

Fact Sheet

The NIMS Integration Center
DHS/FEMA · May 2006
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NIMS Essential Standards List

One of the primary responsibilities of the NIMS Integration Center is to identify guidelines, protocols and standards that will help emergency responders and managers from all levels of government organize effective responses to emergency incidents and hazards, natural disasters and terrorism.

The Center's aim is to establish an Essential Standards List that would represent a set of the most significant national standards for NIMS. The initiative is utilizing a two-pronged approach that is intended to enhance compatibility between national-level standards for NIMS and those developed by other public and private organizations as well as professional groups.

Through a cooperative agreement with the NIMS Integration Center, Eastern Kentucky University (EKU) is developing and implementing a process to identify and evaluate operational and technology-based standards that will provide implementation guidance for NIMS. EKU is examining voluntary consensus standards and existing guidance that could be used to support NIMS implementation and compliance.

The process involves a successive, interactive, intensive, on-going effort to consider the thousands of specific requirements in existing standards to determine if they are consistent with concepts and principles in NIMS, and, if they support implementation or compliance. The Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) is developing a content analysis tool which will help sort through the standards requirements for the NIMS Integration Center through an arrangement the Center has with the DHS Science and Technology Directorate.

The NIMS Integration Center also is working with standards development organizations to encourage the integration of NIMS concepts into standards that are now under development or being revised, such as NFPA 1600 (Disaster Emergency Management and Business Continuity Programs) and NFPA 1561 (Emergency Services Incident Management Systems), ASTM 2413-04 (Hospital Emergency Incident Command Systems), NFPA 472 (Standards for Professional Competence of Responders to Hazardous Materials Incidents) and NFPA 473 (Standard for Competencies for EMS Personnel Responding to Hazardous Materials Incidents).

Work also is ongoing with EKU to develop a Statement of Requirements, which will help provide additional focus and clarity to the concepts and principles in NIMS. EKU is putting together groups of subject matter experts and stakeholders to help examine and discuss the implications and effects of adopting existing voluntary consensus standards as NIMS standards.

In a related effort, the Center is working on the identification of standardized criteria for the qualification, training and certification of response personnel, which will promote compatibility among all national level standards including those developed by public, private and professional groups. It is facilitating the development of a system of typed and categorized resources, to include equipment, teams and personnel.

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