



## RKB and IAEM – Partners Serving Emergency Managers

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### Background

The **International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM)** is a non-profit educational organization dedicated to promoting the goals of saving lives and protecting property during emergencies and disasters. IAEM’s mission is to serve its members by providing information, networking and professional opportunities, and to advance the emergency management profession. The IAEM has established a partnership with the Responder Knowledge Base to ensure that all members are aware of this unique equipment-related information resource, and that it continues to meet the needs of emergency management professionals.

The **Responder Knowledge Base (RKB)** is a web-based information service for the emergency responder community funded by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and hosted by the Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism (MIPT). RKB operates as a public service, with no cost to users and no cost to information contributors such as product manufacturers. Thousands of jurisdictions and departments, as well as virtually all State Administrative Agencies, now use the RKB on a regular basis to obtain grant guidance and unbiased product information. The site address is [www.rkb.mipt.org](http://www.rkb.mipt.org).

### RKB Mission

*“Created to provide emergency responders, purchasers, and planners with a trusted, integrated, on-line source of information on products, standards, certifications, grants, and other equipment-related information.”*

The Responder Knowledge Base has become a “first-stop” for emergency responders, managers, purchasers, and planners seeking equipment information. RKB provides a wide variety of in-depth product information while maintaining a reputation for objectivity. The knowledge base vets and integrates input from a variety of sources, including manufacturers, standards development organizations, testers, and other web sites. The RKB mission has been endorsed by many of the leading associations in the emergency response community, including:

- International Association of Emergency Managers
- InterAgency Board for Equipment Standardization and Interoperability
- International Association of Chiefs of Police
- National Sheriffs Association
- International Association of Fire Chiefs
- International Association of Fire Fighters
- National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians
- National Bomb Squad Commanders Advisory Board
- International Safety Equipment Association
- National Tactical Officers Association

## Knowledge Base Content

The “heart” of the RKB is its ability to link varying types of equipment-related information so that even inexperienced users can quickly find a wealth of relevant information. Product descriptions, standards, third-party certifications, operational suitability tests, and grants/assistance programs are only a few of the many categories of information in the RKB. When an item is displayed, a set of “Knowledge Links” appears to guide users to related items in other categories. A built-in site tutorial helps users to quickly realize the site’s full potential.

## Major Programs Supported

The RKB hosts the interactive version of the FEMA National Preparedness Directorate’s **Authorized Equipment List (AEL)**, which is provided in an interactive format and linked to relevant information such as applicable standards. The following grant programs are served by the RKB’s interactive AEL: State Homeland Security Program, Urban Area Security Initiative, Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Program, Metropolitan Medical Response System, Emergency Management Performance Grant, Citizen Corps Program, Transit Security Grant Program, Port Security Grant Program, Intercity Bus Security Grant Program, Buffer Zone Protection Program, and Chemical Buffer Zone Protection Program. The RKB also provides an interactive version of the InterAgency Board’s **Standardized Equipment List (SEL)**. The RKB is the only site in existence that provides an integrated display of the AEL and SEL.

The RKB also supports other DHS programs, including:

- **Commercial Equipment Direct Assistance Program (CEDAP)**. RKB handles the entire on-line application process including email notifications and telephone support for applicants, and then transmits the data for scoring and award.
- **Systems Assessment and Validation for Emergency Responders (SAVER) Program**. All user registration and account maintenance services for SAVER, including verification privileges for emergency responders, are provided by RKB. SAVER content is also integrated into the knowledge base.
- **Homeland Defense Equipment Reuse (HDER) Program**. Product information on available products and information on how to request them is provided on-line.
- **Homeland Security Standards Database (HSSD)**. Information on more than 4,000 standards is integrated into the RKB and cross-referenced with the HSSD.

## The RKB Today

The RKB has more than **56,000 registered users**, including Federal, state, and local responders from every discipline, and more than **1,300 contributing organizations**, including product manufacturers, standards organizations, and certifying agencies. The site currently contains over 4,400 products, as well as thousands of related items such as certifications and standards. In addition, the site has added special features such as mission critical hints and the ability to display “side by side” comparisons of products. RKB also offers an “Ask an Expert” feature; more than 2,300 replies have been provided to date, ranging from equipment issues and standards to grant eligibility. In 2006, the site averaged more than 24,000 visits per month.

## For Additional Information

Questions about the Responder Knowledge Base program should be directed to the RKB Program Office at 703-641-2078.