



FEMA

Fact Sheet

INCIDENT MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE TEAMS

FEMA has developed a next generation of rapidly deployable emergency response teams called Incident Management Assistance Teams (IMATs). The IMATs are full-time, rapid-response teams with dedicated staff able to deploy within two hours and arrive at an incident within 12 hours to support the local incident commander. The teams support the initial establishment of a unified command and provide situational awareness for federal and state decision-makers crucial to determining the level and type of immediate federal support that may be required.

IMATs were developed from an expanded concept of the former Emergency Response Teams (ERT) at the national and regional levels. The plan is to eventually have three National IMATs with 26 fulltime staff each, and 10 Regional IMATs staffed with 15 fulltime personnel each. Currently two National IMATs and three Regional IMATs are operational; a fourth, the Region VII IMAT will be operational later this year.

IMATs provide a forward federal presence to facilitate the management of the national response to catastrophic incidents. The primary mission of a FEMA IMAT is to rapidly deploy to an incident or incident-threatened venue, provide leadership in the identification and provision of federal assistance, and coordinate and integrate inter-jurisdictional response in support of an affected state or territory.

IMATs are led by experienced, senior-level emergency managers and staffed with a core of permanent full-time employees, unlike FEMA's Emergency Response Teams (ERT), which were staffed on a collateral duty basis. When not deployed, the teams are responsible for building and maintaining a close working relationship with regional, state, tribal, and local emergency management officials, federal partners, and the private sector to support planning, training, exercising, and other activities in preparation for disaster response.

Both national and regional-level teams can be augmented with additional staff from other departments and agencies as needed and are supported by FEMA's Mobile Emergency Response Support elements. The teams are fully compliant with the National Incident Management System and the Incident Command System and they train and exercise as a unit.

The National IMAT-East is located in Washington, D.C., at FEMA Headquarters. National IMAT-West is located in Sacramento, Calif., Region 2 IMAT, Region 4 IMAT, Region 5 IMAT and the Region 6 IMAT all are located with FEMA Regional Offices.

FEMA leads and supports the nation in a risk-based, comprehensive emergency management system of preparedness, protection, response, recovery, and mitigation, to reduce the loss of life and property and protect the nation from all hazards including natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and other man-made disasters.