

NIMS *Basic*

FEMA 501-3
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Revision 0

Preparedness

I. Purpose: This document describes specific measures and capabilities that jurisdictions and agencies should develop and incorporate into an overall system to enhance operational preparedness for incident management on a steady-state basis in an all-hazards context.

II. Scope: Incident management officials should leverage existing preparedness efforts and collaborative relationships to the greatest extent possible in developing, refining, and expanding preparedness programs and activities within their jurisdictions and organizations.

A. Public Preparedness The operational preparedness of our nation's incident management capabilities is distinct from the preparedness of the individual citizens and private industry. Public preparedness for domestic incidents is an important element of homeland security, but is beyond the scope of the NIMS.

B. Extract This document is extracted from FEMA 501, *National Incident Management System*. Refer to the NIMS in the event of conflicting information.

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IV. Definitions:

<i>EOC</i>	Emergency Operations Center
<i>EOP</i>	Emergency Operations Plan
<i>FOG</i>	Field Operations Guide
<i>field operations guide</i>	A durable pocket or desk guide that contains essential information required to perform specific assignments or functions.
<i>handbook</i>	See <i>field operations guide</i> definition.
<i>IC/UC</i>	Incident Command/Unified Command
<i>ICS</i>	Incident Command System
<i>Job Aid</i>	A checklist or other aid that is useful in performing or training for a job.
<i>mutual aid agreements</i>	The means for one jurisdiction to provide resources, facilities, services, and other required support to another jurisdiction during an incident.
<i>NIC</i>	NIMS Integration Center

<i>NIMS</i>	National Incident Management System
<i>operations manual</i>	See <i>standard operating procedure</i> definition.
<i>overview</i>	A brief concept summary of an incident-related function, team, or capability.
<i>SOP</i>	Standard Operating Procedure
<i>standard operating procedure</i>	A complete reference document that details the procedures for performing a single function or a number of interdependent functions.

V. Process:

A. Concepts and Principles Under the NIMS, preparedness is based on the following core concepts and principles.

1. Capability Levels Establish and sustain prescribed levels of capability necessary to execute a full range of incident management operations.

Implement through a continuous cycle of:

- Planning
- Training
- Equipping
- Exercising
- Evaluating,
- Taking action to correct and mitigate.

Focus on:

- Guidelines
 - Protocols
 - Standards for:
 - Planning
 - Training
 - Personnel qualification and certification
 - Equipment certification
 - Publication management
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2. Unified Approach A major objective of preparedness efforts is to ensure mission integration and interoperability in response to emergent crises across functional and jurisdictional lines, as well between public and private organizations.

3. Publications

The NIMS provides or establishes processes for providing:

- Guidelines.
- Protocols.
- Standards for planning, training, qualifications and certification.
- Publication management.

National-level preparedness standards related to the NIMS will be maintained and managed through a multi-jurisdictional, multi-discipline center, using a collaborative process. See FEMA 501-7, *NIMS Basic - Ongoing Management and Maintenance*.

4. Mitigation

Mitigation activities are important elements of preparedness and provide a critical foundation across the incident management spectrum from prevention through response and recovery.

Example: Key activities include the following:

- Ongoing public education and outreach activities designed to reduce loss of life and destruction of property.
 - Structural retrofitting to deter or lessen the impact of incidents and reduce loss of life, destruction of property, and impact on the environment.
 - Code enforcement through such activities as zoning regulation, land management, and building codes.
 - Flood insurance and the buy-out of properties subjected to frequent flooding, etc.
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B. Achieving Preparedness

Individual Federal, State, tribal, and local jurisdictions must:

- Implement the preparedness cycle in advance of an incident.
- Include appropriate private sector and nongovernmental organizations in the implementation.

The NIMS provides the tools in the following sections to ensure and enhance preparedness. These include:

- Preparedness organizations and preparedness programs that provide or establish processes for planning, training and exercises.
 - Personnel qualification and certification.
 - Equipment certification.
 - Mutual aid.
 - Publication management.
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1. Preparedness Organizations

Individual jurisdictions are responsible for coordinating various preparedness activities among all appropriate agencies within a jurisdiction, across jurisdictions, and with private organizations. Preparedness organizations that conduct this coordination:

- Range from individuals to small committees to large standing organizations.
- Serve as on-going forums for coordinating preparedness activities in advance of an incident.
- Represent a wide variety of committees, planning groups, and other organizations that meet regularly and coordinate with one another to ensure an appropriate focus on planning, training, equipping and other preparedness requirements.

The needs of the jurisdictions involved will dictate how frequently such organizations must conduct their business and how they are structured.

a) *Multi-Jurisdictional*

Preparedness organizations should be multi-jurisdictional in nature where preparedness activities need to be routinely accomplished across jurisdictions.

