Division Chief
Robert Moore Honored
Regents Fellow Service Award

Global Reach Expanded
TEEX Approves new
Cooperative Learning Centers

Online HazMat
Awareness Course
Now in Spanish

FireTALK
Emergency Services Training Institute • College Station, Texas

WINTER 15

Annual Leadership Symposium Offers Training to over 870 Emergency Responders

Rail HazMat Training

The Fog
BELIEVING YOU WILL DO BETTER IN A BETTER JOB
We’re already in high gear after the winter holidays. In the first weeks of January, ESTI has hosted its Leadership Symposium, held the planning conference for summer Annual Schools, and resumed work on the many construction projects and field improvements that we have underway. Construction continues at the Center for Marine Training and Safety in Galveston with work on the rescue boat davits and docks. We are set to break ground on the new Rescue Program building in Disaster City this month, and work on the Rail Transportation Emergency burn prop is moving right along.

As you’ll see in this issue of FireTALK, we have new Animal Technical Rescue training available through our Texas Extension Program, as well as an online HazMat Awareness course translated into Spanish. We’re also working on updates to our Online Recruit Academy program – you’ll see more about that later this year.

The new year is off to a great start here at ESTI —we look forward to showing you all the exciting things in store for 2015.

—Chief Robert Moore, ESTI Director
Global Reach Expanded through Cooperative Learning Centers
Brian Freeman, Janet Fry

New Large Animal Rescue Course Offered
David Rosier
ARFF
Courses for airport and airport jurisdiction firefighters include the 120-hour ARFF Academy, 40-hour Aircraft Firefighting Operations, Driver/Operator and FAR Part 139 Compliance Drills.

All-Hazard Planning and Exercises
All-hazards planning includes operational and response plans for local, regional, state, and federal jurisdictions, as well as, academic institutions and the private sector. Customized all-hazards Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP)-compliant, hands-on performance-oriented tabletops to full-scale field exercises and computer-aided simulations are available.

DHS/FEMA Funded Homeland Security Training
A wide variety of training courses are offered ranging from tactical level Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) operational response and wide area search training to executive-level training to better prepare senior leadership for the challenges faced in disaster preparation and response. Courses are provided to local and state jurisdictions/agencies via a DHS/FEMA cooperative agreement with TEEX.

Department of Defense Training
TEEX enables Department of Defense firefighters and contract personnel to better protect people and property within their communities by administering state-of-the-art NFPA professional education and Pro Board certification training.

Emergency Medical Training (EMS)
Courses range from CPR/first aid to paramedic and ambulance strike team leader training. Rural/Frontier EMS funding in conjunction/cooperation with the Texas Department of Transportation is also offered. All EMS courses are Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) approved and meet National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT) requirements for certification exams.

Executive Leadership Development
The TEEX Fire Officer Program, the annual TEEX Leadership Development Symposium, and the Fire Service Chief Executive Officer (FSCEO) program are included in this program.

Extension Area / National Fire Academy (NFA)
TEEX is the recognized state fire training agency for the state of Texas. Appropriations from the state of Texas allow us to conduct these courses at no charge to Texas resident firefighters. Numerous NFA field and direct delivery courses are also offered. Courses include firefighting, HazMat, rescue, ICS/NIMS, wildland, ARFF, EMS, and use of the MPRI FireSim™ driving simulator.
Firefighter Recruit Academy
TEEX offers two ways to earn your firefighter certification—a traditional 12-week, face-to-face academy or our new online, blended learning academy. Both programs are committed to developing the premier candidate for success as an entry level firefighter.

Fire Officer
Certification and training are provided to meet the challenges faced by both the company and command officer utilizing our Fire Officer I, II, III, & IV courses. All courses meet NFPA 1021 training requirements. Fire Officer I is also available online.

HazMat Training
Awareness-, operations-, and technician-level training is available. Courses are also offered in incident command, transportation specialist, pipeline, illicit laboratory, and air monitoring. We offer multiple levels of Pro Board certification in accordance with NFPA 472.

ICS Training and Exercises
A broad spectrum of incident management training is offered including NIMS-compliant and equivalent courses approved by the National Integration Center. This training offers both grant-supported training and fee-based courses. Courses can be customized.

Industrial Firefighting
Industrial courses offered include exterior and interior fire brigade leader which lead to NFPA 1081 Pro Board certification. Other courses include incident management, bulk storage emergency management, driver/operator pumper and aerial, emergency operations, and incident safety officer.

