Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program (AFG)

FY 2014 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER)

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What is the purpose of SAFER?

The purpose of SAFER Grants is to provide funding directly to fire departments and national, state, local, or tribal organizations representing the interests of volunteer firefighters to assist them in increasing the number of firefighters to help communities meet industry minimum standards and attain 24-hour staffing to provide adequate protection from fire and fire related hazards, and to fulfill traditional missions of fire departments.

SAFER Grants achieve this purpose by funding: (1) the hiring of new firefighters, (2) the rehiring of firefighters that have been laid off, (3) the retention of firefighters facing imminent layoffs, or (4) the filling of positions that were vacated through attrition. Additionally, SAFER Grants fund fire departments and national, state, local, or tribal organizations representing the interests of volunteer firefighters to assist with the recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters.

Are there any funding limits for SAFER?

There are no annual salary limits, and there are no cost-sharing requirements for funds under the FY 2014 appropriations.

Which categories of activities are eligible for funding under SAFER?

SAFER is a competitive/discretionary grant program comprised of two categories:

1. **Hiring of Firefighters** Grants provide financial assistance to help fire departments rehire firefighters that have been laid off, retain firefighters facing imminent layoffs, fill positions that were vacated through attrition, or hire new firefighters. The goal is to assist departments to improve or restore staffing levels to ensure they have adequate personnel to respond and safely perform at incident scenes, providing protection from fire and fire-related hazards for their communities. **This category provides two-year grants to assist fire departments by paying the salaries and benefits of the SAFER-funded positions.**

2. **Recruitment and Retention of Volunteer Firefighters** Grants are to assist fire departments and national, state, local, or tribal organizations with the recruitment and/or retention of volunteer firefighters that are involved with, or trained in, the operations of firefighting and emergency response. The goal is to create a net increase in the number of trained, certified, and competent firefighters capable of safely responding to emergencies likely to occur within the fire department's geographic response area. **Recruitment and Retention category grants can have a period of performance of up to four years.**

If a department is applying for both SAFER Grant categories - Hiring of Firefighters and Recruitment and Retention of Volunteer Firefighters, does the department need to submit two different narrative statements?

Yes. Departments interested in applying for both a Hiring Grant and a Recruitment and Retention Grant must submit **two separate applications, one for each category**. Each application will require its own unique narrative statement.

Are SAFER Grants "renewable" after the period of performance?

No. SAFER is a competitive/discretionary grant program. Program funds are not renewable and funding is only available to grantees during the period of performance associated with the award. Current or former grantees do not have a competitive advantage over applicants that have not previously received a SAFER Grant award.

Hiring of Firefighters

Who is eligible to apply for funding in the Hiring of Firefighters category?

Career, combination, and volunteer fire departments may apply for funding in the Hiring of Firefighters category.

What are eligible expenses in the Hiring of Firefighters category?

The only allowable costs under the Hiring of Firefighters category are salary and associated benefits (actual payroll expenses). SAFER Funding will pay for the total salary and benefit costs for each funded position.

What are some ineligible expenses in the Hiring category?

- Pre-application costs, such as grant writer fees, administrative costs, and indirect costs associated with hiring or rehiring of firefighters
- Costs to train and equip firefighters (However, the salaries and benefits of firefighters hired under the SAFER Grants funding while engaged in training are eligible if the firefighter is employed by the department.)
- Uniforms and physicals
- Overtime costs (except overtime costs routinely paid as a part of the base salary or the firefighter's regularly scheduled and contracted shift hours in order to comply with the Fair Labor Standards Act [FLSA])
- Salaries and benefits of firefighters who are current employees or were hired prior to the award date (except under the retention activity)
- To fund promotions (e.g., pay a current member a higher salary by placing them in a new SAFER-funded position)

What is the Period of Performance under the Hiring category?

The FY 2014 SAFER Period of Performance for the Hiring of Firefighters category is two years.

Are firefighters hired prior to award eligible under the Hiring category?

No. Firefighters hired and/or rehired prior to award are not eligible under the hiring category. The only exception is those positions under the retention activity.

What are the requirements for the matching funds in the Hiring of Firefighters category?

There are no matching funds requirements for hiring grants.

What happens after the grant concludes? Does a department have to retain the SAFER-funded positions employed?

No. Awarded recipients have no obligation to retain the SAFER-funded positions after the conclusion of the period of performance for FY 2014 SAFER Awards.

What type of firefighter positions will be funded?

Only full-time firefighter positions will be funded. Full-time positions are those funded for at least 2,080 hours per year (e.g., 40 hours per week, 52 weeks per year).

