

Fact Sheet

The NIMS Integration Center
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NATIONAL EMERGENCY RESPONDER CREDENTIALING SYSTEM

The development of a national credentialing system is a fundamental component of the National Incident Management System (NIMS). According to the NIMS, “credentialing involves providing documentation that can authenticate and verify the certification and identity of designated incident managers and emergency responders” to ensure that response personnel “possess a minimum common level of training, currency, experience, physical and medical fitness, and capability” for the roles they are tasked to fill.

The NIMS Integration Center initiated the development of a national credentialing system to help governments at all levels identify, request and dispatch qualified emergency responders from other jurisdictions when needed.

A national credentialing system ensures that personnel resources requested from another jurisdiction to assist in a response operation are adequately trained and skilled. A national system to verify the identity and qualifications of emergency responders will not provide automatic access to an incident site. This system can serve to prevent unauthorized – self-dispatched or unqualified personnel – access to an incident site.

The NIMS Integration Center will work with existing state, territorial or discipline-specific credentialing bodies toward national recognition for multi-jurisdictional response under mutual aid agreements.

The main components of a proposed credentialing system are: eligible volunteers; certifications and qualifications standards; credentialing organizations; credentialing information that can easily identify personnel and verify certifications, training, and licenses; and a record-keeping system.

To support this credentialing initiative, the NIC is using working groups to identify job titles that should be credentialed as well as the minimum qualification, certification, training, education, licensing, and physical fitness requirements for each position. Working groups will represent the following disciplines: Incident Management, Emergency Medical Services, Fire/HazMat, Law Enforcement, Medical and Public Health, Public Works, and Search and Rescue.

Currently active groups include the Incident Management, Emergency Medical Services, Fire/HazMat, Public Works, and Search & Rescue working groups. The NIC is finalizing working group rosters for the remaining disciplines.