

Tech Rescue After Action Review: Pena Blvd Inbound/N. Sha St.



Date: 2/11/2020 **Time:** 18:28 **Incident Number:** 20-015791

Address: Pena Blvd Inbound/N. Sha St.

Tech. Rescue Type:

Water/Confined Space Rescue

Overview:

DPD requested the assistance of the DFD in locating a subject who ran into a storm drain. The initial call at DIA was “code 10 to assist police” with a subject that had ran into a water drainage culvert, E35 and Red Chief were dispatched. Approximately 35 minutes into the incident a water rescue response was added as the storm drain had about 3 feet of water in some areas. R02, T02, D05, Ops2, E01, TR1 and UW1 were added to the call.

E-35 and Red Chief were initially on scene with DPD and DHHA Paramedics. Red Chief was in command on DIA DFD-1. All non-DIA suppression companies were assigned to TAC-5, D-05 and T-02 arrived on scene with D-05 operating on TAC-5. Rescue 2 arrived on scene and set-up for static water rescue operations utilizing a swift-water component. R-2 did both a face to face with Red Chief and with D-05. R-2 was unable to transmit on TAC 5 on the portable radio so R-

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2 moved over to DIA DFD-1 per both Chiefs on scene. The information that was relayed to R-2 was that a male party had fled the sterile (secured concourse at DIA) area after not being allowed to board an aircraft. The party was able to elude DPD and ended up on Pena Blvd. southeast of the main terminal. The party was witnessed entering the drainage culvert adjacent to Pena Blvd. The party went into the culvert and was never seen exiting it. DPD had set up an extensive perimeter prior to calling for DHHA Paramedics, E-35, and Red Chief. The said culvert is open on both ends and is approximately 500' long and 2 feet deep at its deepest at that time. Prior to the arrival of non-DIA suppression companies E-35 and DPD had made entry into the culvert and had walked in "several hundred feet" without locating the party. DPD and E-35 exited the culvert due to the amount of water inside the culvert. DPD presumed the party had drowned in the water and thus a water rescue response was requested. Based off this information along with the estimated down time (approximately 50 minutes) of the party going into the culvert, it was suggested that the water rescue team would operate in the "Rescue Mode". R-2 did a face to face with E-35 and confirmed that E-35 and DPD had entered the culvert and searched as best as they could before withdrawing from the culvert due to the rising water levels. The two technicians and the acting engineer of R-2 were set up to search with probing poles and Thermal Imaging Cameras (TIC). E-1 arrived on scene and the two technicians joined up with R-2. All members were briefed on the search operation with R-2-Charlie being the search group supervisor operating on radio channel Radio to Radio-5. It was conveyed that we were searching for a party that was presumed drowned. The party had come from the sterile area of the airport so the likelihood of the party having a weapon was slim. A member from T-02 that was in an ice rescue suit gave the suit to a DPD officer to wear into the culvert. An E-1 technician asked about air monitoring, so a MultiRAE PID Meter was deployed with the search team. The search team entered the culvert at 19:31. During the search the MultiRAE PID Meter picked up 30 ppm Hydrogen Sulfide (h2s) at approximately 15 feet from the entrance into the culvert. As the search continued forward the h2s ppm readings dropped. (For reference: the IDLH for H2S is 100 ppm, the short term exposure limit is 15 ppm for 15 minutes, time waited average is 10 ppm 8 hours a day 5 days a week and the permissible limit is 20-50 ppm for ten minutes.) A man ladder was found with an open manhole cover during the search. As this was being relayed to the Rescue Officer, the MultiRAE PID Meter malfunctioned. A member of E-1 retreated out of the culvert to the entrance to retrieve another meter. A couple of members still inside the culvert climbed up the man ladder and out of the man hole. Utilizing the TIC, the party was observed hiding in some bushes along Pena Blvd. The search team members alerted DPD and the party was apprehended. The party was then turned over to DHHA Paramedics. All members exited the culvert and a PAR was conducted. The total search time from entry to exit was less than 10 minutes. The search team members that entered the culvert conducted decontamination procedures with E-1's booster line. All companies were then released by Red Chief and returned to service.

Risk vs Benefit:

This was a high-risk operation due to the confined space, presence of H2S and water element. The benefit was that we were still within the 90-minute window and had the possibility of saving a life.

Units Initially Dispatched:

E35 and Red Chief

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First Arriving Unit(s):

E35, Red Chief

Additional Units Requested:

Ops-2, D05, T02, R02, E01, TR1, Under Water

Initial Assignments:

IC: Red Chief

Safety Officer: OPS-2

Initial Strategy:

Search the culvert as far as possible to see if the subject could be located.

Command Structure:

IC: Red Chief

Safety Officer: OPS-2

Tech. Rescue Assignments:

R02, E01 and TR1 water rescue/search

Evaluation and Summary

- 1. Tactical Priorities**
- 2. Positive Outcomes**
- 3. Additional Considerations**
- 4. Recommendations**
- 5. Safety considerations**

Tactical Priorities:

Life safety: attempt a rescue as quickly and safely as possible while there was still a possibility to save a life.

Positive Outcomes:

The victim was located alive.

Additional Considerations:

- It was identified that Tac 5 would not work on DEN (DIA) property and companies on scene were notified to go to DIA-DFD 1.
- H2S was present in the culvert.
- Companies were searching for a party that was running from police.
- Search teams were spread out inside the culvert for approximately 20 to 30 feet.

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- Meter failure causing one search team member to return to the entrance for another meter.

Recommendations:

- The change of radio channels should be announced over the radio. While members on scene were told of the change via face-to-face conversation, incoming companies were unaware of the change. Any time companies operate on DIA property they should utilize the DIA-DFD channels.
- Dispatch can not enter DIA-DEN 1 in the CHNL box on the MDT, the recommendation is to leave this box empty and add DIA-DEN 1 in the notes as the tactical channel.
- Once a confined space operation is identified the entire confined space team should be dispatched including Hamer 1 for air monitoring.
- The possibility of a successful rescue was high however safety should never be overlooked. Companies arrived in three waves; DEN companies arrived first, followed by the district 5 companies and finally the Underwater Team and Ops-2. Not all members were informed of facts of the situation including what actions had already taken place and the likelihood that this party was armed.
- Search team members should stay together and work as a team. In this case, once the meter malfunctioned, all members should have returned to the entrance.

Safety considerations:

All members on any scene should feel empowered to voice any safety concerns. The Safety Officer on this incident was concerned that this person was running from police and could have posed a threat to the rescuers and minimized the other dangers. Time was spent talking to DPD officers and DFD officers trying to identify the severity of this possible human threat.

Changes in radio channels should be aired, especially when units are still responding.

The challenge of this being a confined space operation should have been identified early and the complete confined space team should have been requested.

Summary:

This operation posed challenges from the beginning starting with dispatch trying to build the call with the information given. All special operation needs should have been identified especially since this was at DIA and response times would be a factor.

Over all the operation was a success that ended with a civilian rescue. This incident is a good incident to review and learn from due to multiple operational challenges.

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Where party entered on the west side of the inbound road



Between inbound lane and ramp returning to the airport, this is where party exited

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Where party exited