International Training Services
TEEX offers training worldwide in more than 60 countries to public and private organizations and the military. International customers can set up contract classes at a location of their choice or enroll in a TEEX class at one of the TEEX Cooperative Learning Centers.

LNG Firefighting
The TEEX LNG program provides hands-on spill control and fire suppression training to personnel involved in LNG production, transportation, storage, and response activities.

Marine Firefighting and Safety
The marine program offers a full spectrum of marine firefighting, rescue, safety and prevention courses, as well as land-based marine firefighting.

Oil Spill Response
Our full suite of oil/hazardous substance spill control training courses provide the information necessary to supervise employees and contractors in the control, mitigation, and management of a spill response operation.

Rescue Training (Rope, Confined Space, and Trench)
A comprehensive package of hands-on rescue training courses are designed to train emergency response personnel to safely, efficiently, and effectively perform rescues in the event of an emergency.

Simulation-Driven Jurisdictional Crisis Incident Management Training
Customized, hands-on, computer-driven simulation training is designed to reinforce and hone incident management and decision-making skills during the response to a large-scale or catastrophic incident.

Swift Water Rescue
Courses prepare students for offensive rescue situations involving floods and swift-moving water.

Texas Annual Fire Schools
Courses in the intensive, week-long training school range from basic to advanced levels and are taught by hundreds of guest instructors, each experienced in specific areas of emergency response. Specific schools are offered for ARFF, Municipal, Industrial, and Spanish-speaking firefighters, as well as fire officers.

Urban Search and Rescue
TEEX offers a full complement of structural collapse courses, technical rescue courses, medical and hazardous materials training, command and ICS training, technical and canine search courses, as well as disaster canine weekend workshops for search and rescue dogs and handlers.
Global Reach Expanded through TEEX’s Cooperative Learning Centers

—Brian Freeman
ESTI International Training Director

—Janet Frye
TEEX Communications Coordinator

TEEX recently added two new Cooperative Learning Centers (CLC) in Puerto Rico and Australia to the list of companies approved to provide TEEX emergency response training to local responders and industrial clients within their respective countries.

**El Centro de Entrenamiento a Emergencias con Materiales Peligrosos (CEEMP)** is a specialist HazMat training company that delivers its training via customized mobile training vehicles to companies across Puerto Rico. Still in its infancy, CEEMP is hoping to expand its customer base through the relationship with TEEX.

**ERGT Australia** is that country’s leading commercial training organization, providing emergency response and safety skills training to high-risk industries. ERGT uses simulated environments to develop skills and behaviors that address safety-critical industry needs. In 2013, with six specialist training sites located across Australia (plus one rented facility), the company delivered more than 40,000 training days.

These new centers bring the total number of CLC partners of TEEX to 12 in seven countries, expanding the reach of emergency response training to several thousand more responders worldwide. The CLC arrangement also allows promotion of the Annual Fire Training Schools held in College Station as well as advanced classes which expand the knowledge and ultimate safety of responders worldwide.

ESTI’s International Program has truly gone global, and staff have had a busy year visiting current CLCs and doing site inspections. Program managers have visited:

- 2 sites in Colombia: Fire Safety USA (FSUSA) and Unidad Nacional De Capacitacion Y Adiestramiento (UNCA)
- 2 sites in Brazil: FSUSA and TASK Services
- Mexico: UNCA
- Malaysia: Bintulu Emergency & Safety Training (BEST)
- 2 sites in Puerto Rico: FSUSA and El Centro de Entrenamiento a Emergencias con Materiales Peligrosos (CEEMP)
- Chile: Suatrans
- 3 sites in Australia: ERGT
TEEX officials are also in discussions with Strategic Fire Solutions to open potential CLCs in Germany and India in early 2015, as well as to expand training sites for Suatrans in Peru and Brazil, FSUSA in Ecuador and Colombia, and potentially five additional sites for ERGT in Australia.
TEEX uses a life size horse mannequin to provide large animal rescue training

—Janet Frye
TEEEX Communications Coordinator
People aren’t the only ones who sometimes need rescuing. Natural disasters, human-caused incidents, or just accidents involving terrain or transportation can result in a large animal being trapped in a dangerous situation. These animals may be aggressive, fearful, and, even under the best of circumstances, can accidentally injure a rescuer. Untrained individuals attempting rescue also have the potential to cause further harm to the animal, get themselves trapped or injured, or potentially make the situation more hazardous than it began. In a state like Texas that has such a huge population of horses and cattle, it makes sense for communities to be prepared with an animal disaster response team.

