

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF TEXAS

Misc. Docket No. 16-9038

ORDER CREATING TASK FORCE FOR JUDICIAL EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Following hurricanes that had highlighted the need, this Court through Misc. Docket No. 07-9194, dated November 19, 2007, created the Task Force to Ensure Judicial Readiness in Times of Emergency. The Court charged the Task Force with developing a coordinated plan to ensure that the Texas judiciary could continue to perform its essential functions even if disruptive disasters or emergencies occurred. In July of 2008, the Task Force produced the Interim Plan to Ensure Judicial Readiness in Times of Emergency (Interim Plan), which has since been implemented in many counties throughout this State.

The Court thanks the previous members of the Task Force for their dedication, service, and contributions to the Interim Plan and its implementation.

With the intervening passage of time and the continued evolution of both technologies and threats, the Court finds that the time has come to revisit the issue of coordinated planning for judicial operations amid disruptive events, so as to continue to ensure that the Texas judiciary can perform essential court functions in all circumstances with as little interruption as possible. Disruptive events like hurricanes, tornados, wildfires, terrorist events, technical failures, and public health crises could threaten the operation of our justice system, and Texas courts must remain open to its citizens even in those times.

To these ends, the Supreme Court supersedes its November 19, 2007 Order in Misc. Docket No. 07-9194 and creates the Task Force for Judicial Emergency Preparedness.

I. Membership

Hon. Ross Bush of Midland
Ms. Denise Davis of Austin
Hon. Brian Holman of Lewisville
Mr. Mike Izquierdo of El Paso

Hon. Becky Kerbow of Lewisville
Hon. Missy Medary of Corpus Christi
Hon. Paul Pape of Bastrop
Hon. Bob Pemberton of Austin

Hon. Bob Pemberton of Austin will chair the Task Force. Denise Davis of Austin is designated Vice-Chair. Justice Jeffrey S. Boyd will serve as the Court's liaison.

The following individuals will serve as liaisons to the Task Force:

Chief W. Nim Kidd of Austin, Texas Division of Emergency Management
David Gruber of Austin, Texas Department of State Health Services
Brad Powell of Austin, State Bar of Texas
Maureen Clement, State Office of Risk Management

The Office of Court Administration shall provide staffing support for the Task Force.

II. Charge

The newly-formed Task Force shall:

- review the status of the Interim Plan's implementation across this State, any benefits or burdens of such implementation to the affected governmental entities, and any experience with the Interim Plan's actual activation or use to date;
- evaluate, in light of current threats, technologies, and needs, the adequacy of the Interim Plan as an ongoing means of ensuring that the Texas judiciary can continue performing its essential functions amid disruptive events;
- compare the Interim Plan to any coordinated plans devised to date for the federal judiciary or those of Texas's sister states to ensure continuity of their respective operations amid disruptive events;
- advise the Court whether modifications to the Interim Plan, or some other means altogether, are warranted to ensure that the Texas judiciary can perform its essential functions amid disruptive events with as little interruption as possible;
- issue a report to the Court by December 30, 2016 summarizing the results of the foregoing review and conveying the Task Force's recommendations for any changes, further study, or other action related to this Charge.

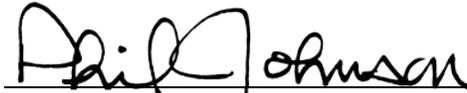
SIGNED this 22nd day of March, 2016.



Nathan L. Hecht, Chief Justice



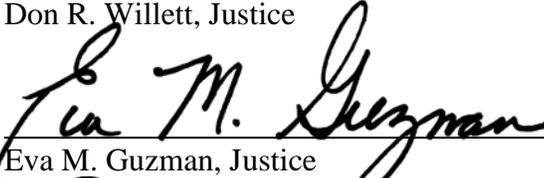
Paul W. Green, Justice



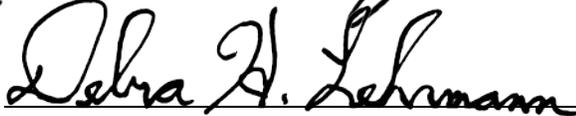
Phil Johnson, Justice



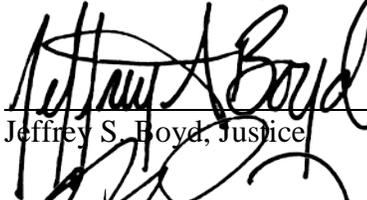
Don R. Willett, Justice



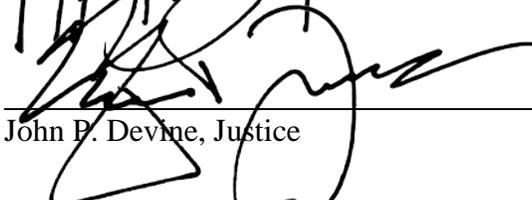
Eva M. Guzman, Justice



Debra H. Lehrmann, Justice



Jeffrey S. Boyd, Justice



John P. Devine, Justice



Jeffrey V. Brown, Justice