps, supply chain weaknesses, and workforce needs.
2.1.3	Strengthen public-private partnerships and share critical infrastructure protection information with appropriate stakeholders through advisory councils, working groups, Fusion Liaison Officer and similar programs, and other relevant forums.
2.1.4	Promote learning and improvement through training and exercises related to the security and resilience of critical infrastructure, with a focus on public-private coordination.
2.1.5	Enhance statewide capability to support critical infrastructure owners/operators to maintain security and continue operations during incidents.
2.1.6	Strengthen the security and resilience of the Texas Interconnection power grid to ensure reliable, uninterrupted access to community lifelines, particularly during emergencies.

Critical infrastructure—especially communications, energy, transportation, and water and wastewater systems—is central to the safety, prosperity, and quality of life of the people of Texas. To enhance infrastructure security and resilience, Texas will work to increase understanding of

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our infrastructure by assessing criticality, vulnerabilities, disruption consequences, risk, and dependencies/interdependencies. Texas will then use and share this knowledge through education, training, planning, exercises, and public-private partnerships.

Since 2021, Texas has increased partnerships with infrastructure stakeholders to enhance collaboration and communication and build understanding across critical infrastructure sectors. These public-private partnerships lead to improved awareness of the state's infrastructure resources and needs, reduce communication gaps, and strengthen critical infrastructure protection efforts. For example, the state created and maintains numerous advisory groups and various other forums, such as the Private Sector Advisory Council and the Infrastructure Liaison Officer Program, to share information and enhance coordination between government agencies and public and private sector critical infrastructure owners and operators. These partners recognize a shared responsibility to protect infrastructure and limit disruptions during incidents, and that shared commitment is exemplified through regular public-private coordination during local emergency operations center and State Operations Center activations to minimize the impacts of incidents to the communities and infrastructure of Texas.

Because physical and cyber security risks to infrastructure systems in Texas could negatively affect homeland security, the global economy, and the international supply chain, the state's infrastructure workforce must be empowered to analyze and mitigate this risk. The infrastructure workforce also must be strengthened to meet growing personnel needs and address potential shortages in critical skills. To this end, workforce recruiting and training are a top priority for Texas in the coming years. In partnership with the private sector, Texas will work with its academic institutions to build workforce development programs for key positions and industries, with focus areas including cybersecurity and supply chain management. In addition, Texas will work with stakeholders to ensure appropriate investments in infrastructure security, to include threat monitoring, security protocols and equipment, and modernization of infrastructure where needed.

Multi-agency, multi-sector training and exercise is a cornerstone of critical infrastructure protection. Texas is committed to promoting infrastructure-related training and exercise events addressing cybersecurity, weather emergencies such as floods and severe winter weather, terrorist and significant criminal attacks, and other threats and hazards impacting all sectors. Texas will continue to exercise state-level capabilities related to widespread blackout events to increase interagency collaboration on emergency response and preparedness capabilities. State agencies will leverage partnerships with local jurisdictions, federal stakeholders, industry partners, and institutions of higher education to develop training on cybersecurity, physical security, disaster mitigation, emergency response, and related topics that will improve statewide resilience moving forward.

The majority of critical infrastructure assets in Texas are owned and operated by private sector entities, and supporting these owners and operators is a central part of the critical infrastructure protection mission in Texas. Texas agencies will continue to share information with owners/operators to identify vulnerabilities and needs so that relevant assets—such as manned and unmanned aircraft, fuel supplies, generators, fire suppression resources, search and rescue teams, and debris management teams—can be deployed to ensure continuity of infrastructure operations during natural disasters and other emergency incidents. Additionally, Texas will work to increase the availability and redundancy of these assets across the state. State agencies will conduct and

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participate in infrastructure-focused workshops, exercises, and training events to promote the importance of cyber and physical protection and to better coordinate the joint public-private response to emergencies impacting critical infrastructure, enhancing security, continuity, and resilience.

Texas will focus attention on the security and resilience of electrical infrastructure throughout the state, particularly infrastructure within the Texas Interconnection, which serves over 26 million customers and covers nearly 75% of Texas' land area and 90% of the state's electrical load. As threats to the grid evolve, effective preparedness and mitigation efforts are essential. Texas will continue to work with industry partners to better understand and meet government requirements for resilience and emergency planning and exercises. Likewise, Texas will maintain and exercise the Texas Energy Security Plan, manage funding programs such as the Texas Energy Fund, and exercise the capabilities required to restore power to the electric grid in case of a total blackout. The goal is secure and resilient electrical infrastructure that is optimally protected from threats and hazards and able to recover quickly from potential disruptions.

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Objective	
2.2	Reduce the risk of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) incidents by enhancing control and early detection capabilities.
Priority Actions	
2.2.1	Strengthen statewide capability to detect, confirm, analyze, and assess radiological and nuclear threats and incidents.
2.2.2	Strengthen statewide capability to detect, confirm, analyze, and assess chemical and biological threats and incidents.
2.2.3	Ensure coordinated inspection and controls of commercial CBRN materials in Texas.

Strengthening statewide chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) threat detection capabilities contributes to national security and enhances the safety and resilience of Texas communities. Successful development and employment of these capabilities relies on collaborative effort and adaptation to evolving threats and technological advancements.

Over the past five years, the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) has maintained and improved its capability to deploy a Radiological Emergency Response Team (RERT) composed of more than 60 state employees to incidents across Texas. This capability has been enhanced by capitalizing on training and education opportunities and participating in radiological exercises. DSHS continues to build its cadre of subject matter experts who can deploy to assist other agencies during radiological incidents. Texas participates in the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)-funded Securing the Cities Preventive Radiological/Nuclear Detection (PRND) initiative, training law enforcement personnel to use Personal Radiological Detection (PRD) devices to enhance statewide radiological detection capability. The Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) has established a radiation detection unit within Texas Highway Patrol, staffed by troopers with specialized training in PRD equipment and protocols, and will continue to grow this capability through training and procurement opportunities.

Due to a growing population, the construction of large artificial intelligence (AI) data centers requiring a substantial amount of electrical power, and other energy-dependent developments, Texas will see a growth in the building and operation of small modular reactors (SMRs) to provide nuclear power to the state's electrical grid. Consequently, the DSHS Radiation Control Program will expand to address SMR operations, safety, and emergency response and enhance the RERT by maintaining a training, education, and exercise program for staff. Future radiological exercise activities include events involving the Pantex nuclear weapons assembly and disassembly facility in Carson County; exercises involving radiological weapons of mass destruction; Waste Isolation Pilot Plant exercises; full-scale exercises at nuclear power plants in Texas; and exercises addressing the hospital response to nuclear accidents and attacks.

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The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) is Texas' lead state agency for hazardous materials (HAZMAT) incident response and works closely with other state agencies to ensure a safe, effective, and comprehensive approach to natural or manmade disasters involving chemicals. Texas also participates in the National BioWatch network, a federal initiative facilitating early detection and response to attacks from intentionally released biological agents.

Specialized personnel and equipment resources enhance the state's ability to detect and respond to CBRN incidents. More than 100 Disaster Response Strike Team (DRST) members are located throughout Texas to respond to HAZMAT disasters. TCEQ's mobile monitoring fleet includes eight vehicles equipped with specialized instruments capable of continuous, real-time measurements of a wide range of toxins and other hazardous materials. TCEQ Texas Optimization Program staff and engineers, along with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency staff, can be sent to impacted areas to work directly with water system staff to expedite the re-establishment of service to their customers. TCEQ toxicologists identify chemical hazards, evaluate potential exposures, assess human health risks, and communicate risks to the general public and stakeholders. TCEQ will ensure environmental emergency response trainings are conducted each year; enhance TCEQ capability for detection of chemical materials and biological agents; ensure that staff experienced in hazardous material response and protection receive training to respond to events as needed; and continue to conduct annual exercises with stakeholders to strengthen response activities and identify any gaps.

TCEQ, DSHS, DPS, and other state agencies have expanded PRND capabilities through training, education, and ongoing regulatory activities aimed at the security of radioactive material users and locations. High-risk areas of the state, such as the border and the Gulf Coast regions, remain the priority for safety and security inspections, and licensed chemical facilities along the Gulf Coast must submit status reports to agencies during and after tropical storms or hurricanes. Programs like the Texas Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal Compact between Texas and Vermont facilitate the safe storage and disposal of commercially-produced radioactive waste to protect people and the environment. The Texas Tier II Chemical Reporting Program is the state repository for hazardous chemical inventories, and the number of unique facility Tier II reports submitted to TCEQ is approximately 80,000 annually. TCEQ provides annual trainings for local emergency planners on accessing and using the online Tier II Chemical reporting database and will continue to enhance inspection and control programs moving forward.

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Objective	
2.3	Strengthen statewide capability to detect, confirm, analyze, assess, and contain threats to public health.
Priority Actions	
2.3.1	Enhance statewide capability for epidemiological surveillance, to include syndromic surveillance of potential pandemics and other public health outbreaks, through coordination and information sharing among all public health and healthcare stakeholders.
2.3.2	Enhance statewide capability to prevent, detect, trace, and contain outbreaks of foodborne illness.
2.3.3	Enhance statewide food defense capabilities, to include development of a state strategy for Food Safety Modernization Act implementation.

Epidemiological surveillance for potential pandemics and other public health outbreaks encompasses a wide variety of potential pathogens including respiratory viruses such as COVID-19 and H5N1, arboviruses such as West Nile virus, bacteria that are suspected bioterrorism agents, and viral hemorrhagic fevers such as Ebola. In Texas, this surveillance is supported by the Texas Syndromic Surveillance (TxS2) program, which provides data to the Electronic Surveillance System for the Early Notification of Community-based Epidemics (ESSENCE) used by local health departments, DSHS, and data providers to monitor emerging public health conditions or threats. DSHS partners with local health departments to receive and investigate notifications of potential pathogens from laboratories and medical providers. The DSHS Disease Surveillance and Epidemiology Division coordinates epidemiological surveillance and response around the state. DSHS also coordinates with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on the Threat Agnostic Sentinel Surveillance (TASS) project, a critical capability aligned with the U.S. Biodefense Strategy that enables early detection of known and emerging biological threats without prior knowledge of the agent.

Texas will strengthen surveillance and response systems to ensure timely detection of threats and inform evidence-based policies and guidelines. Our data providers will help users monitor respiratory illnesses such as COVID-19, influenza, and RSV, with a public-facing dashboard providing a near real-time awareness of respiratory illness conditions so health care professionals can make recommendations and the general public can make informed decisions. Ongoing investment and collaboration are essential to sustaining and modernizing these capabilities. The TxS2 program will recruit data providers to increase data coverage and will provide educational resources and tools to users. DSHS will continue to develop the TASS project for known and novel outbreak response efforts and will maintain genetic sequencing efforts to provide detailed surveillance and epidemiological genetic data for outbreak linkage and responses. DSHS will expand sentinel surveillance networks by recruiting additional outpatient clinics, hospitals, urgent care centers, and school-based health providers to assist with data collection and analysis.

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Having a robust statewide capability to prevent, detect, trace, and contain foodborne illness outbreaks is critical to protecting public health. Foodborne illnesses can spread rapidly, affecting large populations and causing severe illness or death, especially among vulnerable groups such as children, the elderly, and immunocompromised individuals. Standards and safeguards to prevent food contamination at all stages of production and distribution are an essential first line of defense against foodborne illness.

When outbreaks of foodborne illness occur, it is essential that state and local agencies in Texas be prepared to rapidly identify them, conduct tracing to determine their cause and origin, and contain their spread in collaboration with federal partners. The Texas Rapid Response Team (TRRT) is a collaboration between DSHS, the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA), the Office of the State Chemist, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and regional and local health departments to coordinate multi-jurisdictional responses to foodborne illness outbreaks and food-related emergencies related to listeria, salmonella, cyclosporiasis, campylobacter, and other pathogens. In recent years, the TRRT has conducted exercises, developed free online training courses, and built a foodborne illness outbreak investigation sample kit to collect food samples and environmental swabs during incident response. Texas has increased the number of foodborne illness outbreaks reported, due in large part to improvements in laboratory reporting, coordination with the state laboratory, and increased outreach to local and regional health department partners. Electronic case reporting was implemented in 2024 and gives public health employees faster access to case-patients' medical records.

Texas will continue to implement the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) with a risk-based focus in order to identify hazards that are most likely to occur based on factors such as outbreak history, type of food, production process, and scale of production. Additionally, Texas will continue to increase the number of trained FSMA inspectors and inspections, identifying important safety risks and working with private sector partners to address them. The Texas Office of Produce Safety at TDA will continue to work with the FDA to implement a nationally integrated food safety system that encourages the safe production of fresh fruits and vegetables through grower outreach, education, and inspections based on FSMA protocols. Continued training of local and regional health departments and laboratories will increase the speed of reporting illness outbreaks and improve the response to recall activities. Improvements to online reporting systems and dashboards will decrease the amount of time that epidemiologists spend on data entry and allow them to spend additional time conducting epidemiologic investigations.

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Objective	
2.4	Reduce the vulnerability of the agriculture industry to natural hazards and manmade threats.
Priority Actions	
2.4.1	Strengthen the statewide reporting system for threats against the agriculture industry through enhanced coordination among federal, state, local, and private sector stakeholders.
2.4.2	Ensure the continued availability of sufficient capacity in trained personnel, laboratories, and/or specialized facilities to identify and analyze agricultural pests and disease and high consequence animal diseases.
2.4.3	Maintain inspection and control programs used throughout the state to protect against the introduction of plant and animal pests and diseases.
2.4.4	Enhance capacity for pest and animal disease screening along Texas' international and domestic borders, including seaports.

Texas' agriculture industry is critical to national and international food security, supply chains, and economic systems. The health and security of Texas agriculture directly affects the marketability of Texas commodities, productivity, and risks to human health. The increasing interdependency of producers across state lines and Texas' ties with international trade create an environment where agricultural disease outbreaks can have long-lasting and far-reaching impacts.

The Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) has improved accessibility to databases in the field so inspections and other related tasks can be updated in real time. The TexCORE software system captures surveillance and inspection field data to effectively analyze disease patterns, importation and exportation trends, and other factors. Integrated ArcGIS mapping tools for natural disaster and disease management and the use of the USDA Emergency Management Response System (EMRS) web-based application have enhanced animal disease surveillance and control programs.

Texas continues to pursue opportunities to participate with other state agriculture departments and organizations to improve reporting and communication among agriculture infrastructure partners in the public and private sectors and identify communication and information sharing needs. TAHC and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) currently work together to develop statewide strategies on disease management and reporting, including epidemiological tracing, quarantine management, and disease assessment. Texas has worked to strengthen stakeholder coordination by promoting and supporting the development of Secure Food Supply (SFS) programs for continuity of business operations during animal disease incidents. Additionally, Texas has formalized and maintains an Animal Disease Preparedness and Response Plan outlining the coordination efforts among local, state, and federal response partners and agriculture critical

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infrastructure partners. TDA has awarded a grant to the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service to support a network of diagnostic laboratories providing a comprehensive capability to respond and support surveillance and rapid identification of emerging and/or exotic insect pests and diseases. Texas will continue to participate in quarterly regional U.S. Customs and Border Protection Pest Risk Committee Meetings and engage with the Texas Critical Infrastructure Protection Task Force to strengthen relationships and enhance information sharing and threat analysis capabilities. TAHC will increase participation in veterinary outreach and training through the Texas Authorized Personnel Program by providing education and presentations for Texas veterinary schools and working with veterinary stakeholders to distribute information and train personnel on identification and reporting of disease.

TDA Agriculture and Consumer Protection programs have regularly scheduled meetings with EPA, the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA-APHIS), and the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service to share information. TAHC will maintain trained staff and state resources for the detection, containment, and eradication of animal pests/diseases, while also participating in state and national exercise programs to strengthen partnerships with other response agencies. In addition, TAHC will continue engagement with the Multi-State Partnership for Security in Agriculture Council to support Incident Command System position-specific training, foreign animal disease response trainings, All-Hazards Incident Management Team credentialing, and coordination of agriculture response operations among states. TAHC will develop the readiness of strike teams and incident management teams through emergency management training. Texas will continue to seek out opportunities for cross-training, exercising, and planning initiatives with private sector, local, state, and federal partners.

Inspection and disease surveillance are central to Texas' agriculture security operations. Surveillance and eradication efforts have successfully eliminated or significantly decreased diseases and pests. Texas continues to maintain inspection and surveillance networks at livestock sales and congregate animal events, and TAHC regularly inspects animal processing facilities to ensure disease surveillance is occurring. TDA Plant Quality Program and Regional Operations staff support road station inspections for plant shipments from out of state in coordination with DPS. Joint animal disease control and eradication programs are administered in partnership with USDA-APHIS, and federal funding supports national disease control and eradication programs. TAHC has hired and trained ten new compliance full-time employees to increase the frequency of roadside inspections. Texas will continue to monitor, control, and/or eradicate disease and infestation through statewide field-based animal health management and assurance programs, and state regulatory agencies will continue collaboration efforts to enhance disease inspection and surveillance programs. TAHC will continue to review and update information, fact sheets, and forms on the agency website to ensure clear, easily accessible information about all permitting and registration programs and requirements. TAHC will also promote voluntary compliance with legal requirements by providing education and outreach and resolving violations through effective use of legal enforcement and compliance activities. Finally, TDA will conduct inspector training and increase the number of locations and frequency of road station inspection programs.

