BRIDGE 4 Public Safety

HOW TX-COMU COORDINATED INCIDENT COMMUNICATIONS DURING THE KERRVILLE FLOOD RESPONSE USING BRIDGE4PS

Following catastrophic flooding in Kerr County on July 4, 2025, the Texas Communications Unit (TX-COMU) rapidly deployed communications personnel from across Texas to support response and recovery operations. To coordinate interoperability, deploy communications infrastructure, and support field responders, TX-COMU established the #Kerr COMU channel in Bridge4PS as the central operational workspace for the incident.

As the designated interoperable messaging app for the State of Texas, Bridge4PS served as the operational collaboration platform used by TX-COMU to support incident coordination, emergency response communications, and multi-agency disaster response operations during the Kerrville flood response.

When the first Communications Unit Leader (COML) received deployment orders on July 5, he created the "KERR COMU" channel in Bridge4PS before leaving for Kerrville and assigned a second channel owner to begin adding relevant personnel while he was en route. By the time he arrived, more than 20 communications personnel were already in the channel coordinating communications resources and deployable assets.

The channel quickly became the central coordination hub for communications support throughout the incident and remained active from early deployment through demobilization and follow-up coordination after the incident.

HIGHLIGHTS

Real-Time Incident Coordination

Communications personnel used **#Kerr COMU** to coordinate technical operations supporting responders in the field, including:

- ✓ Locating and deploying **Sites on Wheels (SOWs)**
- ✓ Coordinating **portable repeaters and radio infrastructure**
- ✓ Patching **radio systems across multiple jurisdictions**
- ✓ Identifying **radio coverage gaps impacting search and rescue teams**
- ✓ Coordinating **VTAC and 8TAC interoperability channels**
- ✓ Programming and distributing **cache radios**
- ✓ Sharing **ICS-205 communications plans and frequency assignments**

Instead of individually calling or texting multiple people to locate equipment, personnel could post resource requests in the channel and often receive immediate responses from others who had the equipment available. This significantly accelerated deployment of communications resources across the incident area.

Seamless Integration of Incoming Personnel

- COMLs and COMTs deployed from across Texas throughout the operation
- New personnel created an account and were added directly to the channel
- Participants immediately accessed prior coordination history
- Eliminated the need to exchange phone numbers or rebuild messaging groups

AGENCIES SUPPORTING THE COMMUNICATIONS UNIT

- Austin Emergency Management
- Austin Fire Department
- City of Austin
- Bexar County
- Bexar County Sheriff's Office
- Brazos Valley Council of Governments
- Bryan Fire Department
- Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA)
- Denton County
- Denton County Sheriff's Office
- Harris County Universal Services
- Houston Fire Department
- Huntsville, Texas
- Kerr County Sheriff's Office
- Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA)
- San Antonio Fire Department
- Smith County Emergency Services District 2
- Southwest Missouri Incident Support
- Texas Forest Service
- Texas Department of Public Safety
- Texas Division of Emergency Management
- West Central Texas Council of Governments

OPERATIONAL IMPACT

- ✓ Faster **incident coordination and emergency communications across multiple agencies and jurisdictions**
- ✓ Rapid deployment of **communications infrastructure supporting field operations**
- ✓ Reduced **miscommunications and operational delays during disaster response**
- ✓ Continuous coordination across **six weeks of rotating deployments**
- ✓ Reliable communications support for **search, rescue, and recovery teams**
- ✓ Improved **multi-agency disaster response coordination**

By establishing a centralized coordination channel early in the response, TX-COMU enabled communications personnel from multiple agencies to rapidly coordinate communications support for responders operating across the incident area. Using the **#Kerr COMU** channel, the team coordinated radio patches and coverage across multiple systems including TX-WARN and LCRA, while deploying portable repeaters and other communications infrastructure to extend radio coverage into the challenging hill country terrain. This coordination ensured search and rescue teams operating in remote valleys maintained reliable radio communications, improving incident coordination, emergency response communications, and operational effectiveness throughout the Kerrville flood response.

> ***When I received deployment orders to Kerrville as the COML, I created a Bridge4PS channel, "KERR COMU," before leaving home and asked a colleague to begin adding relevant personnel. By the time I arrived, more than 20 people were already in the channel. We used it constantly to update locations for deployable assets and source equipment in one place, often getting immediate responses from others in the channel. It was a true force multiplier, allowing us to quickly add personnel as the incident expanded, including responders from other states and federal partners. This made it easy to onboard Communications Unit members who had never used Bridge4PS. At the peak, the channel had over 50 participants and remained active even after demobilization for follow-up coordination.***
>
> *Thomas Gilbert*
> *Radio System Manager*
> **Brazos Valley Wide Area Communications System**

BRIDGE Public Safety

Contact us
support@bridge4ps.app
bridge4ps.com

Get the App