

Texas Crisis Resiliency Team

San Antonio International Airport Disaster Exercise

After Action Report

Situation:

On 19 July 2017 the San Antonio International Airport conducted a disaster exercise. The scenario was an airplane crash at the airport with multiple casualties and injuries. There were survivors and friends and family members of passengers waiting at the airport do not know the fate of their family members.

Friends and family are initially gathered at the Family Gathering Area in Terminal B. Since this is very limited size and does not offer maximum privacy from reporters, they are moved to Friends and Relatives Center at the NEISD Learning Center. This takes place approximately two hours after the crash. The intent is for the Friends and Family Center to provide support until the airlines sets up a Family Assistance Center.

At the request of the Red Cross the San Antonio VOAD and the Texas Crisis Resiliency Team (TCRT) focused on providing Disaster Spiritual Care at the Friends and Family Center. At the request of the Red Cross, one member of the TCRT also provided initial response at the Family Gathering Area and then came with survivors. There were six members of the Texas Crisis Resiliency Team who participated.

SUSTAIN:

1. Coordination with other response agencies. This exercise enhanced coordination between different organizations who would be responding to support a disaster exercise. The planning meetings prior to the exercise helped create an awareness of the roles of different agencies that might respond.
2. Response methodology of TCRT members. When friends and family members arrived at the Friends and Family Center TCRT members made sure to go to them to help meet their needs. TCRT members did not remain in one location or wait for friends and family members to approach them.
3. Prior training and preparation. The month before the exercise the TCRT conducted Disaster Spiritual Training. Several of those participating in this exercise attended that training where there was a special focus on responding to this type disaster scenario. The others that participated from the TCRT in the exercise had also participated in similar TCRT training. This training is essential preparation to respond to real disasters.

IMPROVE:

1. There was some initial confusion in the setup of the Friends and Family Center. This is likely the result of many of those participating were new to an airport exercise.

2. The role players acting as friends and family members of crash victims did not always appear to take their role seriously. It appeared that many of them saw this as a break to their normal work. Some “acted out” in a way that was fun for them, but was not helpful to the process of the disaster exercise. It is possible that better preparation of the role players might have improved this situation.
3. One TCRT member indicated that she missed a potential language problem in responding. There was a role play who acted quiet and she assumed he was just quiet, while the reason he was acting quiet was because he was supposed to not be understanding because language differences. This was a learning point for the TCRT member to not assume that people understand.



TCRT Participants

**Back Row: Nancy Schweers, Jodi Galbraith, DeAnna Stemock (TDEM)
Ginger Treanor, Jeanne Goodlin, Dan Franklin, Aurora Shinn**

Family Assistance July 19th

Site #2 Family
Gathering Area
(Terminal B)

Site #5 Policy Room
(Terminal A Mezzanine)

Site #3 Unified
Command
(AEC)

Site #4 Friends
and Relatives
Center:
(NEISD Community Learning
Center)