The daily movement of agricultural products and livestock has the potential to rapidly spread disease agents, pathogens, and vectors across state and international borders. The Texas-Mexico border region is a high-threat area for the introduction of plant and animal diseases into the state, including insect infestations such as Texas Cattle Fever Tick. Increases in foot traffic crossing the

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southern border raise the potential for the introduction of foreign animal disease, particularly Foot and Mouth Disease and African Swine Fever. In response to the threat of New World Screwworm, the southern border ports of entry have been closed to live cattle, equine, and bison imports, and the United States and Mexico coordinate on surveillance protocols, eradication, and control efforts. The USDA Veterinary Services National Training and Exercise Program is facilitating a workshop designed to assist with the development of the state's response plan for mitigating and responding to NWS. Texas is taking the lead on this initiative, which will also help guide other states in the development of plans, policies, and procedures. The boll weevil has been functionally eradicated in 15 of the 16 cotton producing zones in Texas, with the eradication effort ongoing in the Lower Rio Grande Valley. Increased livestock surveillance and shipment inspections in the Texas-Mexico border regions will prevent the unauthorized movement of livestock into Texas. Texas will continue to enhance regulatory programs along the Texas-Mexico border by collaborating with local, state, federal, and international partners to implement screening and preventative measures for pest and disease concerns while working to reduce wait times for agricultural inspections of vehicles at ports of entry. Continued outreach and education to local producers on disease and pest control in the area remains a priority.

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Objective	
2.5	Enhance the safety of Texas schools against all threats and hazards.
Priority Actions	
2.5.1	Ensure Texas school districts, charter schools, junior colleges, and universities develop and maintain Multi-hazard Emergency Operations Plans based on comprehensive risk assessments.
2.5.2	Empower all campuses to conduct required safety training and drills at all facilities and expand school participation in exercises with first responders and key community stakeholders.
2.5.3	Educate, train, and provide best practices to school districts, charter schools, junior colleges, and universities on conducting and utilizing school safety and security audits, and ensure required audits are completed to standard.
2.5.4	Expand the availability of training, technical assistance, and resources to support schools and first responders in implementing school safety best practices.
2.5.5	Provide schools with evidence-based behavioral threat assessment training and support school-based threat assessment teams.
2.5.6	Increase the presence of armed security and law enforcement officers on school campuses by providing resources as needed and fostering partnerships and coordination between law enforcement agencies and schools.
2.5.7	Improve post-incident student and family reunification protocols through planning, drills, and exercises
2.5.8	Enhance school and community stakeholder awareness of law enforcement and emergency management response and post-incident protocols for critical incidents impacting schools.

School safety is a critical priority for Texas. Incidents such as the 2022 Robb Elementary School active shooter attack in Uvalde demonstrate the importance of multi-agency school safety planning, preparedness, response, and recovery activities as local, state, and federal stakeholders collaborate to protect campuses across the state from all threats and hazards. Following this tragedy, the 88th Texas Legislature designated the Texas Education Agency (TEA) as the state’s regulatory authority over school safety and enhanced its statewide capacity to support school preparedness initiatives in coordination with partner agencies including the Texas School Safety Center (TxSSC), DPS, and the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM).

A multi-hazard emergency operations plan (EOP) is a vital tool for protecting lives, preparing for a wide range of threats, enabling rapid and effective responses, and promoting a culture of school

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safety. All Texas school districts, charter schools, and junior colleges are required to coordinate with first responders to develop a multi-hazard EOP reviewed and verified annually by TxSSC. TxSSC has developed EOP development training programs, toolkits, templates, and technical assistance opportunities and also supplies reviewed and verified planning materials that aid TEA field agents in conducting statewide District Vulnerability Assessments (DVAs), which review school districts' policies, procedures, and staff training to provide a comprehensive assessment of public and charter school security protocols. In coordination with TEA and other stakeholders, additional guidance has also been developed to address the safety and needs of students and staff with access and functional needs. TxSSC will continue to collaborate closely with TEA to ensure ongoing compliance with multi-hazard EOP requirements. TxSSC will also provide districts with continued support through training, technical assistance, and resources as they develop and refine hazard-specific annexes. TEA will continue to conduct DVAs and include EOPs as part of the DVA process; every school district will complete a DVA at least once in a four-year cycle, per statute. TEA field agents will continue to provide on-site technical assistance to districts regarding safety and security issues associated with district EOPs. In addition, TEA's online school safety platform, Sentinel (a comprehensive, statewide school safety system designed and operated by TEA in collaboration with multiple stakeholder groups), will serve as a repository for school districts' EOPs.

Collaborative school safety exercises involving independent school district staff and students, law enforcement agencies, fire departments, emergency medical services (EMS) providers, and emergency management agencies ensure that all stakeholders understand their roles and can operate cohesively during emergency incidents. Practicing together builds trust, enhances coordination, and significantly improves response time and overall effectiveness during actual emergencies. In 2023, DPS coordinated a statewide, full-scale, school safety-themed complex coordinated terrorist attack exercise with participation from over 60 state, local, and federal agencies across multiple jurisdictions. In collaboration with TEA, TxSSC helps ensure compliance with state-mandated drills; House Bill 33 passed by the 89th Texas Legislature requires jurisdictions designated by sheriffs in each county to conduct an active shooter school safety tabletop exercise or drill each year. TxSSC has partnered with ALERRT and Safe and Sound Schools to deliver the "Staying Safe: School Safety Response" train-the-trainer curriculum that equips students and staff to respond to active threats. TxSSC will continue to promote and deliver training and resources to help schools effectively conduct drills and exercises in alignment with legislative requirements. To further strengthen school emergency preparedness, TxSSC, in collaboration with school districts and first responders, will host annual regional tabletop exercises focused on active threat response and reunification. These exercises are designed to enhance the safety and security posture of schools and the overall quality of EOPs. Additionally, TxSSC will continue collecting compliance data on required drills and exercises through its statewide safety and security audit data collection process. TEA will continue to provide on-site technical support to school districts during drills and safety trainings, and Sentinel will document district and campus compliance with required school safety drills.

School safety and security audits help establish a consistent, high-quality standard of safety across all Texas campuses, regardless of size, location, or resources. Safety and security audits have been mandated in Texas public schools since 2007, and TxSSC continuously refines audit procedures to align with evolving state requirements and best practices and regularly publishes a statewide

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report that summarizes audit findings. Additionally, TEA DVAs are informed by the safety and security audit checklist. TEA will continue to conduct annual audits (including Intruder Detection Audits, in which an inspector attempts to gain access to school buildings and inspects building and classroom doors) and provide on-site technical assistance to all Texas school districts, and Sentinel will remain the standardized reporting and technical assistance platform to coordinate training and updates regarding requirements and best practices involving school safety audits.

Expanding the availability of school safety training, technical assistance, and resources and adapting them to emerging threats and hazards prepares school staff, students, and first responders for natural disasters, active shooter situations, and other emergencies. In 2024, TxSSC delivered over 300 school safety training courses to more than 20,000 school stakeholders. TxSSC has also developed online toolkits that include resources, templates, and guidance to assist school districts. Additionally, TxSSC hosts an annual statewide school safety conference to promote collaboration and share best practices. In coordination with Texas DPS, TxSSC has also provided each school district with information on safe firearm storage to be distributed to parents and guardians. Future annual training will address emergency operations planning, drills and exercise, school behavioral threat assessment, trauma-informed care, Standard Response Protocol and Reunification, youth violence prevention, and school-based law enforcement. TEA's Office of School Safety and Security (OSSS) will continue to facilitate tabletop exercises and localized training for school districts and first responders and ensure their familiarity with the Sentinel system, which includes emergency management functionality allowing school districts to report emergencies and communicate needs for assistance. If a district has a significant school safety incident, TEA OSSS field agents will assist school districts with incident after-action reviews (AARs) and any required technical assistance.

Behavioral threat assessment (BTA) helps schools identify students who may be on a pathway to violence and intervene before violence occurs. The use of evidence-based training ensures that school staff and assessment teams are applying strategies that have been researched, tested, and proven effective. In 2024, TxSSC provided training in school behavioral threat assessment to over 11,000 stakeholders and developed the School Behavioral Threat Assessment Resource Manual to guide the threat assessment process. Threat assessment teams must be multidisciplinary, including administrators, law enforcement, and mental health professionals, to ensure that decisions are collaborative and informed by diverse expertise and perspectives. Threat assessment teams are now required by statute to use the Sentinel system, which includes resources to facilitate the transfer of BTA records between school districts and show school districts how to manage BTA records created prior to Sentinel's existence, ensuring a statewide standardized reporting platform. TxSSC and TEA will continue to collaborate to ensure that Sentinel aligns with best practices and guidance rooted in the National Threat Assessment Center framework. In addition, TxSSC will continue to deliver annual statewide behavioral threat assessment training and technical assistance to school districts. TEA OSSS field agents will continue to assist school districts in all aspects of behavioral threat assessments, coordinating with law enforcement agencies and other stakeholders on behalf of school districts as needed.

Texas law requires that each school campus have at least one armed security officer present during regular school hours. In addition, partnerships between schools and law enforcement agencies help ensure that educators and law enforcement personnel understand their roles, procedures, and expectations during an emergency incident and allow for a more effective response to active threat

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situations. Texas has prioritized collaboration between commissioned officers and schools, instructing Texas Highway Patrol (THP) troopers to visit schools in their areas of responsibility. THP troopers participate in thousands of school visits to forge strong bonds with campuses in the communities they serve, while also serving as a deterrent presence. In 2024, THP troopers recorded over 25,000 school visits. To further strengthen these relationships, TEA field agents will continue to serve as liaisons between school districts and law enforcement agencies. In addition, TxSSC will continue to deliver annual training for all school-based law enforcement, with a strong emphasis on prevention and fostering positive relationships within the school community.

It is critical that school districts are prepared to successfully reunite students with their parents or guardians following an emergency. Establishing clear reunification protocols and regularly practicing them ensures that every student can be accounted for quickly and accurately, while minimizing confusion, miscommunication, and the risk of releasing a student to the wrong individual. Because reunification often involves coordination with law enforcement agencies, emergency medical services, and district officials, multi-agency exercises offer valuable opportunities to practice interagency collaboration, refine communication procedures, and identify gaps in planning. In accordance with state requirements, each school district must have a reunification plan, which should be documented in a Reunification Annex within the district's Multi-Hazard Emergency Operations Plan. To support school districts, TxSSC has annually delivered Standard Reunification Method training statewide, developed a Reunification Annex online course, Reunification Annex Template, and Reunification Annex Template Completion Guide. Additionally, TEA has established reunification guidelines to ensure the safety and security of students and staff with access and functional needs. As part of the annual EOP review process, TxSSC will evaluate the Reunification Annex for all school district and junior colleges, and it will update planning resources, update training modules, and coordinate reunification tabletop exercises in each regional education service center.

Passed by the 89th Texas Legislature, House Bill 33—known as the Uvalde Strong Act—comprehensively addresses active attack incidents at schools. The bill requires school districts and charter schools to have at least one breaching tool and ballistic shield at each campus and mandates security reviews for new or renovated school facilities. It establishes new training and certification requirements for law enforcement, EMS personnel, and public information officers, focusing on improving response protocols. The legislation creates a template for evaluating and reporting on active shooter responses, develops a guide for preparing for and responding to school emergencies, and requires the creation of mental health resource plans for first responders. Additionally, the bill mandates that local law enforcement agencies and emergency services providers conduct thorough evaluations and submit reports after active shooter incidents and requires mutual aid agreements between agencies. The Texas Rangers Special Operations Group provides instructors for ALERRT training and Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events (CRASE) training throughout Texas and also provides school safety evaluations and assessments. Moving forward, DPS will enhance its coordination with local law enforcement and emergency response agencies and school district personnel to enhance mutual awareness of incident response policies and protocols, providing subject matter experts to assist with training, policy development, and safety and security evaluations.

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Objective	
2.6	Enhance statewide cybersecurity efforts to protect sensitive data and safeguard the digital interests of Texas.
Priority Actions	
2.6.1	Continue to expand and strengthen the Texas Information Sharing and Analysis Organization to provide timely and actionable cybersecurity threat intelligence, advisories, educational opportunities, and awareness initiatives for state, local, higher education, and private sector stakeholders.
2.6.2	Maintain the Texas Cybersecurity Framework and Security Controls Catalog to manage risks; improve the resilience of state information systems; develop a knowledge repository for security polices, standards, and guides; and encourage statewide adoption of security controls and policies.
2.6.3	Encourage a culture of security among state and local government through development and implementation of training programs and outreach efforts focused on cybersecurity threats and good cyber hygiene practices.
2.6.4	Develop and implement sector-specific cybersecurity training and exercise programs to encourage preparedness at all levels of government, and ensure sharing of best practices and lessons learned.
2.6.5	Advance the development of Regional Security Operations Centers and other cybersecurity programs across Texas to strengthen proactive defense and response capabilities of local government agencies, school districts, and other eligible entities.

Cybersecurity impacts the safety, livelihood, and access to government services of residents across Texas. Information sharing, education, and training are cornerstones of Texas’ cybersecurity strategy, highlighting the importance of coordination and cooperation among public and private sector stakeholders at all levels to reduce the quantity and impact of cyberattacks. When all levels of government participate in and are familiar with the incident response process, recovery time is shortened. To further enhance the state’s cybersecurity capabilities, the 89th Texas Legislature created the Texas Cyber Command (TXCC), which will lead and build upon many cybersecurity efforts that have previously been coordinated by the Department of Information Resources (DIR).

The Texas Information Sharing and Analysis Organization (TX-ISAO) has grown to over 2600 members, including three formal partners offering nine cybersecurity services. Since 2021, DIR has enhanced the TX-ISAO portal, modernized K-12 school reporting systems, added county tax appraisal districts, and integrated monthly internal threat briefings. Moving forward, TXCC will develop the Cybersecurity Threat Intelligence Center and oversee the TX-ISAO. TXCC will be responsible for expanding TX-ISAO membership among critical infrastructure and industry sectors; developing bulletins based on local incident trends to further support members; and

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enhancing efforts to share information on cybersecurity threats, best practices, and remediation strategies.

The Security Control Standards Catalog provides Texas state agencies, institutions of higher education, and public community colleges with specific guidance for implementing security controls in a format that aligns with National Institute of Standards and Technology guidance. 190 state agencies and institutions of higher education are required to use the Catalog as the foundation of their security planning process. The Texas Cybersecurity Framework (TCF) is intended to help organizations better understand, manage, and reduce cybersecurity risks. The TCF assesses the implementation and optimization of each security control objective. Together, the Security Control Standards Catalog and TCF are central to the state's coordinated cybersecurity capability. To enhance the resilience and security of state information technology systems, DIR has delivered Endpoint Detection and Response and Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) services to state agencies, implemented a Fast Track process for Texas Risk and Authorization Management Program (TX-RAMP) certification, and enhanced Managed Security Services to support K-12 school cybersecurity. DIR will collaborate with TXCC to offer new InfoSec Academy courses and continue policy development through the Statewide Information Security Advisory Committee Policy Subcommittee.

Since 2021, DIR has promoted cybersecurity awareness and training across the state through implementation of prohibited technologies policies, expansion of training standards to address emerging threats such as AI and QR code phishing, and cybersecurity partnerships with municipal organizations. DIR has also established an InfoSec Academy to educate security officers and security staff at state agencies, institutions of higher education, and public community colleges; course curriculum includes security risk management, incident preparedness, cybersecurity incident management protocols, developer training, secure coding methods, and the design and conduct of cyber-focused training exercises. DIR is required to certify annual cybersecurity awareness training programs required for employees and contractors of state agencies, institutions of higher education, independent school districts, cities, counties, and quasi-governmental organizations. DIR also provides a security awareness training program to state agencies, universities, and public junior colleges to enable their end users to recognize threats and become more vigilant in protecting the organization against cybersecurity threats. TXCC will continue to expand cybersecurity training to users, develop sector-specific training for critical infrastructure, and host key outreach events.

A cybersecurity training and exercise program focused on multi-stakeholder response supports identification of vulnerabilities and sharing of best practices and lessons learned. DIR has provided a security tabletop exercise module to cities, counties, and other governmental organizations through the TX-ISAO at each of its monthly security meetings and has conducted ransomware tabletop exercises facilitated by industry experts at its statewide conference. DIR also publishes cybersecurity training guides and participates in national exercises like CyberStorm IX. In accordance with Executive Order GA-49, DIR is collaborating with state agency partners on a sector-specific cybersecurity tabletop exercise focused on critical infrastructure. TXCC will expand these efforts by developing a lessons-learned sharing platform in the TX-ISAO portal; hosting train-the-trainer workshops; and regularly delivering tabletop exercises, incident response training, and quarterly cybersecurity drills. TXCC will provide tabletop exercises to state, regional, and local security partners and address lessons learned from real-world incidents. Texas will

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continue to participate in national-level cybersecurity exercises and coordinate with emergency management practitioners to enhance whole community engagement.

