

MEIS

Greater Kansas City's Metropolitan Emergency Information System

What is MEIS?

The Metropolitan Emergency Information System (MEIS) is a secure, Web-based system that allows public agencies, nonprofit organizations and key private-sector partners to share information before, during and after emergencies. MEIS is designed to support communications not only during a large-scale disaster, but also in day-to-day planning.

The Mid-America Regional Council (MARC), the metropolitan planning agency for the eight-county, bistate Kansas City region, worked with Apex Innovations and many local organizations over the past two years to customize Apex's i-INFO software and build the MEIS network.

What can MEIS do for the region?

MEIS enables area public agencies to have access to information on resources to support mutual aid in emergency planning, response and recovery efforts. These resources might include:

- Equipment such as generators, vehicles and rescue equipment
- Facilities, including emergency shelters
- Documents such as emergency plans, protocols and checklists
- People, including certified personnel and volunteers.

By building a regional resource database and involving hundreds of public, private and relief agencies serving the Greater Kansas City area, MEIS will help local agencies work together on coordination for emergency planning, mitigation, response and recovery. The system will also provide a means for mass communications to pre-defined groups, and a calendar of training and exercise events that will serve as a one-stop shop for first responders.

Who should use the system?

MEIS will serve a wide variety of organizations, including:

- Emergency communication centers
- Fire departments
- Law enforcement agencies
- Emergency management offices
- Public health departments
- EMS agencies
- Public works departments
- Nonprofit relief agencies
- Hospitals
- Utility companies



**Collaborate
Between
Agencies**

**Share
Documents**

Manage Assets

**Create
Reports**

**Schedule
Training**

**Map Agencies
and Assets**

**Communicate
Before, During
and After
Emergencies**

**Keep Data
Secure**

MEIS

Greater Kansas City's Metropolitan Emergency Information System



Why should my agency participate?

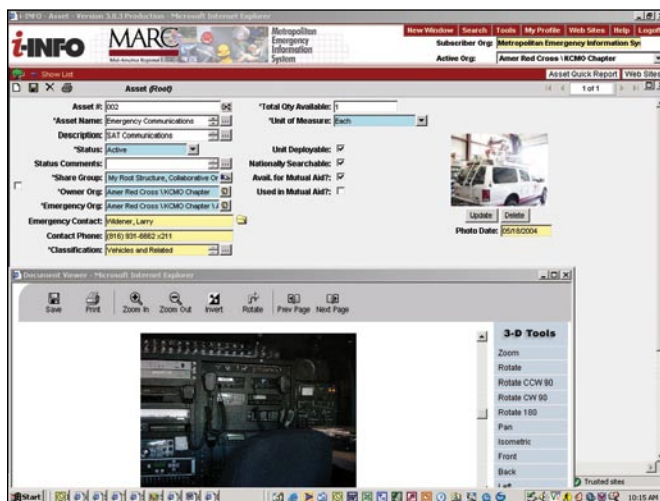
Local public agencies in Metro Kansas City have long been committed to assisting their neighbors in times of emergency. The Regional Homeland Security Coordinating Committee has chosen MEIS as a means to support mutual aid for natural and man-made disasters and emergency events.

Your participation will help local agencies have regional resource information at their fingertips for planning purposes and during an emergency. By adding your agency's shareable resources to the MEIS database and maintaining your records, you'll help the region be ready to respond — and you'll know where to turn for the resources you need if a disaster strikes your community.

How do we get started?

First, review the MEIS information packet and appoint a lead person from your agency who will work with MARC to review computer system requirements, identify users and their roles, schedule training and learn how the system can fit your agency's specific needs.

MARC is committed to providing you the support you need to make effective use of MEIS for the benefit of your agency and the entire Greater Kansas City region. **If you need more information about MEIS, please contact our MEIS project coordinator, John Hwang, at 816/701-8214 or jhwang@marc.org.**



People and Organizations

The **Organization and Person Information** component of MEIS provides users with access to basic information about all of the organizations in the system and the personnel associated with each organization. With 24-hour contact information for each agency at your fingertips, you'll always be able to find the people you need to reach in an emergency.

Your agency, through its lead contact for MEIS, will determine which users and organizations can access your data and at what level. You'll also assign user logins and security roles within your agency. For example, you may want to share contact information for key personnel with other agencies, but limit access to other information to those in your own organization.

What kind of information can MEIS store?

The system allows you to store and share a wide variety of information about your staff, including names, addresses, phone numbers, e-mail addresses, photos, education, skills, certifications, training and current project workloads. MEIS includes an "auto-update" feature that will periodically send an automated e-mail to each individual, asking him or her to update the database with any new or changed information.

The system will interface with the Personnel Accountability Security System (PASS), which will allow for the verification of credentials and tracking of emergency personnel at the scene of major incidents.

In an emergency, you'll be able to quickly search the system for the people you need, by skill type, location, organization, certification or other criteria.

Which employees should use MEIS?

It's up to each agency to determine which personnel will need access to MEIS and how many discrete user IDs it will need.

