



Community Colleges and the ICS

Compliance with the National Incident Management System

UPDATE

November 2007

In 2007, State Agencies, including Colleges and Universities, were sent the following guidance regarding NIMS Compliance.

[All state agencies participating with Emergency Support Functions (ESF) as listed in the Washington State Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) and any other state agencies that have a role in incident management or response must submit their final Federal fiscal year 2007 NIMS Compliance Progress Report by September 30.

Other state agencies are encouraged to continue their NIMS implementation efforts, and should at a minimum, have key personnel complete the IS-700 "Introduction to NIMS" course. This will provide some knowledge of the Incident Command System to personnel who may be interacting with emergency response organizations. (Nothing precludes agencies from implementing additional NIMS compliance activities set by the Department of Homeland Security.) All agencies are encouraged to submit an electronic NIMS Progress Report.]

Agencies determine appropriate personnel needing to complete specific courses. Some Incident Management Systems Division (IMSD) links that assist in making this determination are at www.fema.gov/pdf/emergency/nims/TrainingGdlMatrix.pdf or http://www.fema.gov/emergency/nims/nims_training.shtm.

All reporting agencies in the State must utilize the NIMS Progress Report (located at <http://emd.wa.gov/>) to report their compliance of NIMS activities. Agencies may in addition use NIMSCAST if they wish, but it is not required.

In the past, Community and Technical Colleges have managed hurricanes, severe weather, fires, campus murders, and deaths. The Incident Command System (ICS) supports Community and Technical Colleges when there is a need to coordinate emergency response with others in their community, particularly the local emergency services agencies. It can be expanded to meet every size and type of emergency situation and as of September 30, 2006, federal preparedness funding will require compliance with NIMS.

As state agencies the Community and Technical Colleges are required to comply with NIMS. Governor Locke issued a proclamation making it a requirement of all state agencies, and will be honored by Governor Gregoire.

The Center of Excellence for Homeland Security strongly supports the proclamation and recommends that each Community and Technical College comply with NIMS requirements.

An important element of the ICS is the development of Incident Action Plans. Every event requires that decisions be aligned with priorities being made for the management of the crisis. A critical element in the management of the crisis for the responders, whether institutional or emergency services, is the determination of the immediate action plan. The ICS builds this priority planning into the basic concept of the system.

Community and Technical Colleges can be compliant by:

- Incorporating NIMS into existing training programs and exercises;
- Ensuring that Federal preparedness funding (including DHS Homeland Security Grant Program, Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) funds) support NIMS implementation at the state and local levels (in accordance with the eligibility and allowable uses of the grants);
- Incorporating NIMS into Emergency Operations Plans (EOP);
- Promotion of intrastate mutual aid agreements;
- Coordinating and providing technical assistance to local entities regarding NIMS; and
- Institutionalizing the use of the Incident Command System (ICS).

FIVE STEPS TO COMPLIANCE:

Following are the current NIMS compliance requirements to be completed by September 30, 2006.

- 1. Have your police, emergency managers, custodians, and management personnel, and those who coordinate the College's role in an emergency response receive some level of NIMS and ICS training by completing the online courses from FEMA (an increase of three over last guidance). These courses can be found at:
 - IS 700 <http://training.fema.gov/emiweb/IS/is700.asp>,
 - IS 800 <http://www.training.fema.gov/emiweb/IS/is800.asp>,
 - ICS 100: <http://www.training.fema.gov/emiweb/IS/is100.asp>
 - ICS 200: <http://www.training.fema.gov/emiweb/IS/is200.asp>

All first responders at your institution and anyone who interfaces for your college with your local or state emergency management office should take all four courses.

2. Complete a self-assessment of NIMS compliance using the tool provided by the NIMS Integration Center called NIMCAST. The tool can be found on the FEMA website at: www.fema.gov/nimcast/index.jsp. You will need to obtain a password. (To obtain this

password call or email Paul McNeil or Jim Kadrmas at the state Emergency Management Division)

Paul McNeil	EOC Manager	253-512-7033	p.mcneil@emd.wa.gov
Jim Kadrmas	Assistant EOC Manager	253-512-7027	j.kadrmas@emd.wa.gov

The NIMCAST asks a number of questions about your institution's emergency planning. It is suggested that you complete the NIMCAST.

3. Once your college has accessed the NIMCAST tool and completed the assessment, it will need to develop a baseline identifying the institution's gaps within the NIMCAST assessment and by September 30, 2006; your college will need to develop a timeline to address the noncompliance issues or gaps in the NIMCAST. This is a great tool to assess your current emergency management plan. Consider talking with your local emergency management office to see if there is an opportunity for your institution to seek funding to help meet the gaps that you identify.

4. Have your institution formally adopt the NIMS. There are sample resolutions that can be used. Suggested formats for resolution can be found on the FEMA website at http://www.fema.gov/txt/nims/sample_nims_executive_order.txt.

5. Finally, you must institutionalize the Incident Command System. The following are suggestions for institutionalizing the Incident Command System.

- Make note in your emergency management manuals that the ICS will be used for crisis management.
- Obtain a copy of the ICS and review the general documentation.
- Talk with your local office of Emergency Management about ICS and its Interface with them.
- Focus your institution's emergency plans to use the ICS.
- Consider developing your internal emergency response plans to use the general format of the ICS.
- Consider how your college would use the Unified Command structure in a crisis where external emergency services support your college.
- Examine with your local emergency service agencies the concept of the liaison function in ICS and how your college would use this function.

* An example of a college's adaptation of the ICS for a college environment can be obtained from Santa Fe Community College (FL) by contacting the author at daryl.johnston@sfcc.edu or 352/334-0305. You can download SFCC's Crisis Management Team from http://ips.sfcc.edu/ips/CMT_TableTop1/ (limited time access).

In addition, Community and Technical Colleges should consider having their first responders such as police officers and emergency medical technicians take the online

ICS-100 course from FEMA. This course is the foundation for more advanced training in the ICS.

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