



Media Contact  
Dinah Massie Martinez

Office 713.881.3244  
Cell 713.591.6856

## **Groundbreaking Police Accords Will Save Lives**

*Regional child abduction, high-speed chase procedures set*

HOUSTON (April 30, 2008) – Motorists and abducted children will have the force of more than 50 law enforcement agencies in the Southeast Texas region working for them, thanks to two memoranda of understanding (MOUs) signed at 10 a.m. Friday, May 2, at Houston TranStar.

The groundbreaking agreements ensure a unified effort when handling child abduction cases and dealing with high-speed chases that cross jurisdictional lines.

“The signing of these MOUs is an incredibly important event for all our respective communities,” said President of the Houston Area Police Chiefs’ Association and Shenandoah Police Chief John R. Chancellor. “Law enforcement agencies now have tools to better coordinate during the intense situations involving high-speed chases passing through neighboring jurisdictions. And the newly created Southeast Texas Child Abduction Response Team (CART) gives us a valuable system for the rapid and safe recovery of high-risk missing children,” said Chancellor.

The agreement, which involves more than 50 different law enforcement agencies within the Greater Houston area, is among the largest in the state.

The vehicular pursuit agreement means individual agencies will work out high-speed chase guidelines that include notification when crossing boundaries, self-restrictions on joining other agencies’ pursuits, limits on the number of police vehicles engaged during pursuits, methods for wrong-way pursuits, roadblock usage and others.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, law enforcement agencies engage in more than 30,000 high-speed chases annually, resulting in nearly 300 deaths every year.

The CART policy sets out responsibilities for the lead agency as well as the role supporting agencies will play in providing resources such as manpower, command posts and crime scene units. CART is a program arm of the Texas Center for the Missing, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to offering help, and hope, to the missing and their families.

According to the center, more than 59,000 children were reported missing in Texas in 2007, about 11,000 of these from the 13-county region around Houston.

“Never before in this region have so many police agencies come together to enhance the level of cooperation and service to our communities,” said Chancellor. “These new policies will improve our ability to save the lives of both the public and our officers.”

Located at 6922 Old Katy Road, Houston TranStar is a collaboration between four government agencies that coordinate and enhance transportation and emergency management services, responding to incidents and emergencies in Harris County and beyond. Sharing their resources to serve area residents, the agencies are the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), Harris County, Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (Metro) and the City of Houston.