

National Incident Management System (NIMS)

With the issuance of HSPD 5 by President Bush, the National Incident Management System (NIMS) was established as the basis for the overall governance of emergency response by 1st responders at the Federal, State and local level. One of the criteria established by HSPD 5 for the continued eligibility of State and local government to receive homeland security support was the adoption and adherence to NIMS. In support of the Presidential Directive, NEMA as State Administrative Agency, has been directly involved in the creation of the Nebraska NIMS Implementation Plan and is overseeing the process for the Lt. Governor. Knowing this is a new process; there has been a lot of confusion concerning NIMS and the certification of NIMS, it is our hope we can bring some clarity on how to achieve NIMS compliance at the local level.

Within Nebraska it was determined that IS100 & IS700 (independent study) would be the baseline for NIMS compliance. To support the State adoption of NIMS, an executive order issued by Governor Heineman, dated March 04, 2005 directed the State to adopt NIMS by October 2005. A NIMS Implementation Plan was developed and approved by the Governor's Homeland Security Policy Group and Lt. Governor Sheehy in March of 2005.

The NIMS Implementation Plan outlines the baseline for NIMS compliance is (IS100 & IS700) and identifies that each state agency/local jurisdiction will have to determine their level of compliance after meeting the established baseline. The NIMS Implementation plan can be found at the NEMA web site at www.nema.ne.gov. Each agency/jurisdiction needs to develop their NIMS Implementation Plan identifying their level of NIMS by using the compliance chart. The NIMS Implementation Plan Template is also on the NEMA web site to assist local jurisdictions with meeting compliance. 1st responders must recognize this is the start of an evolutionary process and initially we are only establishing a baseline at the State and local level. As noted in the implementation plan, as 1st responders have more responsibility with their organizations, the level of required training will increase. At both the State and local level, long term implementation plans for both training and exercising will need to be in place to maintain NIMS compliance.

Local jurisdictions have several options when taking the IS100 & 700 courses. If justified NEMA can provide training on both courses and assistance with the NIMS Implementation Plan. Additionally, both courses are provided via the web at www.fema.gov/training and can be taken on an individual basis. Once you have taken IS100 & 700 NEMA encourages local 1st responders to use our power-point and instruct others in your community/agency. Whether a 1st responder takes the courses through NEMA, in a group class at the local level, or via the web, it is imperative the twenty-five question test be taken either online or in the paper version to receive your FEMA NIMS certificate and show compliance.

FEMA in conjunction with the NIC (NIMS Integration Center) has recently developed a online assessment tool that will help assist us as a State with determining our level of compliance. The NIMCAST (NIMS Capability Assessment Support Tool) is a seventy-five question online assessment. It is our plan to role out the NIMCAST by the January of 2006, allowing each county the ability to assess and report their level of compliance. More information will be made available on the use of NIMCAST in the near future through the local emergency management director. The NIMCAST assessment tool can be found at <http://www.fema.gov/nimcast/index.jsp>.

Please don't hesitate to call Henry Tamasi, NEMA Exercise and Training Coordinator at (402) 471-7349 or Tonya Smith, NEMA Exercise Training Officer at (402) 471-7176, if you have any questions concerning NIMS and the state plan.