

Texas Rapid Response Team

FDA/DSHS RRT

Presented by Debra K. Callan, ARM
Program Director



DEFINITIONS

- “Rapid Response Team” (RRT) develops, implements, and exercises an all-hazards food and food-borne illness rapid response concept within food protection programs.
- “food” articles used for food or drink for man (Department of State Health Services – DSHS) and other animals (Office of the Texas State Chemist – OTSC).

BACKGROUND

- Food Protection Plan 2007:

Limited Competition Docket # FDA-2008-N-0357

Built around a strategy of:

- Prevention
- Intervention
- Response

In October of 2009, the FDA funded Virginia, Texas and Washington. These states were added to the core group of Minnesota, Maine, Florida, California, Washington, and North Carolina.

The funding is to build infrastructure under the Manufactured Food Regulatory Program Standard (MFRPS) and to provide:

- Surveillance, investigation, response, and review of alleged food-related incidents and emergencies;
- Collection, analysis and dissemination of information that may prevent their recurrence.

- The RRT's will respond to all food hazard incidents in the farm-to-table continuum of food production and delivery by using Incident Command Structure (ICS) protocols, a formalized crisis management system.
- The RRT's are designed to operate in conjunction with other food and feed agencies within state programs, other state RRT's, FDA district offices, and state emergency operations centers; it is another tool to enhance response capabilities.

CONCEPT

- State & District build teams that train and exercise together;
 - State deployed to meet state response needs,
 - District deployed to meet Federal response needs.
 - They are deployed together to meet combined need for joint inspectional response and where response dictates use of surge capacity.

TEXAS

The Texas, and all cooperative agreements, serve as prototype for additional teams. Present RRT's define and develop core competencies, contribute to RRT "Knowledge Base" and develop inventory of "Best Practices".

SCOPE AND TRIGGER

SCOPE:

- The scope of the RRT is to provide preparedness, prevention, and an immediate response to a food/feed related disaster that would affect the citizens of Texas. This includes a large scale investigation involving food and/or feed and large scale recalls of food and/or feed. It is not intended to include a natural disaster (hurricane, forest fire, etc.). However, there are outcomes from a natural disaster that are within the scope of the RRT, such as flooding, wind storms, tornadoes, power outages and fires, if the food chain is threatened and the outbreak is not part of a statewide emergency response activation.

TRIGGER

There are numerous events that could trigger an activation of the RRT:

- Are there human and/or animal illnesses?
- How large is the Food-Borne illness outbreak?
- How rapidly are the casualty/victim numbers rising?
- Is there a unique population that is affected (non-related individuals)?
- Is there an unusual pathogen involved?
- Are there human and/or animal fatalities?
- How quickly is the event escalating?

TRIGGER – CON'T

- Who/what is the source of the information?
 - Internal Sources:
 - Field Inspectors
 - Epidemiology
 - External Sources:
 - FDA
 - Local Health Departments
 - Office of the State Chemist (OTSC)
 - Other State Agencies
 - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
 - Reportable Food Registry

DEVELOPMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Identify all the parties who might be involved in response:
 - Federal
 - Agriculture, Public Health, Feed Control, etc.
 - State
 - Public Health
 - Tribal
 - Local
 - Industry

- All partners should be involved in the planning stages, should engage in close and effective working relationships, and should develop relationships with entities previously not always involved.

- TEAM CONSIDERATIONS

- Vulnerabilities
- Risk
- Industry emphasis
 - Raw agricultural commodities
 - Manufacturing
- Seasonal production
- Populations
- Regional considerations

SUMMARY

State Rapid Response Teams are Not Alone

- FDA districts will develop teams, train, and exercise with State Teams.
- Deployment of RRT's will support State needs, support FDA needs; they will respond together and work with locals for the good of all Texas citizens.
- Please email questions to
- debra.callan@dshs.state.tx.us
- Phone 512-834-6770 X2484