



FEMA

# Fact Sheet

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NIMS Integration Center  
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## NIMS IMPLEMENTATION FOR NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

### Background

In the United States, all emergencies regardless of size or type are local events. However, when a community's resources are insufficient to respond to an incident, local government may call on nongovernmental organizations for assistance. Nongovernmental organizations are non-profit entities with an association that is based on interests of its members, individuals, or institutions and that is not created by government, but may work cooperatively with government. Such organizations serve a public purpose, not a private benefit. Examples of NGOs include faith-based charity organizations and the American Red Cross

As required under Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD)-5, the NIMS enables responders from different communities with a variety of job responsibilities to better work together. Everyone has a role to play in NIMS implementation—fire and rescue, law enforcement, hospitals and healthcare systems, transportation systems, public works, voluntary agencies, private industry, nongovernmental organizations, and many others—not only in responding to an event, but in ongoing preparedness activities as well.

### Recommended Activities for Nongovernmental Organizations

The NIMS Integration Center recommends<sup>1</sup> **14 activities** for Nongovernmental organizations that support NIMS implementation. These activities closely parallel the implementation activities that have been required of State, territorial, tribal, and local governments since 2004. Effective and consistent integration of the NIMS across Federal, State, territorial, tribal, and local governments, the private sector, and nongovernmental organizations, will result in a strengthened national capability to prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from any type of incident.

### *NIMS Adoption*

#### Recommended Activities

1. **Adopt NIMS** – Coordinate with your organizational leadership in order to advise them of your organization's intent to formally adopt NIMS.<sup>2</sup>
2. **Identify a Point of Contact** – Share this person's name, telephone number and address with your local emergency management authority. Keep this list current. When an incident occurs, this should not be the first time other entities familiarize themselves with you and visa versa. Make it a priority to meet the other POCs within your response community.

### Association to NIMS

NIMS uses a systems approach to integrate the best of existing processes and methods into a unified national framework for incident management. This framework forms the basis for

<sup>1</sup> The NIMS Integration Center has not formally endorsed official NIMS implementation activities for Nongovernmental organizations. Once appropriate stakeholders have formally reviewed and considered these recommendations, final NIMS Implementation activities may be identified and communicated to the nongovernmental community at that time.

<sup>2</sup> NGO elements receiving Federal preparedness funding, including DHS Homeland Security Grant Program and the Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI), must coordinate NIMS implementation with their respective State Administrative Agency.

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interoperability and compatibility that will, in turn, enable a diverse set of private organizations to conduct well integrated and effective incident management operations.

## ***Command and Management***

### **Recommended Activities**

1. **Use the Incident Command System (ICS)** -ICS is an excellent organizational tool. The use of ICS will align your organization with all other responding entities so that deployment is accomplished in a consistent, efficient and effective manner. ICS implementation must include the consistent application of Incident Action Planning and Common Communications Plans.
2. **Support Integrated Multi-Agency Coordination Systems (MACs)** - Ensure your organization is able to communicate with local Incident Command Posts (ICPs), local 911 Centers, local Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs), state EOCs, and regional/federal EOCs. Verify this connectivity as soon as possible.
3. **Establish a public information system** – Gather, verify, coordinate, and disseminate information, both within your organization and with others (i.e. media, local emergency management, private sector partners, and other nongovernmental organizations) during an incident.

### **Association to NIMS**

NIMS ICS enables effective and efficient incident management by integrating equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications operations. ICS is structured to facilitate activities in five major functional areas: command, operations, planning, logistics, and finance administration. ICS is also flexible and scalable to allow for the functional areas necessary to be used, and then added to or terminated as necessary.

## ***Preparedness: Planning Activities***

### **Recommended Activities**

1. **Revise Plans** - Organizational plans and SOPs should incorporate NIMS policies, principles and procedures, to include planning, training, response, exercises, equipment, evaluation and corrective actions.
2. **Promote Mutual Aid** – Establish a memorandum of understanding/memorandum of agreement with government agencies, private sector organizations, and other nongovernmental organizations, to share resources and personnel. Ensure that the agreement addresses credentials held by members of your organization.

### **Association to NIMS**

As it pertains to NIMS, preparedness is operationally focused on establishing guidelines, protocols, and standards pertinent to planning training and exercises, personal qualifications and certification, equipment certification and publication management.

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## ***Preparedness: Training***

### **Recommended Activity**

1. **Maintain NIMS Training** – Emergency preparedness and response personnel in your organization can complete training programs consistent with the NIMS National Standard Curriculum Development Guide. Training may include IS-700 *NIMS: An Introduction*, IS-800.a; *NRP: An Introduction*; Incident Command System (ICS-100) and Incident Command System (ICS-200). For guidance as to who within your organization, should participate in NIMS training, refer to: [http://www.fema.gov/emergency/nims/nims\\_training.shtm](http://www.fema.gov/emergency/nims/nims_training.shtm)

### **Association to NIMS**

NIMS represents a core set of doctrine, concepts, principles, terminology, and organizational processes to enable effective, efficient, and collaborative incident management at all levels. Additionally, NIMS addresses emergency prevention, preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation programs and activities through its training curriculum. These training courses are also attended by response organizations. Encouraging your employees/associates to attend these courses will result in a more collaborative working relationship with public and private sector partners.

## ***Preparedness: Exercises***

### **Recommended Activity**

1. **Exercise NIMS** - Participate in State, territory, regional, tribal, and/or local NIMS-based exercises.
2. **Develop NIMS-based Exercise Program** - Develop exercises that are specific to your organization's structure to test the NIMS concepts and principles (i.e. ICS)
3. **Identify Corrective Actions** – Upon completion of each exercise, your organization should identify any shortfalls that emerged in its response application of the NIMS concepts and principles. Corrective actions should be identified and applied in future exercises.

### **Association to NIMS**

Everyone that is involved in incident management should participate in realistic multi-agency, multi-discipline and multi-jurisdictional exercises to improve integration and interoperability.

## ***Resource Management***

### **Recommended Activities**

1. **Inventory Response Assets** - Inventory your response assets that are among the 120 resources that have been typed by the NIMS Integration Center, using the Resource Typing standards found at: [http://www.fema.gov/emergency/nims/mutual\\_aid.shtm](http://www.fema.gov/emergency/nims/mutual_aid.shtm). Share this inventory with your local emergency management authority. All other resources can be inventoried at the discretion of the individual NGO.

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2. **Coordinate Mutual Aid Requests** - Exercise your response asset inventory during exercises and training opportunities.

## **Association to NIMS**

Resource management coordinates and oversees the application of tools, processes, and systems that provide incident managers with timely and appropriate resources during an incident. Resources should include personnel, teams, facilities, equipment, and supplies. Your resource inventory should be maintained throughout the emergency management life cycle (prevention, preparedness, response, recovery, mitigation) in order that your organization is prepared for and able to support the event. Remember, MOAs and MOUs should be established during pre-incident times.

## ***Communication and Information Management***

### **Recommended Activity**

1. **Use Plain Language** – When communicating during a multi-agency, multi-jurisdiction, multi-discipline incident, apply standardized and consistent terminology. This includes the establishment of plain language communications standards when communicating within your organization, as well as when communicating with other Nongovernmental organizations and local emergency management organizations.

## **Association to NIMS**

Effective communications, information management, and information/intelligence sharing (i.e. biological event) are critical aspects of domestic incident management. Maintaining a common operating picture and ensuring accessibility and interoperability are principle goals of communications and information management. When operating in a multi-discipline and multi-jurisdictional incident, common language among all responders limits confusion and miscommunications.