



Homeland Security

Dear Governor:

The purpose of this letter is to provide information on the National Incident Management System (NIMS) Fiscal Year (FY) 2006 implementation requirements. Hurricane Katrina was a stark reminder of how critical it is for our nation to approach incident management in a coordinated, consistent, and efficient manner. We must be able to come together, at all levels of government, to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from any emergency or disaster. Our operations must be seamless and based on common incident management doctrine, because the challenges we face as a nation are far greater than the capabilities of any one jurisdiction. The NIMS is our nation's incident management system, and recent events have taught us that full implementation of NIMS among all jurisdictions and all levels of government is must be achieved as quickly as possible.

As you are aware, Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5 "*Management of Domestic Incidents*" required the adoption of NIMS by all Federal departments and agencies. This directive also requires that Federal preparedness assistance funding for states, territories, local jurisdictions and tribal entities be dependent on NIMS compliance. This letter transmits two FY 2006 NIMS Implementation Matrices. The first matrix identifies the state and territorial level NIMS implementation requirements, while a separate matrix identifies the NIMS implementation requirements that must be taken at the tribal and local government levels. I hope that the two distinct matrices will facilitate the state's coordination and communication with tribal and local jurisdictions regarding NIMS implementation.

The NIMS was issued by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) on March 1, 2004, to provide a comprehensive and consistent national approach to all-hazard incident management at all jurisdictional levels and across functional disciplines. In a September 8, 2004, letter to the nation's governors, DHS outlined a phased approach to NIMS implementation, with full compliance required by September 30, 2006. The September 2004 letter also outlined the important steps that states, territories, tribes and local jurisdictions would need to take during FY 2005 (October 1, 2004-September 30, 2005) to ensure minimum compliance with the NIMS during the first year of implementation. A copy of the September 2004 letter is available on the NIMS Web page at: <http://www.fema.gov/nims>.

Over the past year, with the support of the NIMS Integration Center (NIC), states, territories, tribes, and local jurisdictions have made significant progress in implementing this important new system. The implementation of the NIMS within every state, territory, tribal and local jurisdiction creates a baseline capability that, once established nationwide, will be the foundation for our prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery strategies.

The NIMS Integration Center
DHS/FEMA
October 4, 2005

In addition to the above NIMS implementation efforts, the NIC has worked closely with the Federal departments and agencies as they developed plans to fully adopt and implement the NIMS. The NIMS implementation requirements were incorporated into (FY) 2005 Federal preparedness assistance programs. The NIC will continue to work with the Federal departments and agencies to ensure federal implementation of NIMS and that all FY 2006 Federal preparedness assistance programs reflect and support the NIMS implementation at the state, territory, tribal, and local government levels as appropriate.

This letter and the enclosed matrices outline the important steps that state, territorial, tribal, and local entities must take during FY 2006 (October 1, 2005- September 30, 2006) to become fully compliant with the NIMS. Jurisdictions will be required to meet the FY 2006 NIMS implementation requirements as a condition of receiving federal preparedness funding assistance in FY 2007. However, it is important to recognize that NIMS implementation will not end in FY 2006. The NIMS is a dynamic system, and the doctrine as well as the implementation requirements will continue to evolve as our prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery capabilities improve and our homeland security landscape changes. Further, new personnel will continue to need NIMS training, and NIMS processes will still have to be exercised in future years.

Most important of the FY 2006 requirements, states and territories must establish a planning process that incorporates the appropriate procedures to ensure the effective communication and implementation of NIMS requirements across the state, including tribes and local governments. This planning process must include a means for measuring progress and facilitate the reporting of NIMS implementation among its tribal and local jurisdictions.

The successful implementation of the NIMS depends on the participation and integration of all state, territorial and community-based organizations, including public, non-governmental, and private organizations that may have a role in preventing, preparing for, responding to, or recovering from an incident. States, territories, tribes and local jurisdictions should therefore consider and include appropriate organizations in their NIMS implementation efforts, including private sector emergency medical and hospital providers, transportation systems, utilities, and special facilities such as industrial plants, nuclear power plants, factories, military facilities, stadiums and arenas. Moreover, full NIMS implementation is a dynamic and multi-year phase-in process with important linkages to the National Response Plan (NRP), the Homeland Security Presidential Directive - 8 (i.e. the "National Preparedness Goal") and the National Infrastructure Protection Plan (NIPP). Future refinement to the NIMS will evolve as policy and technical issues are further developed and clarified at the national level. This may well result in additional requirements being issued by the NIC as to what will constitute continuous full NIMS compliance in FY2007 and beyond.

Additional information about NIMS implementation and resources for achieving compliance are available through the NIC. Once again, this year's federal preparedness assistance program documents will also address state and local NIMS compliance. The NIC web page, <http://www.fema.gov/nims>, is updated regularly with information about the NIMS and additional guidance for implementation. The NIC may also be contacted at the following address:

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Thank you for your support in implementing the NIMS. I look forward to continuing our collective efforts to better secure the homeland and protect our citizens.

Sincerely,

Michael Chertoff
Secretary

Enclosures:

Summary of NIMS Implementation Schedule, Requirements, and Certification Process
FY 2006 State and Territorial Compliance Activities Matrix
FY 2006 Tribal Government and Local Jurisdiction Compliance Activities Matrix

cc: State Administrative Agency
State Emergency Management Director
State Homeland Security Advisor
Tribal Association Chairs
DHS Directorates and Offices
Homeland Security Advisory Council