TEEX is now partnering with the Texas A&M College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences to make this kind of rescue training available across the state. Individuals who have been trained to work safely around animals in emergency situations and who have the technical capabilities to perform complicated rescue procedures will be significantly less likely to sustain injuries themselves, and the outcome of the rescue is likely to be improved. It is the goal of this course to provide the training and information necessary for emergency responders to act as resources in their communities to ensure that animal disasters do not escalate and endanger the public.

The curriculum was initially developed by Dr. John Haven, head of the Veterinary Teaching Hospital and Director of the Veterinary Emergency Treatment Service at the University of Florida, and has become available at TEEX through coordinated efforts of several people. Dr. Wesley Bissett, Director of the TAMU Veterinary Emergency Team, Dr. Ernest Reesing, and Dallas Renfrew from TEEX have all worked energetically to get this course set up and available to Texas responders as part of TEEX’s Fire Extension mission in Texas.

“Individuals who have been trained to work safely around animals in emergency situations and who have the technical capabilities to perform complicated rescue procedures will be significantly less likely to sustain injuries themselves, and the outcome of the rescue is likely to be improved.”
The Large Animal Technical Rescue training is designed for a general audience of individuals who may encounter these rescue situations, including law enforcement, fire service personnel, animal control, veterinarians, large animal facility operators, animal rescue groups, large animal transporters, and potentially large/small animal owners.

The course is structured for a two day delivery. Time is divided between classroom lecture and hands-on student participation led by instructors. Topics covered include:

- **Mechanical advantage systems**
- **Rigging systems, rope and knots, and various types of equipment that are important to animal technical rescue**
- **Effective anchor use**
- **Low and high angle rescues**
- **Animal behavior and care**
- **Body language and positioning of both animals and humans**
- **Basic first aid for animals**

A capstone experience at the end of the course requires that students apply the knowledge gained throughout the course to a practice scenario involving a mannequin with limited assistance from the instructors.

The next delivery of the course is scheduled at TEEX’s Annual Spring School in March. For more information, you can contact the TEEX Extension Program or your Regional Coordinator.
TEEX HOSTS

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

— Janet Frye
TEEX Communications Coordinator
The TEEX Product Development Center (PDC) hosted an Infectious Disease Response Workshop on November 8 at the Emergency Operations Training Center and Disaster City. The event drew robotics experts, researchers, responders and industry partners to learn and discuss training and new technologies for emergency response to infectious disease and medical disasters.

The workshop covered various aspects of medical response, including how TEEX training for first responders incorporates proper procedures for response to a medical emergency. TEEX experts explained the various types of personal protective equipment and demonstrated proper procedures for donning and doffing HazMat suits, decontamination procedures, as well as the current practices for biohazard waste management and patient transport.

“We were pleased to host this event to bring key researchers, responders, industry and government personnel together to explore critical issues related to response to infectious disease incidents,” said PDC Manager Caleb Holt. “One of our strengths at the PDC is to give manufacturers, developers and innovators a place to test out their products in real-world scenarios.”

The workshop included demonstrations of the current practices in medical response by walking participants through various scenarios, including a field hospital, a demonstration of how biohazard waste is handled, and how first responders, equipment, and vehicles are decontaminated. The role of robotics was also examined, including a demonstration of a MUTT, or multipurpose unmanned tactical transport, that resembles an electric wagon. Jason Moats of TEEX participated in a panel discussion on best practices in education and training related to medical disaster preparedness.
Chief Robert Moore, Division Director of TEEX’s Emergency Service Training Institute, has been selected to receive the Regents Fellow Service Award from The Texas A&M University System Board of Regents.

The award is the highest honor given by the Board of Regents. Its purpose is to honor service, extension and research professionals within the agricultural and engineering agencies, health science center and veterinary medical diagnostic laboratory who have provided exemplary professional service to society that has created large and lasting benefits to Texas and beyond. This award, approved by the Board of Regents in 1998 specifically for agency professionals, is analogous to the Regents Professor Award that was approved in 1997 specifically for faculty in the universities.

TEEX Director Gary Sera nominated Chief Moore for the award because of his service to the agency and career of work on behalf of the people of Texas. Moore started as a paramedic for the Channelview Volunteer Fire Department (VFD) in Houston in 1975, and soon after began working full-time at ARCO Chemicals in their fire brigade and safety department. In both roles, he progressed rapidly through leadership positions, serving as a captain, fire marshal, and then assistant fire chief at Channelview, as well as team leader, assistant fire chief, and then fire chief at ARCO. At the VFD, his task was to work in the local community to improve public awareness and education, and to get his 40-person team trained and equipped to handle the variety of medical emergencies and structure fires that made up most of their work. As the ARCO fire chief, he was responsible for site safety, which included training the members of his own brigade, and for working with the other companies in the Houston Ship Channel as part of the Channel Industries Mutual Aid (CIMA) organization to prepare for and respond to major incidents.

