



**PENNSYLVANIA EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT AGENCY
2605 Interstate Drive
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17110-9364**



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The purpose of this package is to provide information about the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and to stress why we need to be fully NIMS compliant by FY 2007. Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5 "*Management of Domestic Incidents*" required the adoption of NIMS. First and foremost, our purpose in emergency management and the emergency response community is to protect lives, property and ensure public safety throughout Pennsylvania. We need to leverage all resources and funding to streamline our operations as one team to accomplish our purpose as a community. The NIMS is much more than just a list of required elements; it is a new approach to the way we prepare for and manage incidents, one that will lead to a more effective utilization of resources and enhanced prevention, preparedness and response capabilities. Moreover, full NIMS implementation is a dynamic and multi-year phase-in process with important linkages to the National Response Plan (NRP), Homeland Security Presidential Directive - 8 (i.e. the "National Preparedness Goal") and the National Infrastructure Protection Plan (NIPP).

In recent events, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita devastated the southern coastal states. The emergency response community did not fully comply with the NIMS and failed to utilize the Incident Command System (ICS) as stated in the NIMS, to manage the incident. Mass confusion and lack of coordination caused in-efficient use of many resources and many other resources were not used. If the NIMS and ICS were used, and used correctly, the response and recovery efforts may have worked more efficient and effectively. This is based on the management of the fires that devastated thousands of acres in California; the response and recovery efforts were seamless and efficient. The emergency response community managing that event utilized the NIMS and ICS principles, procedures and structure which proved to streamline operations and effectively utilized all their resources.

Lessons learned from these recent events provide us the opportunity to fully see the advantages of the NIMS and ICS. When NIMS is fully implemented, states and local jurisdictions will be able to:

- Ensure common and proven incident management doctrine, practices and principles are used to plan for, protect against, respond to and recover from emergency incidents and preplanned events;
- Maintain a response operation capable of expanding to meet an escalating situation and the ability to integrate resources and equipment from intrastate and interstate mutual aid agreements, state-provided assistance and federal government response;
- Order and track response assets using common resource typing and definitions, and draw on mutual aid agreements for additional assistance;
- Establish staging and allocation plans for the re-distribution of equipment, supplies and aid coming into the area from other localities, states or the federal government through mutual aid agreements;

- Conduct situational assessments and establish the appropriate ICS organizational structure to effectively manage the incident; and
- Establish communication processes, procedures and protocols that will ensure effective interoperable communications among emergency responders, 9-1-1 centers and multi-agency coordination systems such as Emergency Operations Centers (EOC).

Beginning in FY 2007, which starts on October 1, 2006, all federal preparedness funding will be conditioned upon full compliance with the NIMS. Federal preparedness assistance includes (but is not limited to) the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program, the Homeland Security Grant Program, the Urban Area Security Initiative Grant Program, the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Grant Program, and the CDC Public Health Emergency Preparedness Cooperative Agreement. The current list of grant programs is attached; it is broken down into the program areas: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), Departments of Justice (DOJ), Agriculture (USDA), Energy (DOE), Homeland Security (DHS), Health & Human Services (HHS), Education, the Interior (DOI) and Transportation (DOT). These organizations providing the preparedness grant funds affect many programs throughout Pennsylvania. In order to prevent possible loss of this funding, all state, county and local agencies, commissions and departments; law enforcement; career and volunteer fire, EMS and other emergency response organizations; and all other entities involved in and/or support of preparedness, response to, recovery from, and mitigation to all-hazards in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania must comply with the NIMS requirements. By completing the FY 2005 activities as well as the FY2006 activities outlined in the FY 2006 NIMS requirement matrix, state and local governments will have achieved what is considered to be full NIMS implementation by FY 2007.

In some instances smaller communities may not have the resources to implement all elements of NIMS on their own. However, by working together with other localities in their regions, they will be able to pool their resources to implement NIMS. We encourage and support a regional approach to NIMS implementation among jurisdictions.


This NIMS Information Package is provided to your organization to assist in the implementation of the NIMS. The information contained in this package is referenced from the letter to all the governors by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) on September 8, 2004; the NIMS document; Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5 (HSPD-5); the National Response Plan (NRP); and the Homeland Security Presidential Directive 8 (HSPD-8).

This package serves as a guide explaining the NIMS compliance requirements. There are several attachments explaining each requirement and defining terminology used in the NIMS requirements. Hopefully this package will clear up any misunderstanding on what is required to become NIMS compliant. There are specific actions that state, county and local jurisdictions need to complete by September 30, 2006. As the State Administrative Agency (SAA), I will be certifying that Pennsylvania is compliant with the FY'06 NIMS requirements. To ensure compliance, I require that all counties and municipalities sign a legal document, (resolution, proclamation, certification or letter), stating their jurisdiction is compliant with the FY'06 NIMS compliance requirements. This document must be sent to my office by September 1, 2006; this will ensure Pennsylvania as a whole will meet the September 30, 2006 deadline.

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.

The Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency established a centralized point of contact for all inquires concerning the NIMS. Your questions and concerns are valuable to us and helps provide valuable information to continually update and streamline the NIMS implementation process. Please leave your contact information and your question and/or concern about the NIMS implementation process at 1-866-471-7262 or email: RA-EMNIMS@state.pa.us we will contact you as soon as possible. We would also like to invite you to visit our website www.pema.state.pa.us and click on the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) link. Once in the FAQ page click on the NIMS/NIMCAST FAQ link for more information on the NIMS.

Sincerely,



James R. Joseph
Director

Attachments:

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| Attachment 1 | Governor's Proclamation |
| Attachment 2 | National Incident Management System (NIMS) General Information |
| Attachment 3 | National Incident Management System (NIMS) Fact Sheet |
| Attachment 4 | National Response Plan (NRP) Fact Sheet |
| Attachment 5 | Summary of NIMS Implementation Schedule, Requirements and Certification Process |
| Attachment 6 | NIMS FY'06 Compliance Requirements |
| Attachment 7 | Additional NIMS Information |
| Attachment 8 | NIMS Training Requirements for FY '06 |
| Attachment 9 | NIMS Frequently Asked Questions |
| Attachment 10 | The NIMS National Standard Curriculum Training Development Guidance (October, 2005) |