



# Texas Department of Public Safety

**Information for the News Media**  
Media Relations Office  
(512) 424-2080

Aug. 19, 2009

## **DPS assists with resolving hostage situation**

Rachel Hillsman, a Katy Independent School District police officer who had been abducted by Julio Reyes, another Katy Independent School District officer, was recovered alive Wednesday after Reyes released her at approximately 7 p.m.

As SWAT members were removing Hillsman from the Brookshire house where she had been held hostage, they heard a single gunshot. After Hillsman was out of the house, further investigation revealed that Reyes had shot himself. He was pronounced dead at the scene, and Texas Rangers have begun investigating the crime scene.

Reyes had abducted Hillsman at gunpoint early Tuesday morning as she left a home near FM 1458 and Wilpitz Road in southern Waller County. The abduction occurred in the presence of Hillsman's children, who were not injured during the incident.

Information gathered by law enforcement officers during the day on Tuesday indicated that Reyes and Hillsman were most likely still in the immediate area. Officers from the Waller County Sheriff's Office, the Texas Highway Patrol, DPS Criminal Law Enforcement, DPS Aviation and the Texas Rangers set up a perimeter and maintained it overnight.

Wednesday morning, numerous local, state and federal officers started an intensive search in the Brookshire area. Around 1 p.m., DPS SWAT team members were conducting a house-to-house search of a group of homes under construction on Stella Drive in northeast Brookshire when a DPS SWAT officer spotted a broken fence and window in a home. As they approached the home, team members saw Reyes, who then grabbed Hillsman to use her as a shield. Because Hillsman's safety was in question, DPS SWAT made an approach to the door. While at the door, Reyes fire a single shot in the residence. Fearing for Hillman's life, DPS SWAT members breached the door and made an immediate entry to rescue her. SWAT members began negotiating with Reyes to secure Hillsman's release. DPS SWAT, as well as HPD SWAT, continued negotiations throughout the afternoon and early evening.

*For a recorded sound bite on this topic, call 512-424-2606*

**Read about DPS online at [www.txdps.state.tx.us](http://www.txdps.state.tx.us)**

When Hillsman was kidnapped, authorities issued the first-ever Blue Alert, which is similar to the Amber Alert and intended to speed the apprehension of violent criminals who kill or seriously wound local, state or federal police officers. Coincidentally, the alert was issued on the first anniversary of Texas Governor Rick Perry signing the executive order that created the Blue Alert. For more information about the Texas Blue Alert Network, please see the DPS web site at [ftp://ftp.txdps.state.tx.us/dem/amber/blue\\_alert\\_information.pdf](ftp://ftp.txdps.state.tx.us/dem/amber/blue_alert_information.pdf).

### (PIO 2009-51)



Follow us on Twitter!  
@TexasDPS\_PIO  
@TexasDPS\_Capitol