Preparedness organization at all jurisdictional levels should:

- Establish and coordinate emergency plans and protocols to include public communications and awareness.
 - Integrate and coordinate the activities of the jurisdictions and functions within their purview.
 - Establish the standards, guidelines, and protocols necessary to promote interoperability among member jurisdictions and agencies.
 - Adopt standards, guidelines, and protocols for providing resources to requesting organizations, to include protocols for incident support organizations.
 - Set priorities for resources and other requirements.
 - Ensure the establishment and maintenance of multi-agency coordination mechanisms, to include:
 - EOCs.
 - Mutual aid agreements.
 - Incident information systems.
 - Non-governmental organization and private sector outreach.
 - Public awareness and information systems.
 - Information and operations security.
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2. Preparedness Programs

Individual jurisdictions should establish programs that:

- Address the requirements for each step of the preparedness cycle (planning, training, equipping, exercising, evaluating, and taking action to correct and mitigate).
- Adopt relevant NIMS standards, guidelines, processes and protocols.

3. Preparedness Planning

The principal types of plans listed below:

- Describe how to use personnel, equipment, and other governmental and non-governmental resources to support incident management requirements.
- Represent the operational core of preparedness and provide mechanisms for setting priorities, integrating multiple entities and functions, establishing collaborative relationships, and ensuring that communications and other systems effectively support the complete spectrum of incident management activities.

a) EOP

Each jurisdiction should develop an EOP that will:

- Define the scope of preparedness and incident management activities necessary for that jurisdiction.
- Describe organizational structures, roles and responsibilities, policies, and protocols for the provision of emergency support
- Facilitate response and short-term recovery activities (which set the stage for successful long-term recovery).
- Drive decisions on long-term prevention and mitigation efforts or risk-based preparedness measures directed at specific hazards.
- Be flexible enough for use in all emergencies. A complete EOP should describe the purpose of the plan, situation and assumptions, concept of operations, organization and assignment of responsibilities, administration and logistics, plan development and maintenance, and authorities and references.
- Contain functional annexes and hazard-specific appendices along with a glossary.
- Pre-designate jurisdictional and/or functional area representatives to the IC/UC whenever possible to facilitate responsive and collaborative incident management.

Public preparedness is generally beyond the scope of the NIMS. The EOP should, however, include pre-incident and post-incident public awareness, education, and communications plans and protocols.

b) Procedures

Procedure development is required in accordance with the law for certain risk-based/hazard-specific programs. There are four standard levels of procedural documents:

- Overview.
- SOP or Operations Manual
- FOG or Handbook.
- Job Aid.

Each organization covered by the EOP should develop procedures that translate the tasking to that organization into specific action-oriented checklists for use during incident management operations, including how the organization will accomplish its assigned tasks.

Document and implement the procedures with:

- Checklists.
- Resource listings.
- Maps.
- Charts.
- Other pertinent data.
- Mechanisms for notifying staff.
- Processes for obtaining and using equipment, supplies, and vehicles.
- Methods for obtaining mutual aid.
- Mechanisms for reporting information to organizational work centers and EOCs
- Communications operating instructions, to include private sector and non-governmental organization connectivity.

c) Preparedness Plans

Preparedness plans describe the process and schedule for:

- Establishing preparedness.
 - Identifying and meeting training needs (based on expectations the EOP has outlined).
 - Developing, conducting, and evaluating exercises.
 - Correcting identified deficiencies.
 - Arrangements for procuring or obtaining required incident management resources through mutual aid mechanisms.
 - Plans for facilities and equipment that can withstand the effects of hazards the jurisdiction may face.
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d) *Corrective Action and Mitigation Plans*

Corrective action plans are activities to implement procedures based on lessons learned from actual incidents or training and exercises.

Mitigation plans describe activities that can be taken prior to, during, or after an incident to:

- Reduce or eliminate risks to persons or property.
 - Lessen the actual or potential effects or consequences of an incident.
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e) *Recovery Plans*

Recovery plans describe actions beyond rapid damage assessment and those necessary to provide immediate life support for victims.

Long-term recovery planning involves identifying strategic priorities for:

- Restoration.
 - Improvement.
 - Growth.
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4. *Training and Exercises*

In order to improve integration and interoperability, incident management organizations and personnel at all levels of government, and within the private sector and nongovernmental organizations must:

- Be appropriately trained in order to improve all-hazards incident management capability nationwide.
 - Participate in realistic exercises, including multi-disciplinary and multi-jurisdictional events.
 - Participate in private sector and nongovernmental organization interaction.
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a) *Courses*

Training involving standard courses helps ensure that personnel at all jurisdictional levels and across disciplines can function effectively together during an incident. The courses focus on:

- Incident command and management.
 - Incident management structure.
 - Operational coordination processes and systems.
 - Discipline-specific and agency-specific subject matter expertise.
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b) *NIC*

The NIC will assist in this function by:

- Facilitating the development and dissemination of national standards, guidelines, and protocols for incident management training and exercises, to include consideration of existing exercise and training programs at all jurisdictional levels.
 - Facilitating the use of modeling and simulation capabilities for training and exercise programs.
 - Facilitating the definition of general training requirements and approved training courses for all NIMS users. These requirements
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will:

- Be based on mission-to-task analysis.
- Address critical elements of an effective national training system to include field-based training, specification of mission-essential tasks, and requirements for specialized instruction.
- Cover fundamental administrative matters such as instructor qualifications and course completion documentation.
- Review and approve (with the assistance of national professional organizations and with input from Federal, State, tribal, local, and private sector and non-governmental entities) discipline-specific requirements and training courses.

c) Curriculum

The training approach developed for ICS serves as a model for course curricula and materials applicable to other components of NIMS. ICS training is organized around four course levels:

- ICS-100, Introduction to ICS.
- ICS-200, Basic ICS.
- ICS-300, Intermediate ICS.
- ICS-400 Advanced ICS.