Volunteer and mostly volunteer fire departments may hire individuals to fill officer-level positions (e.g., chief, fire inspector, training officer, safety officer). However, as the goal of SAFER Grants is to enhance incident scene safety, all applicants must certify that the primary assignment (more than 50 percent of duties) of all SAFER-funded positions will be an operational assignment (fire suppression, including staffing a fire suppression vehicle) regardless of collateral duties.

The grant program will consider funding job-share positions if sufficient justification is provided.

What is a job-share position?

A job-share position is a full-time position occupied by more than one person. For FY 2014, there is not a cap on the number of employees who may share a single job-share position.

Can a department apply for job-share positions if it has never previously utilized job-share employees?

For applicants who are applying under the rehire, retention, and/or attrition subcategories, if the position was not job-shared when the position was vacated, then you will not be eligible to job-share the position if award. New job-sharing positions are only eligible for applicants applying in the new hire activity.

If a fire department receives a SAFER Award, how much time does it have to hire the positions?

For all grantees under the Hiring of Firefighters category, a default 180-day recruitment period begins when the application is approved for award.

The two year period of performance automatically starts after the 180-day recruitment period, regardless of whether the grantee has successfully hired or rehired the requested firefighters.

If a grantee is able to rehire or hire their SAFER-funded firefighters during the 180-day recruitment period, the period of performance may begin at that time. For grantees awarded under the Retention category, the period of performance can begin immediately. However, in both cases, grantees must submit an amendment requesting that the period of performance start before the end of the 180-day recruitment period. The period of performance cannot be started later than 180 days after the recruitment period.

Can grantees submit a payment request for pre-award expenditures?

Pre-award expenditures are not reimbursable in the Hiring category. However, costs incurred after award but prior to the start of the official period of performance (i.e., during the 180-day recruitment period) are eligible for reimbursement. Any costs

incurred prior to the period of performance will be charged against the total grant budget. **Firefighters hired prior to the date of award are not eligible for SAFER Funding unless the award is for retaining firefighters.**

The 2014 SAFER Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) states that grantees cannot layoff any firefighters during the two-year period of performance. What if the department loses positions to retirement or other attrition? Must it fill those vacancies?

Yes. For the two-year period of performance all FY 2014 Grantees awarded in the Hiring category are required to maintain their staffing at the level that existed at the time of award, in addition to the SAFER-funded positions.

At the time of award, grantees under the Hiring of Firefighters category must submit a current (pre-SAFER) roster listing paid operational/firefighting personnel in support of NFPA 1710 or NFPA 1720, who are in full-time or job share positions. The program office will work with a grantee to establish the correct staffing maintenance number which combines the number of pre-SAFER and SAFER hires. Once this is established, grantees must agree to maintain this number throughout the two-year period of performance by taking active and timely steps to fill any vacancies.

Grantees who are unable (due to documentable economic hardship) to fill firefighting positions that are vacated through attrition (e.g., resignation, retirement) may petition FEMA for a waiver of staffing maintenance requirements. An approved waiver allows a grantee to decrease and reestablish the staffing maintenance number agreed to at the time of award by the number of positions that a grantee is unable to fill. In order to qualify for this waiver, the economic hardship must affect the entire public safety sector in a grantee's jurisdiction, not solely the fire department. **Waivers will not be granted for SAFER-funded positions. Grantees who fail to maintain this level of staffing risk losing the federal funds awarded under this grant.**

What is the difference between layoff notices that need to be submitted for rehiring and retention?

- **Rehiring** - Requests for grants to rehire laid-off firefighters are limited to requesting the number of firefighter positions **already lost** due to layoffs enacted in the two years prior to the start of the application (February 9, 2015).
- **Retention** - Requests for grants to retain firefighters who face imminent layoff are limited to those firefighters that **have been issued a formal layoff notice, prior to the start of the application period**, that specifies a date for the layoff action that is within 120 days of the close of the application period (March 6, 2015); the layoff's must become effective on or before July 4, 2015.

Do departments need to provide a copy of the layoff notice if they want to rehire or retain firefighters? How can an applicant attach this documentation to the online application?

Yes. A copy of the official, signed, and issued layoff notices that correspond to the positions being requested must be attached to the Hiring grant application for applicants who request funds to rehire firefighters who were laid off and/or to retain firefighters at risk of layoff. When you select the Rehire and/or Retention option in the Request Details section of the application, an option will appear that directs you to attach an electronic copy of the layoff notice. The layoff notices may be in either a PDF or a Microsoft Word document. You may attach multiple documents if needed (Note: only .doc and .pdf files will be accepted).

