



NNOAC *Insight*

The Official Position of the National Narcotic Officers' Associations' Coalition

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REGIONAL INFORMATION SHARING SYSTEMS (RISS) PROGRAM

The men and women of law enforcement face diverse, emerging, and dangerous challenges every day. As the proliferation of narcotics sweeps across our nation, our narcotics officers need more support now than ever. The National Narcotic Officers' Associations' Coalition (NNOAC) is proud to serve our nation's narcotics officers. The NNOAC consists of 40 individual state narcotics associations and represents more than 50,000 law enforcement officers across the country. The NNOAC is also honored to support criminal justice organizations that provide critical services and resources to officers in the field at all levels of government. One of those programs is **RISS**. RISS is a nationwide program that consists of six regional centers and the RISS Technology Support Center (RTSC). **RISS has served our criminal justice community for more than 45 years.**

Through RISS, thousands of agencies and hundreds of thousands of officers can **access millions of records containing information and intelligence data, request critical investigative case support, and utilize life-saving officer safety event deconfliction to avoid "blue on blue" situations** among law enforcement. Among the most important issues facing law enforcement is the ability to safeguard their officers and communities while effectively detecting, preventing, apprehending, and convicting criminals. RISS's services and resources directly benefit narcotics officers who tirelessly work to arrest drug traffickers and remove dangerous contraband from our streets. The NNOAC strongly supports RISS and believes that it is one of the most important law enforcement programs for our nation. Continued investment, sustainability, and growth are essential so that our narcotics officers continue to turn to and rely on RISS for its services and resources. In some cases, RISS is the only program to which law enforcement can turn to for support.

The NNOAC membership urges Congress support funding for RISS at **\$48 million in Fiscal Year (FY) 2021.**

About RISS

RISS serves more than **9,300 local, state, federal, and tribal criminal justice agencies** and other partners by providing adaptive solutions and services that facilitate information sharing, support criminal investigations, and promote officer safety. The six RISS Centers include the:

- Middle Atlantic-Great Lakes Organized Crime Law Enforcement Network (MAGLOCLN)
- Mid-States Organized Crime Information Center (MOCIC)
- New England State Police Information Network (NESPIN)
- Regional Organized Crime Information Center (ROCIC)
- Rocky Mountain Information Network (RMIN)
- Western States Information Network (WSIN)

The RISS Centers work individually to support their unique regions and collectively on nationwide activities and projects. RISS also partners with numerous federal and nationwide entities, such as the U.S. Department of Justice, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

RISS is **used and trusted by hundreds of thousands of law enforcement officers and criminal justice professionals** in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, U.S. territories, England, New Zealand, and parts of Canada. RISS services and resources support an all-crimes approach and provide significant support to narcotics investigations and criminal activities that may have a nexus to drugs, opioids, drug trafficking, and other related areas.

The RISS Secure Cloud (RISSNET) and RISSNET Resources

RISSNET connects disparate systems, provides bidirectional sharing, and offers a single simultaneous search of resources. More than **240 RISS and partner resources** are accessible via RISSNET. In addition, more than **55 million intelligence and investigative records** are available via RISSNET. RISS developed several resources accessible via RISSNET, which directly assist narcotics officers with their efforts. These include:

- The **RISS Criminal Intelligence Database (RISSIntel)** user interface provides for a real-time, online federated search of more than **60** state, regional, and federal partner systems.
- The **RISS National Gang Program (RISSGang)** Website dedicates a section to drug/cartel organizations. The site includes photos, hand signs, and other information.
- The **RISSLeads Investigative Website** provides the opportunity for investigators to securely post and access information on various topics, including narcotics.
- The **RISS Property and Recovery Tracking System (RISSProp)** provides access to pawn, secondhand, and other shop transactions and enables officers to identify and return stolen property and identify other criminal activities.
- The **RISS Master Telephone Index (MTI)** is an analytical database designed to compare and match common telephone numbers in law enforcement investigations from across the nation.
- The **RISS Money Counter Project (MCP)** stores currency serial numbers for comparison to currency submitted by officers in previous cases.
- The **Drug Pricing Reference Guide** is an online tool that enables officers to search for comparable prices on narcotics; serves as a price guide when assessing the value of seizures and contraband; and identifies supply, demand, and popularity trends within the drug market.
- RISS develops **secure hosted websites** for narcotics investigators to share information, post materials, and communicate. There are more than **40 sites housed on RISSNET**.

RISSIntel Software as a Service (SaaS)

RISS is second to none when it comes to its technology and continual goal to advance, streamline, and deliver easily accessible and powerful tools and data. With this goal in mind, RISS is working to launch **RISSIntel SaaS—the next generation of RISSIntel**. RISSIntel SaaS is a secure 28 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 23-compliant, cloud-based solution that will offer small- and medium-sized law enforcement agencies, including rural agencies, their own branded intelligence system software. The service was designed and built with input from officers and other criminal intelligence experts to help ensure that the service is easy to use and conforms to the needs

of the field. RISSIntel SaaS will further expand information sharing; leverage proven and advanced technology; streamline officers' access to data; and enable agencies that may not have shared previously the opportunity to quickly collaborate, connect, and exchange information. **This product will revolutionize law enforcement intelligence sharing.**

RISS Officer Safety Resources

According to data released by the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund, since 1786, more than 21,000 law enforcement officers have died in the service of our nation. At the current rate, one officer is killed every 55 hours in the United States. In addition, more than 60,000 officers are violently assaulted each year. Violence is extremely prevalent in the enforcement of our nation's drug laws. However, RISS has developed resources specifically to aid officers in the field and to help safeguard them from friendly fire.

