Introduction & Background to RITA

Background

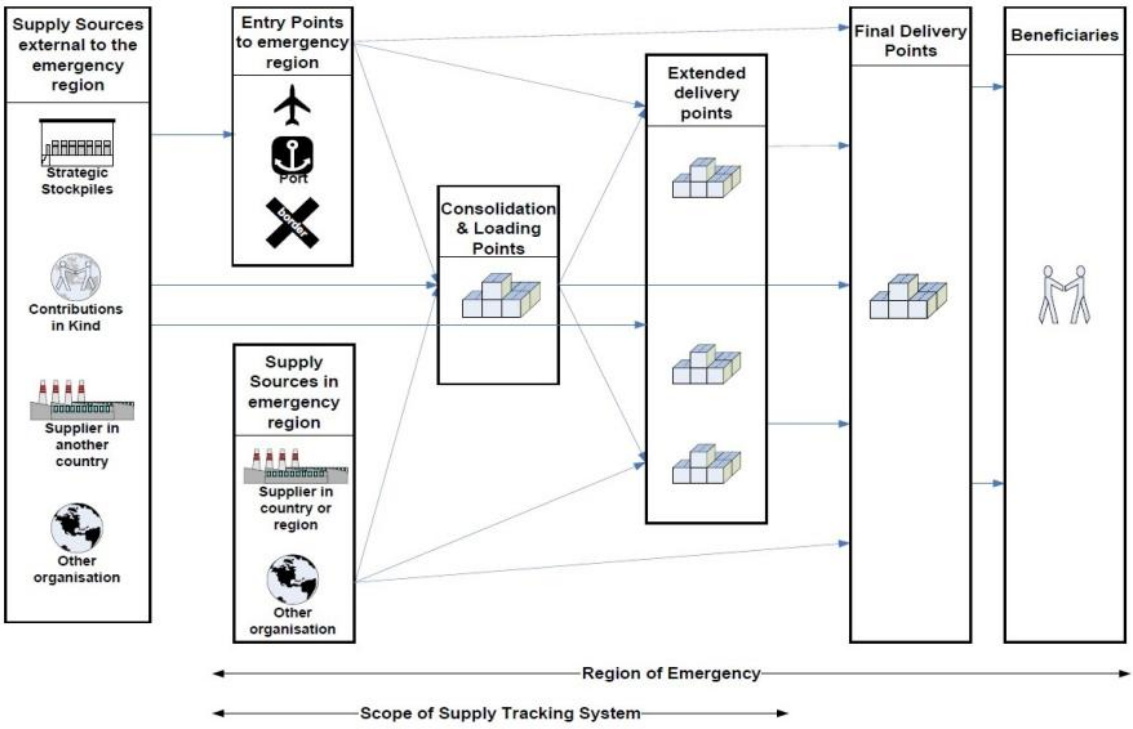
WFP and the Logistics Cluster support the broader humanitarian community during an emergency by providing logistical services, covering the storage and transportation of supplies (commonly known as "**Relief Items**") from various entry points to extended points of delivery. Managing the information necessary to perform this task effectively is complex and time-consuming. Although the basic aim across all operations is the same – the tracking of cargo - the underlying operational requirements often differ widely, which led to the development of a variety of tracking solutions – ranging from white-boards, Excel spread sheets and Access databases, or some combination of the three.

In most cases, the tools developed were specific to a particular operation. This meant users with experience in one operation had to learn a completely new set of procedures and tools when placed in a new operation. It also resulted in information gathered during an operation effectively being discarded, as it was impossible to compare data across different operations.

RITA was developed in response to these shortcomings. By using a single system across multiple operations, procedures can be standardized, training becomes more efficient, and statistics can be accurately compared between operations.

Scope of Service Provision

The diagram below shows the scope of service provided by the Logistics Cluster during an emergency operation:



The Logistics Cluster tracks humanitarian food and non-food cargo within an emergency

response, wherever the Logistics Common Transport or Storage Services are being used. Cargo movements within an operation that *do not* use the common service provision are outside the responsibility of the Logistics Cluster.