A department hired SAFER firefighters in a prior year's grant with a contract that expires this year and the firefighters will not be laid off, but their jobs will be terminated. Can the fire department apply for an FY 2014 SAFER Grant to keep them employed?

Yes, in this case the fire department may apply for a grant to retain the firefighters; however, you must contact the Program Office to discuss the documentation that must be included for your unique situation.

Recruitment and Retention of Volunteer Firefighters

Who is eligible to apply for funding in the Recruitment and Retention of Volunteer Firefighters category?

Combination fire departments, volunteer fire departments, and national, state, local, or tribal organizations that represent the interests of volunteer firefighters may apply for funding in the Recruitment and Retention category.

What are examples of eligible costs under the Recruitment and Retention of Volunteer Firefighters category?

Applicants must correlate the activities for which funding is being requested and the identified recruitment or retention problems or issues being addressed. Additionally, FEMA will not fund activities if an applicant has not provided sufficient information detailing how an activity being funded will enhance recruitment and retention.

For specific examples of eligible costs, please refer to the FY 2014 SAFER FOA.

What are some ineligible expenses in the Recruitment and Retention of Volunteer Firefighters category?

Examples of ineligible expenses include but are not limited to the following:

- Salary and benefits for firefighters
- Firefighting equipment/vehicles
- Fire simulators or fire training props (e.g., burn trailers, forcible entry, etc.)
- Cash payments for non-operational activities
- Costs for training currently covered under the department's operating budget, such as tuition or instructor fees for department-mandated, basic-level training
- "Giveaways," such as pencils, pens, t-shirts, cups, mugs, or balloons, for recruitment events

Is communications equipment eligible under FY 2014 SAFER?

No. All communications equipment including cellphones, pagers, portable radios, or Computer-Aided Dispatch systems is ineligible under FY 2014 SAFER.

Can Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for new firefighters be purchased under the Recruitment and Retention of Volunteer Firefighters category? What are the requirements?

Yes.OSHA-required and NFPA-compliant PPE is eligible only for newly recruited members, and reimbursement will be limited to the number of new recruits who received an NFPA 1582-compliant physical exam and are certified as "fit for duty." Only actual costs are allowed and will be paid on a reimbursable basis and FEMA may establish a reasonable cost allowable. Grantees will be required to provide documentation of completed NFPA 1582 physicals as well as documentation to support the purchase of the PPE.

Please refer to the FY 2014 SAFER FOA for examples of eligible PPE expenditures.

In previous years, SAFER Applicants were limited to requesting up to four sets of PPE for training; is there a limit on the number of PPE that can be requested under FY 2014 SAFERR?

No. For FY 2014, there is no limit on the number of sets of PPE that may be requested. Applicants should request the number of sets they think they will need based on the number of recruits that an organization anticipates will be recruited during the period of performance. Please refer to the FY 2014 SAFER FOA for examples of eligible PPE expenditures.

What types of tuition reimbursement are ineligible?

The FY 2014 SAFER Grant does not limit the type of tuition reimbursement one can apply for, and it does not have to be related to fire science or related fields.

Do Recruitment and Retention grantees need to submit training certificates?

While grantees are not required to submit these documents, training certificates, as well as any grant-related documents, must be retained by the grantee for a minimum of three years after the grant has been officially closed.

Can a grantee submit a payment request for pre-award expenditures?

Except for grant writer fees, pre-award expenditures are not reimbursable in the Recruitment and Retention category. However, costs incurred after award but prior to the start of the official period of performance (e.g., during the 90-day recruitment period) are eligible for reimbursement. Any costs incurred prior to the official period of performance will be charged against the total grant budget.

Is there a matching funds requirement for the Recruitment and Retention of Volunteer Firefighters category?

No. There is no local matching funds requirement for this category and no maximum federal share limit.

Are administrative or indirect costs eligible?

Administrative or indirect costs are limited to a combined total of three percent of the total awarded amount, unless a grantee has a previously negotiated and approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement.

This indirect cost rate is established by a federal department or agency for the grantee's organization that the grantee uses to compute the dollar amount they can charge to the grant for indirect costs incurred during the execution of the grant agreement. (Information about Indirect Cost Rate Agreements can be found at http://rates.psc.gov/.)

Prior to submitting any claims for reimbursement of indirect costs, applicants must first submit a copy of their negotiated and approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement to FEMA for review and approval. The indirect cost rate is applicable as long as it is consistent with the established terms of the agreement.

