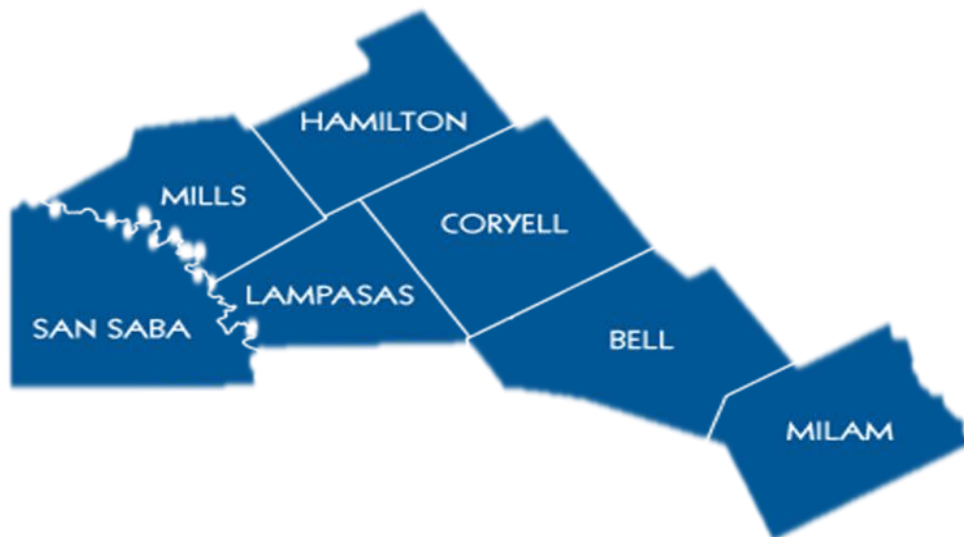




# ***CENTRAL TEXAS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS HOMELAND SECURITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE BYLAWS***

*as of September 20, 2018*



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## **HOMELAND SECURITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The Homeland Security Advisory Committee (HSAC) was created as a voluntary, unincorporated association of the Central Texas Council of Governments (CTCOG) on February 26, 2009. The mission of the HSAC is to facilitate regional homeland security activities such as assisting CTCOG staff in planning, coordinating, evaluating and recommending, prioritizing projects for grants received from the State of Texas. In addition, they also assist with the development of the region's Homeland Security Strategic Plan, Long Range Interoperability Plan, set region's priorities for grant submission, training of first responders and coordination of regional projects. Members of the HSAC may be from public safety-first responders, public health and medical representation, Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) District Coordinator, Texas A&M Forest Service and emergency management. This diverse group has the knowledge and expertise to provide input needed to meet the requirements and stipulations for receiving and executing grant funds.

Homeland security funds from the federal government are received by the State of Texas Homeland Security Office, which then assigns the Texas Office of the Governor, Homeland Security Grants Division to interface with the 24 Councils of Governments (COGs) in making grant fund awards. The COGs, working with local governments, determine what projects are needed to ready their regions for any weapons of mass destruction events and/or homeland security breaches. After determining the projects, each local jurisdiction, with assistance from COG staff, formulates a list of equipment necessary for the jurisdiction to complete the project. That list is then submitted to the HSAC for their review for approval by the CTCOG executive committee prior to submission to the Office of the Governor Homeland Security Grants Division.



CTCOG HSAC plays a vital role in ensuring that the communities and citizens are protected and prepared for large scale emergencies. Training for first responders is coordinated by a work group of the advisory committee. Often the actual trainers are members of the advisory committee. HSAC is also responsible for developing or assisting local jurisdictions to establish exercise criteria and participate in the exercises.

## **ARTICLE I**

### **NAME, PURPOSE, RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Homeland Security Committee (HSAC) was created as a voluntary, unincorporated association of the Central Texas Council of Governments.

The mission of the CTCOG Homeland Security Advisory Committee is to facilitate regional homeland security activities among local jurisdictions, including, but not limited to: planning, training, funding and mutual aid consistent with the State of Texas Emergency Management Plan and to maximize effective and efficient use of resources.