Joining TEEX in 1996 as an instructor in the Industrial fire program, Chief Moore has since served in numerous leadership roles at the Emergency Services Training Institute, reaching his current position as the Division Director in 2011. During his tenure, Chief Robert Moore has ushered in the addition of two other divisions, including the Center for Marine Training in Galveston. He has added new training programs, added or improved infrastructure, and has led the division to continuous growth in annual income and total number of students trained each year.

Chief Moore is known and respected for his strength as both a successful negotiator and decisive leader. He has shown the type of strategic leadership that has moved ESTI from a strong regional emergency responder training institution to a true international training organization. At the same time, he has demonstrated a commitment to facilitating a spirit of mutual respect among his counterparts in the many organizations that represent the fire service in Texas.

Please join us in congratulating Chief Moore on receiving the Regents Fellow Service Award!

—Matt Sherwood, Ph.D.
ESTI Curriculum Manager
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ROBERT L. MOORE  
Division Director, Teex  
Emergency Services Training Institute
TEEX is now offering a Spanish-language version of the online course “WMD/Terrorism Awareness for Emergency First Responders (AWR-160-W).” This nationally-recognized awareness-level HazMat course, which is available online at no cost, trains responders to meet the requirements established in National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 472: Standard for Competence of Responders to Hazardous Materials/Weapons of Mass Destruction Incidents and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) 29 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1910.120(q)(6)(i)(a–f) “First Responder Awareness Level” competencies. The course provides participants the knowledge to recognize a hazardous material, protect themselves, notify others, and secure the scene.

For a full course description and online registration, visit http://www.teex.org/nerrtconline and click on “AWR-160-W Conocimiento Sobre Armas de Destruccion Masiva/Terrorismo para Socorrista.”
TEEX hosted the National FEMA Canine Certification Evaluation at Disaster City® on October 18-19. Undergoing evaluations were 17 dogs from 11 FEMA Urban Search and Rescue Task Forces from eight states, said Texas Task Force 1 Search Team Manager Susann Brown. The teams had a 94% pass rate, she added.

FEMA evaluators rated the testing teams on their ability to work together while locating six victims in two rubble piles. Canines must be able to be directed remotely by their handlers (using voice commands and hand signals) and perform a bark indication when they detect a victim. TX-TF1 members volunteered their time to assist with the testing, and 102 volunteers came out over the two-day event to act as victims for the testing teams. One Canine Search Specialist from TX-TF1 participated in the evaluation and located all 6 victims, passing the test and adding another deployable disaster canine team to the Task Force.

“The newest rubble training prop was a big hit with the evaluators and the testing canine teams,” Brown said. It is a very realistic representation of a two-story home or business that has suffered major damage and is based on tornado disasters that TX-TF1 has responded to. The prop set-up included large trees that were placed as if they had been uprooted and had fallen into the area.

Brown added: “Evaluators and testing handlers gave TX-TF1 a perfect score as a host for this event, again demonstrating the outstanding canine training facility and tremendous support we have here at TEEX.”

—Janet Frye
TEEX Communications Coordinator
More than 870 Texas emergency responders attended the 2015 Leadership Development Symposium on January 12–14 in San Marcos at the Embassy Suites Conference Center.

A cadre of top-notch speakers provided up-to-date information on effective leadership, management, safety, crisis communication, generational differences, budgeting, and other relevant topics, centered on the theme “Breaking Barriers.”

Featured speakers at the symposium this year included author and former CEO of Southwest Airlines Jim Parker, author and leadership expert Captain David Marquet (retired), and Mike Lipkin, president of Environics/Lipkin. The symposium, in its seventh year, is coordinated by TEEX and funded, in part, by Texas general revenue. There is no registration fee for Texas resident firefighters, and sessions are geared to meet continuing education requirements for Texas fire officers and EMS personnel. The conference is popular with Texas fire chiefs as well as administrators from a wide spectrum of emergency services.
Mark Your Calendar for Next Year!
January 11–12, 2016
San Marcos, Texas