The **RISS Officer Safety Event Deconfliction System (RISSafe)** helps detect conflicts between agencies and officers who may be investigating the same subject at the same time or planning an operation in the same vicinity at the same time. Undercover operations pose a particular threat; narcotics officers are often required to work in this capacity, routinely placing them in harm's way. There have been instances where officers have shot other officers because they did not know another agency was working a target or planning an event. Because of RISSafe, officers are notified prior to engaging in these types of high-risk activities. It is impossible to place a cost on the number of lives that RISSafe has helped save. In addition to saving lives, RISSafe helps ensure the integrity of investigations and preserves law enforcement assets and resources. RISSafe is a comprehensive and nationwide system, accessible and monitored on a 24/7/365 basis and available at **no cost** to all law enforcement agencies. Since its inception, more than **2 million operations** have been entered into RISSafe, resulting in more than **485,000 identified conflicts**.

Because RISS is dedicated to ensuring that our officers are safe, it leverages expert staff at watch centers to monitor events and notify affected officers. This quality control piece is critical to timely notification as well as to ensuring that officers connect and collaborate on cases. Currently, **29 RISSafe Watch Centers** are operational throughout the country, 23 of which are operated by organizations other than RISS, such as state agencies, fusion centers, and High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTAs). These organizations have invested resources to support this critical officer safety program and recognize the value and importance of RISSafe in their daily activities.

RISS continues to work with its deconfliction partners to advance nationwide deconfliction coverage. In addition to RISSafe, there are two other event deconfliction systems—HIDTA's Case Explorer and SAFETNet. Working together, the three system owners integrated the systems using a solution known as the Partner Deconfliction Interface (PDI). Now, regardless of the system used, conflict information will be returned from the other two systems. The partners are also working to enhance target or subject deconfliction among systems through the Nationwide Deconfliction Pointer System.

RISS also operates the **RISS Officer Safety Website**, which serves as a nationwide repository for issues related to officer safety, such as concealments, hidden weapons, armed and dangerous threats, officer safety videos, special reports, and training.

Investigative Support Services

In addition to its information, intelligence, and deconfliction resources, RISS helps agencies and officers through a variety of investigative services. RISS assists narcotics officers by providing:

- **Analytical services**, such as link-analysis charts, crime scene diagrams, cell tower mapping, telephone-toll analysis, financial analysis, digital forensics services, and audio/video enhancements.
- Comprehensive **intelligence and investigative research** reports on criminal subjects.
- **Specialized equipment**, such as cameras, recorders, and other devices.
- **Technical support** through RISS's field services staff and **field-based solutions**.
- **Confidential funds** to assist investigators with undercover operations, buy busts, etc.
- **Training** opportunities on timely and relevant topics, such as investigative techniques and emerging crime. Examples include *Narcotics-Related Financial Investigations*, *Technology Threats and Trends in Narcotics Investigations*, and *Investigating Drug Trafficking Organizations*.
- Law enforcement-sensitive **briefings and publications**, such as the *Drug and Substance Abuse: CBD Special Research Report*, the *Current Medical Marijuana Laws in the Southeast* publication, and the *Drug Concealment Report: Traffickers' Unusual Places*.

RISS Impact

Every year, agencies and officers who use RISS report that they were able to seize millions of dollars and remove dangerous contraband from communities. During FY2019, there was a significant spike in this area due to reports from agencies in the MAGLOCLLEN region that **seized 32,242 pounds of cocaine, valued at more than \$1.5 billion**, and currency and property valued at **\$14.6 million**. As a result, FY2019 seizures reported by agencies using RISS was **valued at more than \$1.7 billion**. **RISS provides an excellent return on investment to our nation.**

In addition, the RISS Centers developed **86,292 analytical products**, loaned **3,001 pieces of specialized equipment**, responded to **49,565 requests for research and technical assistance**, helped train **45,435 individuals**, and provided other investigative services to officers and analysts investigating crime. Agencies using RISS services reported that they **arrested 2,593 suspects, located 1,551 individuals, prosecuted 460 cases, and resolved 2,175 cases**, in part, because of the support from RISS.

Although impressive, these statistics only tell part of the story. It is the real-life everyday successes that demonstrate the impact and value of RISS. **To view narcotics-related and other shared successes submitted by agencies and officers on how RISS has helped their investigations, visit www.riss.net/Impact.**

The NNOAC urges Congress to provide funding for RISS at a level that enables the program to strengthen the services it provides to all of law enforcement. RISS plays a significant part in helping law enforcement personnel stay safe while supporting thousands of investigations. **The NNOAC urges Congress to fund RISS at \$48 million for FY2021.**