In other words, the transfer of goods from the customer to the initial delivery point; and the transfer of goods from the Extended Deliver Point (EDP) to the beneficiaries is the responsibility of the partner and are therefore explicitly outside the scope of the tracking system.

Goods are tracked from initial arrival at a designated entry point. The goods then travel through various Consolidation & Loading Points (CLP). Tracking ends once the goods leave the final Extended Delivery Point.

Purpose

RITA is a tool to manage the logistics of transporting (mainly non-food) cargo for the humanitarian community. The main purposes of the system are:

- **Manage incoming cargo** – both direct pick-up from customers' warehouses; and delivery by a customer to cluster-controlled warehouse.
- **Manage cargo in transit** – from determining vehicle requirements and schedules to answering customer enquiries about the status and whereabouts of their cargo.
- **Manage customs requirements**, by having a better view of what each consignment contains.
- **Manage outgoing cargo** – both releases (where the customer picks up their goods from the cluster-controlled warehouse); and deliveries (to a customer-specified address).
- **Improve customer service** - Organisations need to know where their goods are in the delivery chain, if only at a high level – In transit, Received, Dispatched, Delivered, etc.
- **Basic warehouse management** reporting and monitoring.
- **Reporting operation**-wide statistics.

This translates into a number of specific features:

- Maintain a single reference point for the goods over the lifetime of the consignment (Consignment ID).
- Track the movement of all goods with full transparency, via a DHL-style online tracking mechanism (Consignment Tracking Number). Because RITA is internet-based, customers can now independently see the progress of their goods through the use of a computer-generated tracking number to ensure confidentiality.
- Simplify the complex process of scheduling vehicles over multi-point routes – this is currently done at dispatch time. The dispatch operator can split a single consignment to different vehicles and plan a multi-stop route.

