



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

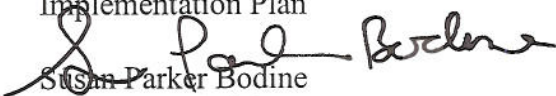
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OFFICE OF  
SOLID WASTE AND  
EMERGENCY RESPONSE

**MEMORANDUM**

**SUBJECT:** National Incident Management System (NIMS) Incident Command System (ICS) Implementation Plan

**FROM:**

  
Susan Parker Bodine  
Assistant Administrator

**TO:**

Assistant Administrators  
Associate Administrators  
General Counsel  
Chief Financial Officer  
Regional Administrators

Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD)-5, Management of Domestic Incidents requires all Federal agencies to adopt the National Incident Management System (NIMS), and by extension to implement the Incident Command System (ICS). This implementation plan outlines the steps being taken by EPA to fully incorporate NIMS ICS into Agency-wide preparedness and response activities.

While EPA is already implementing ICS, this plan provides information on policies and procedures that are under development that will advance the Agency's implementation.

I encourage you to familiarize yourself with this plan and to share it with your staff. If you or your staff have questions about this plan, please contact Roberta Runge, EPA's NIMS Coordinator at 202-564-1973.

Attachment

cc: Deputy Regional Administrators  
National Incident Coordination Team  
Superfund Division Directors



## **NATIONAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (NIMS) INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM (ICS) IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

### **PURPOSE**

This plan outlines the steps being taken by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to fully incorporate the National Incident Management System (NIMS) Incident Command System (ICS) into its national response procedures, plans, and policies, as required under Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD) -5, *Management of Domestic Incidents*, and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) NIMS Integration Center (NIC).

This plan recognizes that EPA is already implementing ICS. However, it provides an outline of the additional steps that are needed to fully and comprehensively implement ICS across the Agency. This plan provides context for EPA procedures, plans, and policies under development in relation to NIMS ICS implementation.

### **BACKGROUND**

On **February 28, 2003**, the President issued HSPD-5, directing the DHS Secretary to develop and administer a national system for incident management to provide a consistent nationwide approach for federal, State, and local governments to work effectively and efficiently together to prepare for, respond to, and recover from domestic incidents, regardless of cause, size, or complexity. All federal agencies are required to adopt NIMS and, by extension, are required to implement ICS. ICS provides a flexible and scalable management structure and common terminology, and assigns responsibilities to specific positions in order to effectively and efficiently manage an incident. The system is built around five major response management functional areas: Command, Planning, Operations, Logistics, and Finance.

On **June 27, 2003**, as a result of lessons learned from the response to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 and other subsequent major responses, the EPA Administrator introduced a new Agency-wide EPA National Approach to Response (NAR) to increase preparedness for the possibility of multiple, simultaneous Incidents of National Significance (INS) across several regions. This multi-faceted mechanism included a new management approach designed to provide consistency and coordination in addressing key aspects of a response, such as organizational elements (emergency response assets, support personnel, and national teams), exercises and training, equipment, laboratory capability/capacity, and contracting. In addition, NAR required EPA to implement ICS in its emergency response activities.

On **March 1, 2004**, the DHS Secretary issued the National Incident Management System. NIMS represents a core set of doctrine, concepts, principles, terminology, and organizational processes to enable effective, efficient and collaborative incident management at all levels. In **December 2004**, the National Response Plan (NRP) was published. NIMS and the NRP provide a comprehensive all-hazards approach to domestic incidents. The NRP can be found at:

[http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/NRP\\_FullText.pdf](http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/NRP_FullText.pdf)

EPA has been implementing NIMS ICS in a variety of ways in our emergency response activities in accordance with HSPD-5, the EPA NAR, and DHS NIMS requirements. This NIMS ICS Implementation Plan provides the roadmap for the Agency's next steps in a full and comprehensive implementation of NIMS ICS.

## **PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Assistant Administrator (AA), Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response (OSWER)** is responsible for the development of the NIMS Implementation. This function will be managed by OSWER'S Office of Emergency Management (OEM), which will ensure the coordination of plan development with all EPA program and regional offices.

**The NIMS Coordinator** serves as the chair of EPA's NIMS Integration Team (NIT), represents the Agency at national NIMS meetings and works with other federal and State response partners regarding NIMS implementation.

**The NIMS Integration Team (NIT)** is responsible for developing EPA's ICS policy, guidance documents, and training programs for NIMS Implementation. The NIT is composed of regional On-Scene Coordinators (OSCs); representatives from OSWER's Environmental Response Team (ERT) and National Decontamination Team (NDT); the Office of Water (OW); the Office of Radiation and Indoor Air (ORIA); and the Office of Criminal Enforcement, Forensics, and Training (OCEFT). They are responsible for ensuring that regional Incident Management Team (IMT) development is consistent with national guidelines; ensuring regional personnel and management are informed of ICS, NIMS and NRP updates; ensuring ICS/IMT training is accessible to responders; and coordinating with Response Support Corp (RSC) personnel through OEM.

## **PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION**

### **Training, Qualification, and Certification**

EPA has been training emergency response employees in basic ICS principles since 1997 with IMT position-specific training initiated in 2004. A comprehensive training program has been developed and is ongoing to train emergency responders, support personnel and executives on various aspects of ICS. Courses range from basic awareness to high level position-specific courses depending upon an employee's expected role in an emergency response.

To further our training and certification program, provide national consistency and meet the requirements of NIMS, an EPA Order outlining qualifications and certification standards for ICS Key Leadership Positions (KLPs) is being developed by OEM and the NIT to provide consistency nationally for personnel serving in those positions.