Subject to CTCOG's Executive Committee specifying otherwise, the Homeland Security Advisory Committee's specific responsibilities are:

1. To review and comment for the CTCOG Executive Committee on applications requesting State or Federal Funds.
2. To advise CTCOG's member cities, counties and special districts, directly or through the CTCOG Executive Committee, on matters within their jurisdiction pertaining to homeland security.
3. To conduct training workshops.
4. To set priorities for the Homeland Security grant division submissions each year.



5. To review and comment on other grants submitted to enhance Homeland Security.

## **ARTICLE II**

### **MEMBERSHIP NUMBER**

The Homeland Security Advisory Committee shall be composed of the following voting members appointed by the CTCOG Executive Committee:

1. One Emergency Management Coordinator from each of the seven counties (Bell, Coryell, Hamilton, Lampasas, Milam, Mills and San Saba).
2. A CTCOG staff member, designated by the CTCOG Executive Director, shall serve as HSAC liaison and shall attend each HSAC meeting as a non-voting member.

### **Qualifications**

To be eligible for membership on the Advisory Committee a member must reside or be employed in the County the member is to represent unless otherwise designated by the CTCOG Executive Committee. Members must possess experience and/or training in disaster planning and/or response.

### **Term**

1. The term of appointed for a member of the HSAC shall begin on the date of appointment by the CTCOG executive committee.
2. A member may be reappointed by the CTCOG executive committee.
3. In the case of a vacancy, the CTCOG executive committee shall accept a nomination from the entity for a replacement to serve.
4. A member may be removed for good cause by the CTCOG executive committee.

### **Vacancy**

A vacancy occurs when:



1. A member dies;
2. A member is not reappointed;
3. A member resigns (resignations shall be in writing to the CTCOG HSAC liaison and the advisory committee chairperson);
4. A member is removed; or
5. A member no longer meeting the qualification requirements.

#### **Attendance**

1. Members are expected to participate in all meetings.
2. Attendance records documenting HSAC member absences will be maintained by the CTCOG HSAC liaison. If a member is unable to attend a scheduled meeting, notification should be provided to the HSAC liaison prior to the meeting. If a member is unable to attend a meeting, the member may send a representative who assumes all but the voting rights and responsibilities of the member.
3. A proxy form will be used to record an HSAC Committee member's vote if that member is unable to attend a regularly scheduled or special meeting. The proxy form can be used to establish a quorum if needed. The HSAC proxy form may be obtained from the HSAC Chairperson, the HSAC Vice Chairperson or the HSAC Secretary by 4:00 p.m., one day prior to the date of the HSAC meeting. Ballots received after the scheduled HSAC meeting, will be considered invalid. Ballots are exempt from public disclosure until after the election. Only one ballot may be cast by any HSAC Committee member.



## **ARTICLE III**

### **OFFICERS**

The HSAC shall elect a chairperson, vice-chairperson and a secretary from among its voting members. Election of a chairperson, vice-chairperson and secretary will occur at the first meeting of the calendar year.

#### **Term**

1. Officers serve one-year terms beginning on the date of election.
2. Officers may serve a maximum of two consecutive terms.
3. The secretary may serve multiple consecutive terms, voted on each year.

#### **Vacancy**

In the event an officer is unable to fulfill his or her term, the HSAC shall elect a replacement at a regular or specially called meeting, who serves for the remainder of the unexpired term.

#### **Duties**

1. The chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the HSAC. The chairperson shall represent the HSAC in presentations to the CTCOG executive committee unless such responsibility is delegated by the chairperson.
2. In the case of a tie during a vote at which a quorum is present, the chairperson will be deemed to have the authority to break the tie.
3. The vice-chairperson shall perform all the duties of the chairperson in the case of absence or disability and such other duties as may arise, from time to time, when required or requested by the HSAC.
4. In the case of the chairperson and vice-chairperson are absent or unable to perform their duties, the HSAC may appoint a chairperson pro tem.



