U.S. Department of Agriculture
Homeland Security Office

NATIONAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM and INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM TRAINING

BACKGROUND

One of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's highest priorities is the protection of American agriculture and the food, fiber and forestry infrastructures.   In March 2003, Secretary Ann M. Veneman directed the Department's agencies to use USDA's newly created National Interagency Incident Management System (NIIMS)[1] to mobilize maximum resources more effectively in support of common goals.

NIIMS offered the first unified incident management structure across all USDA agencies and enhanced USDA's effectiveness in responding to a wide range of emergencies, including natural disasters as well as accidental or deliberate incidents that may threaten the U.S. food supply, critical infrastructure or economy.

Used successfully for decades by the Forest Service and other emergency response agencies, the NIIMS model provided a broader range of emergency management resources to USDA agencies involved with agricultural biosecurity incidents.

USDA used NIIMS in response and recovery efforts for avian influenza in

2002, Exotic Newcastle disease in 2003 and Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy in 2004, with resounding success.

NIIMS BECOMES NIMS

Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5, *Management of Domestic Incidents,* issued in February 2003[2] requires a single comprehensive approach to domestic incident management under the National Incident Management System (NIMS)[3]. NIMS embraces the Incident Command System (ICS) and establishes the Nation's first unified response structure that is scalable to fit the needs and complexity of a disaster event while

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[1] Secretary's Memorandum 1800-1, USDA, March 17, 2003.

[2] HSPD-5, The White House, February 28, 2003.
[3] NIMS, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, March 1, 2004.

unifying Federal, State and local responders under one emergency management approach. USDA now operates under NIMS.

OVERVIEW OF THE INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM (ICS)

ICS is one of five components of the National Incident Management System (NIMS). It is a standardized on-scene emergency management concept specifically designed to allow its user(s) to adopt an integrated organizational structure equal to the complexity and demands of single or multiple incidents without being hindered by jurisdictional boundaries. Some jurisdictions use the term "Incident Management System" (IMS) to describe such an organization. For purposes of NIMS, the terms are intended to be synonymous.

ICS is a combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures and communications operating within a common organizational structure designed to aid in the management of resources at incidents. It was developed through a cooperative interagency (local, State, Federal) effort. ICS is applicable to small day-to-day situations as well as very large and complex incidents.

ICS TRAINING PROGRAM ELEMENTS

The ICS Training Program will consist of four focus areas:

1. **General ICS Courses:** The NIMS ICS national training curriculum is divided into four courses: I-100, I-200, I-300 and I-400. These four courses serve as the foundation for understanding the Incident Command System and as the core curriculum of the training program.

2. **Position-Specific Courses:** NIMS ICS training contains position-specific courses for key positions within the ICS organization, such as Operations Section Chief, Planning Section Chief, Unit Leaders, etc. These are higher level courses for persons with a significant level of understanding and expertise with ICS. The courses are designed to provide students knowledge, skills and abilities required of an ICS position and teach how to perform successfully using ICS.

3. **Position-Specific Workshops:** Due to the limited availability of existing position-specific courses, position-specific workshops will be held. These workshops will be geared toward field unit, district, regional and area personnel. They will emphasize the practical aspects of carrying out the responsibilities of an ICS position within the Department, as well as information flow within the ICS organization. These workshops will consolidate information from two or more position-specific courses.

4. **Incident Management Team Training:** This category of training includes small-group or team dynamics and is designed to aid the people who work together within an ICS organization to be a productive, efficient and high performing unit. This training, an essential component of the ICS training program, is in addition to the training listed above. It is

expected that all personnel who serve on Incident Management Teams in Command and General Staff positions will attend this training.

OVERVIEW OF GENERAL ICS TRAINING

I-100: Course is titled "Introduction to the Incident Command System." It consists of one module (Module 1) that introduces the student to the ICS organization, basic terminology and common responsibilities. The course is designed to be 2 hours long and will be delivered via a Web-based, self-study training medium. This course will be required for all USDA personnel who may be involved in response operations and individuals who seek to improve their understanding of ICS. Completion of I-100 is a prerequisite for additional ICS training.

I-200: This course is titled "Basic Incident Command System." It includes five modules (Modules 2 through 6) that describe the Principles and Features of ICs, Organizational Overview, Incident Facilities, Incident Resources, and Common Responsibilities Associated with ICS Assignments. The course is 4 hours long and will be delivered via a Web-based, interactive approach. This course will be required for personnel who will be involved in response operations.

I-300: Course is titled "Intermediate Incident Command System". It includes five modules (Modules 7 through 11) and is 27 hours in length. Intermediate ICS expands on Basic ICS. It provides more description and details about the organization and operation of ICS and management of resources. It describes the duties of all positions, including Air Operations, and provides examples of how the essential principles are used in incident and event planning. I-300 will be taught utilizing a combination of classroom and Web-based training. This course is required for all individuals who will work at the Unit Leader, Division or Group,and Command and General Staff positions.

I-400: Course is titled "Advanced ICS" and consists of Modules 12 through 15. I-400 emphasizes large-scale organizational development, roles and relationships of the primary staff, and planning, operational, logistical and fiscal considerations related to large and complex incident and event management. It describes the application of Area Command and the importance of interagency coordination on complex incidents and events and is 22 hours in length. I-400 will be delivered utilizing a combination of classroom and Web-based training. This course is required for all personnel who perform in Command and General Staff positions.

I-401: This course is titled "Multi Agency Coordination (MAC)" and consists of Module 16. This module discusses the roles of the Emergency Operations Centers and the Multi-Agency Coordination Systems and is 4 hours long. I-401 will be delivered in a classroom setting utilizing classroom and scenario-based simulations. This course is required for individuals who will serve on a MAC team.

I-402: Course is titled "ICS for Executives" and consists of Module 17. This module is an orientation for executives, administrators and policy makers. It provides a basic understanding of ICS for individuals who establish or implement policy but who are normally not part of the on-scene ICS organization. This course lasts 2 hours and is delivered in a classroom setting.

TRAINING TIMELINES

USDA ICS training will be implemented incrementally over the next 3 years. The Forest Service's National Advanced Resource and Technology Center (NARTC) is revising ICS training to fit the needs of USDA agencies.

I-100 and I-200 – Available on-line at www.GoLearn.gov .

I-300 and I-400 – Available in late 2004.

I-401 & I-402 – These courses are now available throughout the United States.

Incident Management Team (Command and General Staff) Training – Course to be delivered in October of 2004 for USDA employees who will serve on Incident Management Teams in Command and General Staff positions.

Position-Specific Courses – Expected completion is early 2005.

DEPARTMENT CONTACT

For additional information, contact Greg Power of the USDA Homeland Security Office at (202) 205-3587.

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