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Agency Name: Hidalgo County Office of Emergency Management
Grant/App: 5091301 **Start Date:** 9/1/2024 **End Date:** 8/31/2025

Project Title: Rapid Response Expanded Communications Project
Status: Application Pending Submission

Narrative Information

Overview

The purpose of the Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) is to support state and local efforts to prevent terrorism and other catastrophic events and to prepare the Nation for the threats and hazards that pose the greatest risk to the security of the United States. HSGP provides funding to implement investments that build, sustain, and deliver the 32 core capabilities essential to achieving the National Preparedness Goal (the Goal) of a secure and resilient Nation. The building, sustainment, and delivery of these core capabilities are not exclusive to any single level of government, organization, or community, but rather, require the combined effort of the whole community. HSGP supports core capabilities across the five mission areas of Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery based on allowable costs.

Primary Mission and Purpose

State Homeland Security Program (SHSP): Supports state, Tribal and local preparedness activities that address high-priority preparedness gaps across all core capabilities where a nexus to terrorism exists. All investments must be consistent with capability targets set during the Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA) process, and gaps identified in the State Preparedness Report (SPR).

Many activities which support the achievement of target capabilities related to terrorism preparedness may simultaneously support enhanced preparedness for other hazards unrelated to acts of terrorism. However, **all SHSP projects must assist grantees in achieving target capabilities related to preventing, preparing for, protecting against, or responding to acts of terrorism.**

Eligibility Requirements

Cybersecurity Training Requirement

Local units of governments must comply with the Cybersecurity Training requirements described in Section 772.012 and Section 2054.5191 of the Texas Government Code. Local governments determined to not be in compliance with the cybersecurity requirements required by Section 2054.5191 of the Texas Government Code are ineligible for OOG grant funds until the second anniversary of the date the local government is determined ineligible. Government entities must annually certify their compliance with the training requirements using the Cybersecurity Training Certification for State and Local Government. A copy of the Training Certification must be uploaded to your eGrants application. For more information or to access available training programs, visit the Texas Department of Information Resources Statewide Cybersecurity Awareness Training page.

Criminal History Reporting

Entities receiving funds from PSO must be located in a county that has an average of 90% or above on both adult and juvenile dispositions entered into the computerized criminal history database maintained by the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) as directed in the *Texas Code of Criminal Procedure, Chapter 66*. The disposition completeness percentage is defined as the percentage of arrest charges a county reports to DPS for which a disposition has been subsequently reported and entered into the computerized criminal history system.

Counties applying for grant awards from the Office of the Governor must commit that the county will report at least 90% of convictions within five business days to the Criminal Justice Information System at the Department of Public Safety.

Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR)

Eligible applicants operating a law enforcement agency must be current on reporting complete UCR data and the Texas specific reporting mandated by 411.042 TGC, to the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) for inclusion in the annual Crime in Texas (CIT) publication. To be considered eligible for funding, applicants must have submitted a full twelve months of accurate data to DPS for the most recent calendar year by the deadline(s) established by DPS. Due to the importance of timely reporting, applicants are required to submit complete and accurate UCR data, as well as the Texas-mandated reporting, on a no less than monthly basis and respond promptly to requests from DPS related to the data submitted.

Entities That Collect Sexual Assault/Sex Offense Evidence or Investigate/Prosecute Sexual Assault or Other Sex Offenses

In accordance with Texas Government Code, Section 420.034, any facility or entity that collects evidence for sexual assault or other sex offenses or investigates or prosecutes a sexual assault or other sex offense for which evidence has been collected, must participate in the statewide electronic tracking system developed and implemented by the Texas Department of Public Safety. Visit DPS's Sexual Assault Evidence Tracking Program website for more information or to set up an account to begin participating. Additionally, per Section 420.042 "A law enforcement agency that receives evidence of a sexual assault or other sex offense...shall submit that evidence to a public accredited crime laboratory for analysis no later than the 30th day after the date on which that evidence was received." A law enforcement agency in possession of a significant number of Sexual Assault Evidence Kits (SAEK) where the 30-day window has passed may be considered noncompliant.

National Incident Management System (NIMS) Implementation

Grantees are required to implement NIMS. The NIMS uses a systematic approach to integrate the best existing processes and methods into a unified national framework for incident management across all homeland security activities including prevention, protection, response, mitigation, and recovery. Grantees must use standardized resource management concepts for resource typing, credentialing, and an inventory to facilitate the effective identification, dispatch, deployment, tracking and recovery of resources.

Emergency Management Plans (Intermediate Level)

Cities and counties must have a current emergency management plan or be a legally established member of an inter-jurisdictional emergency management program with a plan on file with the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM). Plans must be maintained throughout the entire grant performance period. If you have questions concerning your Emergency Management Plan (preparedness) level, contact your Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC) or your regional Council of Governments (COG). For questions concerning plan deficiencies, contact TDEM at tdem.plans@tdem.texas.gov.