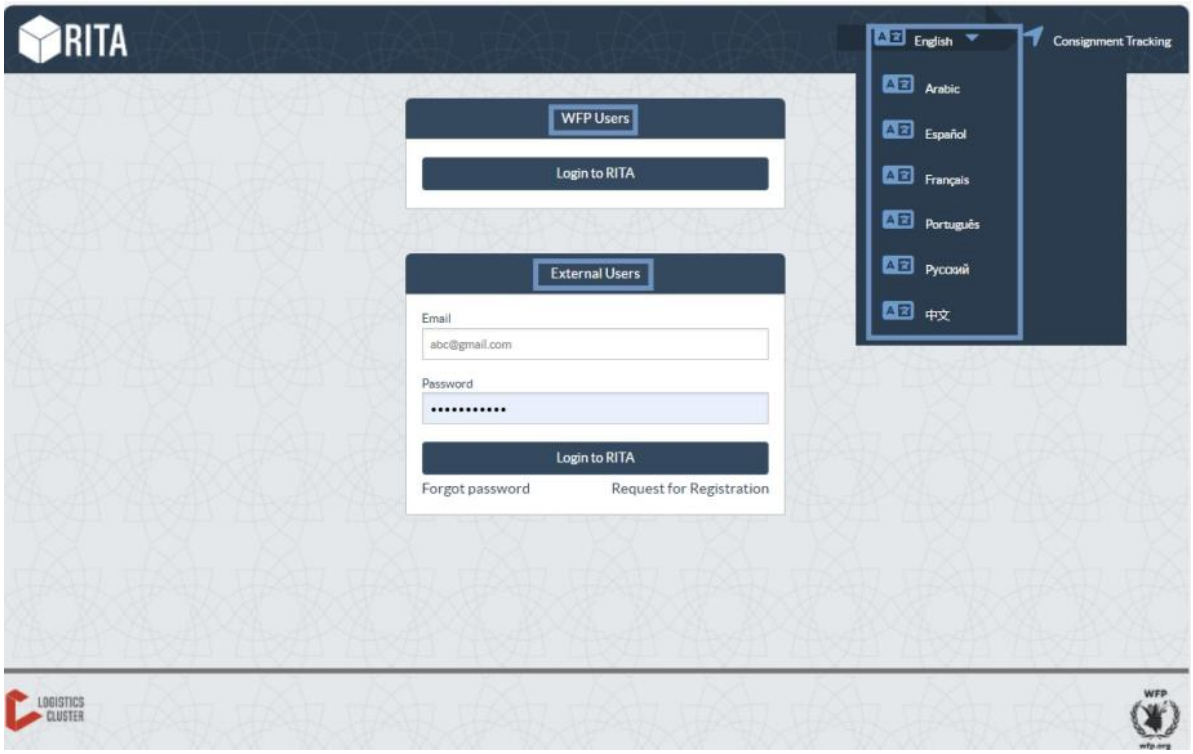
Accessing and Navigating RITA

RITA Website

To access RITA, open your web browser (Google Chrome is recommended as the default browser), and enter the appropriate URL (for the Logistics Cluster: https://rita.logcluster.org, for On-Demand Service Provision: https://rita.wfp.org).

A login screen will appear, and the operator must provide the details of their login ID (email address) and password.

By default, the language used is English. However, the operator has the option to switch to Spanish, French, Portuguese, Arabic, Russian, and Chinese language.

