



**HOUSTON FIRE DEPARTMENT
PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE
NEWS RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Houston firefighters deployed with Texas Task Force to
Haiti**

Texas Task Force 1 (TX-TF 1), one of ten USAR Task Forces being sent to Haiti by FEMA, has departed from Ellington Field earlier this afternoon. The team is comprised of 80 personnel from agencies throughout the state, including 16 members from the Houston Fire Department. TX-TF 1 is one of 28 National Urban Search and Rescue team in the nation, which FEMA coordinates.

According to Executive Assistant Fire Chief Daniel Snell, each team takes about three 18-wheelers worth of equipment, including shoring equipment, stabilization equipment, cameras, canine units, and additional search and rescue items. The team is supported by a tech team who will compile information and research, a medical team to address the task force member's medical issues and a hazardous materials component to address any hazardous materials and chemicals the team may come across in their search and rescue efforts.

The team will receive their assignment from the Incident Support Team when they arrive in Haiti.

"Of the entire USAR program, this team is one, if not the best, trained in the nation to handle search and rescue situations," said Snell.

TX-TF 1 originated in response to the bombing of the Murrah Federal building in Oklahoma City on April 19, 1995. The Texas Engineering Extension Service (TEEX) is the primary agency responsible for coordinating urban search and rescue (US&R) efforts under the State of Texas Emergency Management Plan. This team has been called out to assist with search and rescue following Hurricanes Ike and Katrina, as well as the 9-11 attacks on the World Trade Center.

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