



"I don't know how my agency would have survived without the assistance we received - these wonderful men and women came in and sat in those chairs as if they had worked for me forever. It took them maybe a half an hour to figure out our CAD - and they already knew the 911 system and COLLECT/NCIC as both are statewide systems. We use plain speak so there was no issue with "codes" and our mapping was easy to read. These professionals were handling calls and entering events as if they had worked for us forever. The other added benefit was that it gave my staff a chance to breathe and to talk to someone about how THEY were feeling. As a Director I knew my Center and community were in good hands, as TERT members are the best of the best - they know their jobs - they were there to serve, not to sit around and do nothing - and they represented their agencies with honor and pride." Maureen Will, Newtown, CT

TERT- Who, What, and How – For PSAP Managers

What you Might Not Know

The APCO/NENA National Joint Telecommunicator Emergency Response Taskforce Initiative (NJTI) is a committee of the National Emergency Number Association (NENA) and the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials (APCO) national organizations established to assist states in creating TERT programs within their state.

Telecommunicator Emergency Response Taskforces (TERT) in partnership, with NENA and APCO are dedicated to the development of a nationally recognized program for Telecommunicator mutual aid response in the aftermath of disasters, providing information as to operational deployment of Telecommunicator Emergency Response Taskforce (TERT) programs and taking a leadership role in assisting governmental agencies in the development of TERT-style programs at the regional, state and local levels.

TERT teams are recognized as a deployable EMAC resource. ¹As such, agencies that contribute TERT Team members may be reimbursed for eligible expenses, which may include position backfill, etc., for federally declared disasters.

TERT teams are most often deployed intra-state, to agencies within your own state in need of assistance.

Here are some FAQs:

Where can I learn more about TERT?

A: Check with your state chapter(s) of APCO or NENA to determine if your state has a TERT program through one of them.

State TERT information can also be found on the NJTI website at: <https://www.njti-tert.org/>

¹ Individual states have different Interagency Agreements, MOUs, etc. for EMAC deployments. It is dependent upon each agency to check with the State Emergency Management authority to insure proper agreements are in place.

What requirements are there for my employees to become deployable?

A: The training requirements for team members are completion of FEMA's online Independent Study course IS144, Telecommunicators Emergency Response Taskforce (TERT) Basic Course, and the current version of FEMA IS100 and IS700.

For TERT Team Leaders the requirement is IS144, IS1200, Telecommunicator Emergency Response Taskforce Training Team Leader Training, and the current version of FEMA IS100, IS200, IS700 and IS800.

How many employees must I send on a deployment?

A: You don't have to send any employees. It is up to you, your center staffing needs, and the availability of your employees to be deployed. You may find your state only requests one team member (or leader) from any PSAP – may depend on the urgency of the need.

What if I need a TERT team?

A: We hope you won't ever need to call for a TERT Team, but if you do, the mechanism to request a TERT response is to make a request through your local Emergency Management Agency, which will, in turn, make the request through your State Emergency Management authority. Ensure you notify the state TERT Coordinator as well.

Is TERT the same as tactical or incident dispatchers?

A: No. TERT is a PSAP to PSAP deployment to an agency in need of a team due to a disaster or unusual occurrence. A tactical or incident dispatch team is typically a PSAP to Field deployment, often by a team of dispatchers who work for that PSAP and have trained with field responder teams. The purpose of TERT is to provide relief to personnel of a communications center that has experienced significant incident to augment the staffing of that center, allowing PSAP personnel time off.

What other value is there in preparing employees of my center to be part of a TERT team?

A: For some agencies, there may be a lack of opportunities for line staff to engage in additional professional development. Involvement in an agency's TERT program can be a wonderful development opportunity for the personnel you select to be part of this endeavor. These teams derive a sense of pride from their involvement with TERT, even if they all don't have the opportunity to deploy.

How can I get more information on TERT in my state?

A. Here is a [link](#) to what the NJTI has as the latest information on who your TERT coordinator is in your state. If your state doesn't have a TERT team, NJTI can help you or your state chapter of APCO or NENA explore the possibility of starting a program in your state.

As a Director I never thought much about TERT or how they could serve my community - I learned that lesson on 12/14 - we are a small agency and we do police/fire and EMS (to include EMD) and the Telecommunicators who came to us were trained in all 3 disciplines. You never know when you will have a line of duty death or events that will take staff away from you and having the services of highly trained dispatchers to come in and give relief where it is so sorely needed takes another burden off your shoulders. I paid it forward and had 3 of my staff trained in TERT; we have deployed twice to agencies that had events that stretched their capabilities. When I explain TERT I try to give an all-encompassing vision of what we can/do provide. TERT is not a group of dispatchers who swoop in and take over a center, TERT is a highly trained team of professionals that can assist an agency in all facets of communications. We can provide assistance at a planned event or can respond during an emergency. It's just like having a spare tire on your vehicle, you NEVER need it until that one time you do. TERT is a resource that will always assist any agency in any way we can.

We are very lucky at GCSO as we don't really have to make an "argument" with our Sheriff as he allows the Director to handle most anything related to communications. However after the events of August 2016 it gave everyone at our agency (whether they were involved with NH TERT or not) a truly great appreciation for what NH TERT does. With the response we received at our center we were able to have all of our staff (that chose to) attend the funeral and services together (if they chose to) and gave us a few hours to grieve together. That time we had together may not seem important to everyone but to ME that was our first step in healing. As I look back today I can honestly say that NH TERT allowed our agency the time we needed to say goodbye to one of our own and know that everything would be taken care of at our center." Thayer Paronto, Grafton (NH) County Sheriff's

Department