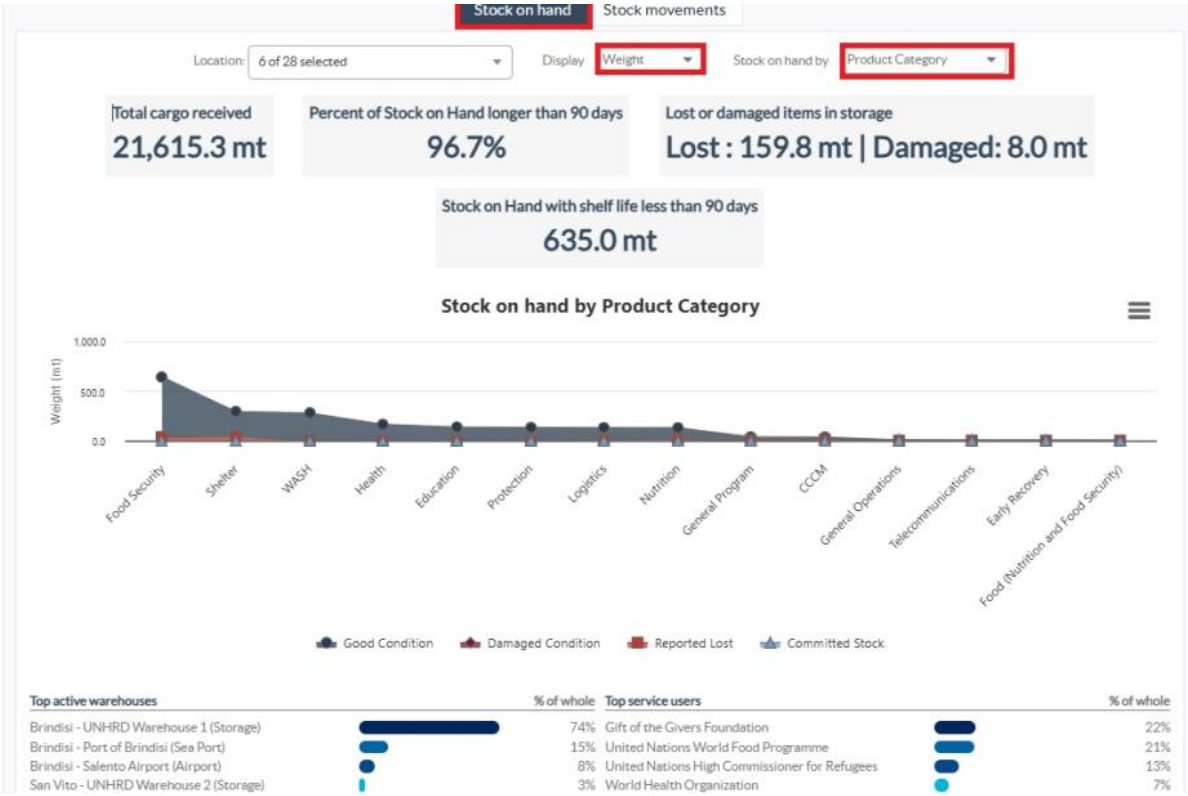


Logging in

Operators with WFP email addresses can type their email addresses and sign in by clicking on "**Login with WFP password**" and using their corporate password.

For other email addresses, email RITA GLOBAL atrita.global@wfp.org to request access. Once RITA Administrators assign access to the User ID (usually the email address), the operator is given a default password. Type these values into the "**Email**" and "**Password**" fields and click "**Login**".

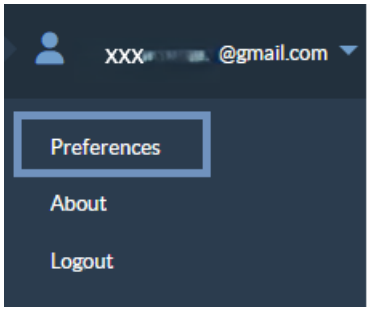
You will now be looking at the RITA Main Menu:



RITA provides automatic account notifications that notify users of account and password expiration in advance.

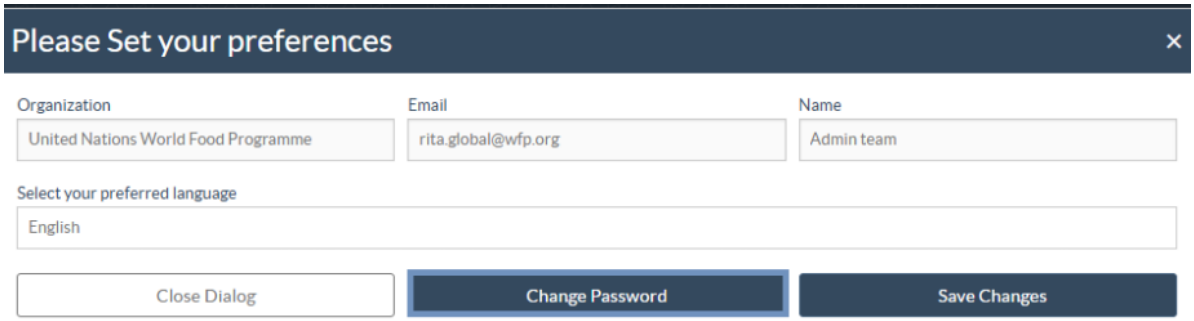
Note: For External Users, the password must be changed after logging in. To change the password, follow the steps below.

Step 1: After logging in to RITA, click on Preferences from the user interface, as shown in the screenshot.



Step 2: The Preferences dialog box will open. This screen displays the user's organization, email address, name, and preferred language.

Step 3: Click on the Change Password button within the Preferences dialog.



Step 4: Enter the required password details following the on-screen instructions. Click Save Changes to confirm and apply the new password.

Navigating RITA

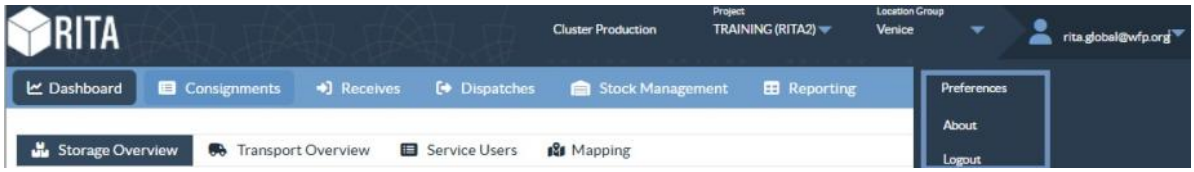
The RITA Main Menu has the following key elements listed below:

RITA Logo: Clicking the RITA logo from anywhere within RITA will return the operator to the Main Menu screen.