Course materials have been developed and shared by a number of Federal, State, tribal, local and other specialized training providers in a nationally recognized effort. This allows use of a broad set of training providers and allows programs to be tailored to the specific circumstances faced at the Federal, State, tribal, and local levels.

5. Personnel Qualification and Certification

NIMS preparedness is based on national standards for qualification and certification of emergency response personnel.

Standards will help ensure that participating agencies and organizations field personnel who possess the minimum knowledge, skills, and experience necessary to execute incident management and emergency response activities safely and effectively. Standards typically include:

- Training.
- Experience.
- Credentialing.
- Currency.
- Physical and medical fitness.

Personnel that are certified for employment in support of an incident that transcends interstate jurisdictions through the Emergency Management Assistance Compacts System will be required to meet national qualification and certification standards. Federal, State, local, and tribal certifying agencies; professional organizations; and private organizations should credential personnel for their respective jurisdictions.

a) *National Level*

To enable this qualification and certification function at the national level, the NIC will:

- Facilitate the development and/or dissemination of national standards, guidelines, and protocols for qualification and certification.
 - Review and approve the discipline-specific requirements submitted by functionally oriented incident management organizations and associations, with the assistance of national professional organizations and with input from Federal, State, local, tribal, private sector, and non-governmental entities.
 - Facilitate the establishment of a data maintenance system to provide incident managers with the detailed qualification, experience, and training information needed to credential personnel for prescribed incident management positions.
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6. *Equipment Certification*

A critical component of operational preparedness is the incident management and emergency responder organization acquisition of mission essential task equipment that will perform to certain standards, including the capability to be interoperable with equipment used by other jurisdictions.

To enable national-level equipment certification, the NIC, with input from of national professional organizations, Federal, State, tribal, local, and private sector and non-governmental entities, will:

- Facilitate the development and/or publication of national standards, guidelines, and protocols for equipment certification. This effort includes the incorporation of standards and certification programs already in use by incident management and emergency response organizations nationwide.
 - Review and approve lists of emergency responder equipment that meet national certification requirements.
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7. *Mutual Aid Agreements*

Each jurisdiction should be party to a mutual aid agreement (such as the Emergency Management Assistance Compact) with appropriate jurisdictions from which they expect to receive or to which they expect to provide assistance during an incident. This would normally include all neighboring or nearby jurisdictions, as well as relevant private sector and non-governmental organizations. States should participate in interstate compacts and look to establish intrastate agreements that encompass all local jurisdictions. Mutual aid agreements are also needed with private organizations such as the American Red Cross to facilitate the timely delivery of private assistance at the appropriate jurisdictional level during incidents.

a) *Provisions*

At a minimum, mutual aid agreements should include the following elements or provisions:

- Definitions of key terms used in the agreement.
- Roles and responsibilities of parties.
- Procedures for requesting and providing assistance.
- Procedures, authorities, and rules for payment, reimbursement, and allocation of costs.
- Notification procedures.
- Protocols for interoperable communications.
- Relationships to other agreements among jurisdictions.
- Workers compensation.
- Treatment of liability and immunity.
- Recognition of qualifications and certifications.
- Sharing agreements as required.
- Authorized officials from each of the participating jurisdictions will collectively approve all mutual aid agreements.

8. Publication Management

Publication management requirements include:

- Develop naming and numbering conventions.
- Review and certification of publications.
- Methods for publications control.
- Identify sources and suppliers for publications and related services.
- Manage publication distribution.

NIMS publication management includes the following types of products:

- Qualifications information
 - Training course and exercise information
 - Task books
 - ICS training and forms
 - Other necessary forms
 - Job aids
 - Guides
 - Computer programs
 - Audio and video resources
 - Templates
 - "Best practices"
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9. NIC

To enable national-level publication management, the NIC, will:

- Facilitate the development, publication, and dissemination of national standards, guidelines, and protocols for a NIMS publication management system.
- Facilitate the development of general publications for all NIMS users as well as their issuance via the NIMS publication management system.
- Review and approve the discipline-specific publication management requirements and training courses submitted by professional organizations and associations, with:
 - Assistance of appropriate national professional standards making, certifying, and accrediting organizations.
 - Input from Federal, State, local, tribal government and private sector and nongovernmental organizations.

VI. References:

FEMA 501, *National Incident Management System*

FEMA 501-7, *NIMS Basic - Ongoing Management and Maintenance*

Courses

ICS-100, *Introduction to ICS*

ICS-200, *Basic ICS*

ICS-300, *Intermediate ICS*

ICS-400 *Advanced ICS*

VII. Supersedure:

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