



# The National Incident Management System: Top Ten Questions



**U.S. Department of Education, Office  
of Safe and Healthy Students**

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# Key Question 1

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- What is NIMS and why do we need it?



# Key Question 1

- NIMS is a comprehensive, national approach to incident management that is applicable at all jurisdictional levels and across functional disciplines. It is intended to:
  - Be applicable across a full spectrum of potential incidents, hazards, and impacts, regardless of size, location or complexity.
  - Improve coordination and cooperation.
  - Provide a common standard for overall incident management.



# Key Question 1

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- NIMS lays the groundwork for efficient and effective responses, from a single agency fire response to a multiagency, multijurisdictional natural disaster or terrorism response.
- NIMS provides commonality in preparedness and response efforts that allow diverse entities to readily integrate during an incident.



# NIMS Components

The NIMS structure features five integrated components:

1. Preparedness;
2. Communications and Information Management;
3. Resource Management;
4. Command and Management;
5. Ongoing Management and Maintenance
  - Supporting Technology and
  - NIMS Integration Center.



# Key Question 2

- What are the NIMS requirements that I need to implement under my grant?



# Key Question 2

- HSPD–5 “Management of Domestic Incidents”
- FY 2010 REMS grantees are required to implement the NIMS requirements for local governments as these were the published requirements during the application period
- OSDFS provides customized compliance objectives and guidance for schools



# Key Question 2

- Compliance objectives address the five NIMS components:
  1. Adoption
  2. Preparedness
    - Planning
    - Training
    - Exercise
  3. Communications and Information Management
  4. Resource Management
  5. Command and Management



# Key Question 2

- Compliance objectives:

1. Adoption

- Adopt NIMS at the district level
- Designate a single point of contact to coordinate NIMS implementation
- Ensure that Federal preparedness awards support NIMS

- 2a. Preparedness: Planning

- Develop, implement, and refine plans to incorporate NIMS and reflect the National Response Framework (NRF).
- Participate in mutual aid agreements.



# Key Question 2

- Compliance objectives (cont.):
  - 2b. Preparedness: Training
    - **IS-700.a** *NIMS, An Introduction*
    - **IS-800.b** *National Response Framework*
    - **IS-100.SCa** *Introduction of ICS for Schools*
    - **IS-200.a** *ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents*
    - **ICS-300** *Intermediate ICS for Expanding Incidents*
    - **ICS-400** *Advanced Incident Command (Recommended)*
    - **G-4022** *Incident Command System (ICS) Overview for Executive/Senior Officials*



# Key Question 2

- Compliance objectives (cont.):
  - 2c. Preparedness: Exercise
    - Incorporate NIMS into exercises
    - Plan for/and or participate in a multi-agency exercise
    - Incorporate lessons learned into emergency management plans
  - 3. Communications and Information Management
    - Apply common and consistent terminology, including plain language
    - Utilize systems to present consistent and accurate information



# Key Question 2

- Compliance objectives (cont.):
  4. Resource Management
    - Identify/inventory response assets
    - Ensure relevant and applicable interoperability standards are used in acquisition programs
    - Use response asset inventory for mutual aid requests
    - Develop a system to credential emergency personnel to ensure proper authorization and access to an incident



# Key Question 2

- Compliance objectives (cont.):
  5. Command and Management
    - Institutionalize ICS for all emergency incidents and pre-planned school events
    - Coordinate and support the use of integrated Multi-agency Coordination System, or MACs
    - Establish a public information system
    - Ensure that public information officers can gather, verify, and coordinate information



# Key Question 3

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- Who should take the required NIMS courses?



# Key Question 3

- Key personnel must take the NIMS training courses
- Schools should identify *key personnel to receive training based on their roles and responsibilities*
  1. Executive Leaders,
  2. General Personnel,
  3. Critical Personnel, and
  4. Leadership.



# Executive Leaders

- **Must be** familiar with the comprehensive systems supporting emergency management, even though they may not have a designated role in the incident command system.
- **Are often** responsible for making financial, administrative, and managerial decisions supporting the school or IHE emergency management program and will likely have very high-level responsibilities before and after an incident, as opposed to command responsibilities in the field during an actual incident response.
- Executive Leaders should take the following two courses:
  - **G-4022** *Incident Command System (ICS) Overview for Executive/Senior Officials*
  - **IS-700** *NIMS, An Introduction*



# General Personnel

- Personnel with any role in emergency preparedness, incident management, or response such as faculty and educators, school resource officers, counselors, and bus drivers.
- General personnel should complete
  - **IS-100.SCa** *An Introduction to ICS*
  - **IS-700.a** *NIMS, An Introduction*



# Critical Personnel

- Incident Commander, command staff, general staff, or member of another key campus emergency management team.
  - Command staff may include public information officer, safety officer, or liaison officer.
  - General staff may include staff serving on the operations, planning, logistics, or finance/administration branches.



