Abstract
During the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks and the 2005 Hurricane Katrina disaster, information sharing occurred among public safety agencies. These communication problems led to the loss of lives, the destruction of property, and the delay of timely medical assistance. Results indicated that while standard operating procedures have changed since the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks and the 2005 Hurricane Katrina disaster, there is still a need for greater emphasis in regards to training, interoperability, and shared resources among public safety agencies.

Problem
A decade after September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks the public is still at risk because several public safety agencies are experiencing factors that block communications and information sharing across jurisdictional lines (Krauss, 2007; Relyea, 2004). Public safety agencies experience problems in disseminating and communicating critical information, and this problem currently results in the needless loss of lives and destruction of property associated with tornados, floods, and fires.

Purpose
The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to investigate information sharing barriers among public safety personnel assigned to Georgia Region Seven Emergency Management Agency of Homeland Security during the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack and the 2005 Hurricane Katrina disaster. Emphasis on information sharing highlights the deficiency of interoperability among first responders. If law enforcement agencies cannot communicate and share information with emergency management personnel before or on the scene, it can result in a loss of lives and destruction of property. Other challenges to interoperability are poor coordination and difficult partnerships. These partnership problems include territorial issues associated with management and control of radio systems.

Research Questions
RQ 1. What did Georgia Regional Seven Management Agency Homeland Security view as communications and information sharing gaps that impeded information sharing among public safety agencies during the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack and the 2005 Hurricane Katrina disaster?
RQ 2. What are the benefits of information sharing among government agencies, private sectors, citizens, federal, state, and local public safety agencies during a disaster?
RQ 3. How can government-wide policies and procedures improve the exchange of information in Georgia Region Seven Emergency Management Agency Homeland Security and reduce distrust that appears to be inherent in the relationships among first responders?

Procedures
Qualitative data was collected through 12 participants who were solicited through the auspices of the Georgia Region Seven Emergency Management Agency of Homeland Security. The list included first responders who met two basic criteria for inclusion. First, they must have been first responders during both the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks and Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Second, at the time of the study they must have been employed in federal, state, or local agencies identified as first responding agencies. Data were collected through a semi-structured interview protocol with open-ended questions. The interviews were conducted in a public library conference room. This setting was not near the participant’s job location. A time was set to meet with each participant that was mutually convenient. Each participant was warned about the time commitment.

Data Analysis
Data were transcribe electronically into NVivo 10 software to identify word phrases, sentences, and paragraphs of information that was uttered by the participants during the interview and to looked for overlap, patterns, and redundancy.

Findings
This study revealed the following findings:
Ø First, public safety agencies and policymakers should look to private market solutions to help fill the interoperability gap that exist in the public safety communications infrastructure.
Ø Second, public safety agencies should promote a cultural of information sharing among their counterparts through training. Training provides awareness.
Ø Third, strong governance must be developed and maintain. In other words, government should seek more partnerships with private stakeholders.

Limitations
This study was limited to first responders who were working in Georgia Regional Seven Homeland Security at the time of this study.
The opinions from this study were obtained solely from the viewpoint of first responders in Georgia Regional Seven Homeland Security.
The participants were asked to recall past events. The memories of what happened during the two events and how it impacted Georgia Regional Seven Homeland Security may have diminished.

Social Change Implications
The results of this study highlighted how creating an information sharing environment among public safety agencies in Georgia could cultivate positive social change and affect the spectrum of communication and information sharing in the public interest. Improving interoperability and information sharing can save lives, increase funding, and cultivate the safety of first responders and citizens. This study demonstrated how information cannot remain isolated from individuals who need it. Public safety agencies need to shift the mindset to a sharing environment among all agencies.