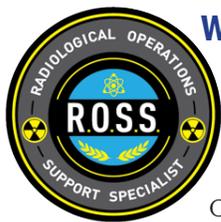


# Radiological Operations Support Specialist



## Who We Serve

During hazardous radiological preparedness or response operations, the Radiological Operations Support Specialist (ROSS) identifies and provides critical information to responders, key leaders, and decision-makers. The ROSS is a state and local subject matter expert (SME) with the ability to bridge the gap between response and radiological knowledge in order to minimize the impact of a potential or actual incident involving the release of radiological or nuclear materials.

## Services at a Glance

**Local preparedness.** The ROSS works with local leaders in their preparedness efforts by supporting radiological disaster planning and exercises thus increasing radiological response capabilities.

### Qualified radiological and ICS expert.

A ROSS is a resource with radiological expertise and an understanding of the Incident Command System (ICS) available to State and local responders, emergency managers, and state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) decision-makers.

**Bridge knowledge and action.** The ROSS can bridge together response and radiological knowledge to minimize the impact of a potential or actual incident involving the release of radiological or nuclear materials.

**On-call deployable asset.** ROSS are on-call personnel to enhance SLTT response teams during radiological/nuclear emergencies.

**Response recommendations.** A ROSS provides SLTT leadership, decision-makers, and responders with appropriate recommendations for hot zone definition, population monitoring and decontamination levels, patient handling, release of vehicles and equipment from a hot zone, responder personal protective equipment (PPE), decontamination techniques, and dose and turn-back guidance.

**Federal response framework expertise for SLTTs.** The ROSS gives SLTT response centers instant expertise in the federal radiological response framework, including assets, capabilities, deployment timelines, logistical needs, and contact information, including the Protective Action Guidelines. During nuclear/radiological emergencies, the ROSS can help SLTTs work effectively with the federal response and know what to expect from it.

**Interpret federal and local data products.** The ROSS helps responders and decision-makers interpret federal and local data products, and deconflict contradictory measurements and models to aid decisionmaking.

**Public messaging.** The ROSS supports public messaging development and briefings and knows how to communicate radiological issues to a non-technical audience.

## WHO CAN USE A ROSS?

### SLTT EMERGENCY MANAGERS

SLTT emergency managers are able to draw on ROSS expertise for planning, exercises, and incident response. The ROSS is able to participate at all levels of the ICS as deemed appropriate by the SLTT emergency plan, and more than one ROSS is able to respond to a single event if necessary.



### SLTT FIRST RESPONDERS

First responders are able to rely on the ROSS for actionable intelligence based on real-time modeling and assistance with PPE decisions if necessary when responding to a radiological incident. The ROSS also translates decisions made at the command center into specific actions on the ground.



### SLTT DECISION MAKERS

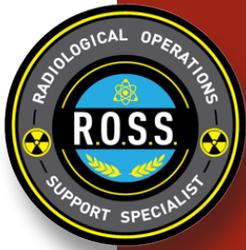
Decision-makers are able to use the ROSS's technical expertise and knowledge of the SLTT and Federal incident command structures to improve communications and decision-making capabilities. The ROSS is able to translate technical information from the first responders and modeling tools into actionable intelligence to support the decision makers, as well as act as a liaison between the SLTT response team and the Federal response team.



FEMA

For more information Contact ROSS Program Office at  
[fema-ross@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:fema-ross@fema.dhs.gov)





## How to Activate a ROSS

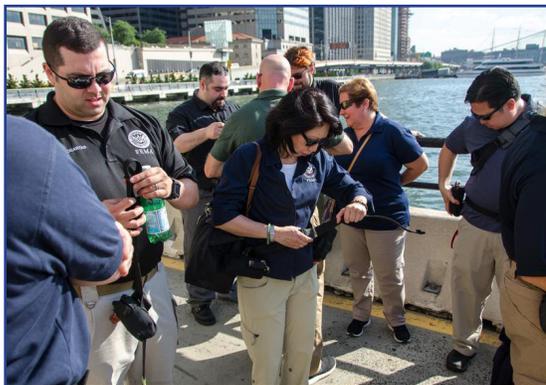
The ROSS is available to deploy for exercises and real-world events at the FSLTT levels. The ROSS can deploy as a single asset or strike team depending on the need by contacting [fema-ross@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:fema-ross@fema.dhs.gov).

### ROSS in Action



#### THE VIGILANT GUARDIAN 2017

During the one-day Radiologic Dispersal Device (RDD) exercise, the ROSS met all demands for specialized radiological knowledge, served as an effective support bridge between the local, state, and Federal authorities and resources, and served as a radiological response leader and reference among the local response effort. The ROSS was able to view the event from the local perspectives, which assisted the locals in prioritizing radiological response efforts.



#### GOTHAM SHIELD 2017

For Gotham Shield 2017, a ROSS Strike Team was deployed to separate locations to provide subject matter expertise to New York City and the States of New York and New Jersey to help test the technical feasibility of the ROSS concept in multiple jurisdictions. The multi-day scenario included four improvised nuclear devices (INDs) in two states and Canada. Throughout the exercise, the ROSS personnel were a resource for radiological questions and concerns from the city and state response entities and helped the State Emergency Operation Centers (SEOCs) understand the repercussions of the incident.



#### VIBRANT RESPONSE 2016

Vibrant Response 2016 IND Exercise: the multi-day exercise focused on regional and national incident management following a no-notice 10-kiloton IND detonation in Pittsburgh, PA. Most notably, the ROSS helped the radiation component of the exercise become the focal point of the response by presenting complex data to decision-makers in plain language. The ROSS took the opportunity to directly address the exercise participants and stated that approximately 100,000+ people had been exposed to radiation levels high enough to cause acute radiation syndrome and most likely death within a few weeks. Immediately after the briefing, the FEMA Operations Chief asked the ROSS for further guidance, since he and his team were unaware of the magnitude of the exposure.

The ROSS concept was developed out of an effort to bridge the gaps identified in the 2010 Department of Homeland Security Strategy for Improving the National Response and Recovery from an IND Attack.

FEMA CBRN: Preparing our nation to respond to chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear catastrophes.



**FEMA**

For more information about the FEMA CBRN Office  
contact [fema-cbrnoffice@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:fema-cbrnoffice@fema.dhs.gov)