# Critical Personnel (cont.)

- Critical personnel should complete
  - **IS-100.SCa** *An Introduction to ICS*
  - **IS-700.a** *NIMS, An Introduction*
  - **IS-800.b** *National Response Framework, An Introduction*
  - **IS-200.a** *ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents*



# Leadership

- **Personnel with a leadership role and are typically obligated to:**
  - command and manage during incident response in the absence of traditional incident response personnel



# Leadership Personnel (cont.)

- Leadership personnel should complete:
  - **IS-100.SCa** *An Introduction to ICS*
  - **IS-700.a** *NIMS, An Introduction*
  - **IS-800.b** *National Response Framework, An Introduction*
  - **IS-200.a** *ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents*
  - **ICS-300** *Intermediate ICS for Expanding Incidents*
  - **ICS-400** *Advanced Incident Command*



# Key Question 4

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- The NIMS online training is a great resource, however my district's staff prefer in-person trainings. Is there a way to provide the training in person and still receive a certificate of completion from FEMA?



# Key Question 4

- FEMA makes NIMS course materials available for organizations to download and use in local training efforts
- Grantees should ensure that trainers are certified to deliver the specified NIMS course
- To receive a certificate, training participants must submit the course examination to FEMA
  - FEMA Op-scan sheets
  - Allow 6-8 weeks for certificate delivery



# Key Question 5

- Do I need to train everyone in my school district on NIMS?



# Key Question 5

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- In a perfect world, yes!
- In reality, this may not be possible
- All staff, including substitutes, should have a basic knowledge of school emergency procedures
- Staff with specific responsibilities in responding to emergencies should have appropriate level of NIMS training



# Key Question 6

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- Does my school district superintendent need to complete any NIMS courses? If so, which ones?



# Key Question 6

- FEMA recommends that all officials who will be interacting with multiple jurisdictions and agencies during an emergency incident have a basic understanding of NIMS
- Recommended courses include (at a minimum):
  - **IS-100.SCa** *An Introduction to ICS*
  - **IS-700.a** *NIMS, An Introduction*



# Key Question 7

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- We have an emergency management team already in place and have pre-established names for each job to be carried out in an emergency. Why do we need to change our current team to follow the Incident Command System?



# Key Question 7

- ICS is a fundamental form of management established in a standard format
- ICS represents organizational "best practices" and has become the standard for emergency management across the country
- ICS is flexible to meet varied needs during an emergency, but should not be changed to reflect local preferences (i.e., you should not change the structure established for ICS)



# Key Question 8

- My superintendent wants to be both the Incident Commander and the Public Information Officer in an emergency. Does this model work under ICS?



# Key Question 8

- No!
- Under ICS, each person has one role, not multiple
- Each role under ICS has specific responsibilities and require different skill sets
- The role of the Incident Commander (IC) is a “full-time job”
- The Public Information Officer (PIO) may need to be off-site at a Joint Information Center



# Key Question 9

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- How is my district held accountable for being NIMS compliant? What should I do to demonstrate NIMS compliance?



# Key Question 9

- Assurance submitted with grant application
- Performance reports
- Site visits
- Documentation
  - Documentation of implementation progress (e.g., Checklist )
  - NIMSCAST



# Key Question 10

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- What NIMS compliance resources are available for schools?



# NIMS Resources for Schools

- Readiness and Emergency Management For Schools (REMS) Technical Assistance (TA) Center
- School Preparedness Website
- National Integration Center (NIC) Incident Management Systems Integration Division (IMSID)
- NIMS Resource Center
- Emergency Management Institute (EMI)



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The REMS TA Center was established in October 2007 by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Safe and Healthy Students.

The center supports schools and school districts in developing and implementing comprehensive emergency management plans by providing technical assistance via trainings, publications and individualized responses to requests. For additional information about school emergency management topics, visit the REMS TA Center at <http://rems.ed.gov> or call 1-866-540-REMS (7367). For information about the REMS grant program, contact Tara Hill ([tara.hill@ed.gov](mailto:tara.hill@ed.gov)).

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