Speaker Videos will be available for viewing on TEEX website

Thank You to the outstanding Speakers, Volunteers, Sponsors, and Planning Team Members who came together to bring this fantastic event!
Rail Transportation Emergency Project in the Works for Brayton

—Janet Frye  
*TEEX Communications Coordinator*

A new Rail Transportation Emergency project is under construction at Brayton Fire Training Field. It will replace Project #64 Gas Transport, which has already been removed. The new project will include three railcars placed in a simulated derailment, allowing several different fire scenarios for each. “A fourth railcar will be placed in the front portion of the project to block access and visibility to the scene, and debris around the derailment will enhance the realism of the simulated scenario,” said John Coppennoll, Director of Facilities Maintenance and Construction. This prop will aid responders who could be faced with flammable liquid railcar emergencies in their communities. The new Project #64 will also provide a realistic training solution to those dealing with crude by rail and its related potential.

The project is being built by TEEX Construction and Maintenance crews. Three general service railcars have been donated by Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) railroad along with rail, concrete cross ties, and various other items that will make for a very realistic scenario. Both BNSF and Union Pacific have provided technical assistance in planning the new project.

The new project is scheduled to be complete in March of 2015.
New NFA Training Available

ESTI is the state liaison to the United States Fire Administration’s National Fire Academy (NFA) in Emmitsburg, Md. In this role, ESTI assists the NFA with curriculum development, course deliveries in Texas, and support functions to Texas departments and the NFA. We are pleased to announce that NFA training now includes a new Managing Officer program. The program is designed for individuals who have some experience as supervising officers, and offers a defined, nationally recognized curriculum that emphasizes foundational concepts in leadership, safety, community risk reduction, training, and technology. The program can be completed in as little as two years, and participants receive a NFA capstone certificate. The program does have some entrance requirements, and includes four resident courses: Contemporary Training Concepts for Fire and EMS, Applications of Community Risk Reduction, Transitional Safety Leadership and Analytical Tools for Decision-Making.

For more information about the new Managing Officer program visit the NFA website.
Extension Trailers Wrap Up an Updated Look

The Extension Program’s trailers have a new look! ESTI’s Marketing Office has been working to create a more consistent look across the field whether on a trailer or on marketing collateral. The new design incorporates the new TEEX logo with the steel-look campaign created for the newly designed ESTI marketing materials. The back of the trailer features the new Regionalization Map.

New Regional Coordinator for Extension

Michael Cole is the new Extension Regional Coordinator for Region 6. He replaces Alan Dillon who recently retired from TEEX. Contact Michael at MichaelCole@teex.tamu.edu or 979-739-4780.

Check Out TEEX’s New Website

After months of preparation, TEEX’s new website is up and running! Visit www.teex.org to see it! Look for ESTI programs by clicking on the Fire and Emergency Services box. Past and future issues of FireTALK will be available through the RESOURCES drop down menu.
Careers on the Move

Professional development never stops. No matter where you are in your emergency response career, TEEX has training to help you take the next step. Below are just a few of the individuals who have pursued their goals in our programs.

TEEEX Paramedics Complete Classroom Training and Begin Clinical Rotations

Twelve students have completed 153 hours of online courses and 280 hours of classroom training at TEEX, and will now begin their clinical rotations. The students will need to successfully complete 600 hours of clinical internships and then take the National Registry exam to become certified.

The TEEX Paramedic Program is certified by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP). The 1,033-hour program is approved for CEUs by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) and the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE). Students may also use their VA Education Benefits.

Congratulations to the Newest Graduates of the Firefighter Recruit Academy!

Congratulations to the latest graduates of the TEEX Firefighter Recruit Academy, Class #145. Fifty-one new firefighters from Texas and Canada completed the 12-week academy held at the Brayton Fire Training Field in College Station. The graduation ceremony was held November 21 at the H.D. Smith Complex.

The academy prepares entry-level firefighters to earn the ProBoard certifications for Firefighter I, Firefighter II, Hazardous Materials Awareness and HazMat Operations. The TEEX academy meets or exceed the requirements in most states and countries for preparation and/or certification of municipal firefighters.
Ron Batchelor and Lori Peace, two senior instructors in ESTI’s WMD/HazMat program, got an unusual assignment in Dallas last October. When Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital nurse Nina Pham contracted the Ebola virus and was admitted for treatment, her dog Bentley came into the care of Dallas Animal Services. This presented the city with a rare situation in which a veterinary patient was also a potential source of hazardous material, and staff had to take protective precautions far beyond their normal experience with PPE. Because there were no procedures in place to draw on for best practices, TEEX and the Texas A&M Veterinary Emergency Team (TAMU VET) were asked to provide some expert help. Dr. Debra Zoran and Dr. Wesley Bissett from TAMU VET supported the staff charged with Bentley’s medical monitoring, while Batchelor and Peace consulted regarding safety, assessment of the site, procedures and best practices for handling potential contaminants, as well as providing decontamination support for the dog’s caregivers.

