NIMS
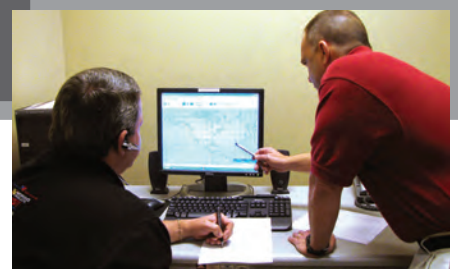## Interoperability Test Laboratory

In 2008, the NIMS Support Center (NIMS SC) laboratory in Somerset, Kentucky, became the first in the nation to receive accreditation by the American Association for Laboratory Accreditation (A2LA) for testing emergency response information technology.

Funded by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the laboratory supports evaluations that aim to verify that systems conform to interoperability standards and can exchange critical messages during disasters. The accreditation is valid for all evaluations of technologies involving the following standards:

• Common Alerting Protocol (CAP)
• Emergency Data EXchange
  Language (EDXL) Standards

To achieve accreditation status, the laboratory was required to meet general requirements for the competencies of testing and calibration laboratories, as provided in ISO/IEC 17025:2005. A laboratory's fulfillment of these requirements means the laboratory meets both the technical competence requirements and management system requirements that are necessary for it to consistently deliver technically valid test results.

Most evaluations conducted at the laboratory today are part of the NIMS Supporting Technology Evaluation Program (NIMS STEP), which is designed is to assist responders when making purchases to ensure products conform to national standards and guidelines. The facility is also equipped to support evaluations of incident management systems and operational tests using the Simulated Emergency Operations Center (SEOC).

For additional information about the laboratory and its capabilities to assist you in meeting your test and evaluation needs, contact staff at: NIMSLAB@nimssc.net.