Program Income

Applicant agrees to comply with all federal and state rules and regulations for program income and agrees to report all program income that is generated as a result of the project's activities. Applicant agrees to report program income through a formal grant adjustment and to secure PSO approval prior to use of the program income. Applicant agrees to use program income for allowable costs and agrees to expend program income immediately after PSO's approval of a grant adjustment and prior to requesting reimbursement of funds.

Deduction Method - Program income shall be deducted from total allowable costs to determine the net allowable costs. Program income shall be used for current costs unless PSO authorizes otherwise. Program income which the grantee did not anticipate at the time of the award shall be used to reduce the PSO award and grantee match rather than to increase the funds committed to the project.

Asset Seizures and Forfeitures - Program income from asset seizures and forfeitures is considered earned when the property has been adjudicated to the benefit of the plaintiff (e.g., law enforcement entity).

Program Requirements**Building and Sustaining Core Capabilities**

1. All capabilities being built or sustained must have a clear link to one or more Core Capabilities in the National Preparedness Goal.
2. Many capabilities which support terrorism preparedness simultaneously support preparedness for other hazards. Grantees must demonstrate this dual-use quality for any activities implemented under this program that are not explicitly focused on terrorism preparedness. Activities implemented under SHSP must support terrorism preparedness by building or sustaining capabilities that relate to the prevention of, protection from, mitigation of, response to, and recovery from terrorism.
3. Funding should be used to sustain core capabilities. New capabilities should not be built at the expense of maintaining current and critically needed core capabilities. New capabilities must be aligned with capability targets and gaps identified through the THIRA/SPR process.

Mission Areas

The National Preparedness Goal organizes the core capabilities into the five mission areas:

- **Prevention.** Prevent, avoid or stop an imminent, threatened or actual act of terrorism.
- **Protection.** Protect our citizens, residents, visitors, and assets against the greatest threats and hazards in a manner that allows our interests, aspirations, and way of life to thrive.
- **Mitigation.** Reduce the loss of life and property by lessening the impact of future disasters.
- **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.

Nationwide Cyber Security Review

Grantees will be required to complete the Nationwide Cybersecurity Review (NCSR), enabling agencies to benchmark and measure progress of improving their cybersecurity posture. The Chief Information Officer (CIO), Chief Information Security Officer (CISO), or equivalent for each recipient agency should complete the NCSR. If there is no CIO or CISO, the most senior cybersecurity professional should complete the assessment. The NCSR is available at no cost to the user and takes approximately 2-3 hours to complete. For more information about the NCSR, visit: <https://www.cisecurity.org/ms-isac/services/ncsr/>.

Overall Certification

Each applicant agency must certify to the specific requirements detailed above as well as to comply with all requirements within the PSO Funding Announcement, the *Guide to Grants*, the *Grantee Conditions and Responsibilities*, any authorizing or applicable state and federal statutes and regulations to be eligible for this program.

I certify to all of the application content and requirements.

Project Summary :

Briefly summarize the project, including proposed activities and intended impact.

The intent of this project is to expand the deployment of our Rapid Response Communications Project. This project would expand the current rapid response mobile radio cache by purchasing new batteries for 38 portable mobile radios to include four desktop multi-bank chargers. These portable radios are part of a deployable cache utilized within the region to assist first with radio communications between first responders and responding agencies during an emergency response or planned event. The expansion of the project would allow for the additional purchase of 8 mobile radios to be installed in our expanding emergency response units: mobile command unit, emergency tow vehicle, UTV's and our rapid emergency response vehicles assigned to rural areas. These rapid response vehicles can be used regionally when requested to respond to large scale events or disasters.

Problem Statement :

Provide a detailed account of the issues, threats or hazards that your project will target. For federal Homeland Security Grants, include specific references to the regional or state *Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA)*, as applicable.

The region is identified with 46 jurisdictions, 22 within Hidalgo County alone. The shortage of radios within the region have benefited from the portable mobile radio caches responding to large scale disasters or planned events. Without the use of the caches it would be difficult to effectively communicate between first responders and responding agencies. Given the most recent events that have threatened the region such as the flooding of 2021 and the COVID19 Pandemic responses as identified on Page 25 of the THIRA, hurricanes and flooding continue to be a threat that would require the region to maintain constant radio communication between agencies in case of a power outage, evacuations a or large scale responses for those municipalities that currently lack the radios needed for maintaining continuous communication.

Existing Capability Levels :

Describe the existing capability levels, including resources that are currently in place to support this project prior to the use of grant funds.

The radio cache which consists of 38 portable radios are in need of new batteries. The lifespan of the batteries vary depending on the usage and recharge but at a minimum the life expectancy is 3 years. Without the approval of the project, the office would be unable to purchase the replacement batteries due to the lack of operational funding. Without the expansion of the Rapid Response Communication Project to include 8 mobile radios to be installed in the emergency response mobile command unit, emergency tow vehicle, UTV's and the rapid emergency response vehicles assigned to rural areas would be impossible to communicate effectively with first responders and responding agencies during a response. All vehicles assigned to the Rapid Response Communication Project can be utilized within the county and regionally as requested.