It is critical to ensure that government organizations across all regions are protected from cyberattacks that can disrupt essential services or compromise Texans' sensitive information. To address this need, Texas has established Regional Security Operations Centers (RSOCs) at state universities including Angelo State University, the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, and the University of Texas at Austin to support local governments during major cybersecurity incidents and provide regional access to network security infrastructure. This localized support strengthens Texas' overall cyber resilience and ensures timely, expert assistance where it is most needed. The RSOCs are heavily focused on student workforce development, and they provide proactive cybersecurity monitoring, alerting, and defense services to city, county, school district, and critical infrastructure customers. Texas Cyber Command will continue to grow the RSOC program at additional colleges and universities across the state, strengthen statewide cybersecurity programs, and encourage Texas higher education institutions to add cybersecurity coursework.

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Objective	
2.7	Ensure the integrity of Texas elections by protecting electoral systems and processes against compromise or interference.
Priority Actions	
2.7.1	Implement cybersecurity measures to prevent unauthorized access to election hardware and software.
2.7.2	Ensure the security of polling stations, election infrastructure, and election staff against physical threats or intimidation.
2.7.3	Enhance state, regional, and local coordination to ensure access to information and resources supporting election security efforts.
2.7.4	Conduct election security training and exercise events including local election officials and law enforcement agencies.

A threat to elections is a threat to our democracy at its foundation. It is essential that Texas elections remain free, fair, and unimpeded by outside influence, threats, or attacks. Texas elections are managed by county and municipal officials, with support from the Texas Secretary of State and other state agency partners including TXCC, DPS, and TDEM.

A strong cybersecurity posture reduces vulnerability to cyberattacks and mitigates the influence of misinformation/disinformation campaigns on public trust in the electoral process. All 254 counties in Texas participate in a statewide Election Security Assessment program and receive assessment reports and remediation implementation suggestions. Annually, all county officials, elections workers, and vendors who use the statewide voter registration database complete mandated Cybersecurity Awareness Training. Software is in place to detect anomalies in the state voter registration database, and safeguards like MFA have been implemented. In addition, the Texas Secretary of State is a member of the Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center (MS-ISAC). The Texas Election Security Toolkit developed by the Secretary of State’s Office includes templates for various election security-related plans and policies, including information security and vendor risk management, and trainers host webinars for local officials on use of the toolkit. In the coming years, Texas will continue to work with counties to revise and maintain their information security plans to ensure appropriate policies, procedures, and capabilities are in place to protect election systems against cyber threats.

Targeted attacks on election workers and election infrastructure may also threaten the integrity of the electoral process. Texas utilizes a comprehensive, multi-agency approach to physical security during elections. All local election offices coordinate with local law enforcement agencies throughout each election period, ensuring law enforcement partners are aware of election dates and locations and that polling locations are part of regular patrol routes. Moving forward, Texas

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will work to further strengthen these relationships, including through development of a polling location security checklist by the Secretary of State's Office. Texas will also work with local officials to ensure election workers are aware of their ability to request that their personal information be kept confidential under Chapter 552 of the Texas Government Code.

For all levels of elections, access to resources and information on security best practices is critical to maintaining the integrity of election infrastructure and processes. The Texas Secretary of State's Office has hired a dedicated election security specialist to facilitate communication among local, state, and federal security partners and monitor ongoing security programs. The Office has also coordinated with TDEM to establish protocols to ensure operational and communications support during natural disasters that may impact elections. Partnerships among officials at all levels will be active throughout election periods to ensure continuous coordination. After-action debriefs following elections will ensure documentation of any incidents and identification of best practices and areas for future improvement.

Election workers must regularly train on and exercise security procedures and protocols for them to be effective. The Texas Secretary of State maintains a robust elections training program that includes training materials and resources, year-round webinars, and in-person regional trainings covering table-top exercises, standard procedures, and best practices for election security. In 2025, this program was reviewed and improved to provide the most up-to-date standards and practices to election workers across the state. The program will continue to provide local officials with a standardized election security curriculum and will support local officials in developing and maintaining a comprehensive, multi-layered approach to securing all aspects of the election process. Texas will continue to hold election security-related sessions at annual election law seminars and will develop an annual data collection process to track participation in drills, exercises, and supplemental trainings throughout the election cycle.

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Objective	
2.8	Enhance Texas homeland security operations through the use of unmanned aircraft systems and protect against the illegal use of unmanned aircraft systems by threat actors.
Priority Actions	
2.8.1	Develop or refine plans and policies guiding government agency use of unmanned aircraft systems and operations to counter unmanned aircraft systems, with a focus on protecting privacy.
2.8.2	Implement technological solutions to ensure data availability and shared situational awareness during multi-agency unmanned aircraft system operations.
2.8.3	Enhance state and local capability to detect and monitor unmanned aircraft systems, particularly near critical infrastructure, mass gatherings, and other potential targets.
2.8.4	Develop and implement common standards for state and local agency training programs for unmanned aircraft system and counter-unmanned aircraft system operations.
2.8.5	Enhance coordination and information sharing among state, federal, local, and private sector organizations to ensure awareness and common understanding of law and policy related to counter-unmanned aircraft systems operations.

Developing and refining policies for government agency use of unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) and counter-UAS operations is vital to striking a balance between operational effectiveness and the protection of privacy and civil liberties. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Reauthorization Act of 2024 introduced temporary authorities for counter-UAS operations aimed at protecting critical infrastructure and mass gatherings. At the state level, DPS educates public safety agencies statewide on operational compliance and privacy protections and collaborates with the FAA and other federal partners to inform national stakeholders about the role and value of UAS in public safety operations. Looking ahead, expanding counter-UAS authorities and enabling more advanced public safety operations will be a priority. As federal policies are implemented, the need to educate and equip state, local, tribal, and territorial agencies across Texas will intensify. DPS will lead statewide efforts through its Public Safety UAS Collaboration Group to ensure stakeholders at all levels are prepared to responsibly integrate new authorities and technologies while protecting civil liberties and maintaining operational integrity.

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As UAS deployments grow, investing in scalable, reliable technologies is critical to achieving situational awareness, unified command, and resilient incident management. Public safety agencies use UAS data and video feed collaboration platforms to enhance real-time data sharing, situational awareness, and operational coordination, providing secure live-streaming, geospatial mapping, and remote piloting capabilities. The Team Awareness Kit (TAK), developed by DHS, supports complex communication needs during multi-jurisdictional responses. Together, these platforms enable a common operating picture across agencies, allowing responders to make informed decisions. Leveraging the Texas Public Safety UAS Collaboration Group, DPS will continue to engage stakeholders statewide, promoting the integration of scalable technologies that foster seamless data exchange, unified command, and mission continuity. These efforts will ensure that public safety agencies remain equipped to respond effectively while maintaining transparency and trust.

As UAS technology becomes more accessible and sophisticated, the risk of unauthorized or malicious UAS activity near sensitive sites like power plants, stadiums, and government facilities continues to grow. Strengthening detection capabilities allows agencies to identify potential threats and supports airspace deconfliction during mass gatherings and emergency operations. By investing in scalable, interoperable detection technologies and fostering cross-agency collaboration, state and local entities can play a pivotal role in securing the low-altitude airspace that increasingly intersects with daily life. DPS currently owns six dedicated detection sensors and has access to more than 18 additional sensors statewide, enabling broad coverage near critical infrastructure and high-risk areas. To further enhance situational awareness, DPS is actively facilitating the installation of Remote ID sensors through an FAA-funded initiative, supporting the integration of standardized identification broadcasts into existing detection networks. Future activities will focus on expanding UAS detection networks through strategic memorandums of understanding with federal stakeholders, enhancing coverage and coordination. Texas will also continue to expand Remote ID sensor coverage, building on its FAA-funded initiatives to create a layered, interoperable detection framework that supports both broadcast and network-based identification.

Developing and implementing common standards for state and local UAS and counter-UAS training programs is essential to ensure consistency, safety, and mission readiness across jurisdictions and enable collaborative airspace operations. Unified standards support credentialing, accountability, and public trust, while allowing agencies to adapt more efficiently to evolving technologies and federal guidance. DPS continues to offer access to its comprehensive UAS training materials and provide audit services to agencies for their UAS training programs, fostering consistency, transparency, and operational excellence. The annual TEXCON Drone Expo brings together public safety professionals for hands-on instruction, panel discussions, and advanced training courses tailored to law enforcement, fire/EMS, and emergency management personnel. Texas will continue to expand access to high-quality UAS and counter-UAS training by partnering with non-profit organizations to deliver low-cost educational programs to public safety agencies across Texas and nationwide.

Enhancing coordination and information sharing among state, federal, local, and private sector organizations is essential to building a unified and effective approach to counter-UAS operations. Collaborative efforts help prevent jurisdictional conflicts, streamline response strategies, and ensure that privacy and civil liberties are protected. Moreover, consistent communication fosters

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innovation, accelerates policy development, and enables stakeholders to adapt to emerging technologies and threats. By aligning legal interpretations and operational standards across sectors, agencies can build trust, reduce risk, and maintain a resilient posture in safeguarding airspace. DPS has developed a specialized course titled “Enforcing Drone Laws,” a core component of training for all department recruits that provides foundational knowledge on UAS regulations, enforcement strategies, and legal frameworks, ensuring that personnel are equipped to navigate the evolving drone landscape. The department has extended this curriculum to numerous agencies across Texas and the nation, fostering a shared understanding of operational authorities, privacy considerations, and mitigation protocols. Texas will continue to monitor federal and state legislative developments, including updates stemming from presidential executive orders and FAA rulemaking, to ensure agencies remain informed and compliant. Through its statewide coordination efforts and educational outreach, Texas will help public safety stakeholders navigate emerging authorities, privacy considerations, and technical capabilities.

Goal 3: Mitigate

Minimize the impact of terrorist, criminal, and hostile foreign nation attacks and natural and technological disasters through proactive mitigation planning and programs.

Objective	
3.1	Use mitigation planning to reduce the consequences of attacks and disasters to people, property, and critical functions throughout the state.
Priority Actions	
3.1.1	Update the multi-year State Hazard Mitigation Plan, including the hazard vulnerability assessment, every five years, and develop a FEMA-approved Enhanced Hazard Mitigation Plan.
3.1.2	Improve the process used to update state, regional, and local mitigation plans through the use of planning studies, new technologies and data, and available academic resources.
3.1.3	Provide technical assistance and training to local jurisdictions to encourage the development of hazard mitigation plans based on vulnerability assessments, and ensure planning integration at the regional level.
3.1.4	Draw on the expertise of hazard mitigation professionals to strengthen the capabilities of local and regional resilience networks.

Texas is one of the most disaster-prone states in the U.S. and leads the country in billion-dollar disasters, demonstrating the need for effective statewide disaster mitigation planning. Additionally, Texas' ability to receive federal funding through emergency management grants is contingent upon the state having a Texas State Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The Texas State HMP helps Texas and its communities understand their disaster risks and vulnerabilities, which in turn helps inform resource prioritization and decision making. The current Texas State HMP was approved in 2023 and will be active for five years. It covers a wide range of disasters using data from local partners and universities. TDEM and its stakeholder partners have begun working on the 2028 Texas State HMP, and it will meet the standards to be approved as an Enhanced Hazard Mitigation Plan.

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Keeping state, regional and local mitigation plans current and informed by data-driven analysis is essential for proactive risk reduction. By leveraging mitigation principles, advanced mapping tools, and academic partnerships, Texas lowers technical barriers for planning in all jurisdictions, ensuring that communities of every size and capability can identify and address their vulnerabilities. This approach not only promotes resilience across the communities of Texas but also strengthens grant eligibility and accelerates funding approvals. TDEM supports local jurisdictions in obtaining federal grants from FEMA and the Texas General Land Office (GLO) that they can use to fund mitigation planning. Over the next five years, Texas will increase use of the Texas Disaster Information System (TDIS) and its subtools such as the Risk Assessment Mapping Tool (RAMP) and the Data and Models Query Tool (DMQT). By providing planning tools, training, and on-demand support tailored to local needs, Texas will ensure that all mitigation plans remain accurate and applicable to current and emerging threats and hazards.

Texas provides technical assistance to all requesting partners and jurisdictions to facilitate strong working relationships and enhance planning capabilities across the state. Texas encourages local jurisdictions to work with their local Council of Governments (COG) to collaborate across the region and develop a comprehensive hazard mitigation plan. The state coordinates technical assistance calls in addition to working closely with local jurisdictions on data collection and compliance with FEMA standards. As a result, over 80% of Texas' population is currently covered by a FEMA-approved hazard mitigation plan. The population covered by a FEMA-approved hazard mitigation plan is approximately 92% at the end of 2025. Furthermore, TDEM is developing mitigation planning classes targeting local jurisdictions to increase local planning knowledge and expertise.

TDEM collaborates with the Institute for a Disaster Resilient Texas and other professional hazard mitigation partners to translate complex data into user-friendly formats for jurisdictions and their residents. By making risk and vulnerability information readily accessible, Texas empowers communities to develop and maintain FEMA-approved mitigation plans. The state has enhanced risk assessment outreach and mitigation advocacy through partnerships with regional resilience networks. By leveraging these networks' collective strengths, such as data sharing, resource coordination, and joint training, communities collaborate more effectively before, during, and after disasters. TDEM will partner with Texas A&M University's architecture and engineering programs to provide guidance for jurisdictions developing or updating their hazard mitigation plans, while also creating off-the-shelf mitigation projects at no cost to jurisdictions. In addition, TDEM will collaborate with regional nonprofits to offer hands-on support for lower-capacity communities, guiding these communities through the planning process. Workshops, virtual office hours, and peer-mentoring cohorts will ensure sustained engagement and capacity building.

Goal 3: Mitigate

Objective	
3.2	Implement mitigation projects to enhance the resilience of mission-critical systems and infrastructure throughout Texas.
Priority Actions	
3.2.1	Support local-level mitigation projects that maximize the impact of pre-disaster and post-disaster funding, including the use of targeted state funding programs.
3.2.2	When appropriate, provide input and recommendations to governing bodies on potential ways to address community vulnerabilities through legislative means including amendments to building codes, insurance regulations, and land use regulations.
3.2.3	Identify and maintain a list of potential high-impact regional mitigation projects, including projects to improve watershed resilience and floodplain management, to be submitted for available funding opportunities.
3.2.4	Enhance multi-agency coordination at the state and regional levels to maximize efficiency and effectiveness across all major mitigation grant programs.
3.2.5	Ensure critical facilities maintain the capability for uninterrupted operations, including alternate power sources, during disasters and other emergencies.

The effective use of mitigation funding for well-planned projects is critical to reducing the impact of future disasters on Texas communities. Texas uses Stafford Act Section 404 to strengthen mitigation before disasters occur and Section 406 to integrate resilience measures into post-disaster repairs. TDEM leverages Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funding in partnership with GLO and the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) through the Texas Flood Information Clearinghouse to identify high-priority projects. By aligning with the State Administrative Plan’s emphasis on strong benefit-to-cost ratios and coordinated state funding, Texas maximizes return on investment and strengthens community resilience. Since 2021, TDEM has strengthened partnerships with local jurisdictions and state agency partners to coordinate multi-source funding for mitigation projects, and Texas has supported over 100 projects—ranging from home elevations to critical drainage upgrades—with Section 404 and Section 406 initiatives while leveraging CDBG-DR grants and TWDB’s flood planning assistance. The Texas Flood Information Clearinghouse has been enhanced, with grant opportunities enabling communities to identify and apply for targeted resilience funding more efficiently. Over the next five years, Texas will expand its portfolio of mitigation and recovery projects by coordinating federal, state, and local funding streams. Texas will develop and deliver new hands-on training courses for elected officials and emergency managers to strengthen local grant administration capacity and ensure projects are “shovel-ready.”

Goal 3: Mitigate

Through informed policy recommendations, Texas supports sustainable, long-term mitigation outcomes at the state and local levels. TDEM leverages the agency's expertise to assist with development of legislative frameworks that proactively reduce disaster risk, promote resilience, and safeguard Texans. From 2021 to 2025, TDEM supported legislative initiatives to strengthen community resilience by shaping insurance regulations, influencing land-use policies, and encouraging jurisdictions to adopt the latest building codes. Although it has made significant progress in promoting tougher construction standards and addressing insurance market challenges, Texas needs ongoing collaboration and advocacy at all levels to advance effective mitigation measures. Over the next five years, TDEM and partner agencies will strengthen their role as trusted advisors to policymakers, helping craft and promote legislation that effectively reduces community vulnerabilities in order to enhance resilience and support safer, more sustainable development throughout Texas.

