

# TEXAS HIGHWAY PATROL STREAMLINED INCIDENT COORDINATION DURING THE KERRVILLE FLOOD RESPONSE

## OVERVIEW

During the 2025 Kerrville flooding, the Texas Department of Public Safety (TxDPS), including Texas Highway Patrol (THP), deployed hundreds of troopers in waves to support perimeter security, search and rescue, and incident coordination across a large operational area.

Early in the response, communications became fragmented across multiple platforms, creating inefficiencies that impacted coordination in the field.

## THE CHALLENGE

On the second day of his deployment, THP Sergeant JD Rodriguez (La Salle County) was managing 13 separate text groups, all with varying combinations of unknown phone numbers. In addition to the fragmented text groups, personnel from other agencies also utilized WhatsApp and Signal which further fragmented the overall texting environment.

This resulted in:

- No single operational picture
- Unknown participants across threads
- Redundant questions and updates
- Delays in locating personnel and resources
- Ongoing effort to manage large, shifting group texts

This fragmented environment slowed coordination during a critical phase of the disaster response.



## THE SOLUTION:

### #THP KERRVILLE RESPONSE

With approval from his chain of command, Sgt. Rodriguez created the **#THP Kerrville Response** channel in Bridge4PS and transitioned communications out of text messaging.

Within 24 hours:

- ✓ Fragmented groups were replaced with a single coordination channel
- ✓ Troopers operated from a shared, real-time communication environment
- ✓ Information became consistent, visible, and actionable

## BUILT FOR SCALE AND OPSEC

The **#THP Kerrville Response** channel was configured as:

- ✓ **Searchable** for easy discovery
- ✓ **Password-protected** to maintain operational security
- ✓ **Self-service join** to eliminate admin overhead

This was critical for a months-long operation:

- Troopers could join when deployed and leave when demobilized
- No need to manage phone numbers or manual invites
- Eliminated the administrative burden of maintaining large group texts

This approach enabled scalable, secure messaging and incident coordination without sacrificing OpSec.

# SUPPORTING OPERATIONS

THP used the channel to coordinate:

- Perimeter security operations
- Support for search and rescue teams
- Field assignments and resource coordination
- Real-time updates between Troopers and Supervisors

A separate #THP Kerrville Command channel was created as a private group for command staff, ensuring focused leadership coordination.

Other agencies supporting the response were also onboarded into Bridge4PS in separate channels, expanding overall public safety collaboration.

# OPERATIONAL IMPACT

- Replaced dozens of text groups with one operational channel
- Improved incident coordination across deployed Troopers
- Reduced miscommunications and redundant messaging
- Enabled coordination for hundreds of rotating personnel
- Eliminated administrative burden of managing text groups
- Maintained a secure, controlled communications environment

# LESSONS LEARNED

The TxDPS After Action Report identified Bridge4PS and TAK as critical tools for all disaster response operations. The primary limitation was a lack of pre-incident training.

## KEY TAKEAWAY:

Effective disaster response depends on having tools in place and ensuring personnel are trained on them before an incident occurs.



*Prior to deploying to Kerrville, I established a Bridge4PS channel for my team to ensure seamless communication from the outset. While supporting leadership in the Emergency Operations Center, I recognized its broader potential and helped expand its use across the response. A dedicated channel for Highway Patrol Troopers provided real-time field updates to leadership, significantly improving situational awareness, while a separate command channel enabled senior leaders to coordinate response efforts.*

*Bridge4PS proved critical during the operation, enhancing communication, improving visibility, and bringing structure and control to an otherwise chaotic situation.*

*JD Rodriguez  
Sergeant (La Salle County)  
Texas Highway Patrol*



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