



National Hazardous Materials Fusion Center

RIST Frequently Asked Questions

Where will the RISTs be located?

The pilot teams will be located in the Houston, Los Angeles and Chicago areas. Ultimately, additional teams will be strategically located throughout each PHMSA region to ensure appropriate coverage.

Who will use the information RISTs gather and for what purposes?

The information will be used for a number of purposes.

At the federal level:

- PHMSA, FRA and FMCSA will use the information to improve risk analysis of hazmat-transportation incidents. This will improve PHMSA's and FRA's ability to better focus outreach, training and resources to the response community and to improve the safety of hazmat transportation.
- PHMSA will also use the information to help in the creation of a research and development program that will focus on improved safety for responders, communities and the environment.
- NFA will be able to use the information to determine training needs and develop new training programs. The information will also help the NFA review the effectiveness of the different types of training available.

At the state and local level:

- Hazmat-response leadership will be able to request data that can help in the assessment and development of hazmat capabilities within their jurisdictions.
- State fusion centers will be able to request information to help with assessments.

At the IAFC:

- The IAFC will use the information to better ensure responder safety to hazmat incidents. The information will be analyzed to determine emerging trends and patterns. Information with an immediate impact on responder safety will be disseminated quickly to the hazmat response community. The information will be used to develop after-action reports, lessons learned, guidance for best practices, realistic training programs/packages and information to industry on improving shipping and process safety.

How are team members affiliated with the IAFC?

Team leaders will be part-time employees of the IAFC. Team members will be contracted with the IAFC either individually or through their current agency.

Who will supply the tools and equipment for the RISTs?

The IAFC will supply each team member with the equipment needed for deployment through the DOT-PHMSA grant. Personal cell phones or pagers should be used for deployment notification purposes. Approved itemized expenses will be reimbursed.

How will team members be notified?

Designated IAFC personnel will notify the appropriate team members via phone, pager and/or email.

Will insurance coverage be provided to team members during deployment?

Insurance coverage during deployment will be outlined in your individual contract or contract with your agency depending on its policy.

How will travel arrangements be made?

All flight arrangements, car rentals and lodging accommodations will be made by designated IAFC personnel.

May I drive my personal vehicle to the incident?

Yes; if the incident is within 250 miles from your location (or other preapproved distance), you may opt to drive your personal vehicle. Mileage will be reimbursed according to the current federal rate.

May I rent a vehicle to drive to the incident?

Yes; this is preferred to ensure auto insurance coverage is active. You will be provided a rental upon arrival if traveling by air.

Where can I get a copy of IAFC's travel policies?

If you become a RIST member, a copy of the policy will be provided. Other general questions can be directed to the RIST coordinator.

As part of RIST, will I incur out of pocket expenses?

The majority of expenses will be paid for upfront. All other allowable expenses will be reimbursed with proper documentation. Each member will be provided with a reimbursement policy.

What kind of authorization do I need from my employer or agency?

This information will be outlined in the individual or agency contract with the IAFC.

Who will pay for my replacement if I am requested to respond for RIST?

A memorandum of understanding or agreement (MOU or MOA) will be activated and the IAFC will reimburse your employer for backfilling your position while you are actively deployed with RIST.

How long will my contract be effective?

Contracts will be reviewed on a regular basis. No contract will exceed a three-year period.

How much time per year can a team member anticipate for RIST assignment?

During the pilot year, approximately 40 hours will be spent on assignment. After the pilot period, time is dependent on significant-incident frequency and request for call-out. It is estimated a team member may be active approximately 10 days per year.

Will the incident commander have a final say on the report that is turned in by the RIST leader?

Report information will only be used in a constructive manner and will not be used to make accusations or affix blame to the responding jurisdiction. RIST personnel will collaborate with the IC during their process, so the IC will have the opportunity to offer input but will not have a *final say* regarding content of the report to be submitted.

What is RIST's authority on scene?

RIST authority on scene is limited to being present and collecting information as outlined by the National Hazmat Fusion Center's scope of work.

How long will RIST be on scene?

Time on scene is dependant on type and scale of incident. The on-scene time parameters of a large-scale incident could be anywhere from eight hours to three days.

Can RIST members provide me with any support, such as technical advice, logistics, etc?

No. RIST members are prohibited from acting in any command, operational, planning or logistical capacity during a response.

Will the incident commander receive a copy of items reported to the IAFC and/or DOT-PHMSA?

Yes; a copy of the final report submitted to the IAFC will be made available to the incident commander.

What should I do if I'm interested in applying for a team position?

Applications and position descriptions are available for download from the RIST webpage. Contact RIST Coordinator Amber Wells at awells@iafc.org for more information.

I would like to participate in the Hazmat Fusion Center's development. What is the next step?

Individuals may participate in the RIST or the Data subcommittee, attend a focus-group session in one of the five PMHSA regions, submit data and lessons learned from responses and let others know about the Hazmat Fusion Center. Contact the Hazmat Fusion Center staff for more information at hazmatfusion@iafc.org.

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