Keeping a ready roster of high-impact regional mitigation projects ensures Texas communities can swiftly make use of every hazard mitigation funding opportunity. By partnering with the Cooperating Technical Partners program and TDIS for up-to-date flood hazard models, aligning with the GLO's Coastal Resiliency Master Plan, and maintaining modular "shovel-ready" initiatives, Texas maximizes federal investment and accelerates risk reduction. In its State Administrative Plan, TDEM prioritizes flooding solutions at the watershed level. This is achieved in concert with TWDB, which administers the Flood Mitigation Assistance program. Through this partnership, Texas has successfully prepared and submitted multiple mitigation projects for funding consideration, prioritizing initiatives that promote natural floodplain restoration, stormwater management improvements, and sustainable watershed practices. The state also guides communities to work with regional river authorities, regional water planning groups, planning commissions, and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), and to consult the State Water Plan to ensure coordinated, long-term resilience initiatives. Moving forward, Texas will enhance data integration, expand collaboration, support project development, and align mitigation efforts with funding opportunities. The state will maintain an updated project list and engage stakeholders regularly to improve floodplain and watershed resilience statewide. TDEM will also encourage jurisdictions to use new flood mapping technology and aid TWDB in crafting the State Water Plan.

Enhancing multi-agency coordination at the state and regional levels maximizes efficiency and effectiveness across all major mitigation grant programs and underpins Texas' cohesive mitigation framework. By accelerating grant awards and enabling fast-tracking of projects, this coordinated approach not only boosts competitiveness for grant funding, but also expands the reach and impact of disaster risk reduction investments throughout Texas. TDEM is expanding its County Liaison Officer (CLO) program to strengthen mitigation efforts statewide. As the first point of contact at the county level, CLOs bring TDEM closer to local communities, streamlining access to information and boosting awareness of funding opportunities and grant application procedures. By maintaining regular communication and active collaboration with TWDB and GLO, TDEM ensures grant applicants have the resources and support they need to succeed. Over the next five years, Texas will strengthen coordination frameworks and synchronize funding strategies to boost efficiency and reduce barriers for applicants. To support this work, Texas is procuring a new online platform that will centralize federal grant project management and facilitate financial compliance oversight.

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Maintaining continuous operations is vital to incident response and recovery, ensuring that critical facilities remain fully functional and safeguarding Texans throughout disasters. Reliable power and high-quality plans for operational continuity directly enable effective emergency response, maintain lifeline services, and enhance overall community resilience. Since 2021, Texas has made substantial progress in enhancing the resilience of critical facilities through the implementation of backup power systems, but continued efforts are needed. Over the next five years, Texas will accelerate infrastructure upgrades, encourage resilience standards, enhance operational readiness, and strengthen coordination to ensure that critical facilities can operate without interruption during emergencies.

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Objective	
3.3	Enhance the resilience of Texas communities, with particular focus on the most vulnerable areas and populations.
Priority Actions	
3.3.1	Expand and enhance local jurisdiction and citizen capabilities through participation in individual and community preparedness programs.
3.3.2	Expand community long-term planning programs that include strategies for supporting vulnerable populations before, during, and after an attack or disaster.
3.3.3	Maintain outreach and education programs to encourage appropriate insurance coverage based on risk.
3.3.4	Develop and implement proactive programs to improve public health in rural and other underserved communities.
3.3.5	Expand the availability and delivery of training focused on individual civilian response to attacks and emergencies.
3.3.6	Leverage public-private partnerships to enhance private sector resilience and engagement in mitigation efforts.

Strengthening the preparedness and resilience of communities starts with empowering local jurisdictions and the individuals living within them. By investing in preparedness programs such as Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), Medical Reserve Corps, Neighborhood Watch initiatives, Fire Corps, Volunteers in Police Service, public alert systems, and first aid/CPR training, communities build strong networks of informed citizens who can assist their families and neighbors, support first responders, and help mitigate the impact of emergency incidents.

Since 2021, community preparedness programs across Texas have demonstrated resilience and adaptability in the face of evolving challenges and opportunities. Texas has transitioned from the Citizen Corps framework to a more universal, nationally recognized “Community Preparedness” model. This updated approach emphasizes whole community engagement and encourages collaboration across jurisdictions, disciplines, and community groups to meet the varied needs of Texas residents before, during, and after disasters and other incidents. CERT training, volunteer organizations, and youth- and school-based preparedness education are all essential elements of this enhanced model.

The Texas Association of Regional Councils (TARC) plays a critical coordination role in advancing community preparedness statewide. TARC delivers information, training, and technical assistance to Councils of Governments (COGs), local elected officials, and community volunteers,

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helping to align efforts across regions and ensure consistency in local and regional preparedness strategies. In collaboration with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, TARC is also providing training and support to establish and enhance CERT programs within state parks, benefiting the park system and surrounding communities. TARC will continue to assess training and equipment needs to support the sustainment of existing teams and the development of new community preparedness initiatives, ensuring that local jurisdictions and their regional partners are equipped with the tools, resources, and knowledge necessary to respond effectively to emergencies.

Based on access and functional needs, medical conditions, English language proficiency, access to basic services, and other factors, some individuals and communities in Texas are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of natural disasters and other emergencies. It is critical that emergency planning considers and accounts for the risks and needs of these populations. In recent years, Texas has made progress in infrastructure development and funding mechanisms that support community-based long-term planning with a focus on vulnerable Texans. Over the next five years, TDEM will update state planning standards and templates to keep policy and planning frameworks current and effective. Technological tools supporting community planning will be strengthened through the integration of demographic data tools, improving risk assessment and decision-making at all levels. Through regional workshops, targeted technical assistance, and field deployments, TDEM and other partners will continue to build local capacity. Public meetings, virtual forums, and community liaison partnerships will deepen and enrich community engagement at the strategic level to help ensure the most vulnerable Texans are cared for during emergencies.

Texas homeowners must be aware of the risk of flooding and other weather events to make sure they have appropriate insurance coverage to protect their financial investments and help recover after an incident. The Texas Insurance Code directs the Texas Department of Insurance (TDI) to raise awareness of the agency's Help Line to answer consumer insurance questions and to maintain and publicize a website—HelpInsure.com—to assist consumers in making informed decisions when buying home and auto insurance. TDI produces web resources, videos, podcasts, and social media messages to increase consumer awareness of risks including floods and other perils and sends claims filing and fraud prevention information to local officials and media in affected areas after a disaster. In partnership with other state agencies at disaster recovery centers, TDI helps consumers affected by disasters navigate insurance issues and raises awareness about the Texas Windstorm Insurance Association, National Flood Insurance Program, and the Small Business Administration Disaster Loan Program. TDI will continue to partner with stakeholders to educate consumers about the importance of reviewing their insurance coverages and to answer insurance-related questions after disasters.

Many rural and tribal areas of Texas have limited public health and medical resources, increasing vulnerability in these communities; if the trend of rural hospitals closing due to financial challenges continues, this problem will be further exacerbated. Texas must be proactive in engaging with these communities to address public health and medical concerns and develop innovative solutions to reach vulnerable populations. The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) has held an annual workshop with the three tribes of Texas since 2023, with a focus on infectious disease and how state and local resources can be used to support the tribes, and will continue this effort moving forward. DSHS will conduct a Rural and Frontier Tabletop Exercise focusing on ways to improve response and recovery coordination and operations among state, rural, and frontier jurisdictions. Exercises will address use of the Incident Command System,

Goal 3: Mitigate

identification of jurisdictional risks, public health roles and functions, mass prophylaxis/administration, and intervention strategies. DSHS will also focus on delivering quality healthcare via telehealth platforms and outreach operations to expand access in rural and other underserved areas. For example, the Virtual Directly Observed Therapy platform supports tuberculosis case management and treatment. Case support nurses will also be deployed to each Texas Public Health Region to address gaps in infectious disease care and treatment.

The first few minutes of an attack or disaster are often the most critical, and trained civilians can provide life-saving aid before professional responders arrive. Whether administering basic first aid, controlling bleeding, or understanding how to react during an active threat, these skills significantly increase survival rates. By equipping more citizens with these skills, Texas builds a more resilient society and fosters a sense of preparedness and collective responsibility, reducing panic and chaos during unforeseen incidents. Texas has significantly increased public awareness regarding the importance of civilian preparedness in recent years. Campaigns like "Stop the Bleed" and "Run, Hide, Fight" have gained traction in communities across the state, while the Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events (CRASE) program partners DPS and local law enforcement with civilian community organizations. Significant progress has been made in developing standardized, accessible, and engaging training curricula designed to be easily adaptable for various community groups and age ranges. DPS promotes "train the trainer" programs certifying a core group of instructors who can then disseminate vital knowledge more broadly, increasing scalability. DPS and partner agencies will significantly expand outreach to specific vulnerable populations, schools, businesses, and community organizations, forging new relationships and strengthening existing ones. Based on real-world feedback and evolving threats, DPS will continuously update and refine training curricula to ensure it remains relevant and reflects the latest best practices in civilian emergency response.

Leveraging public-private partnerships will expand the state's mitigation capacity by formally integrating private sector strengths into planning and resilience efforts. These relationships foster shared responsibility, safeguard infrastructure, enhance information flow, and fortify the economic backbone of Texas in the face of growing threats. TDEM has cultivated and strengthened relationships with private sector partners to support hazard mitigation and resilience. Joint planning workshops and resilience forums build trust and align goals to reduce the impacts of natural hazards and other incidents for the entire community. These public-private relationships can also lead to the implementation of co-funded mitigation projects such as reinforcing power systems, upgrading stormwater drainage in communities, and retrofitting buildings to withstand high winds. Each initiative emerges from integrated planning sessions, ensuring public and private partners remain aligned on how best to reduce risk and strengthen community resilience in the long term. TDEM, in collaboration with other partners, will continue to institutionalize and scale its public-private collaboration model for long-term resilience planning and mitigation investment. This effort includes expanded private sector engagement, strategic planning integration, and shared financial responsibility for protecting Texas' communities and economy against future disasters.

Goal 4: Respond

Increase the capability of the state's response system to minimize damage and loss of life from terrorist, criminal, and hostile nation attacks and natural and technological disasters.

Objective	
4.1	Enhance the systems and organizational structures that coordinate and manage response operations to ensure unified, efficient effort.
Priority Actions	
4.1.1	Strengthen the state's regionally focused, multi-discipline, all hazards response system that ensures each region statewide has access to the necessary response teams and resources, to include enhancement of resource request and mutual aid processes.
4.1.2	Develop and maintain critical information technology and communications capabilities to connect local, regional, and state operations centers and enable data sharing with partner organizations at all levels.
4.1.3	Continually improve proficiency in incident management software for the systems used to coordinate and support incidents throughout the state and FEMA Region VI and employed in all incident command centers.
4.1.4	Enhance connection and integration of common operational picture, tactical coordination, resource management, and other decision support tools across agencies and operations centers to ensure shared federal, state, and local situational awareness during incidents.
4.1.5	Complete development of a Texas Business Emergency Operations Center (BEOC) as a forum for coordination and information sharing between the state and private sector partner organizations during operations.
4.1.6	Enhance shared awareness among all stakeholders of available response assets through resource typing and asset inventory initiatives.
4.1.7	Enhance systems and processes for ensuring rapid and efficient delivery of critical supplies during incidents, to include contract management and warehousing initiatives.

Goal 4: Respond

Timely, well-coordinated operations in response to all threats and hazards limit damage and save lives. The effectiveness of response operations, which may be managed at the local, regional, and/or state level based on the scope of an incident, depends on many factors including having appropriate systems and structures in place to communicate and share information; the ability to coordinate mutual aid across jurisdictions; use of common terminology and processes for describing response capabilities; establishment of a common operational picture among all responders during incidents; and integration of community capabilities into public sector response activities.

Texas maintains response teams and resources that can be deployed statewide during emergencies. Established resource request and mutual aid processes enable local jurisdictions to receive the support they need when local capabilities are overwhelmed. The State of Texas Assistance Request (STAR) is an online resource request and fulfillment process that jurisdictions can use to obtain necessary resources coordinated through the State Operations Center (SOC) during all phases of an emergency, and online STAR training is available to all homeland security stakeholders. In 2024, the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) published a new State Mutual Aid Reimbursement Guide and also began offering mutual aid partner training videos online. Additionally, the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) allows states to send personnel, equipment, and commodities to assist with response and recovery efforts in other states. TDEM implements EMAC in Texas, and the Texas EMAC Reimbursement Guide provides instructions on how individuals and jurisdictions will be reimbursed for an EMAC deployment. Texas will continue to develop and update processes and guidance to assist jurisdictions across the state as they request emergency response teams and resources.

Reliable and resilient information technology (IT) and communications systems are essential to coordinated statewide emergency management, enabling real-time situational awareness across jurisdictions to support multi-agency, multi-jurisdictional response efforts during disasters and other incidents. Data sharing with local governments, state agencies, and federal partners through integrated platforms such as WebEOC improves decision making. Texas has recently upgraded WebEOC and geographic information systems (GIS) capabilities while adding data tools and expanding broadband, satellite communications, and WebEOC membership in rural areas. Texas will continue to assess and implement artificial intelligence (AI)-driven analytics for predictive modeling and faster decision-making while integrating data systems and merging data tools into common platforms to streamline functionality where possible.

Improved proficiency in incident management software in Texas incident command centers ensures seamless coordination across local, regional, and federal partners while helping to maintain operational readiness and standardize response protocols on platforms such as WebEOC and Esri. Training programs for WebEOC and other incident management platforms have expanded across the state, and Texas will work to offer advanced training modules to improve system usability in all jurisdictions. Simulation-based exercises using real-time data and evolving scenarios will add fidelity to preparedness programs, as will AI-assisted decision support tools integrated into incident management platforms. Regular software audits and updates will maintain system integrity.

Integration of common operational picture, tactical coordination, resource management, and other decision support tools enhances situational awareness during emergency response, improving

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coordination and resource allocation by integrating real-time data from multiple systems. Communities across Texas have expanded the use of the TDEM Portal to integrate GIS, WebEOC, and resource tracking tools into one platform. Integration of AI and predictive analytics into the automated common operational picture process is a priority, along with deployment of cloud-based platforms for real-time data sharing and collaboration. The Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) uses the Team Awareness Kit (TAK) application to track public safety personnel in the field, providing situational awareness and enhancing interagency tactical coordination during operations. Furthermore, DPS provides access to TAK to public safety personnel via TAK Manager, allowing partners to log in through the Law Enforcement Enterprise Portal (LEEP), Foundation for Trusted Identity (PIV-I cards), FirstNet, or home agency single sign on. Texas will work to expand mobile access to decision support tools for field responders and develop a statewide interoperability framework for all emergency response and emergency management software.

The Business Emergency Operations Center (BEOC) facilitates information sharing between the private sector and the SOC, creating a forum for public-private partnership and the development of a common operating picture during all phases of an emergency while supporting the stabilization and recovery of Texas communities. The BEOC helps the private sector keep track of current operating conditions in affected areas, provides updates on resources available to private sector partners, and identifies the priorities and needs of all stakeholders during response and recovery operations. Additionally, the BEOC works with the TDEM Preparedness Division to develop continuity of operations plan templates for business and industry to mitigate the impacts of incidents on supply chains and other critical functions. The BEOC will continue to focus on creating essential products lists for use during emergencies, maintaining and updating existing lists, and planning for the sourcing of these essential products. The BEOC will occupy a physical presence in the new SOC once construction is completed. Emergency Support Function-14 (ESF-14) will bring in private sector partners to aid in the coordination and dissemination of information on situational awareness, the status of supply chains, and product availability during an incident. The BEOC will leverage these partnerships to better coordinate all phases of the emergency management process.

Resource typing and asset inventory initiatives improve coordination and deployment of emergency resources across jurisdictions by ensuring compatibility and readiness of mutual aid assets. TDEM continues consolidation of response asset availability documents and Mission Ready Packages (MRPs); the goal is to have one database for state, Interstate Emergency Response Support Plan (IERSP), and EMAC needs that includes response assets from all applicable state agencies. Texas will continue to build a secure, cloud-based platform to catalog all state agency MRPs and ensure compatibility with EMAC and IERSP standards for resource sharing and deployment.

Effective systems and processes for rapid and efficient delivery of critical supplies ensure timely delivery of life-saving resources during disasters and other emergencies, reducing logistical bottlenecks through streamlined warehousing and distribution systems. Improving coordination with vendors and partners via robust contract management is central to this mission, supporting statewide resilience by maintaining a scalable and responsive supply chain. Texas has established regional staging areas to pre-position critical supplies, expanded warehouse capacity, and improved inventory tracking systems. Additionally, pre-negotiated contracts with vendors for

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rapid procurement and delivery during emergencies are in place. Moving forward, Texas will develop a centralized platform to manage warehousing, inventory, and distribution in real time, and this platform will be integrated into existing systems including WebEOC and the TDEM Portal. Texas will also implement a digital contract management system to track vendor performance, renewal timelines, and compliance, and deploy predictive analytics to forecast demand based on incident type and location.