5. The secretary will provide a sign-in sheet for all meetings and record all minutes. The secretary will email a reminder of scheduled meetings a week prior to monthly meetings.

#### **Other Officers**

The HSAC may elect other officers from time to time to carry out its responsibilities. This may be done by a simple majority vote of the HSAC members at any regularly scheduled meeting where a quorum is present.

### **ARTICLE IV**

#### **MEETINGS**

1. The HSAC shall meet monthly, if a monthly meeting cannot be scheduled, the HSAC will meet the following month on a day, time and place specified by the CTCOG HSAC liaison or the Advisory Committee as a whole.

2. Written notice, including an agenda, of each regular meeting shall be prepared by the HSAC Chairperson and electronically transmitted by the Secretary to each HSAC member at least three business days before the meeting date. (The agenda will be transmitted to the HSAC members with notes from the meeting to be distributed by committee members as they deem necessary with request for input for future agenda items).

#### **Special**

1. The HSAC shall meet specially if called by the CTCOG executive director, the CTCOG HSAC liaison, the HSAC chairperson or requested in writing by at least one-third (1/3) of the membership, excluding vacancies of the HSAC.

2. A request by the membership for a special meeting must be in writing, addressed to the chairperson, and described the purpose or purposes of the meeting. Only that business



reasonably related to the purpose or purposes described in the request may be conducted at the special meeting.

#### **Quorum and Action**

1. A majority of the total voting membership, excluding vacancies, constitutes a quorum for conducting HSAC business.
2. A majority vote of the members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present is necessary for action by the HSAC. During a meeting in which a quorum has been established, and then subsequently lost due to members leaving, all remaining business items requiring a HSAC vote of action must be postponed until the next scheduled meeting at which a quorum is established.

#### **Open Meeting and Records**

1. The meetings are subject to the Texas Open Meetings Act.
2. Minutes of the HSAC meetings, documents distributed, and other records are the property of the CTCOG. These materials are available for public view, upon receipt of a written request by the interested party.
3. Except where these bylaws require otherwise, Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the conduct of HSAC meetings.

#### **Professional Conduct**

HSAC members should maintain objectivity and professionalism when carrying out business of the HSAC. In the event a HSAC member acts in a manner which brings the work of the HSAC into question or controversy, it shall be the authority of the CTCOG executive director to address the incident with the appointing member of the jurisdiction or agency.





## **Article V**

### **Application Procedures**

#### **Notification to Potential Applicants**

CTCOG staff will notify potential applicants of the opportunity to apply for grant funding in advance of the application period. Notifications shall include, at a minimum, the name of the funding opportunity, instructions for viewing the Request for Applications posted on the HSGD's eGrants website, the HSGD's eGrants website address - <https://egrants.gov.texas.gov>, and due dates for the submission of applications for the State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSP). Notifications will be made by posting all relevant grant and grant application information on the regional preparedness website <https://ctcog.org/>. Furthermore, current grantees, other requestors within the CTCOG region, and all municipal and county governments with a population of 2,500 or more will be notified by formal letter to the address of record, notifying each jurisdiction's Chief Elected Official, emergency management coordinator, police department/sheriff's office, and fire department points of contact. Jurisdictions will be encouraged to contact CTCOG staff for additional information about the grant application process, including any information regarding procedures or deadlines that are not included in the grant application kit (SOW HS2.1).

#### **Strategic Vision**

The CTCOG's strategic vision related to homeland security issues is identified in the region's Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA), State Preparedness Report (SPR), and Texas Homeland Security Strategic Plan-Implementation Plan (HSSP-IP). Applicants for grant funds shall demonstrate participation in the CTCOG region's THIRA/SPR/HSSP-IP process or describe how the application addresses a Homeland Security priority as identified in the plan. For more information on the THIRA/SPR/HSSP-IP or for a copy of the THIRA/SPR/HSSP-IP, jurisdictions should contact CTCOG staff.

#### **Application Workshop**

All applicants are required to attend a **mandatory** grant application workshop. An independent grant writer may attend but must be accompanied by someone from the applying organization. CTCOG staff will notify local jurisdictions of the dates, times, and locations of the grant application workshop(s).



