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NIMS (National Incident Management System)

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#118

**HOT
topic**

September 14, 2005
NIMS (NATIONAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM)
Ray Crouch Sr., Fire Management Consultant

> **Two critical dates are approaching.**
> - Your city must be **NIMS awareness compliant** by **October 1, 2005**.
> - Your city must be **fully NIMS compliant** by **October 1, 2006**.

WHAT IS NIMS?

The National Incident Management System (NIMS) is the nation's first standardized approach to incident management and response. This integrated system makes America safer by establishing a uniform set of processes, protocols, and procedures that all emergency responders, at every level of government, will use to conduct response actions. This system ensures that those involved in emergency response operations understand what their roles are and have the tools they need to be effective.

This system encompasses much more than the Incident Command System (ICS), although ICS is a critical component of the NIMS. It also provides a common foundation for training and other preparedness efforts, for communicating and sharing information with other responders and with the public, for ordering resources to assist with a response effort, and for integrating new technologies and standards to support incident management. For the first time, all of the nation's emergency responders will use a common language and a common set of procedures when working individually and together to keep America safe. The NIMS ensures that they will have the same preparation, the same goals and expectations, and most importantly, that they will be speaking the same language.

WHO MUST COMPLY WITH NIMS?

The NIMS requires that federal, state, territorial, tribal, and local governments (city and county) comply.

WHAT MUST BE DONE BEFORE THE FIRST CRITICAL DATE OF OCTOBER 1, 2005?

1. **Complete the NIMS Awareness Course "National Incident Management System (NIMS), an Introduction" IS 700.**

This independent study course developed by the Emergency Management Institute (EMI) explains the purpose, principles, key components and benefits of NIMS. The course is available online and will take between 45 minutes to three hours to

complete. The course is available on the EMI Web page at http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/is700.asp.

2. **Formally recognize the NIMS and adopt the NIMS principles and policies.**

Every city in Tennessee should adopt a resolution to formally adopt the NIMS. A sample resolution is attached to assist you in formally adopting the NIMS.

3. **Establish a NIMS baseline by determining which NIMS requirements you already meet.**

Many cities in Tennessee have already implemented many of the concepts and protocols identified in the NIMS. The 2004 DHS Homeland Security Grant Program encouraged grantees to begin utilizing NIMS concepts, principles, terminology, and technologies. The NIMS Integration Center (NIC) has developed the NIMS Capability Assessment Support Tool (NIMCAST). The NIMCAST is a Web-based self-assessment system that states, territories, tribes, and local governments can use to evaluate their incident response and management capabilities. This useful tool identifies the requirements established within the NIMS and can assist you determine the extent to which you are already compliant, as well as identify the NIMS requirements that you currently are not meeting.

4. **Establish a time line and develop a strategy for full NIMS implementation during the period of October 1, 2005, to September 30, 2006.**

Cities must comply fully with NIMS implementation before October 1, 2006. A time line of implementation must be developed before October 1, 2005. This time line should lay out a plan of how each city will comply during the federal fiscal year beginning October 1, 2005, and ending September 30, 2006.

5. **Institutionalize the use of the Incident Command System (ICS).**

If a city is not already using ICS, it must institutionalize the use of ICS (consistent with the concepts and principles taught by DHS) across the entire response system. The 9/11 Commission Report recommended national adoption of the Incident Command System to enhance command, control, and communications capabilities. All federal, state, territory, tribal, and local jurisdictions will be required to adopt the ICS in order to be compliant with the NIMS. If your city adopts the attached sample resolution, you will comply with this requirement.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF OUR CITY DOES NOT COMPLY WITH NIMS?

Your ability to obtain future grants from most federal agencies will be highly jeopardized, if not impossible, if your city is not NIMS compliant.

WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION ABOUT NIMS?

You can find complete documentation about NIMS at either of the two following Web sites: http://www.nimsonline.com or http://www.fema.gov/nims.

The IS 700 NIMS Introduction class and test can be found at http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/is700.asp.

For more information, please contact Ray Crouch, MTAS Fire Management Consultant, at (615) 532-6827.

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THE UNIVERSITY *of* TENNESSEE

Resolution No. _____

A Resolution to Adopt the
National Incident Management System

WHEREAS, emergency response to critical incidents, whether natural or manmade, requires integrated professional management; and

WHEREAS, unified command of such incidents is recognized as the management model to maximize the public safety response; and

WHEREAS, the National Incident Management System (NIMS) has been identified by the federal government as being the requisite emergency management system for all political subdivisions; and

WHEREAS, failure to adopt NIMS as the requisite emergency management system may preclude reimbursement to the political subdivision for costs expended during and after a declared emergency or disaster and for training and preparation for such disasters or emergencies; now, therefore:

Be it resolved by the (Town of) (City of) (County of) _____, Tennessee:

SECTION 1. The (City) (Town) (County) adopts the NIMS concept of emergency planning and incident command.

SECTION 2. In furtherance of NIMS, it is the policy of this (City) (Town) (County) to train public officials and employees responsible for emergency management.

SECTION 3. Directs that incident managers and response organizations in our jurisdiction train and exercise the Incident Command System (ICS) and use it in their response operations.