Goal 4: Respond

Objective	
4.2	Build and maintain the response teams and qualified personnel essential to all-hazard response operations.
Priority Actions	
4.2.1	Ensure personnel in all response agencies statewide are trained and qualified on the Incident Command System in accordance with agency, jurisdiction, or national standards, to include implementation of the National Qualification System where appropriate.
4.2.2	Enhance training on Texas response processes and systems for personnel staffing emergency operations centers statewide, to include additional focus on the transition period from response to recovery operations.
4.2.3	Ensure sustainment of typed response teams across Texas, to include personnel replacement, training to maintain proficiency, and replacement of equipment as needed.
4.2.4	Make investments to build new response team capabilities where possible, based on assessments of needs.
4.2.5	Effectively manage the use of trained and vetted volunteers from private, public, non-profit and faith-based organizations to support statewide homeland security response activities.
4.2.6	Facilitate training and qualifications for typed Incident Management Team (IMT) personnel, and routinely integrate IMTs into exercises and operations.

Trained and qualified response teams and personnel at the state, regional, and local levels are the essential building blocks for all response operations. The National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the Incident Command System (ICS) enable diverse stakeholder agencies and organizations to coordinate incident response under a commonly understood management structure. It is critical that response personnel in Texas are trained and qualified on these systems using a phased, standards-based approach. Texas will continue to implement a statewide ICS training baseline and mandate ICS training compliance for relevant emergency response partners, requiring all entry-level responders, first-line supervisors, mid-level managers, and command staff to complete the minimum appropriate ICS/NIMS training level based on their roles. Texas will also promote National Qualification System (NQS) credentialing, implement NQS for key response roles, adopt FEMA’s NQS standards for deployed personnel and assets, and use position task books to document demonstrated competencies. Additionally, completion of position-specific training, where available, will be required, and TDEM will collect training documentation in its Master Qualification and Training Database (which currently houses more than 700 Incident Management Team (IMT)-related qualifications and training records). Responders will continue to have access to no-cost training in ICS and position-specific courses.

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Emergency operations center (EOC) training is foundational to building statewide emergency management capacity throughout Texas. TDEM addresses disparities in training and experience across jurisdictions by offering a first-of-its-kind, Texas-specific curriculum that equips emergency managers with practical, end-to-end incident response coordination skills. TDEM's four-day EOC training course delivers a high-impact curriculum tailored to Texas response and recovery systems, filling gaps not addressed by federal or academic programs. The Incident Support Task Force (ISTF) Membership Program enables jurisdictions to request trained and experienced personnel from other local entities, creating a scalable, peer-driven resource network during complex incidents. The ISTF model has gained national recognition, not only supporting Texas jurisdictions but also facilitating deployment to other states during major disasters. Focused recruitment, training, and retention efforts ensure a growing pool of qualified ISTF members capable of navigating all phases of disaster operations. TDEM has expanded its EOC and ISTF training and support infrastructure significantly since 2021, enhancing statewide capabilities through strategic staffing and curriculum development and expanding ISTF personnel availability so that EOCs across the state benefit from trained and experience personnel. TDEM will increase training opportunities to address specialized functions aligned with federal and state regulations and continue to grow the cadre of trained ISTF personnel to support EOC operations and offer related technical assistance in Texas and across the country.

The sustainment of typed response teams is essential for maintaining critical capabilities across various disciplines to support Texas' homeland security mission. These teams offer standardized resources defined by function, capabilities, credentialing, equipment, and training, allowing them to be effectively requested and deployed during incidents. They play a key role in mutual aid efforts across regional, state, and federal levels, based on established interagency agreements. Additionally, sustaining these teams supports operational and strategic planning by enabling consistent assessments of available resources and their locations. Ongoing response team development efforts have focused on sustaining and adapting capabilities to meet evolving threats and hazards, building and maintaining skillsets in units such as bomb disposal teams, explosive detection canine teams, HAZMAT teams, and SWAT teams, among others. Texas will continue investing in personnel, training, exercises, and equipment to sustain and modernize its typed response capabilities, leveraging grant opportunities and other funding sources.

Homeland security threats evolve rapidly, requiring ongoing investments in plans, training, exercises, and equipment procurement and sustainment. Coordination between state and local partners ensures a balanced approach to funding allocation, enabling the development of new capabilities and supporting the continued effectiveness of existing teams. Limited availability of funding has underscored the importance of ongoing threat assessments and capability gap analyses to guide investment decisions. Since 2021, 468 homeland security grant awards have been allocated to special response teams across the state to support the development of new capabilities. Over the next five years, Texas will continue working with state and local stakeholders to improve the strategic prioritization of investments aimed at building response team capabilities. Key activities will include regular collaboration and communication to identify funding priorities, changes in grant program requirements, and emerging threat trends.

Trained and vetted volunteers directly support statewide homeland security efforts, serving as critical force multipliers during disasters. Effective volunteer management ensures operational efficiency, community resilience, and equitable support across jurisdictions, while ISTF training

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ensures consistent volunteer management practices during disasters. TDEM has made substantial progress in volunteer management through technology integration, refinement of protocols, and expanded coordination. Volunteer reception centers (VRCs) and digital platforms such as the Texas Community Recovery (TCR) system help emergency managers vet and manage volunteers and strengthen collaboration between state and local entities, and their use by local jurisdictions is increasing. The TCR system has been upgraded in recent years, with new management tools and data feeds for improved situational awareness. Texas has refined access control and credentialing protocols to improve security and efficiency during emergency response and recovery operations. Texas will continue to promote and expand the use of VRCs and the TCR system across the state, while leveraging technology in support of volunteer credentialing, registration, and scheduling. Volunteer training and the incorporation of volunteers in homeland security exercises will further empower volunteers to more effectively contribute to the security and resilience of their communities.

Texas uses the All-Hazard IMT program to support all ESFs during incidents affecting the state; ensure consistency and efficiency in incident response operations through NIMS and ICS; establish regional Incident Overhead Support Teams capable of delivering assessments, resource support, and incident management direction; improve coordination between state and local entities; and strengthen the overall preparedness of Texas communities through the ability to adapt to all-hazard incident scenarios and deliver consistent, high-quality support. A structured, standards-aligned approach is necessary to facilitate training and qualifications for typed IMT personnel and to seamlessly integrate IMTs into operations. Texas develops, prepares, and deploys IMTs statewide by ensuring all IMT personnel are trained and credentialed according to NQS; providing regular training opportunities for IMT personnel; and including IMTs in exercises and real-world emergency response events. IMTs will continue to be a cornerstone of homeland security preparedness, response, and recovery missions in Texas. The program maintains over 820 members and position task books, to include the members of 25 Type 4 DDC Teams; eight Type 3 Regional Teams; and four State Type 2 Teams. Priorities moving forward include increased ICS training, the implementation of improved resource ordering/tracking software and systems, and hiring additional full-time staff to facilitate the IMT program. In addition, TDEM will continue to strengthen its regional-level capabilities to coordinate and support response operations.

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Objective	
4.3	Achieve statewide communications operability and interoperability in Texas.
Priority Actions	
4.3.1	Enhance partnerships with regional radio systems across the state to ensure radio system coverage and connectivity for interoperability.
4.3.2	Ensure radio systems, equipment, owners, and users are in compliance with the Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan and Regional Interoperable Communications Plans.
4.3.3	Expand end-user communications system training and exercises at the state, regional, and local levels.
4.3.4	Ensure mobile communications assets across the state are regularly tested at the local and/or regional level and ready for deployment.
4.3.5	Make strategic investments in statewide communications infrastructure to strengthen operability and interoperability.
4.3.6	As public safety broadband is expanded, continue to work with the public safety community statewide to incorporate mobile broadband applications that enable interoperable data and information sharing into state and regional communications response plans and governance.
4.3.7	Enhance the availability and readiness of redundant communications systems and equipment to ensure continued operability in the event of mass communications outages.
4.3.8	As needed, invest in radio subscriber equipment to ensure reliable communications for first responder agencies, ensuring P25 compliance.

Reliable and resilient communications capabilities are needed on a regional and statewide level to support a coordinated multi-agency response to natural, technological, and human-caused threats and hazards across Texas. Achieving and maintaining statewide communications operability and interoperability is challenging due to the size and complexity of the state’s terrain and the need for sustained funding for the design, planning, buildout, and maintenance of radio system infrastructure. The Office of the Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC), with cooperation from the City of Austin, Harris County, Lower Colorado River Authority, and the City of Fort Worth, established the first regional radio system-of-systems. This project has successfully connected the Greater Austin/Travis Regional Radio System, Texas Wide Area Radio Network (TXWARN), Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA), and the North Texas Interoperable Radio Network to provide real-time situational awareness among these four systems. Texas has also

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established end-user training to enhance subscriber knowledge and increase interoperability through proficient, effective use of the regional radio systems. The state will work through the Texas Interoperable Communications Coalition (TxICC) governance process to establish policy, develop training and operational procedures, identify solutions to link existing systems, establish deployment options, and establish metrics and milestones. Pursuing funding to ensure the complete buildout of regional radio systems is a priority, as is expanding end-user training to enhance subscriber knowledge and increase interoperability. The SWIC office will also encourage new or existing stand-alone systems to join regional radio systems by exploring funding options to reduce the impact on local budgets.

At all levels, Texas is moving forward with its goal to fully implement the Texas Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan (SCIP). Texas adopted the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office of Emergency Communications Interoperability Continuum to help emergency response agencies and policy makers plan and implement communications interoperability solutions. This document covers governance, standard operating procedures, technology, training and exercises, and usage. Texas holds annual SCIP Conferences and TxICC meetings and has updated the Texas Statewide Interoperability Channel Plan (TSICP) according to federal regulations. Texas will continue to hold Regional Interoperable Communications Plan (RICP) workshops with Councils of Government (COGs) across the state to update RICPs and will expand training and education for local stakeholders.

Communications training is vital for all stakeholders to enhance communications operability and interoperability. Texas routinely conducts communications unit courses to introduce foundational concepts and critical technical content to communications operators throughout the state. The SWIC office has planned and co-hosted regional communications training exercises to ensure personnel are trained to coordinate communications during an emergency and re-established quarterly state agency meeting to discuss interoperability issues. The SWIC office will continue to identify and recruit communications personnel to instruct training courses and will seek additional funding for communications training exercises. Texas will also develop an advanced training program to evaluate and enhance first responders' ability to use subscriber radios in crisis situations.

The Mobile Communications Command Program and regional mobile command and communications vehicles can respond within hours to establish interoperable communications in any part of Texas. It is imperative that all equipment is routinely checked, maintained, and kept in deployment-ready condition. Texas has held regional communications exercises to allow regional partners to practice deployment of their mobile assets, and DPS and other agencies have deployed mobile command platforms to numerous emergency response operations since 2021. Texas will continue to participate in regional and interstate exercises involving mobile communications assets, to include jamming exercises coordinated by DHS. A new digital platform will replace the Communications Assets and Survey Mapping system and will allow local, regional, and state agencies to post updates directly so that command and communications assets can be located and deployed in a timely manner.

Texas has an ongoing need to sustain and enhance its interoperable emergency communications infrastructure. Due to Texas' geographic size and diversity, some areas continue to experience limited or no radio coverage. Addressing these coverage gaps requires the installation of new

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communication towers, repeaters, and related equipment. Additionally, after-action reports from large-scale incidents frequently cite communications shortfalls as critical areas for improvement. Operating within funding constraints, local and state agencies have worked together to prioritize key projects and maintain essential services, and the state has continued to improve its emergency communications infrastructure in recent years. Interoperability gaps remain in certain regions, however, highlighting the need for continued investment. Over the next five years, Texas will focus on strengthening collaborative planning and funding strategies to support emergency communications infrastructure. Stakeholders at the local, regional, and state levels will coordinate to monitor emerging communication needs, assess equipment life cycles, and align their approaches on grant opportunities. Emphasis will be placed on enhancing radio coverage in underserved areas, replacing aging infrastructure, and incorporating new technologies to ensure seamless, interoperable communications during multi-agency responses.

Improved mobile broadband access and tools will bolster the state's emergency communications networks. The SWIC office and the Texas Interoperable Communications Coalition have promoted two broadband-enabled technologies that are available at no cost for basic subscriptions: TAK locates personnel and assets (aircraft, UAS platforms, vehicles, etc.) on a digital map during response operations, and Bridge4PublicSafety (Bridge4PS) is a public safety communications platform available for free download that provides messaging and collaboration features tailored to first responders. Texas will continue to promote TAK and Bridge4PS and work with jurisdictions that want to integrate local servers with the Texas TAK server to enhance data interoperability.

Texas homeland security responders at all levels must be able to communicate effectively during emergencies, some of which may involve widespread communications outages. It is therefore critical to ensure that communications systems include redundant capabilities and avoid geographic or technological single points of failure. TDEM is building its statewide communications infrastructure through the purchase and deployment of all-band P25 smart radios, Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellite systems, and push-to-talk satellite telephones. Texas is updating its radio architecture to allow for over-the-horizon nationwide coverage through the LTE cellular infrastructure and redundant P25 line-of-sight radio coverage. LEO satellite systems will provide voice and data capabilities, while Voice-Over-IP Red Phone service will provide interoperable communications with other Red Phones via a satellite backhaul. Additionally, the Texas Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) program will continue to provide amateur radio operators to supplement state and local government communications systems during emergency operations when normal communications systems may be degraded or unavailable.

First responders across Texas rely heavily on radio subscriber equipment for effective communication and coordination during emergencies. As this equipment reaches the end of its useful life or becomes obsolete, agencies must replace it. Without timely replacement, the reliability and interoperability of public safety communications can be compromised. Given the high costs associated with this equipment, agencies often rely on external funding sources, such as grants, to sustain their communication capabilities. Since 2021, many first responder agencies in Texas have successfully leveraged various grant programs to offset the costs of replacing outdated radio equipment. These efforts have helped maintain operational readiness and ensure continued access to modern, interoperable communication tools. Texas will continue to support first

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responder agencies in identifying and securing funding mechanisms that can assist in the ongoing replacement and modernization of radio subscriber equipment.

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Objective	
4.4	Ensure continued enhancement of public health and medical emergency response systems.
Priority Actions	
4.4.1	Enhance public health disease containment education and capabilities including public health risk communication, control measures to prevent the spread of diseases, and decontamination.
4.4.2	Maintain the state's ability to rapidly distribute and dispense medical material and countermeasures during a public health emergency.
4.4.3	Enhance capacity to monitor the status of healthcare facilities during incidents to anticipate needed resources.
4.4.4	Expand and enhance capabilities for delivering public health and medical surge capacity, including teams, equipment, and processes, when required for incident response.
4.4.5	Expand the availability of trained and vetted disaster behavioral health services to support impacted populations.

As Texas continues to respond to infectious disease outbreaks such as H5N1, Mpox, and measles, the state plays a key role in supporting local and regional public health partners responding to emergencies and working to reduce the spread of public health threats. The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) is updating the DSHS Infectious Disease Annex based on recent real-world disease response operations and exercises. DSHS continues to maintain the Texas Emergency Medical Task Force (EMTF), which includes multiple emergency healthcare capabilities including the Infectious Disease Response Unit (IDRU). In coordination with partners in other states, DSHS continues to train and exercise with the University of Texas Medical Branch Special Pathogens Excellence in Clinical Treatment Readiness and Education Program (SPECTRE) and Regional Emerging Special Pathogen Treatment Center (RESPTC) on infectious disease patient movement and intake practices and protocols. DSHS will refit and resupply the EMTF IDRU in the coming years and also plans to conduct tabletop exercises and regular conference calls with UTMB RESPTC regarding the patient movement process during an infectious disease incident.

Providing timely and effective medical countermeasures (MCM) is critical to reducing mortality and morbidity during the response to infectious disease, biological threats, and other public health hazards. To this end, Texas has updated state-supported MCM-related resources materials such as standard operating guides (SOGs), technical guides, and toolkits for state, regional and local partners. DSHS has successfully maintained its temperature-sensitive supply chain (“cold chain”) contingency contracts; continued its maintenance of the state’s durable medical equipment cache; and conducted a statewide State Medical Operations Center (SMOC) 2026 World Cup Exercise

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that included MCM request, distribution, and dispensing activities. DSHS has responded to several infectious diseases since 2021 including Mpox and measles, all of which provided opportunities to refine MCM distribution processes involving laboratory test kits, vaccines, antivirals, and PPE. DSHS will continue its work on building out the administrative, financial, and logistics (AFL) SOG for SMOC processes, along with the MCM SOG. DSHS is also planning multi-agency tabletop and functional exercises to directly address MCM issues.