Project: This option displays the current project and lets the operator choose if access has been granted to many

Location Group: When the operator clicks on the '**Location Group**" option, a drop-down menu with all the sites within the current project appears.

User Email: When the operator clicks on the email address, a drop-down menu appears with three options explained below:



- **Preferences**: This tab allows the operator to change their language preference. Currently, the available options for RITA users are English, French, and Spanish.
- **About:** Clicking the "About" option will display the user's ID and details about the server.
- **Logout**: Clicking the "Logout" link will exit RITA.

Customize Columns

RITA provides a flexible Customize Columns feature across various screens allowing users to tailor their data views based on operational needs and preferences. This functionality lets users display only the most relevant columns of information.

On the Consignment screen, users can click the '**Customize Columns**" button to access a comprehensive list of available fields.

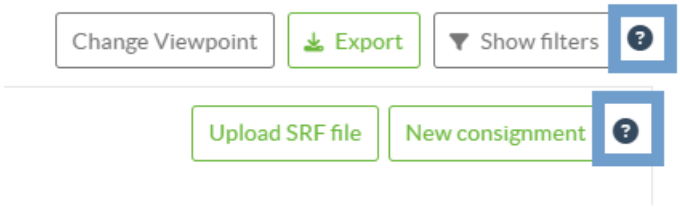
These include:

- Core fields like Consignment, Reference, Sender, Receiver, Destination, Status, consignment created date, Total Weight (kg) and Total Volume (m^3).
- Operational details like Attachments, Sub-project description, Cold Chain, Dangerous Goods, Fragile, Regulated, Tracking code, Created by, Expiry Dates, First Expiry Date, Total Value (USD), Batch Numbers, Remarks, Transport Unit Quantity and Expected Arrival Date.
- The Specific columns available vary from page to page, and are based on context.

By checking or unchecking the boxes next to each field, users can control what is displayed on their screen. Once the desired fields are selected, clicking "Save" will apply the new view.

