



International Association of Fire Chiefs

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27 July 2004

Mr. James Staves
Director, Emergency Preparedness Center
University of Texas at Dallas
P.O. Box 830688
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Richardson, Texas 75083-0688

Dear Mr. Staves,

The International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) has been very interested in E-Plan for the last two years. We are pleased that you have worked so closely with the IAFC HazMat Committee and its chairman, Chief John Eversole, to incorporate our suggestions into E-Plan to make it more secure and easier to use.

Firefighters need accurate information on all hazards associated with physical structures, particularly with chemical manufacture, storage, packaging and distribution. This information, contained in EPA Tier II forms, is extremely useful, but only when it can be readily accessed. Approximately 80% of the country's firefighters are volunteers, and typically, do not have the time or resources to perform data entry and data management functions into stand-alone computer programs. Therefore, Tier II data is almost never available to the smaller municipal and rural fire departments.

E-Plan, developed by EPA Region 6, provides an easy-to-use computer program that incorporates Tier II data, for the specific benefit of assisting hazardous materials response teams and first responders. Information on the chemical hazards at facilities and their potential impacts, must be made available to first responders and emergency planners on a need-to-know basis only and within a secure platform. IAFC has a consistent record of stressing the need to protect these types of information from broad public access.

The International Association of Fire Chiefs believes that E-Plan's structure, security management and operating principles provide a good model for delivery of federal and state agency maintained data to first responders nationwide.

We encourage you to continue to work to expand E-Plan from a regional program in EPA Region 6 (Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas) to a nationwide program for firefighters, emergency managers and first responders.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Garry L. Briese". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Garry L. Briese, CAE
Executive Director

April 13, 2006

From: Gregg Dawson
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2006 3:47 PM
To: 'green.richard@epamail.epa.gov'
Subject: Question about E-Plan

Mayor Green, good afternoon, we've not met but my name is Gregg Dawson and I am the regional director for Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness Programs for the North Central Texas region. I work at the Council of Governments here in Arlington and have been here just under 4 years. I spent the previous 16 years working for Bob Terrell, Libby Watson and Larry McMillen running the Emergency Operations Center in Fort Worth.

The reason I am writing is because I recently had lunch with some colleagues here in Arlington. Among them was Jim Staves who I met in my work with Dr. Harris and UTD on other projects. Jim was telling me that there may be a possibility that funding for E-Plan may be in jeopardy. I assume you are familiar with E-Team but it is a program that greatly benefits response and life safety for first responders and other support agencies in hazardous materials incidents. It can also be used for training and exercises.

I checked into how many agencies that would affect and there are six major cities in my region alone including Dallas. In addition my old employer (City of Fort Worth) was scheduled to come on soon. After thinking about this even further it appears there may be other significant programs we are dealing with that could compliment this system. We have a system called LOCATE with over 7,000 regional contacts that could benefit from this program and a GIS based-Graphical Warning System that could also potentially be enhanced. We are always looking for ways to leverage existing resources and it appears that's just what E-Plan has done by using existing sources of information and simple interfaces for first responders to use.

I know first hand how helpful this would have been in my old job. I'm no longer in operations but I do recognize a great asset to first responders when I see it. I would hate to see this go away. I encouraged Jim to get back with me but I also asked for a contact so that we could weigh in on this. I understand that EPA can not be all things to all agencies and this may require another revenue/funding stream.

I would just say in closing that this is a wonderful tool and you all have clearly provided a valuable, life saving system and it would be a shame to see it discontinued. I am not sure how we could help at this time but am willing to help Jim or others brainstorm a bit on it. Using Homeland Security funds is a possibility but would be a hard sell on reoccurring costs. Please visit our web site. Our region is really working well together and building some innovative programs for regional emergency preparedness capacity. Thanks for your time Mayor.

Gregg Dawson
NCTCOG Emergency Preparedness/Homeland Security Programs Director
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