The importance of managing medical capacity during disasters or large-scale medical incidents is essential to Texas hospital systems' response capability. Priority efforts to manage patient surge, patient load balance, patient transfer, healthcare capacity monitoring, and disease surveillance support effective disaster response and homeland security preparedness. DSHS has enhanced disease surveillance reporting in healthcare facilities since 2021 and now requires the implementation and maintenance of an electronic statewide patient tracking system in the Emergency Medical Task Force State Coordinating Organization contract. DSHS is currently developing a Patient Movement SOG that describes how the State Medical Operations Center (SMOC) will move patients during emergency incidents or a High Consequence Infectious Disease (HCID) event. DSHS will continue to support the Hospital Preparedness Program Bed Synchronization Project and will work with statewide hospital preparedness partners to develop regional patient surge and movement plans and exercises.

Texas provides a high level of patient care during response and recovery operations by actively managing healthcare system capacity and capabilities during disasters and other incidents. The recently completed Direction, Control, and Coordination SOG and the Information Collection, Management, Analysis, and Dissemination SOG assist public health partners in surge capacity planning. New contracts covering medical shelters, durable medical equipment maintenance, medical staffing, oxygen supplies, pharmaceutical materials, and fatality management will likewise bolster the state's emergency medical surge capacity. The Texas Health Alert Network (TxHAN) broadcasts public health alerts to all stakeholders, and DSHS will continue to host annual SMOC trainings and exercises to test surge capabilities.

Expanding the availability of people trained and vetted to provide disaster behavioral health services is crucial for supporting communities and first responders impacted by natural disasters, mass casualty attacks, and other emergency incidents. Since 2021, the Texas Health and Human Services Commission's Disaster Behavioral Health Coordination (DBHC) staff has deployed assets to support disaster recovery in Uvalde, Kerr County, and elsewhere, and has made considerable progress in expanding the availability of DBH personnel. The First Responder Mental Health (FRMH) Workgroup, with partners from the Bill Blackwood Law Enforcement Management Institute of Texas, Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service, Texas Law Enforcement Peer Network, Texas Line of Duty Death Taskforce, TDEM, and other groups assisted in finalizing the Deployable Teams SOG. Through a collaborative partnership with the University of Texas at San Antonio, DBHC has offered trainings for Psychological First Aid; Skills for Psychological Recovery; Cumulative Stress and Self-Care; and Compassion Fatigue and Resiliency. DBHC is also increasing community preparedness for mass violence incidents through Bipartisan Safer Communities Act (BSCA) grants. Starting in 2026, the Deployable Teams SOG program will begin distributing "Go Kits" to local mental health and behavioral health authorities across the state, including key tools and resources for continuity of operations during disaster response. BSCA staff are developing tabletop trainings, drills, and exercises for local mental health

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and behavioral health authorities to test their mass violence response plans. DBHC will continue to provide resource referrals for the Texas Critical Incident Stress Management network and other first responder peer support trainings, ensuring that behavioral health educational needs are met.

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Objective	
4.5	Expand statewide cybersecurity incident response and incident management capabilities to enable rapid detection, containment, and recovery from cyberattacks.
Priority Actions	
4.5.1	Strengthen state-level cybersecurity incident response and incident management capabilities to assist eligible entities.
4.5.2	Encourage and support incident response preparedness for all levels of government and the private sector by providing trusted guidance and access to expert resources.
4.5.3	Develop, maintain, and test statewide cybersecurity incident response and incident management plans that clearly define roles, coordination processes, and priorities for responding to incidents.
4.5.4	Develop, maintain, and test communication processes and procedures to support coordinated and effective cybersecurity incident response activities.

Cyber incidents pose unique challenges to response efforts due to the geographical size of Texas, varying cybersecurity maturity levels across Texas entities, and potential shortfalls in cybersecurity funding. The growth in cyberattacks targeting government agencies at all levels creates a clear need for effective, well-coordinated responses engaging a variety of stakeholders and capabilities. To strengthen Texas' cybersecurity readiness, the Texas Department of Information Resources (DIR) has established a dedicated Cybersecurity Incident Response Team (CIRT) and the Texas Volunteer Incident Response Team (VIRT) that includes over 150 volunteers. These teams play a critical role in supporting local entities during cyber incidents. Since 2021, DIR has expanded training of, conducted functional deployment exercises for, and launched tools to remotely train VIRT members. Texas Cyber Command (TXCC) will build and enhance cybersecurity incident response, threat intelligence, and forensic centers and will enhance team capabilities through exercises, training, and technology development. TXCC will also promote VIRT membership and expand Regional Security Operations Center (RSOC) partnerships to increase statewide cybersecurity response capacity. The Texas Military Department and DPS will continue to maintain cybersecurity response assets that can be deployed as needed.

Entities impacted by a cyber incident are often unable to respond effectively. Incident response preparedness is key to decreasing the impact of cyberattacks on Texas through rapid threat detection, containment, and recovery of critical services. DIR has cultivated relationships with statewide organizations such as the Texas Association of Counties, Texas Association of School Boards, Texas Municipal League, and the Texas Association of Governmental Information Technology Managers that can provide support to local government IT staff. The Texas Information Sharing and Analysis Organization (TX-ISAO) functions as a clearinghouse for incident response preparedness resources for public and private sector members. Moving forward,

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TXCC will continue to promote incident response preparedness by conducting workshops, meetings, and exercises and developing preparedness products.

Maintaining and improving a comprehensive multi-agency cyber incident response plan is critical to the state's cybersecurity preparedness posture. The Texas Cybersecurity Incident Plan outlines responsibilities, defines coordination mechanisms, and lists basic response prioritization principles. The DIR Incident Response Redbook helps organizations develop their own incident response teams and cybersecurity plans, and it is reviewed and updated periodically. DIR supports cybersecurity incident response planning statewide by providing foundational templates, best practices, and other policy guidance; conducting outreach through the TX-ISAAC; participating in interagency collaboration and planning efforts; and coordinating with local and regional planning groups. Additionally, DIR and TDEM have published the ESF-20 (Cybersecurity) Annex to the State of Texas Emergency Management Plan. Since 2021, DIR has strengthened statewide coordination by expanding the Statewide Incident Response Workgroup, integrating it into the Statewide Information Security Advisory Committee (SISAC), and adding the RSOCs as standing members. TXCC will assume the leadership of cyber response planning initiatives moving forward, incorporating lessons from real-world incidents and exercises to enhance statewide planning.

Developing, maintaining, and testing communication processes and procedures helps ensure a coordinated and effective response to cybersecurity incidents. Clear communication is essential for quickly sharing threat intelligence, coordinating roles and responsibilities, and minimizing confusion, while well-defined procedures reduce response time, prevent duplication of effort, and help contain the impact of incidents. Regular testing ensures that these protocols and procedures work as intended under real-world conditions. DIR has developed and maintained a consolidated security incident and telephone notification threshold document. In collaboration with TDEM and other partners, TXCC will focus on documenting, maintaining, and testing communication and response procedures to support collaboration among local, state, federal, and private sector cybersecurity stakeholders.

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Objective	
4.6	Integrate and coordinate multiple methods to warn and keep the public and local leaders informed about emergencies in their communities.
Priority Actions	
4.6.1	Ensure the 2-1-1 Texas Information Referral Network has the resources needed to effectively collect and share information to support communities during incidents.
4.6.2	Enhance the capability to provide emergency information to persons with disabilities and functional and access needs and persons with limited English proficiency.
4.6.3	Make strategic investments to enhance public warning systems and processes to ensure timely, comprehensive alerts and information sharing, including the expansion of local jurisdiction alerting authorities and capabilities.
4.6.4	Continue expanding the use of social media and new technology platforms to provide accurate and timely emergency information to the public and counter misinformation and disinformation that may endanger responders and the public.
4.6.5	Strengthen statewide plans and processes for establishing and operating Joint Information Centers, and exercise this capability at the state, regional, and local levels.
4.6.6	Complete the statewide implementation of Next Generation 9-1-1, consistent with Federal Communications Commission requirements on commercial telecommunications providers, to enhance the capability of Public Safety Answering Points to receive information and data to inform emergency response operations.

Before and during homeland security incidents, delivering effective communications and warning to the public, along with the ability of the public to quickly report issues requiring public safety and emergency response, can save lives and limit damage by enabling protective actions and making response operations more efficient. New technologies and methods of communication have created more opportunities for timely two-way information exchange. In some cases, they also create a challenge in ensuring coordinated messaging and information accuracy. Over the next five years, Texas will upgrade its public information and warning capabilities to ensure that accurate emergency information is available to all who need it.

The 2-1-1 Texas Information and Referral Network (2-1-1 TIRN) plays a key role in connecting Texans to services in times of emergency. The network provides comprehensive and accurate resource information to the public 24 hours a day, seven days a week via phone and chat functions and through its website, 211texas.org. 2-1-1 TIRN also captures real-time data from the public

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about their needs during disasters and passes this information to relevant state agencies. Since 2021, 2-1-1 TIRN has focused on enhancing one-way texting and has launched social media campaigns to encourage the public to sign up for texts during disasters. 2-1-1 TIRN is engaging with other 2-1-1 states to establish interstate memorandums of understanding to support call handling capacity. 2-1-1 TIRN will continue to support Application Programming Interface (API) planning for data sharing with TDEM and United Way Worldwide.

Sharing pertinent information with the public, including persons with disabilities and functional and access needs and persons with limited English proficiency, to ensure that all Texans remain informed about emergency incidents and resources is a primary responsibility of public information officers. Texas continues to develop homeland security and emergency management training videos and public messaging in multiple languages and with closed captioning to expand the accessibility of information, while also sending state personnel to conferences, community preparedness fairs, and other outreach events to communicate directly with citizens. TDEM continues to work alongside disability rights advocacy and support organizations, voluntary organizations active in disaster (VOAD), government agency partners at all levels, and the Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities to implement best practices and enhance the state's emergency management efforts for Texans with disabilities. Texas will continue to educate and support local officials as they implement statutory requirements for wellness checks on medically fragile individuals. In addition, TDEM will explore opportunities with local jurisdictions to increase utilization of American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters for in-person outreach. The State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry (STEAR) program will work to expand accessibility among populations with limited English proficiency, disabilities, and functional and access needs so that all vulnerable citizens can register with STEAR for assistance during disasters.

Homeland security emergencies and missing person incidents occur quickly and unexpectedly. Due to the unforeseeable nature of these incidents, it is imperative for governmental entities to provide accurate communications, alerts, and warnings to the public. The expansion of the public warning system into local jurisdictions increases the chances of the public taking appropriate actions for their safety or reporting vital information to law enforcement in a timely manner. In recent years, Texas has made investments into improving and enhancing the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS), allowing public officials to quickly share vital information with the public during life-threatening situations. These improvements have also assisted in communicating vital emergency information to persons with disabilities, functional and access needs, and limited English proficiency. DPS continues to serve as the public alerting authority responsible for the AMBER, Silver, Blue, CLEAR, Endangered Missing, Power Outage, and Active Shooter alert systems; state partners regularly meet with key stakeholders to learn and implement best practices and evaluate evolving technologies and tools available for public alerts. DPS will continue to work with local, state, and federal partners to enhance the department's public warning system in accordance with federal and state laws.

DPS, TDEM, and other state and local agencies have continued to expand their use of various social media platforms to engage the public and provide timely, accurate, and uniform messaging before and during incidents. Social media can also be a forum for misinformation and disinformation that can create confusion and potentially endanger first responders. Moving forward, it is essential to educate the public on how and where to find official messaging during

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incidents and to build trust and confidence in the accuracy of information provided by government agencies.

An effective Joint Information Center (JIC) enhances the flow of public information in an emergency. By collocating public information officers (PIOs), the JIC accelerates information release time, enhances information coordination and analysis, reduces misinformation, maximizes resources, and helps build public confidence in response efforts. Exercising this capability builds relationships, enables process improvements, and facilitates the accurate flow of information. A virtual JIC has been established in the SOC during real-world incidents. In recent years, TDEM has held a hurricane planning workshop with FEMA that included JICs; hosted a Public Information Course (G290) and Advanced Public Information Course (G290A); and conducted multiple other exercises addressing JIC operations. The current Texas Emergency Management Basic Plan describes state coordination for JIC operations. TDEM continues to meet with public information agency stakeholders to review PIO efforts before, during, and after incidents.

Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG911) is a digital, IP-based system that is replacing legacy analog 9-1-1 infrastructure to create a faster, more resilient system that allows voice, photos, videos, and text messages to flow seamlessly from the public to the 9-1-1 network. NG911 will improve Public Safety Answering Points' ability to help manage call overload; receive information during natural disasters and other emergencies; and withstand cyberattacks. The 87th Texas Legislature established a statewide target implementation date of September 1, 2025 for NG911 and authorized the Next Generation 9-1-1 Service Fund to support the deployment and operation of NG911 equipment and personnel. 51 local 9-1-1 entities have fully implemented NG911 in their jurisdictions to date. In 2024, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) unanimously adopted a Report and Order (R&O) regulations document to facilitate the nationwide implementation of NG911. Looking forward, the Texas Commission on State Emergency Communications will work with all Texas 9-1-1 entities to further implement NG911 standards in coordination with (FCC) guidance and regulations.

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Objective	
4.7	Ensure updated and validated emergency plans are in place at public agencies that provide vital public services, and encourage such planning within private entities.
Priority Actions	
4.7.1	Periodically review, update, and upgrade incident response plans at the state and local levels, and ensure these plans account for people with disabilities or other access and functional needs.
4.7.2	Update all annexes to the Texas Emergency Management Plan as required, and develop new annexes when appropriate.
4.7.3	Encourage and assist local agencies with the development and revision of comprehensive local and inter-jurisdictional emergency management plans, to include plans for special events.
4.7.4	Facilitate state agency continuity planning and program management through coordination, consultation, and training, and encourage and assist with continuity planning at the regional and local levels.
4.7.5	Continue to hold annual workshops at the regional level to ensure coordinated planning and scheduling of preparedness activities.

Regularly reviewing and updating incident response plans ensures they remain current with evolving threats, hazards, best practices, and legal requirements. TDEM and partner agencies will continue to support local jurisdictions with guidance, tools, and training in preparing emergency management plans and promote compliance with federal and state laws, enhancing preparedness for all communities across Texas. The Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) regulates licensed providers that provide services to people with disabilities or other access and functional needs, including Medicare-certified facility-based programs such as Intermediate Care Facilities for individuals with intellectual disabilities and Nursing Facilities and community-based programs such as hospice or Primary Home Care programs. HHSC will continue to work with health care providers, requiring them to maintain and update emergency plans and ensure their staff are fully trained to execute those plans.

Maintaining a comprehensive, current, and responsive Texas Emergency Management Plan (TEMP) as the guiding framework for statewide emergency preparedness, response, and recovery efforts ensures a common approach to emergency management among all stakeholders in Texas. The TEMP must align with Texas Government Code Chapter 418, along with federal requirements under FEMA’s Comprehensive Preparedness Guide (CPG) 101 and other relevant guidance. Keeping annexes updated allows TDEM to incorporate lessons learned, address emerging threats and hazards, and integrate new capabilities and resources. TDEM uses the annex development and

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update process to ensure plans reflect the needs of all Texans, providing functional guidance for critical ESFs such as mass care, transportation, communications, public health, and more. TDEM has made substantial progress in modernizing and maintaining the TEMP since 2021. The Basic Plan has been successfully updated, and all 20 ESF Annexes have been reviewed, revised, and made publicly available. TDEM is actively updating all hazard-specific annexes to ensure they reflect current threats and hazards, capabilities, and best practices. TDEM has also transitioned to a continuous planning model, where all annexes are now treated as live documents subject to ongoing review and revision. This shift from static updates to a dynamic, iterative process ensures that the TEMP remains a relevant, actionable, and forward-looking framework for statewide emergency response operations.

Local jurisdictions are the first to respond to emergencies, and their ability to do so effectively depends on comprehensive, up-to-date emergency plans that are coordinated across jurisdictional boundaries and tailored to their specific risks. Comprehensive local planning is often a requirement for receiving federal preparedness and mitigation funding, and TDEM's assistance helps ensure jurisdictions remain eligible for these critical resources. All TDEM regions have a Preparedness Section Chief and a Regional Preparedness Coordinator that work closely with local jurisdictions regarding preparedness activities, to include planning guidance. The TDEM County Liaison Officers (CLOs) also support the Regional Preparedness Coordinators with coordination and preparedness efforts and help address the needs of local emergency management stakeholders. Texas will continue to expand the CLO program to enhance that level of planning support, maintaining an ongoing planning cycle that includes regular engagement with members of the Emergency Management Council, local jurisdictions, and regional partners. Regional planning workshops will provide technical assistance, promote collaboration across jurisdictions, and align local planning efforts with state and federal guidance. Exercises will help test the effectiveness of plans, identify gaps, and drive continuous improvement.

Continuity of operations (COOP) planning is essential for sustaining government services in the event of a disruption and ensuring that the most critical government services continue to be available to the people of Texas under any conditions. Since 2014, each Texas state agency is required to create a continuity plan consistent with FEMA's COOP guidance. The Texas State Office of Risk Management (SORM) website provides templates, standards, and other materials to assist in government agency COOP planning. SORM is transitioning to a cloud-based risk management information system that will include implementation of a secure portal for submission, feedback, and collaboration on continuity plans and exercises. Regional and local continuity planning outreach with TDEM and COGs will align continuity planning with emergency operations and cybersecurity plans.

