



# ATF News

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives  
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## **ATF National Response Team Joins Investigation Into Georgia Refinery Blast and Fire**

PORT WENTWORTH, Ga., — The National Response Team (NRT) from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) entered the investigation into the Feb. 7, 2008, explosion and fire at the Imperial Sugar Refinery in Port Wentworth, Ga., at the request of the Georgia State Fire Marshal's Office.

Phil Durham, NRT special agent in charge of this activation, said the NRT arrived on scene yesterday and will work in concert with the host of other local, state and federal agencies involved in the investigation.

Since 1978, ATF's NRT brings definitive expertise and an array of state-of-the-art equipment to the investigation of major fires and explosion incidents. Four regional components, organized geographically, to cover the United States comprise the NRT. The team can respond within 24 hours to assist state and local law enforcement or fire service personnel with onsite investigations.

The NRT component normally has 13-18 members, including veteran special agents who have post-blast and fire origin-and-cause expertise; forensic chemists; explosives enforcement officers; fire protection engineers; accelerant detection canines; explosives detection canines; and intelligence, computer forensic and audit support. A fleet of fully equipped response vehicles is strategically located throughout the United States to provide logistical support.

ATF's partnership with federal, state and local officers is vital to the most effective processing efforts at a "post-blast" or fire scene. The NRT capitalizes on that by working alongside its partners in reconstructing the scene, identifying the seat of the blast or the origin of the fire, conducting interviews and sifting through debris to obtain evidence related to the explosion or fire.

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In addition to investigating hundreds of large fire and explosion scenes, the NRT trucks were deployed for the 2001 terrorist attack on the Pentagon, the Olympics and other major sporting events in the United States, presidential inaugurations and the national political conventions, and major international conferences. This is the eighth NRT activation in fiscal year 2008 and the 647th since the program began in 1978.

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