For example, your agency might assign "administrator" status to your lead contact for MEIS, and different levels of "user" rights to department heads, your public information officer or other key personnel. Users with similar roles could share a single user ID if you wish.

Personnel information can be maintained — using the auto-update feature described above — even for those employees who don't have their own user IDs.



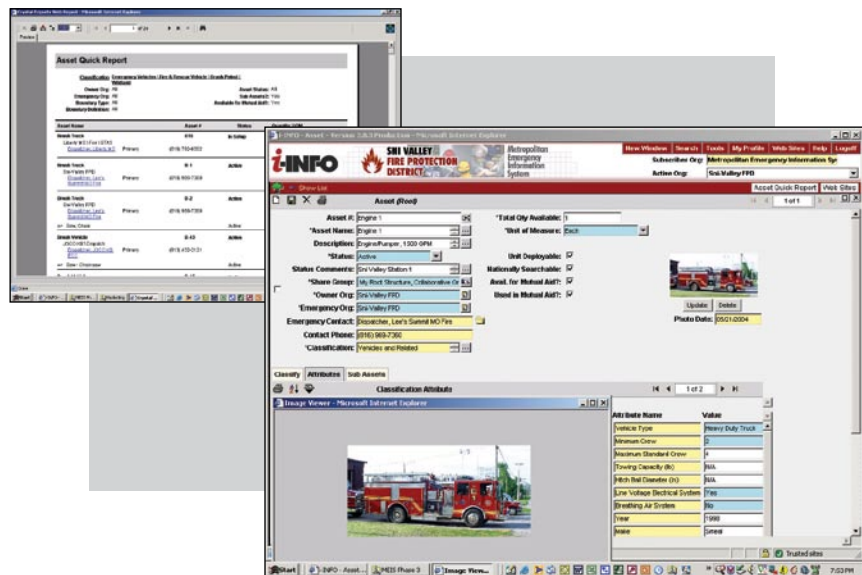
MEIS is extremely flexible. You decide who will use the system, what information you'll store, and who can access that information. You're in control.

Asset Management

MEIS allows public and private agencies to store, share and manage information about their emergency assets, including facilities, vehicles, equipment and supplies. This information can include:

- Photos and maps
- Instructions for use
- Specifications and classifications
- Electronic copies of mutual aid agreements for sharing assets
- Information on who to call, page or e-mail for each asset

MEIS allows users to quickly search for assets by type, location, organization or subcategory. The **Asset Quick Report** feature displays assets found, along with appropriate contact information. MEIS also provides advanced extract and query capabilities, and can export information to Microsoft Access or Excel.



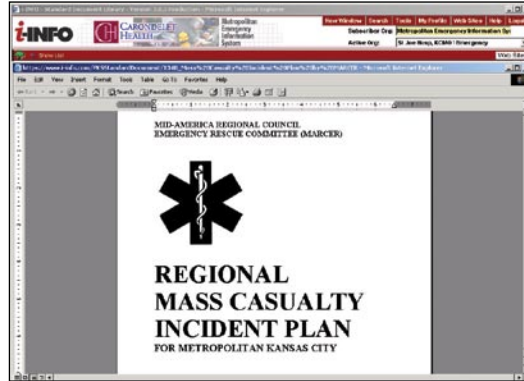
MEIS not only offers users the ability to find needed assets quickly in an emergency, but also helps agencies assess where gaps in availability might exist during the planning process.

Asset Tracking

MARC will use MEIS to record all equipment purchases made with regional homeland security funds, and local agencies will use the system to report on the availability and use of those assets on a periodic basis. Users can also share standardized specifications, requests for proposals and bid information as they plan future purchases. An asset mapping feature will be added by late 2005.

The MEIS Library

MEIS users are encouraged to store and share plans, protocols and other information that will support mutual aid efforts in emergency situations. The **MEIS library** allows users to store, retrieve, check in, check out, view, markup and collaborate on a wide variety of documents — emergency plans, protocols, checklists, training and exercise materials, maps, floor plans, Microsoft Access databases, news releases and more.



Reference Documents

Reference documents can also be attached to specific data records within MEIS. For example, users might attach:

- How-to instructions and specification sheets to **assets**
- Site photos, floor plans and organization charts to **organizations**
- Resumés, biographies and proof of certifications to **people**.

The system will accommodate large-format documents and allows viewing of three-dimensional images, drawings and maps. MEIS is compatible with more than 250 different file formats.



Event Calendar

MEIS will allow administrators from many different agencies to enter data about training courses, standard meetings, conferences and seminars in the system. Event administrators can release this information to a public Web site, allowing users to search for particular events or display events on a consolidated, inter-agency calendar. Users will be able to select a class or event and link to another site to register or get more information. Class rosters, attendance and certification can also be monitored through the system. This function will be available in 2006.

documents

MEIS

Greater Kansas City's Metropolitan Emergency Information System

Roles

Roles for Local Agencies Using MEIS

Access to MEIS requires a user ID and password. While agencies may decide to share user IDs among staff with similar roles, users who will need different levels of access should be given discrete user IDs. As the main system subscriber, MARC will ask all participating organizations to identify one or more individuals to fulfill the following roles:

Organization/Person Managers

Org/Person Managers will manage their agencies' organizational structure within the system, defining subgroups as needed and identifying personnel within each group. This structure allows users to quickly communicate with others within a particular organization or subgroup. Org/Person Managers also play a critical role in defining security roles and permissions for their agencies. MARC recommends that each agency (e.g., fire department, police department) assign an Org/Person Manager to manage its entire Org/Person structure. Very large organizations, such as larger fire departments, may need several Org/Person Managers at the battalion or fire station level. Small cities may only need one Org/Person Manager for the entire city. The system can manage a variety of scenarios, so each organization has some flexibility in defining its own organizational structure.