Regional workshops provide a forum for TDEM and local partners to synchronize planning calendars, exercise schedules, and training efforts. This coordination minimizes duplication, maximizes participation, and ensures that preparedness activities are strategically aligned across jurisdictions. These workshops also provide a forum for face-to-face engagement among local, regional, state, tribal, and federal partners to build the networks that are critical during emergencies. By reviewing after-action reports, recent incidents, and regional capabilities, these workshops help identify areas for improvement and guide future planning priorities and investment decisions. Moving forward, TDEM will continue to conduct annual regional workshops as a key component of the statewide preparedness strategy, adjusting workshop conduct based on feedback

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from participants to ensure relevance and effectiveness. Workshop agendas will evolve to address emerging threats and planning priorities among all stakeholders based on their specific concerns and community needs.

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Objective	
4.8	Ensure access to and adequate support for homeland security and emergency preparedness and response training across all agencies, jurisdictions, and disciplines.
Priority Actions	
4.8.1	In coordination with partner agencies at all levels, ensure appropriate training is available to and completed by first responders and other critical personnel throughout the state.
4.8.2	Ensure appropriate training is available to and completed by elected leaders with homeland security and emergency management responsibilities.
4.8.3	Enhance processes for evaluating homeland security training needs and availability to identify gaps at the state, regional, local, and/or tribal levels, and request or build additional training as appropriate.

Comprehensive, focused training programs ensure that individuals and teams build and maintain the knowledge and skills required to respond effectively to emergencies and operate in coordination with partner agencies and jurisdictions. Texas supports state and local agencies by establishing and implementing a training program that produces skilled and practiced first responders, emergency management leaders, and other homeland security personnel. The state’s training strategy is designed to provide tailored training for first responders and leaders at every level, including those in the private sector, in order to ensure all personnel are prepared to meet the unique needs of their specific communities and integrate with leaders and responders throughout the state. Texas will continue to coordinate with the National Domestic Preparedness Consortium (NDPC) and other partners to identify training opportunities that enhance the state’s homeland security preparedness.

Elected leaders must be prepared to effectively carry out their homeland security and emergency management duties to ensure the safety and well-being of their communities. Texas will continue to offer training and guidance to local leaders to enhance incident response. For instance, TDEM’s Public Officials Workshop course gives elected officials a fundamental understanding of their roles and responsibilities in managing disasters within their jurisdictions and provides the basic framework for successfully conducting disaster response operations; the course reviews the TDEM Executive Guide, a document that outlines the emergency management process in Texas and is updated regularly. The state will engage with local emergency managers to ensure Texans receive training opportunities and coordinate with Councils of Governments and other partner agencies to identify training needs and gaps and to schedule training events, developing new training when required to meet the needs of elected officials across the state.

FEMA’s Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) program requires recipients to develop an Integrated Preparedness Plan (IPP), the foundation on which all preparedness activities

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are built. The purpose of the IPP is to document overall preparedness priorities and activities, incorporating all elements of the Integrated Preparedness Cycle and allowing for maximum efficiency of resources, time, and funding. Texas will continue to survey first responders to determine training needs and will also leverage technology to provide remote trainings across multiple jurisdictions simultaneously.

Goal 4: Respond

Objective	
4.9	Design and conduct homeland security exercises across the state to strengthen preparedness for attacks and disasters.
Priority Actions	
4.9.1	Exercise state-level homeland security and emergency management plans to ensure shared understanding of responsibilities, resource requirements, and coordination requirements.
4.9.2	Encourage and provide support to local agencies to exercise their homeland security and emergency management plans to ensure shared understanding of responsibilities, resource requirements, and coordination requirements.
4.9.3	Enhance processes for the review and analysis of exercise and real-world incident After Action Reports, and share best practices and lessons learned across jurisdictions to facilitate continuous improvement.
4.9.4	Encourage the alignment of exercises with Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) principles to maintain consistency and quality in exercise design and execution.

Exercising homeland security and emergency management plans is essential to ensuring a shared understanding of roles, responsibilities, and resource coordination processes across agencies and jurisdictions. Exercises help validate plans, identify gaps, and strengthen interagency coordination in a collaborative, no-fault environment. Through regular exercises, the state fosters collaboration, builds trust among stakeholders, and ensures that strategic objectives and tactical actions are clearly aligned during emergencies. Texas will continue to expand and enhance its statewide exercise program, adding increasing complexity and scope. These exercises will be used to validate state-level plans, strengthen operational coordination, and improve response and recovery outcomes. Multi-agency, multi-jurisdictional participation will ensure comprehensive preparedness and shared situational awareness across the homeland security enterprise.

Supporting local agencies in exercising homeland security and emergency management plans is critical to building a resilient and coordinated statewide emergency management system. As the state's lead agency for emergency preparedness, TDEM plays a key role in fostering local capacity, ensuring alignment with state and federal planning frameworks, and promoting a shared understanding of roles and responsibilities at all levels of government. Texas government agencies can assist local jurisdictions in planning, conducting, and evaluating tabletop exercises, drills, functional exercises, full-scale exercises, and other events that help enhance and clarify existing plans and reveal potential challenges in incident response.

Thorough after-action reports (AARs) that engage all stakeholders following exercises and real-world incidents drive continuous improvement and operational excellence. TDEM and partner agencies will continue to use AARs developed at the state and local levels to systematically

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evaluate performance, identify gaps, and share best practices across jurisdictions. This process will help to strengthen statewide preparedness by institutionalizing lessons learned, standardizing corrective actions, and promoting a culture of resilience. AAR review and analysis ensures that knowledge gained from past events informs planning, training, and exercises, leading to more effective outcomes during future emergencies.

Aligning exercises with Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) principles ensures consistency, quality, and measurable outcomes in exercise planning and execution across Texas. HSEEP provides a standardized methodology that improves interoperability, encourages comprehensive evaluation, and enhances the ability to compare performance across jurisdictions. This alignment helps ensure exercises are meaningful, focused, and capable of identifying capability gaps, which supports continuous improvement and statewide readiness. The state will continue to base exercise activities on HSEEP guidance and methodologies and offer HSEEP classes to local jurisdictions and partner agencies upon request.

Goal 5: Recover

Ensure rapid, effective, and comprehensive community recovery following terrorist, criminal, and hostile foreign nation attacks and natural or technological disasters.

Objective	
5.1	Support effective, community based post-incident recovery preparedness by ensuring plans, structures and processes are in place at all levels of government and coordinated with private sector partners, as appropriate.
Priority Actions	
5.1.1	Support the development and enhancement of regional and local recovery plans that incorporate all community stakeholders and identify structures, processes, priorities, available resources, and responsibilities for coordinating recovery efforts.
5.1.2	Enhance statewide planning for critical recovery functions such as housing, catastrophic debris management, economic restoration, and public health.
5.1.3	Develop and support recovery-focused community networks and planning groups to enhance analysis and understanding of potential recovery challenges, priorities, and planning gaps.
5.1.4	Integrate recovery issues into state and local exercise programs, and share post-exercise analyses and best practices.
5.1.5	Provide training to local officials and communities on recovery preparedness activities, with a focus on conducting effective post-incident damage assessments.

Recovering from disasters and other incidents requires a coordinated effort across multiple stakeholders to provide disaster survivors the resources they need to rebuild. The quality of pre-incident planning and preparedness greatly impacts the ability of communities to quickly and effectively restore full functionality and strengthen their readiness for future incidents. Early identification of necessary resources and capabilities will enhance recovery activities and accelerate what is often a lengthy effort. Local communities, private businesses, local health authorities, and public service agencies each play a large role in providing services to disaster survivors, and a whole community approach to recovery planning is critical. Texas maintains the

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State Emergency Management Plan with a Recovery Annex, which is mirrored in most county/city basic plans. Texas is continuing to explore new ways to address recovery needs and support regional and local recovery plans. Future efforts will focus on aligning local annexes with the state framework and standardizing integration of best practices and lessons learned into plans.

Texas maintains a strong emphasis on recovery planning, including statewide identification of challenges and development of solutions. The Emergency Support Function 16 (Recovery) Annex to the State of Texas Emergency Management Basic Plan identifies organizations, establishes operational concepts, assigns responsibilities, outlines coordination procedures, and details capabilities for achieving emergency management recovery objectives. Through recovery staff at the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM), the Texas General Land Office (GLO), the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), and other state and regional organizations, there are several opportunities for enhancement of local recovery planning. The TxDOT Statewide Transportation Resilience Plan (STRP) contributes to recovery planning by identifying key considerations related to post-disaster debris management, power outages, communication disruptions, supply chain disruptions, and other issues. Through the Texas Ready program, The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) provides planning tools and preparedness resources to assist individuals and communities in post-disaster recovery. Texas will continue to offer guidance to local partners on the importance of creating or growing local Long-Term Recovery Groups (LTRGs) to coordinate recovery planning and identification of needs within jurisdictions. Additionally, GLO will continue to coordinate with TDEM and the Texas A&M University Hazard Reduction and Recovery Center to assist local jurisdictions by providing funding for planning tools used to develop, certify, and maintain local housing recovery plans. TDEM regional representatives will continue to visit with jurisdictions to support planning efforts, provide technical assistance, and train statewide partners on recovery planning.

Disaster recovery benefits from the support of the community, leveraging local knowledge and expertise in coordination with public, private, and non-profit resources to rebuild and return to normalcy. Texas provides comprehensive state support for communities through TDEM's County Liaison Officer (CLO) program, as CLOs work with state, regional, and local leaders to ensure all community stakeholders are incorporated in coordinated recovery activities. Long-term recovery goes beyond rebuilding infrastructure to focus on restoring lives after disasters. LTRGs are central to this work, coordinating resources, services, and organizations to address individual and community unmet needs through disaster case management, outreach, donations and volunteer management, advocacy, and repair and rebuilding efforts. There are 47 LTRGs in Texas, with 25 currently active. Each group tailors its recovery efforts to local needs when personal, insurance, or government resources are insufficient, using available resources and volunteers. To support them, TDEM provides mentorship, connects them to funding opportunities, facilitates use of the Texas Community Recovery Management System, and hosts a monthly Peer Support Network. Following the 2025 federally declared Central Texas flooding disasters, LTRGs have led recovery across affected counties. TDEM supports these groups throughout all phases of recovery, providing guidance and technical guidance through its Voluntary Agency Liaisons to ensure consistent coordination and stronger community-led recovery.

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Texas will continue to integrate recovery issues into state and local exercise programs to better prepare local communities and jurisdictions to recover from natural disasters and other catastrophic incidents. Recovery stakeholders from state agencies will participate in at least one annual statewide exercise or event in the State Operations Center (SOC) with the Texas Emergency Management Council. Additionally, TDEM recovery staff will continue participating in all SOC activations. TDEM regional staff will integrate with local jurisdictions to ensure critical recovery functions are addressed in local disaster exercises. These exercises will help ensure local jurisdictions have personnel adequately trained to perform recovery-related duties.

Since its launch in 2021, the State of Texas Assessment Tool (STAT) has been used to assist local jurisdictions in capturing their damage estimates, and it gives TDEM the ability to start Preliminary Damage Assessments. It also has a training feature that is consistently used by the Incident Support Task Force (ISTF) team and TDEM recovery personnel when training local partners. This tool includes a just-in-time training that takes no longer than 30 minutes to complete, making it possible to quickly capture damages within affected jurisdictions. The Public Assistance State of Texas Assessment Tool (pSTAT) is available for local government use, and the Individual Assistance State of Texas Assessment Tool (iSTAT) is available for individual use. Training courses related to STAT are available on [PreparingTexas.org](https://www.preparingtexas.org). The pSTAT helps the state identify disaster damage to public infrastructure and assists emergency management officials in assessing that damage. This data will determine if the state of Texas and our communities meet federal thresholds for disaster assistance. With the data submitted, TDEM recovery personnel can start Preliminary Damage Assessments with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to facilitate federal disaster declarations for eligible counties. Related activities and training will continue to be conducted in person, during conferences, via virtual platforms, and by telephone.

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Objective	
5.2	Coordinate rapid and effective delivery of post-incident recovery assistance to impacted communities to address immediate needs.
Priority Actions	
5.2.1	Continue to implement the Disaster Recovery Task Force concept to strengthen rapid recovery support to local jurisdictions and other partners.
5.2.2	Plan and implement solutions to address temporary housing needs for people displaced by disasters and other incidents.
5.2.3	In coordination with federal partners, assist communities and individuals with identifying potential sources of public and private funding and direct aid following an incident, and facilitate effective case management.
5.2.4	Enhance statewide capabilities to perform critical short-term recovery tasks including restoration of lifeline services, hazardous material cleanup, and debris management.
5.2.5	Ensure common understanding among public and private sector partners of post-disaster reentry processes, priorities, and restrictions to enable delivery of essential goods and services.

Effective management of short-term recovery challenges is critical to restoring the basic functionality of communities impacted by catastrophic incidents, and local jurisdictions have noted a consistent need for additional assistance establishing recovery processes early in the response phase and seeing them through to long-term recovery. This assistance can include support in volunteer and donations management, disaster finance assistance, and guidance and/or manpower for damage assessments. The Disaster Recovery Task Force (DRTF) was created by the 86th Texas Legislature in 2019 as a component of the Incident Support Task Force (ISTF) “to operate throughout the long-term recovery period following natural and man-made disasters by providing specialized assistance for communities and individuals to address financial issues, available federal assistance programs, and recovery and resiliency planning to speed recovery efforts at the local level.” The DRTF currently has 11 full-time staff members throughout the state to aid in local response and recovery efforts and will continue to provide tailored assistance to local jurisdictions and organizations and serve as a liaison to state and national nonprofit organizations.

The ISTF team consists of regional coordinators and voluntary agency liaisons throughout the state, as well as positions at TDEM headquarters for community and infrastructure recovery, mass care, and voluntary organization coordination. Members are deployed immediately before, during, or after a disaster and are ready to respond and assist local jurisdictions in the response and recovery phases. Texas will continue to train and educate ISTF team members to support disaster response and recovery missions in every community in the state, developing new capabilities as needed based on evolving challenges. The DRTF will continue to expand with additional staff and the recruitment of local emergency management personnel to join as contract members.

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The Stafford Act authorizes the President to provide federal assistance when a disaster exceeds the resources of a state, local, tribal, or territorial government. Through the Stafford Act, FEMA's Individual Assistance Programs and activities are made available. Under the Individuals and Households Program, financial assistance and direct services to eligible individuals and households who have uninsured or underinsured necessary expenses and other needs may be available. Housing assistance may be provided in the form of financial assistance (funds provided to an applicant) or direct assistance (housing provided to the applicant by FEMA). Examples of direct assistance include multi-family lease and repairs, transportable temporary housing units such as RVs, or manufactured housing units to provide prompt assistance to individuals and families with short-term housing needs. Texas operates the Disaster Case Management (DCM) Program in partnership with Texas Health and Human Services Commission and FEMA, using the State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry (STEAR) as the upgraded database platform. Texas will continue to advance the DCM system while strengthening local partner capacity to ensure more effective recovery support.

Funding sources and direct financial aid are crucial components of community disaster recovery, and Texas coordinates with federal and state partners to identify potential disaster recovery funds. The Texas disaster case management process involves localized damage assessments; coordination with state, federal, and local partners to identify available resources; and assistance with available federal assistance programs. FEMA's Individual Assistance Declaration provides financial assistance and direct services to individuals and households affected by disasters, and Texas has worked alongside FEMA Individual Assistance personnel to stand up Disaster Recovery Centers to facilitate the distribution and tracking of recovery assistance funds. LTRGs help identify and track disaster recovery funding needs and resources from businesses, charitable organizations, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The collaboration between TDEM, FEMA, NGOs, and other stakeholders will continue throughout all federally declared disasters.

Rapid delivery of short-term recovery resources ensures that communities can start to reestablish the rhythms of everyday life. Clearing roads, reconnecting utility services, cleaning up hazardous materials, and other short-term recovery tasks are critical. TDEM's Debris Task Force coordinates debris clearance operations while ensuring personnel safety, environmental compliance, financial accountability, and interagency collaboration. Following the catastrophic Central Texas flooding in July 2025, TDEM activated the Debris Task Force to assist local jurisdictions in debris management and disaster recovery efforts, and it will continue to assist throughout the recovery phase. There is a Texas-specific Debris Management course intended for personnel responsible for managing, documenting, or overseeing FEMA Category A (Debris Removal) projects, delivered to TDEM employees to build a train-the-trainer capability in support of a statewide Debris Management instructor cadre. TxDOT leverages emergency operations personnel, strike-team road crews, and debris management teams to ensure access to areas impacted by disasters. It is also involved with the Streamflow flood study project and the West Texas Mesonet ice/snow study project to help mitigate and best prepare for potential weather impacts. The Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service (TEEX) offers hazardous materials (HAZMAT) response training courses to enhance statewide capabilities related to HAZMAT awareness, detection, cleanup, air monitoring, and other recovery issues.

