



Dear Colleagues,

The purpose of this e-mail is to inform you that effective immediately the Bay Area UASI Regional Training and Exercise Program (RTEP) will no longer be offering UASI-funded training and exercises. Since its inception, the RTEP, hosted by the Alameda County Sheriff's Office has been proud to serve the training and exercise needs of Bay Area first responders, emergency managers and other emergency preparedness and security stakeholders. The RTEP used an inclusive, regional approach to develop its multi-year training plan. Year-to-date the RTEP has provided no-cost training to over 31,118 persons from multiple disciplines from throughout the Bay Area.

The RTEP was overseen by the RTEP Working Group. The working group met on a monthly basis to ensure that all training and exercises supported the National Preparedness Goal as well as build, sustain, and deliver the capabilities necessary to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from acts of terrorism and catastrophic emergencies that could impact the 12 county Bay Area UASI Region. The work of the RTEP Working Group was and continues to be an important effort since the Bay Area UASI region is ranked 5th nationally by the Department of Homeland Security for being at risk of a terrorist attack in addition to the risks of major earthquakes, fires, etc.

The exercises funded by the RTEP particularly the annual Urban Shield exercise hosted by the Alameda County Sheriff's Office remains the largest regional exercise of its type both nationally and internationally. Since inception in 2007 as a regional SWAT exercise it has grown to include community emergency response teams (CERT/NERT), other first responders, emergency management, public health, private industry and other state and federal emergency preparedness stakeholders. Last year, over 9,000 persons participated in the Urban Shield exercise. This exercise provided objective assessments of the region's emergency preparedness strengths and those in need of additional improvements. The Urban Shield Exercise also validated the value of past investments in equipment and training.

The difficult decision to defund RTEP training and exercises was made by the Bay Area UASI Approval Authority at its Thursday, March 14th meeting after being told of the conditions that the Alameda County Board of Supervisors wanted to impose as part of their annual agreement with the Bay Area UASI that funds the RTEP. After much discussion it was determined that these conditions would prevent the Approval Authority from administering Department of Homeland Security Grant Program funds according to published grant guidelines.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the RTEP Working Group, those who helped in the planning and execution of the annual Urban Shield Exercise as well as all of you who wrote letters, sent e-mail or appeared in person before the Alameda County Board of Supervisors to voice your support of the RTEP program and the annual Urban Shield Exercise.

All the Best,

Shawn Sexton
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