Asset Administrators

Asset administrators have rights to add/edit/delete/share their organizations' assets. An Asset Administrator with rights to the main or "root" level of the agency or department can also add/edit/delete/share assets for all subgroups within that department or agency. Asset Administrators at the subgroup level (e.g., a particular fire station) can only add/edit/delete/share assets within their own subgroups. Each organization should work with the MARC staff to define how they would like to have their asset information managed.

Standard Document Administrators

Document administrators have rights to add/edit/delete/share their organizations' standard documents. Standard Document Administrators with rights to the main or "root" level of the agency or department can also add/edit/delete/share standard documents for all subgroups within that department or agency. Standard Document Administrators at the subgroup level (e.g., a hazardous materials unit) can only add/edit/delete standard documents for their own subgroups. Each organization should work with the MARC staff to define how they would like to have their standard documents managed.



Credential Managers

Credential Managers have rights to “verify” the certifications/skills of people within their organizations or subgroups. Credential Managers have the option to attach scanned images of certificates, licenses and other documents to support their verification. They also have the ability to create and track e-mail communications used for verification purposes.

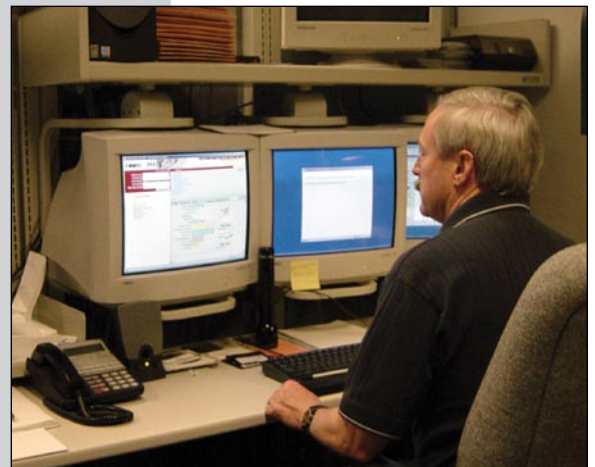
Badge Coordinators

If your organization chooses to become involved in the regional Personnel Accountability Security System (PASS) badging initiative, you will need to designate an authorized Badge Coordinator. This person downloads and transfers information about your personnel from MEIS, and works with a Badge Creator (at one of many shared PASS Badging Centers) to print the PASS badges. Each Badge Coordinator is responsible for logging and distributing PASS badges to their personnel, and updating badges in accordance with their own organization’s badging policies.

Security and Confidential Data

The MEIS system allows each agency to easily control the real-time sharing of their information with other agencies. There are many levels of information security in the system:

- Users classified as managers can designate who has rights to be record “owners” for their organization, or for a specific department within the organization.
- Record owners control who can view various pieces of information in each record.
- Record owners can also assign personnel rights for each record, which allow assigned person(s) to add, update and delete appropriate information within that record.



MEIS

Greater Kansas City's Metropolitan Emergency Information System

MARC

Mid-America Regional Council

APEX

INNOVATIONS

Getting Started with MEIS

Appoint a lead person from your agency who will work with MARC to review computer system requirements, identify users and their roles, schedule training and learn how the system can fit your agency's specific needs.

Minimum System Requirements

To use MEIS, your computer systems must meet the following minimum requirements:

- Pentium III CPU with at least 350 MHz speed
- 128 MB RAM
- Microsoft Windows 98 or later
- Microsoft Office 2000 or later
- Internet Explorer 6.0 or later
- Access to the Internet via DSL, cable, T-1 or satellite modem (384 Kbps connection speed or higher).

Future video-conference features will require additional hardware, including cameras, and highest-speed Internet connections.

Technical Support

MARC is committed to providing you with the technical support you need to make MEIS an effective tool for your agency. Working with your MEIS lead contact person, MARC and APEX Innovations will:

- Review the necessary computer requirements and work with your IT staff as needed to install MEIS.
- Help you identify the appropriate number of users and their roles for your agency.
- Schedule and conduct training to teach your staff how to use the system.
- Work with you to enter your agency's initial data into the system.

Contacts:

John Hwang
Mid-America Regional Council
600 Broadway, Suite 300
Kansas City, MO 64105
Phone: 816/701-8214
Fax: 816/421-7758
jhwang@marc.org

Apex Customer Support Center,
(816)561-7787, ext. 300

- Emergency Help Desk (24/7)
- Help Desk (7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.)
- User Suggestion Center (24/7)

www.apex-innovations.com