Disasters start and end locally, and Texas provides resources when needed for immediate assistance beyond a local jurisdiction's capabilities, helping communities regain normalcy as

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quickly as possible. A central part of this process is managing reentry operations to ensure that essential goods and services quickly reach impacted areas. State law requires TDEM to maintain a phased reentry plan in coordination with the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) and TxDOT, and reentry guides are available online. Local elected officials determine reentry processes in impacted jurisdictions, and the state's Disaster District Chiefs (DDCs) coordinate with local officials to determine reentry priorities based on a tiered system incorporating first responders, damage assessment teams, public health providers, volunteer groups, businesses, and other stakeholders. Effective reentry operations include credentialing processes that allow approved personnel and resources to access affected areas, and Texas will continue to examine ways to standardize and streamline the reentry credentialing process during disasters.

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Objective	
5.3	Coordinate with partner organizations at all levels of government and the private sector to ensure the effective long-term recovery of communities impacted by major incidents.
Priority Actions	
5.3.1	Plan and implement solutions to address long-term housing needs for people permanently displaced by disasters and other incidents.
5.3.2	Effectively administer recovery-related grant funding to ensure projects provide maximum return on investment, address critical community priorities, and incorporate mitigation principles to reduce future risk.
5.3.3	Improve long-term sustainability and mitigate future risk in impacted communities by incorporating current best practice standards into post-disaster planning and construction.
5.3.4	Plan for and provide long-term behavioral health support to individuals and communities impacted by incidents.

Due to the number and frequency of disasters in Texas, many of which do not reach the high threshold for a federal disaster declaration, long-term recovery operations are always ongoing. Multi-agency bodies such as the Flood Organizing Group, the Texas Water Infrastructure Coordination Committee, and Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD) meet on a regular basis to allow access to resources for local entities involved in recovery, mitigation, and ongoing maintenance. Following catastrophic disasters, more frequent meetings will occur, federal funds often become available, and additional groups will stand up, including local recovery committees. GLO continues to build relationships with stakeholders to rapidly establish housing programs and supports the Joint Housing Working Group by hosting pre-disaster meetings to ensure rapid activation once disaster strikes. In addition, GLO will continue to administer the Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery Program in Texas, using U.S. Housing and Urban Development funds to assist low-to-moderate income individuals with housing recovery following federally declared disasters.

Effectively administering recovery-related grant funding optimizes state and local resources by ensuring public funds are invested in projects that deliver the highest return on investment for impacted communities. By aligning funding decisions with strategic priorities set by the state and local jurisdictions, Texas strengthens community resilience and promotes long-term sustainability. TDEM and partner agencies will continue to stress the importance of future mitigation considerations in applicable public assistance projects. Regional staff throughout the state utilize the pSTAT tool and damage assessments to identify any critical priorities or areas that can be addressed to reduce future risk.

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As communities recover from disasters, it is important to do so in a way that enhances resilience and mitigates future risk. Section 406 of the Stafford Act authorizes Public Assistance Hazard Mitigation funding measures taken to help avoid repetitive damage from multiple hazards and incidents and reduce the potential for future damage to an eligible permanent work project. This helps to implement long-term solutions that will result in a more resilient state. Public Assistance Hazard Mitigation funding is offered through FEMA's Public Assistance Grant Program. Recovery coordinators advocate for applicants to seek this additional opportunity while in the recovery phase, and mitigation efforts are discussed in follow-up meetings with grant applicants. Additionally, a Disaster Accounting training class will address mitigation and prepare students through consideration of scenarios on what potential mitigation measures they can take while working alongside FEMA and TDEM during the recovery phase. GLO will continue to administer Community Development Block Grant Mitigation funding, planning and implementing disaster mitigation projects. Moving forward, Texas will continue to explore funding opportunities to enhance the effectiveness and agility of state disaster mitigation activities.

Catastrophic incidents often have long-term effects on the mental health of victims and responders. A strategic approach to implementing behavioral health support to individuals, first responders, and communities impacted by incidents is essential for effective recovery. Recent incidents such as the Robb Elementary School shooting and the July 2025 Central Texas floods have again demonstrated the need for effective mental and behavioral health support for impacted communities. Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) Disaster Behavioral Health Coordination (DBHC) staff support any state and local emergency management planning efforts related to behavioral health issues. DBHC staff serve as subject matter experts and participate in many disaster behavioral health-related preparedness activities. The Deployable Teams Standard Operating Guide program ensures rostering of response and recovery staff who are trained in disaster behavioral health disciplines and are prepared to support their communities following a disaster. These teams support and coordinate with other deployable teams from HHSC, the Department of State Health Services, TDEM, DPS, and other partners. DBHC supports Local Mental Health Authorities and Local Behavioral Health Authorities in managing Crisis Counseling Program (CCP) grants, such as the implementation of the CCP grant related to the 2025 Central Texas floods. The DBHC team will also continue development of media documents that can be easily edited and updated for distribution, ensuring that communications materials address all disaster scenarios. Finally, ongoing team participation in statewide exercises and drills will ensure that processes are as efficient as possible so that DBHC can provide effective support to providers across Texas.

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Develop and enhance the enabling capabilities needed to support statewide efforts across all homeland security mission areas.

Objective	
6.1	Develop, recruit, and train the homeland security workforce to ensure government and private sector organizations maintain critical skills and expertise.
Priority Actions	
6.1.1	Coordinate and share information on homeland security workforce needs with colleges, universities, high schools, and trade schools to assist with development of degree programs and curricula.
6.1.2	Incentivize people with needed skills to join and remain in the homeland security workforce through focused recruitment and retention initiatives.
6.1.3	Build and implement effective training and internship programs to develop the future homeland security workforce.
6.1.4	Deliver continued training and professional development for the homeland security workforce to enhance skills and strengthen a culture of continuous improvement.

Texas faces evolving homeland security challenges in the coming years. The state's critical role in energy production, agriculture, the national supply chain, border security, and other functions means that Texas must be prepared to address all types of emerging threats and hazards, from natural disasters and terrorist attacks to cybersecurity incidents and public health emergencies. Recruiting, training, and retaining an effective homeland security workforce ensures that we have the necessary skills and expertise in the public and private sectors to keep Texas communities safe, prosperous, and healthy. Developing and maintaining the homeland security workforce will depend on coordination and partnerships among state agencies; schools, colleges, and universities; and the business community. Fostering environments where employees feel valued and empowered is how Texas retains these essential workers.

Helping Texas schools develop curricula that benefit the state homeland security mission lays the groundwork for a qualified and effective homeland security workforce. State agencies can

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collaborate with high schools, trade schools, colleges, and universities to develop classes and training opportunities that educate students about how to understand and address the various threats and hazards facing their communities. This will require communication and outreach between homeland security practitioners and educational institutions to create a common understanding of preferred skills and qualifications in areas such as cybersecurity, use of artificial intelligence, and operation of critical infrastructure facilities. As an example, the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) maintains active relationships with institutions of higher education to assist in advancing or developing public safety knowledge and skills and related training curricula. Additionally, the Texas School Safety Center (TxSSC) collaborates with colleges, universities, and technical schools to integrate school safety topics such as emergency management and behavioral threat assessment into relevant degree or certification programs. Programs that invite academic experts to participate in advisory committees and workgroups, host meetings and discussions with agency leaders, and support joint grant applications can also help create synergy between academia and the professional sphere. Moving forward, state agencies across the homeland security space should find ways to build relationships with academic partners and shape the learning environment to benefit the future homeland security workforce in Texas.

Each year, thousands of young graduates enter the workforce, providing a valuable resource for the Texas homeland security mission. Texas state agencies must actively reach out to today's students to recruit tomorrow's homeland security professionals. State agencies send recruiters to high schools, universities, and job fairs to promote their organizations and highlight the benefits of working in the public sector. As an example, regional DPS recruiters hold events at local colleges and job fairs and communicate with high schools, colleges, trade schools, and vocational training centers about the numerous commissioned and non-commissioned career opportunities in the department.

While agencies work to actively build their recruitment pipelines, they should also remain deeply committed to retaining their current workforce. Employees should feel valued and empowered to do their jobs to the best of their ability. Retention must be a top priority, leveraging innovative ways to engage and develop talent. Wherever possible, agencies should endeavor to increase worker retention through professional development opportunities, promotion channels, attractive benefits packages, competitive salaries, flexible work schedules, and other incentives, while consistently recognizing and rewarding excellence.

Providing opportunities for students to get real-world experience in the homeland security space is a powerful recruitment opportunity. Hands-on training and internship programs can expose students to the professional homeland security work environment while giving them a sense of the specific skillsets needed to succeed in various fields. For instance, the Texas Department of Information Resources organizes practical cybersecurity projects to help high school students explore career paths and introduce them to job roles and duties in state government, while the Texas Health and Human Services Commission establishes formal partnerships with universities and community colleges to facilitate student internships, co-op programs, and joint research projects focused on public health issues. The Mickey Leland Environmental Internship Program at Texas Commission on Environmental Quality streamlines the college internship application and hiring process for state agencies and serves as a model for public sector intern recruitment and onboarding. The Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD) also collaborates with institutions of higher education to provide internship opportunities and grow the state's expertise in vital

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capability areas like youth behavior and mental health, and the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) has created the Texas Emergency Management Academy to select and train personnel to fill emergency management roles in state, local, and private sector organizations. TDEM established an initial Emergency Management Academy in 2022 and subsequently opened a second location in 2025. These and similar outreach programs provide a blueprint for effective development of the future homeland security workforce.

Employees who are continually learning and improving will contribute to more successful homeland security outcomes in Texas. One-to-one career development sessions, workplace mentorship programs, and a focus on building a culture of continuous professional education all encourage long-term employee capability growth. Benefits like tuition reimbursement, skill-based training, and personalized learning paths can enhance leadership competencies and prepare the workforce for internal growth and mobility.

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Objective	
6.2	Develop and implement research programs, academic outreach initiatives, and programs for testing and fielding new technologies to enhance homeland security capabilities.
Priority Actions	
6.2.1	Strengthen collaboration with institutions of higher education and research centers to support the homeland security research needs of state and local government agencies.
6.2.2	Enhance the integration of academic and private sector experts into relevant public sector homeland security studies and planning initiatives.
6.2.3	Integrate artificial intelligence to support and increase efficiency in state and local government homeland security activities where appropriate, including development of policy and guidelines for secure implementation and use.
6.2.4	Build and refine processes for testing and evaluating new technologies that may enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of homeland security operations.
6.2.5	Enhance policies, processes, and technologies for the management, storage, analysis, sharing, and security of data related to homeland security operations.

Texas is home to some of the best colleges, universities, and research centers in the world, and this tremendous wealth of knowledge can support statewide homeland security efforts. State and local agencies should work to expand outreach to institutions of higher education, identifying subjects of common interest and mutually beneficial research areas to advance both academic understanding and the practical application of academic concepts. As an example of what this effort can look like, in 2025 DPS developed a public safety research agenda addressing issues across all DPS divisions and hired a full-time Public Safety Research Coordinator to identify academic partners to address that agenda. Faculty, staff, and students from across the Texas public and private universities and research centers are now collaborating with DPS commissioned and non-commissioned personnel on a variety of research projects. This type of focused, formalized outreach activity can yield far-reaching benefits, creating opportunities for improved processes, procedures, and practices while also contributing to public sector homeland security workforce development.

Private sector expertise improves Texas homeland security operations through innovation and the application of cutting-edge technologies and ideas. Combining academic, private sector, and public sector resources into collaborative lines of effort can directly benefit the state and its communities. Currently, the Texas Military Department (TMD) is partnering with Texas A&M

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University to study policy and implementation barriers to homeland security planning, identifying critical infrastructure protection focus areas, information technology efficiencies, and key private sector partners that might contribute to statewide homeland security efforts. The ongoing implementation of Executive Order GA-49 on critical infrastructure protection benefits from the incorporation of academic experts from several institutions, and DPS is identifying private sector sources of new artificial intelligence (AI), geographic information system (GIS), and unmanned aerial system (UAS) technologies that can improve law enforcement response and investigative activities across Texas. Texas will continue to identify areas for public-private sector cooperation to enhance the state's homeland security capabilities.

AI has the potential to support many homeland security mission areas across the public and private sectors. Texas is recognized as a national technology hub and innovation center, home to numerous companies working on state-of-the-art AI applications. State agencies are well-positioned to leverage these emerging AI capabilities to improve their operations and processes, while taking care to develop protocols and guidelines that protect the civil liberties and privacy rights of all Texans. For example, AI tools are a core component of TJJJ's cybersecurity operations, and over the next five years the agency plans to research and potentially introduce AI tools into facility monitoring processes so leadership and other staff members can receive real-time information on serious incidents, such as medical emergencies and outbreaks of violence, that occur in secure areas. Implementing such tools will require rigorous testing and internal controls to ensure sensitive information about youth, staff, and facility operations is protected. At DPS, pilot programs addressing the use of machine learning tools include body-worn and dashboard camera video analysis to identify officer performance and driver safety trends. In the public health arena, AI is being used to track disease outbreaks by cross-checking patient data, identifying patterns, and warning of potential outbreaks. Texas agencies are working to establish governance frameworks, ethical guidelines, policies, and training to navigate new complexities and ensure the responsible use of AI.

As new technologies and tools are introduced, government agencies should develop testing and evaluation processes to assess their potential utility. The Texas A&M Forest Service forms internal agency working groups that test and evaluate new technologies to make sure they meet state and federal guidelines that may affect agency operations. This process—which includes field testing under controlled conditions; after-action reviews and user feedback; and coordination with vendors, research partners, and other state and federal agencies—serves as a model for organizations looking to field new platforms. Similarly, the Multi-Domain Activities Division at TMD coordinates the analysis of new technology requirements through leader-directed projects, using a testing and evaluation process that is tailored to the requirements and purpose of the mission. Processes like these will continue to be vital to successful homeland security technology acquisition and deployment in Texas.

Data management, sharing, and security is a priority as homeland security technology and information systems evolve. As the amount of data collected and shared by state agencies grows, so does the importance of protecting that data. Management of sensitive data relating to homeland security will be conducted through established handling procedures consistent with state and federal regulatory guidance. Standing information security policies regulate the access to, storage, and sharing of sensitive data held by government agencies and their employees. Regulations strictly limit access to certain materials and require regular training on the protection of those

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materials. Trained staff manage controls of and access to sensitive data, and audit logs and investigations track any changes made to sensitive information. Sharing of sensitive information between agencies is done through secure file transfer or other secure methods. Texas will continue to review and refine protocols related to the collection, storage, and sharing of sensitive data.

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Objective	
6.3	Plan and conduct outreach initiatives to enhance public trust in Texas government agencies and raise awareness of homeland security challenges and opportunities.
Priority Actions	
6.3.1	Provide unified, clear, and accurate information to the public through all media sources on government homeland security activities and recommendations for community and individual preparedness.
6.3.2	Encourage participation in public engagement opportunities to strengthen government relationships with Texas communities and individual citizens.
6.3.3	As appropriate, coordinate with and provide information to the Texas legislature to help ensure that legislation and resources effectively address the rapidly-evolving homeland security environment.

Public trust in Texas government agencies is a cornerstone of the homeland security enterprise. The citizens of Texas must have confidence in the aims and abilities of homeland security stakeholders and trust that government agencies are dedicated to improving the safety and well-being of all Texans. Public information offices must deliver clear and accurate messages across multiple media platforms regarding homeland security initiatives in the state, especially during emergency response operations, and actively engage with the public to provide information and recommendations on individual and community preparedness. Agencies should coordinate their public information activities to minimize inaccuracies and conflicting messages that undermine public confidence in the government’s ability to deliver critical services and resources. In the absence of accurate information, misinformation and disinformation take root, further complicating the homeland security operating environment and potentially putting state employees at risk.

Engaging directly with the public builds bridges between the people and their government. Agencies should seek out opportunities to conduct regular outreach activities with Texas communities. Participating in public meetings, speaking engagements, demonstrations, and community events shows a willingness to discuss homeland security issues in an open and transparent manner, which likewise engenders trust and breaks down barriers. Government agencies across Texas should develop public engagement strategies and coordinate those strategies with partners at all levels.

The ongoing partnership between Texas government agencies and the Texas legislature is essential to the state’s homeland security mission. By regularly providing accurate information to elected leaders on priorities, activities, threats, and needs, to include supporting requests for information and testimony during legislative sessions, homeland security stakeholders can contribute to

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development of the laws, policies, regulations, and funding mechanisms that help keep our communities secure and our agencies prepared to respond effectively to emergency incidents. As the homeland security environment evolves and new threats and hazards emerge, public and private sector partners should collaborate on ways to most effectively support legislative efforts to address homeland security goals and challenges.