At the workshop, application kits and other required forms will be distributed to those in attendance. If an applicant cannot attend a workshop, then a one-on-one application training session may be requested by the applicant. If CTCOG staff can accommodate the session, it will be scheduled at the convenience of the CTCOG staff. Attendees will be provided an application kit consisting of an overview of the application process, timelines, scoring instruments and other information needed to complete the grant application. Pursuant to the *Interlocal Cooperation Agreement Between the Office of the Governor and Central Texas Council of Governments*, content of the application workshop will include eligibility; requirements for project summary; problem statement; existing capability levels; capability gaps; impact statement; homeland security priority action; project activity; performance measures; milestones; budget categories and line items; identified project periods; applicable rules, regulations, and certifications required for the funding opportunity; any existing prohibitions stated in the HSGD Request for Applications; civil rights rules related to applicant employees and projects or activities; State strategies or funding preferences; regionally identified priorities; local policies and procedures that affect the COG's prioritization process; and due dates for applicants to submit and certify applications for the funding opportunity (SOW HS3.1).

### **Grant Application**

CTCOG staff can provide technical assistance to potential grantees by telephone or by a personal visit. Technical assistance may be provided any time during the year as needed by the grantee. The potential grantee needs to thoroughly and carefully read the grant application to ensure that all requirements of grantees can be met by the jurisdiction.

### **Application Deadlines**

Application submission deadlines will be announced each year for the grant programs funded through Homeland Security Grant Division (HSGD) of the Office of the Governor. CTCOG staff will notify potential grantees of the application deadlines. Final applications will be submitted directly to HSGD via eGrants.

### **Application Procedure After Submission**

After submitting grant applications to HSGD through eGrants, HSGD will review the grant applications for eligibility. Applications found ineligible will not be considered by HSAC. Those



applications that are eligible will be forwarded to CTCOG staff for review and prioritization by the HSAC.

### **County Distribution of Funds**

The reasonable budget expectation from the OOG of the Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Activities (LETPA) and State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) funding will be divided into three separate categories. Category one will be Bell County, category two Coryell County, and category three will consist of Milam County, Lampasas County, Hamilton County, Mills County, and San Saba County. Each category's funding will be based on population, tax revenue, critical infrastructure, and risk of terrorist activity. Using these guidelines, the following procedures will be followed:

1. Category one, projects within Bell County, will receive 50% of total LETPA and SHSP funding. THE HSAC will score all Bell County applications and provide recommended funding until the 50% threshold is met. If Bell County does not submit enough applications to meet 50%, these funds may be utilized equally in the other two categories.
2. Category two, projects within Coryell County, will receive 20% of total LETPA and SHSP funding. THE HSAC will score all Coryell County applications and provide recommended funding until the 20% threshold is met. If Coryell County does not submit enough applications to meet 20%, these funds may be utilized equally in the other two categories.
3. Category three, projects within Milam County, Lampasas County, Hamilton County, Mills County, and San Saba County will share the remaining 30% of total LETPA and SHSP funding. THE HSAC will score all applications from these combined five counties' applications and provide recommended funding until the 30% threshold is met. If these counties do not submit enough applications to meet 30%, these funds may be utilized equally in the other two categories.
4. Special circumstances – If at any time the HSAC has determined a jurisdiction/agency needs to receive additional funding for a project, the above percentage breakdown may be adjusted and/or abandoned completely to fund a project, regardless of category. So long as the HSAC is in agreeance, they may alter the allocation disbursement to best suit the needs of the region. If this circumstance is utilized, the HSAC must approve of the decision AND must obtain approval from the Executive Committee prior to grant scoring.



