



# INNOVATIVE READINESS TRAINING

Premier Military Training for a  
Secure and Prosperous America

APRIL 2026 | NEWSLETTER

## Critical Infrastructure Integration: Advancing Military Readiness & Community Resiliency

Following updates to IRT's governing documents in fall 2025, IRT is pleased to announce the formal integration of critical infrastructure (CI) into IRT support activities for Community and Military applications.

CI refers to systems and assets so essential to the nation's security, public health, and economic stability that their disruption or incapacitation would have catastrophic consequences. This definition, drawn from Section 5195c(e) of Title 42, U.S. Code, positions CI as a cornerstone of national readiness efforts.

To better integrate CI priorities into IRT's mission, the program has introduced CI screening into Community and Military applications. These changes enhance alignment with federal policy and support more effective, risk-based decision-making for civil-military partnerships.

Community applicants applying for IRT support will now find a new application subsection: **Section 13 of 18** — “**Owners and Operators of Critical Infrastructure**” which asks about the following:

- Identify CI Ownership: Declare whether the organization is a recognized owner or operator of CI.
- Provide Sector Risk Management Agency (SRMA) Details: If applicable.

SRMAs are the federal agencies that coordinate risk, security, and resilience activities in designated CI sectors (e.g., energy, water, transportation, healthcare). This update ensures greater transparency and enables IRT to incorporate broader risk considerations into project planning.

Military applicants will encounter a revised **Section 8** — “**Approving Official Section**,” where they will declare whether a support activity is a CI Project in block P. If the project is related to CI, then applicants must answer three yes or no questions:

1. **CI Recognition:** Confirm whether the community applicant self-attests that it qualifies as a critical infrastructure owner, operator, or supporting entity under applicable Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), or relevant state and local government criteria.
2. **Interagency Coordination:** Specify whether the support activity will involve coordination with federal entities like DHS or CISA to ensure alignment with statutory frameworks and support mechanisms.
3. **Election Infrastructure Exclusion:** Declare the support will not involve systems in the elections infrastructure subsector, safeguarding neutrality and statutory boundaries on military support.

These updates strengthen operational clarity, maintain statutory boundaries, and ensure safe collaboration for CI-related projects. This enhanced framework brings distinct benefits:

- Communities benefit from structured, thoughtfully planned projects which consider potential risks and resilience strategies.
- Interagency coordination and collaboration improve national critical infrastructure.
- National Defense Strategy and National Security Strategy objectives align to reinforce domestic CI resilience at the community level.

IRT's civil-military partnerships continue to strengthen relationships between military members and American communities, enhance unit and deployment readiness for Service members, and provide essential services to local communities. To learn more, [visit irt.defense.gov](http://visit.irt.defense.gov).



*U.S. Marine Corps Gunnery Sgt. Rob Mansfield, a transmissions chief with 4th Combat Logistics Regiment, Marine Forces Reserve, takes notes at a planning meeting at the Kodiak Marketplace in Kodiak, Alaska, Jan. 15, 2026.*

### UNITY OF PURPOSE

IRT strengthens joint coordination and hands-on military training that ensures real-world readiness and mission success in complex contingency environments.

### ACCOUNTABILITY & INNOVATION

IRT increases fiscal discipline, ensuring best use of DoW resources for cutting-edge military training and threat resilience for American communities.

### READINESS & LEADERSHIP

IRT develops strong military leaders who are prepared to meet the challenges of deployment, mission success, and deterrence abroad.

### IRT TRAINING HIGHLIGHTS

Civil Military Partnerships  
Critical Infrastructure  
Application Updates

### IRT LEADERSHIP TEAM

Colonel James Hogan, Director  
Colonel Stephen Rubright, Deputy Director  
Major Melford Simpson, Operations Officer  
Chief Master Sergeant Mathew Forster, Superintendent

### MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP

**Chief Master Sgt. Matthew Forster**  
IRT Superintendent

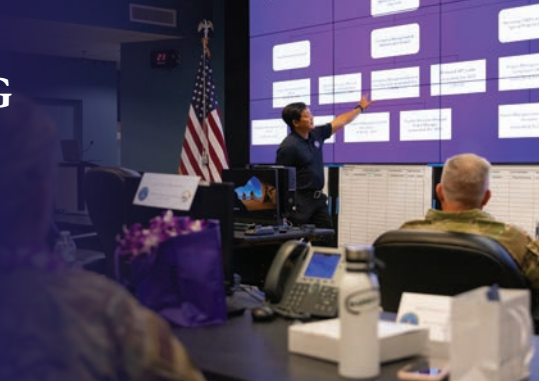


“Critical infrastructure support activities are where community impact and national security align. When IRT policy, planning, and execution are tied to national defense priorities and training objectives, we strengthen local resilience while building Total Force readiness, interoperability, and capability.”



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## IRT STAFF SPOTLIGHT

### COLONEL CHRISTOPHER STANMIRE

AIR FORCE RESERVE COMMAND  
SERVICE RESPONSIBLE OFFICER



“As the AFRC IRT Service Responsible Officer (SRO), it has been a distinct privilege to be a part of the remarkable IRT team. I am consistently impressed by the high caliber of training afforded to our joint enterprise of engineers, medical professionals, and cybersecurity experts. The opportunity to witness the meaningful support provided to the community has been the most gratifying aspect of this role. I am honored to be associated with such a dedicated team and a profoundly important mission, and I am sincerely grateful for the experience.”

## IRT STAFF SPOTLIGHT

### MASTER SERGEANT JESSICA DOIRON

MARINE CORPS RESERVE  
RESOURCE ADVISOR



“The Marine Corps recently relocated the IRT program to the Marine Corps Headquarters, Current Operations Branch. This significant change offers the team and I a rare opportunity to transform how our service uses IRT. We aim to expand the program as a viable training vehicle for our service’s active-duty personnel the way it is used today primarily for our reservists. Providing support and enabling training events that prepare our Marines and Sailors to fight and win our country’s battles in a non-threat environment while simultaneously assisting the community is a win for everyone. I’m excited about the opportunity and the changes to come.”

## IRT EVENTS & SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

- Apr 8: Operation Footprint, Final Planning Meeting
- Apr 8: Nimiipuu Health, Final Planning Meeting
- Apr 13: Cyber Atlanta, Start Date
- Apr 13: Buffalo River Wellness, Final Planning Meeting
- Apr 13: Redwoods Fish Hatchery, Final Planning Meeting
- Apr 13: Green River Wellness, Final Planning Meeting
- Apr 13: Operation Arctic Shelter, Final Planning Meeting
- Apr 20: Operation Footprint, Start Date
- Apr 23: Cyber Atlanta, DV Day
- Apr 24: Cyber Atlanta, End Date
- Apr 26: Camp V-Bar Road Repair
- Apr 27: Task Force Reef Rescue, Start Date
- Apr 27: Tropic Care Big Island, Final Planning Meeting
- Apr 28: Camp V-Bar Road Repair, Final Planning Meeting

More information  
on missions at:



## FY26 IRT PROGRAM MANAGERS

Major Penny Cannon  
Army Reserve | Army Active Duty

Captain Scott Thurman  
Army National Guard

Captain Emanuel Mendez  
Marine Corps Reserve | Marine Corps Active Duty

Commander Shaun Shillady  
Navy Reserve | Navy Active Duty

Major Nathaniel Horwitz-Willis  
Air National Guard | Air Force Active Duty

Lieutenant Colonel Edward Brouch  
Air Force Reserve