Dallas Animal Services obtained an abandoned officer’s quarters building at Hensley Field, a part of the Dallas Naval Air Station. Bentley took up residence in a back room that was draped with tarps and contained a crate filled with soft materials, toys and food. The veterinary staff made entry to Bentley’s room (the hot zone) several times each day to ensure his physical and psychological health. Throughout the quarantine, Bentley learned the daily routine and looked forward to his time engaging with the veterinarians. Playful and well-mannered, Bentley identified his favorite toys and kept them near. He remained pleasant and cooperative when samples were taken, making the veterinary medical care process very smooth.

Veterinary care wearing chemical protective suits and PAPRs (Powered Air Purifying Respirators) presented some challenges and adaptations in PPE. All activities were planned and double-checked prior to entry. To ensure the highest degree of safety, several additional measures were applied and a sound SOP was developed regarding entry, management of waste, invasive care procedures, management of samples, and decontamination. Bentley was pronounced Ebola-free and happily reunited with Nina in November. Thanks to the dedicated staff from Dallas Animal Services and some practical assistance from TEEX and TAMU VET, Bentley’s quarantine was a comprehensive, safe, and functional operation – and, importantly, there are now procedures in place to manage future events of this nature.

Meet Bentley...

—Lori Peace
ESTI HazMat Training Specialist
When a group of emergency responders at the Center for Domestic Preparedness (CDP) responded to a mock earthquake in Alabama recently, they called in their on-scene reports to an Incident Command Post (ICP) hundreds of miles away in Texas.

This may be the future of incident management, according to the training team running the TEEX portion of the joint exercise. There are few barriers to managing a disaster from a distance as long as there is effective communication, explains Training Director Jory Grassinger.

In this case, the groups in Anniston, AL, and College Station, TX, were linked through a unique computer simulation training tool called the Emergency Management*Exercise System (EM*ES), originally available only at the TEEX Emergency Operations Training Center. A web-based version of EM*ES launched earlier this year is allowing groups to interact via the Internet to manage a single disaster from multiple locations.

The “Rook Earthquake” scenario served as the capstone exercise for three classes at the CDP and a TEEX class in Enhanced Incident Management/Unified Command. The CDP classes covered hazard assessment and response management, along with law enforcement response and emergency medical operations for CBRNE incidents.

A June site visit to Anniston by Grassinger and Training Specialist Heather Crites was the first step in the collaboration between the two members of the National Domestic Preparedness Consortium (NDPC). After discussions with CDP officials, the TEEX trainers returned to College Station to develop a scenario that would challenge all of the responders in both locations, and even created a scale map with buildings and streets that corresponded with the Alabama site. To meet the training needs of all of the responders, the earthquake scenario incorporated a rescue and hazmat component, as well as looting and injuries, Grassinger said.

A patient tracking and triage program used in CDP training also was integrated into the scenario. Role players and mannequins that served as “victims” of the mock earthquake were entered into the system and logged according to the extent of their “injuries.” The web-based triage system also tracked which local hospitals received the casualties. The EM*ES computer simulation software and the patient tracking software were available to participants in both locations in real time, Grassinger added.

“This makes the exercise more realistic,” Crites said. “The emergency managers get to talk to responders seeing the incident firsthand, and this also gives the responders interaction with a real management team.”

The collaboration with the CDP is the first time the web-based EM*ES simulation software has connected responders in this fashion, the “boots on the ground” with emergency managers in an ICP. The training through TEEX’s National Emergency Response and Rescue Training Center and the CDP is offered as part of the DHS/FEMA National Training and Education Division Homeland Security National Training Program. Discussions are underway with other NDPC members on additional collaborative exercises, Grassinger said.

The EM*ES software was designed to support realistic, scenario-based training of multiple disciplines and positions in an incident command post setting. The new web-based version allows for multiple, simultaneous exercises to be performed across several locations anywhere in the world, providing greater flexibility for course delivery and reducing costs.

The Web EM*ES software was developed in conjunction with the Texas A&M Engineering Experiment Station (TEES) and the Texas Center for Applied Technology (TCAT), under the project leadership of TCAT Executive Director Jim Wall.