## **Grant Voting/Scoring Methodology and Prioritization**

Eligible applications received from the Homeland Security Grants Division (HSGD) will be reviewed and prioritized by the HSAC. Applications will be prioritized and scored based on eligibility, reasonableness, and cost-effectiveness of the proposed project; Homeland Security priorities identified through the COG's risk informed project prioritization methodology; reoccurring and long-term costs; and any state strategies identified by the HSGD. The following procedures apply to application prioritization:

1. HSAC will utilize the approved CTCOG Scoring Sheet for voting and ranking LETPA and SHSP projects.
2. Conflict of Interest – The COG shall ensure that members of the COG's governing body, the HSAC, and COG staff abstain from scoring on any grant application, other than a grant application submitted by a COG, during the prioritization process if the member or an individual related to the member within the third degree by consanguinity or within the second degree by affinity:
  - a. Is employed by the applicant agency and works for the unit or division that would administer the grant, if awarded;
  - b. Serves on any governing board that oversees the unit or division that would administer the grant, if awarded;
  - c. Owns or controls any interest in a business entity or other nongovernmental organization that benefits, directly or indirectly, from activities with the applicant agency; or
  - d. Receives any funds, or a substantial amount of tangible goods or routine services, from the applicant agency because of the grant, if awarded.
  - e. If any applicant, HSAC member, COG personnel or other individual has reason to believe that favoritism or inappropriate actions occurred during the scoring or prioritization of HSGD projects, the COG shall ensure that the concerns are shared with HSGD as soon as possible (SOW HS4.3). The CTCOG will provide the voting methodology and steps which were taken to prevent any conflict of interest from taking place.
3. Tie scores will be addressed by reviewing the grant applications again and a second scoring sheet will be utilized to determine the outcome of the tie.



4. All individual application scores for each project will be computed by COG staff and the results provided to all members.
5. HSAC members will discuss the final scoring order and recommended allocation based on SHSP/LETPA and expected funding availability. Any changes in ranking order or funding amount must be via a motion and include the reason for the change and be approved in a majority vote by individual voice vote.

### **Executive Committee**

The recommended HSAC project ranking and allocation list will be presented to the CTCOG Executive Committee as soon as possible following the HSAC prioritization meeting. The Executive Committee will approve, disapprove, or modify the prioritization recommendations of the HSAC. CTCOG staff will submit the Executive Committee's final ranking list and how each member scored on each eligible application to the Office of the Governor's Homeland Security Grant Division.

### **Notification of Applicants Regarding Funding Decisions**

CTCOG staff will notify all applicants of the approved priorities in writing within fourteen (14) calendar days of the Executive Committee's decisions. The notice must state: "After the HSAC prioritizes the grant applications and the COG's governing body approves the priority listing, the COG submits the priority listing to HSGD. Based upon the COG's priority listing, HSGD will verify the eligibility, reasonableness and cost-effectiveness strategy of the proposed project, and the availability of funding, and will render final funding decisions on these grant applications. The COG will notify grantees of any changes in the funding recommendations" (SOW HS6.3).

### **Funding Decisions Made by HSGD**

After review by HSGD, a decision to completely fund, partially fund, or deny funds for the grant application will be made by HSGD. These decisions are completely at the discretion of HSGD. Once the final funding decision is made, HSGD will notify the applicant directly either with a Statement of Grant Award or with a denial letter.

### **Post Award Grant Management Workshop**

CTCOG staff will provide a post award grant management workshop. The workshop will discuss,



in detail, the grant management and reporting requirements for HSGD. Attendance is not mandatory but recommended.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **AMENDMENTS**

#### **By CTCOG Executive Committee**

The CTCOG executive committee may amend these bylaws at a regular or special meeting. The written text of the proposed amendment must be included with the notice of the meeting at which the amendment will be considered.

#### **By Homeland Security Advisory Committee**

The HSAC may amend these bylaws at a regular or special meeting. The written text of a proposed amendment must be recorded at the meeting at which the amendment is discussed and voted upon. The written text of the proposed amendment must be included with the notice of the meeting at which the amendment will be considered. An amendment adopted by the HSAC is not effective unless approved by the CTCOG executive committee.

#### **Effective Date**

An Amendment to the bylaws takes effect when approved by the CTCOG Executive Committee unless the amendment specifies a later effective date. Copies of the amended bylaws will be distributed to Advisory Committee members by the Advisory Committee Liaison.