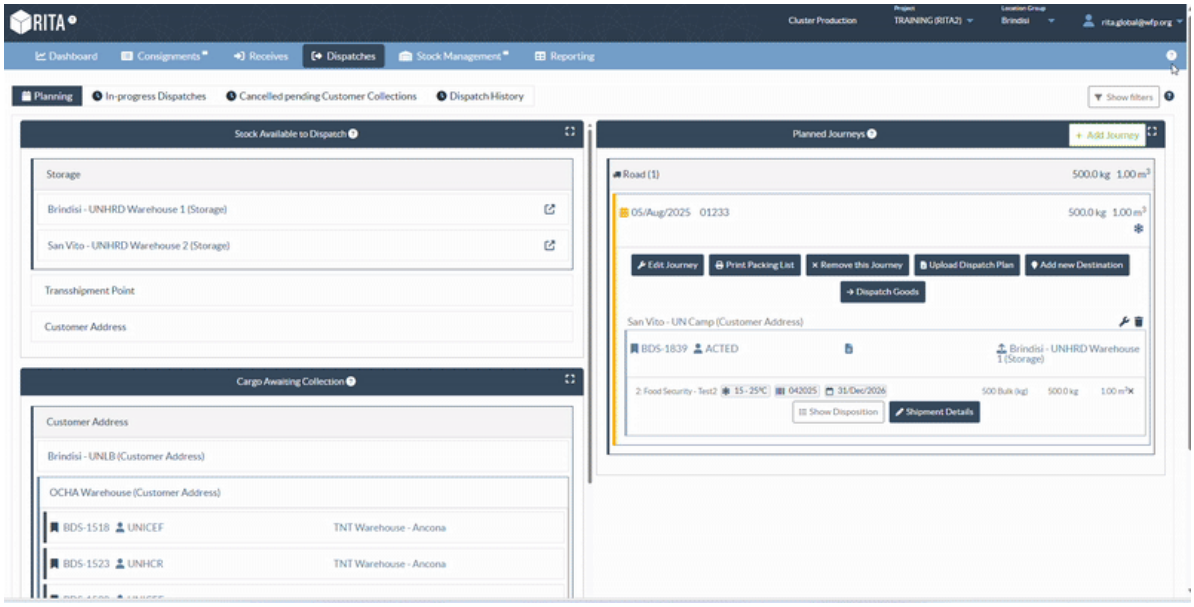
Help Icons

Across various tabs within RITA (such as **Dispatches**, **Consignments** and **Stock Management**), users will notice a **small question mark icon** next to section titles (e.g., "Dispatches" as shown in the image below).



This **Help Icon** is an interactive support feature. When clicked, it redirects users to the relevant section of the **RITA Online User Guide**, providing step-by-step instructions and helpful context specific to that functionality.

For example: In the **Dispatch Planning** tab, clicking the help icon beside "Stock Available to Dispatch" will open the guide on how to plan a journey using available stock.



Note: The Help Icon is also available for RITA users submitting service requests to the Logistics Cluster using the Service Request Form (SRF) and Release Order Form (ROF).

Clicking the icon will redirect users to the corresponding online instruction pages, such as the Online SRF Instructions or Online ROF Instructions, where they can find detailed guidance on how to correctly complete and submit the forms.

Dashboard

The dashboard provides the operator with a snapshot of performance to date. The graphing dashboard allows operators to select multiple variables (weight, volume, consignments), select date ranges, select locations, and transport routes, and, in some instances, overlay data. For details on the dashboard tab, please refer chapter "Reporting- Dashboard".

RITA Automatic Notifications

RITA sends automatic emails to notify partners and cargo owners about any changes to their shipments or consignments. Below are some of the conditions under which the automatic emails are sent:

RITA's user-friendly interface effortlessly enables individuals to submit service requests online in six different languages. Furthermore, it can automatically send notifications in English, Spanish, French, Portuguese, Russian, and Chinese, ensuring effective communication with a diverse user base.

Account and password Expiration reminder:	RITA provides automated notifications one week in advance to remind users of upcoming account and password expirations.

Password Reset and Confirmation Email:	RITA automatically notifies users to reset their password with a password reset link and sends confirmation email after the password has been reset.
Service Request Form Submission:	Service requests submitted through manual or online SRF will trigger alert emails to requestors and RITA operators, notifying key personnel and documenting the workflow. If the owner of the cargo is different from the requestor of the service, RITA sends a separate email to each of them.
Online Service Request Reminder:	When a user has pending service requests submitted online and they have not been verified, RITA sends a reminder email to the customer to verify their submitted request.
Service Request Rejected:	When service requests submitted by users are rejected, the cargo owner will be notified, including notes for the rejection.
Service Request Accepted:	When service requests submitted by users are approved, the person who submitted the online service request will be notified about the acceptance of their request. They will also receive the cargo tracking ID number along with a hyperlink to the tracking page. From there, the user can track the disposition of the cargo.
Cargo Received:	When cargo from multiple consignments is received in a single location, RITA sends automatic email notifications to the cargo owners and partners (if different than the owners).
Release Order Submitted:	Release order requests submitted through manual or online form will trigger alert emails to requestors and RITA operators.
Release Order Rejection Notification:	When a release order request is rejected by the RITA operator, the person who submitted the release order request will be notified, along with rejection notes.
Cargo Dispatch:	When a single journey includes cargo from multiple consignments and is dispatched to multiple locations/recipients, RITA automatically sends email notifications to cargo owners and recipients (if different from the owner) when the cargo is dispatched on a vehicle.
Cancellation of Dispatch:	If a dispatch is cancelled, cargo owners and recipients (if different from the owner) will receive automatic notifications of the changes. RITA operators will be required to provide an explanation for the cancellation of the dispatch.