The National ICS Training, Qualifications and Certification Order will provide details on the level of training required for KLPs as well as a process to document that personnel have received the appropriate training and experience to qualify for a specific KLP. The Order will reflect the

national standards set by the DHS NIC. Qualified personnel who have received the appropriate ICS training, who have experience (via an actual incident or exercise) in a specific ICS position, and who meet the Core Competencies for that position will be considered for certification for a specific position by their managers. This Order will also address ICS training requirements for personnel filling non-KLP positions during a response. The Order will not replace any existing directives that pertain to programmatic training, but will list specific and required ICS training courses for field personnel.

The National ICS Training, Qualification, and Certification Order is scheduled for release in December 2007.

### **Incident Management Teams**

IMTs provide regions with well-trained and qualified personnel to staff ICS-based emergency response management teams. OEM has established a national goal to build capacity within each region to staff three full IMTs with coverage of “qualified” personnel in each of the 11 KLPs. The 11 KLPs are Incident Commander, Safety Officer, Public Information Officer, Liaison Officer, Operations Section Chief, Planning Section Chief, Logistics Section Chief, Finance Section Chief, Environmental Unit Leader, Situation Unit Leader and Resources Unit Leader.

To help facilitate nationally consistent standards for IMT activation and deployment, EPA is creating an IMT National Guidance, which will draw from the best practices identified in regional IMT guidance documents.

The IMT National Guidance is scheduled to be released in December 2007.

### **Resource Typing**

Resource typing is the categorization and description of response resources, both personnel and equipment, which are commonly utilized in emergency response operations. Under NIMS, EPA is required to meet DHS typing standards.

#### Personnel Typing

EPA is developing a national ICS roster of qualified personnel, which will provide an agency-wide view of EPA’s capabilities to respond to an INS. All field-qualified personnel including removal program personnel and RSC members will be included in the roster. The national ICS roster will be maintained by OEM at the national level and monitored by the National NIMS Coordinator.

The national ICS roster will be developed from information available in Train Trax, which is currently in use by most regions. Initially, the ERT will update Train Trax with all ICS training that has been presented by EPA since 2004. This will include all 300/400 level ICS training as well as position-specific ICS training. Once the initial upload has been completed, regions/AAs will be asked to update the information in Train Trax as needed. Additionally, regional managers will be asked to “certify” personnel as having received training in a specific

ICS position, having experience in that position (via an actual event or an exercise) and meeting the Core Competencies for that position. Core Competencies are included in the National ICS Training, Qualifications and Certification Order which is currently under development.

The national ICS roster is expected to be operational by September 2007.

### Equipment Typing

As part of EPA's resource typing effort, EPA has developed and is beginning to implement a National Equipment Tracking System utilizing common nomenclature for response equipment. The system will allow the regions to track their own equipment by function, calibration date, or repair status and to view the status of EPA equipment caches nationally. EPA contractors who manage equipment are required to update the information in the system as needed.

The National Equipment Tracking System is currently being used on a limited basis and will be fully operational by December 2007.

### **Field Tools**

Incident Management Handbook (IMH): EPA is finalizing an IMH that will provide field responders with a basic overview of command structures within ICS (Area Command, Unified Command, and Incident Command), common procedures for all positions in ICS, an overview of the basic responsibilities of specific ICS positions, and proposed organizational charts for specific types of responses. The IMH will also provide an overview of the planning process used by the Incident Command in developing tactical objectives. The IMH, while complete in terms of EPA's use of ICS, is meant to be a field responders reference document.

The IMH is scheduled for distribution in September 2007.

Job Aids: In support of the IMH, position-specific job aids for the 11 KLPs in the IMT have been drafted. Job aids are intended to be a resource for field responders during an incident. They provide guidance on the requirements of their ICS position and will be updated as needed.

The job aids are scheduled for distribution in September 2007.

### **Exercises**

HSPD-8, *National Preparedness*, requires the Secretary, DHS to develop a national preparedness goal and to establish and maintain a comprehensive exercise program to meet this goal. An interim National Preparedness Goal (NPG) was released in March 2005 and can be found at: [http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/odp/docs/InterimNationalPreparednessGoal\\_03-31-05\\_1.pdf](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/odp/docs/InterimNationalPreparednessGoal_03-31-05_1.pdf)

Consistent with HSPD-8, DHS released the National Exercise Program Implementation Plan (NEP) in April 2006. EPA formally agreed to follow the NEP requirements. Within EPA, exercise requirements are reflected in the 2007 Core Emergency Response (ER) Program, specifically Element 3, which requires all OSCs to participate in a minimum of two exercises annually. Also, each RSC member is required to participate in at least one response exercise annually.

EPA personnel have been participating in a wide variety of response exercises for many years. In order to build a more robust exercise program, minimize duplication, improve national consistency and comply with DHS requirements, OEM is developing a three-year exercise strategy consistent with the DHS NEP Implementation Plan. This strategy will identify areas of focus, types of exercises and schedules, by considering regional and headquarters needs. Potential focus areas include: pandemic influenza, NRP activations, cross-regional coordination, and strengthening relationships with State, local, and tribal partners.

The exercise strategy is scheduled for completion by the end of FY 2007.

### **Evaluation**

Implementation of NIMS/ICS will be evaluated in the annual Core ER program reviews conducted by OEM. In FY 07, there will be reviews conducted in each region and headquarters, and for each of EPA's three Special Teams.

Attachments: HSPD-5

EPA's National Approach to Response