Capability Gaps:

Describe the capability gaps which will be addressed by the project. For federal Homeland Security Grants, include specific references to the regional or statewide State Preparedness Report (SPR). The capability gaps noted in the State Preparedness Report, page 41, states that in order to meet the capability target of providing interoperable communications with 2 hours of an incident across 46 jurisdictions and maintain communications for the duration of the incident the issue of more equipment has been identified for dispatchers, first responders, EMS, Fire and Information Officers to include towers, repeaters, radios for special response teams, generators, bridging equipment, mobile communications systems, dispatch stations and radio consoles.

Impact Statement :

Describe the project goals/objectives and how this project will maintain capabilities or reduce capability gaps.

Homeland Security Grant Funding would allow for the continuation of this project for the purchase of the batteries and multi-bank chargers for the 38 portable radio cache and the purchase of the 8 mobile radios to be installed in the emergency response vehicles. This project would only enhance the region by continuing to provide the access to the mobile radio cache and expand the use of the emergency response vehicles with effective and uninterrupted communication during large scale disasters and planned events within the region.

Homeland Security Priority Actions:

Identify the Texas Homeland Security Priority Action most closely aligned with this project. Each Priority Action is linked with an *Objective from the Texas Homeland Security Strategic Plan (HSSP)*. List the Priority Action by number and text (e.g. *1.2.3 Expand and enhance the network of human sources that can provide detailed and relevant information on known or suspected terrorist and criminal enterprises.*)

4.3 Achieve statewide communications operability and interoperability in Texas. 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, local, and tribal 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.

Target Group :

Identify the target group and population expected to benefit from this project.

Communication interoperability is vital for all stakeholders more so during disasters. This project would allow for any response entity such as fire, police, emergency management, and school officials within the region to request the radio caches or emergency response vehicles to aid and assist during emergency response and large scale planned events.

Long-Term Approach:

Describe how the applicant agency will maintain the capabilities supported by this project without additional federal or state funds. If sustainment is dependent upon federal or state grants, describe the ongoing need for future grants, as applicable.

The request for the project would be a one time cost. The life expectancy of batteries for the portable radios are estimated to be 3-5 years depending on the maintenance and charging cycle of each battery. There would be no need for additional purchase for another 3 years. The mobile radios requested for the emergency response vehicles would incur a monthly charge if added to the regional communications system, the cost is undetermined at this time.

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Project Activities Information

HSGP Instructions for Project Activity Selection

Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) applicants should only select one project activity. The eGrants system will allow multiple selections, but each HSGP subrecipient project must fit into one and only one of the Investment Categories that are listed as project activities under the "Activity List".

Selected Project Activities:

ACTIVITY	PERCENTAGE:	DESCRIPTION
Interoperable Emergency Communications	100.00	All emergency response vehicles are required to have access to interoperability communications during a regional response. By equipping the rapid response emergency vehicles with mobile radios would allow for first responders to communicate effectively. The cache has been used during large planned school events, parades, flooding response and large fires.

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Measures Information

Objective Output Measures

OUTPUT MEASURE	TARGET LEVEL
Number of exercises conducted.	1
Number of individuals participating in exercises.	50
Number of interoperable communications devices procured or upgraded.	0
Number of interoperable communications systems created, maintained or enhanced.	0
Number of people trained.	50
Number of trainings conducted.	2

Objective Outcome Measures

OUTCOME MEASURE	TARGET LEVEL
Number of agencies served by the Interoperable communication system.	0
Percent (%) of response agency's first responders with equipment meeting P25 standards.	80
Percent (%) of response agency's radios programmed in compliance with the Texas Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan (TSCIP).	100

Custom Output Measures

CUSTOM OUTPUT MEASURE	TARGET LEVEL
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Custom Outcome Measures

CUSTOM OUTCOME MEASURE	TARGET LEVEL
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Budget Details Information

Budget Information by Budget Line Item:

CATEGORY	SUB CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION	OOG	CASH MATCH	IN-KIND MATCH	GPI	TOTAL	UNIT/%
Equipment	06CP-01-MOBL Radio, Mobile	P25 Mobile Radio, VM5930 Single Band 7/700, Dash, KCH-19 Mobile, KMC-65M Standard Mic, Ignition Sense Cables, P25 Conventional, P25 Phase 1 Trunking, Multi Key AES	\$14,787.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$14,787.00	4
Equipment	06CP-01-MOBL Radio, Mobile	P25 Mobile Radio, VM7000 Dual Bank Deck, Single Remote, KCH-20, P25 7/800 & VHF Mhz, KMC-65M Standard Mic, Ignition Sense Cables P25 Conventional, P25 Phase 1 Trunking	\$26,467.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$26,467.00	4
Equipment	06CP-01-PORT Radio, Portable	Replacement batteries for portable mobile radios.	\$9,175.48	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$9,175.48	76
Equipment	06CP-03-PRAC Accessories, Portable Radio	Multi-unit desktop charger.	\$1,061.10	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,061.10	2
Equipment	06CP-03-PRAC Accessories, Portable Radio	Multibank chargers	\$2,557.80	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,557.80	2

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