

U.S. Fire
Administration



FEMA

DHS ANNOUNCES REVISED NATIONAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

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WASHINGTON, D.C. -- The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) today released a revised National Incident Management System (NIMS) - the national standard for incident management. NIMS establishes standardized incident management processes, protocols, and procedures that all federal, state, tribal and local responders will use to coordinate and conduct response actions.

NIMS expands on the original version released in March 2004 by clarifying existing NIMS concepts, better incorporating preparedness and planning and improving the overall readability of the document. The revised document also differentiates between the purposes of NIMS and the National Response Framework (NRF) by identifying how NIMS provides the action template for the management of incidents, while the NRF provides the policy structure and mechanisms for national-level policy for incident management.

"The National Incident Management System has been the single most significant improvement in incident management since the Department of Homeland Security was formed in 2003," FEMA Administrator David Paulison said. "It has enhanced interoperability among emergency responders at all levels of government and is the product of a collaborative effort involving hundreds of emergency personnel from across the nation. We incorporated lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina, clarified incident command system concepts, increased emphasis on planning and mutual aid, expanded the intelligence/investigation function, and better aligned the NIMS document with the National Response Framework," said Paulison.

With the oversight of FEMA, the newly released NIMS followed an extensive revision involving over 100 partners from all levels of government, private sector, nongovernmental organizations (NGO), and subject matter experts representing a broad spectrum of emergency management and incident response disciplines. Throughout three official nationwide comment periods, FEMA reviewed nearly 6,000 comments from more than 280 individuals and organizations, including extensive review and recommendations made by the National Advisory Council (NAC).

The basic tenets of NIMS remain the same. There have been several improvements to the revised NIMS document which will aid in readability and usefulness of preparing, preventing, and responding to incidents. For example, the revised document places greater emphasis on the role of preparedness and has reorganized its components to mirror the progression of an incident. Recognizing the importance of private sector partners and NGOs in incident response, FEMA has ensured that those entities have been more fully integrated throughout NIMS. The new document is consistent with the NRF, and together they provide a single, comprehensive approach to incident management.

Further information on preparedness programs is available at www.dhs.gov and www.fema.gov.

FEMA coordinates the federal government's role in preparing for, preventing, mitigating the effects of, responding to, and recovering from all domestic disasters, whether natural or man-made, including acts of terror.



NYS Department of State

OFFICE OF
**FIRE PREVENTION
& CONTROL**

phone 518.474.6746

fax 518.474.3240

email fire@dos.state.ny.us