

NIMS ALERT: 04-07

National Review of Incident Command System (ICS) All-Hazard Competencies

The U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) and the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG), working on behalf of the NIMS Integration Center, have identified and compiled the all-hazard core competencies for each ICS position identified in the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and in the NWCG Wildland Fire Qualification System Guide (PMS 310-1, April 2006).

ICS position competencies are the basis for position specific training, position task books, job aids, and other performance-based documents.

This national review is intended to provide an opportunity for comments from all stakeholders prior to inclusion of these competencies in the NIMS National Standard Curriculum Training Guidance and 5-Year NIMS Training Plan.

There are three primary benefits of identifying competencies:

- First, because competencies are a national “benchmark,” they standardize qualifications without interfering with local decision-making about training.
- Second, shared competencies make interagency cross-over and collaboration easier.
- Third, competencies are a critical component for the development of performance-based training.

It is often difficult to distinguish between the terms “competencies”, “behaviors,” “tasks,” and “learning objectives.”

- Competency - A broad description that groups core behaviors necessary to perform a specific function.
- Behavior – A general description of an observable activity or action demonstrated by an individual in a particular context.
- Task – A specific description of a unit of work activity that is a logical and necessary action in the performance of a behavior; how the behavior is demonstrated or performed in a particular context.
- Learning Objective. A statement that describes the intended outcome of a training class, program, or evolution. It identifies the condition, the task, and the standard to which the student must achieve.

It is recognized that competencies among Type 1, 2, and 3 ICS positions appear to be very similar, and this similarity may hide critical differences in proficiency level and the environment or type of incident of where the position is expected to perform. These critical differences are typically captured in the behaviors of each competency. There may also be critical additional competencies for positions within specific disciplines; however, these discipline specific competencies are not addressed in this document.

The ICS position competencies can be accessed for review and can be downloaded from the NIMS website at http://www.fema.gov/emergency/nims/ics_competencies.shtm. If you would like to request a comment form to submit comments, please email Tara.Kelly@dhs.gov. However, while a comment form will help assure clarity and consistency, it is not a requirement. You may also submit your comments directly to that email address. Comments must be submitted by March 25, 2007 to be considered.



New York State Department of State
Office of Fire Prevention and Control
41 State Street
Albany, NY 12231-0001

- phone: (518) 474-6746
- fax: (518) 474-3240
- fire@dos.state.ny.us
- <http://www.dos.state.ny.us/fire/firewww.html>