What is a "nominal stipend?"

Nominal stipends are eligible for firefighters where the primary duty is an operational assignment (fire suppression), regardless of collateral duties. A stipend is nominal if it does not exceed 20 percent of what the fire department would otherwise pay to hire a full-time firefighter to perform the services for which the stipend is provided. Whether a stipend falls above or below the 20 percent threshold may be determined in one of two ways. Departments that maintain paid full time firefighters on their payrolls may compare the stipend to the salary they pay a full time firefighter who performs similar services to determine whether the stipend is more or less than 20 percent of that salary. Departments that do not maintain full time firefighters on

their payrolls may make the determination based on a comparison to the salary paid to a full time firefighter in a neighboring jurisdiction, elsewhere in the state, or ultimately the nation. They may also utilize data from the Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. A nominal stipend may also include reimbursements to volunteer firefighters for approximate out-of-pocket expenses they incur.

If a stipend paid exceeds 20 percent of the prevailing wage, then the firefighter receiving compensation would not qualify as a volunteer and is considered an employee who may be covered by the FLSA minimum wage and overtime provisions. Therefore they would not eligible to receive a stipend under the grant.

How do you define a paid-on-call firefighter?

Firefighters who are paid a stipend for each event to which they respond. Paid-on-call firefighters may be considered paid firefighters or volunteer firefighters, depending on whether the stipend they receive is nominal. A department whose membership is comprised of all volunteer firefighters, including any paid-on-call firefighters who receive only a nominal stipend, will be considered a volunteer fire department for purposes of this SAFER Program. A department whose membership is comprised of any paid-on-call firefighters who receive more than a nominal stipend will be considered a combination fire department for the purposes of this SAFER Program. *Also refer to the definition of a nominal stipend*.

Eligibility

Who is eligible for SAFER Funding?

Eligible departments or organizations are limited to one application for Recruitment and Retention and/or one application for Hiring per application period. Your organization type determines your eligibility for SAFER Categories.

Entity	Volunteer Fire Departments	Combination Fire Departments	Career Fire Departments	National, state, local, or tribal volunteer firefighter interest organizations
Hiring of Firefighters category	✓	✓	✓	
Recruitment and Retention of Volunteer Firefighters category	✓	✓		✓

Can a career fire department apply under the Recruitment and Retention of Volunteer Firefighters category?

No. Career fire departments are not eligible for funds in the Recruitment and Retention category. They are only eligible for funding in the Hiring of Firefighters category.

I represent a volunteer firefighter interest organization that received a Fire Prevention and Safety grant. Are we eligible for a SAFER Grant also?

Yes. National, state, local, or tribal volunteer firefighter interest organizations that represent the interests of volunteer firefighters are eligible to receive funding under the Recruitment and Retention of Volunteer Firefighters category regardless of whether they received a Fire Prevention and Safety Grant. However, these organizations are not eligible for funding in the Hiring of Firefighters Category.

If my fire department was recently awarded an AFG Grant, can it still apply for SAFER?

Yes. While the SAFER Grants and the Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG) are administered by the same office, there are no restrictions with respect to having concurrent awards.

Is an independent rescue squad or emergency medical services unit eligible for SAFER Funding?

No. Independent rescue squads or emergency medical services unit are not eligible for SAFER Funding. Only fire departments and national, state, local, or tribal volunteer firefighter interest organizations are eligible for SAFER Grants.

If my department was awarded a prior-year SAFER Grant that still has an active performance period, is it eligible to apply for a SAFER Grant this year?

Yes. Applicants are eligible to receive more than one SAFER Award. Applicants wishing to apply for additional grants are subject to the same guidelines and requirements as discussed in the FY 2014 SAFER FOA and must indicate if the activities they are requesting are new initiatives or if they are building upon the previously awarded program.

Definition of Applicant Types

How do I determine whether I represent a volunteer, combination, or career fire department?

- A **volunteer fire department** has an all-volunteer force of firefighting personnel. For a fire department to have an all-volunteer force, no member may receive financial compensation (in the form of salary or wages) for their services other than life and health insurance, workers' compensation insurance, and/or a nominal stipend per call. FEMA considers a department to be majority volunteer if more than 50 percent of its membership is made up of personnel who do not receive financial compensation for services.
- A **career department** has an all-paid force of firefighting personnel other than paid-on-call firefighters (fire departments that provide reimbursement on a paid-on-call basis are considered to be a combination fire department for the purposes of this program). .
- A **combination department** has paid firefighting personnel and volunteer firefighting personnel. At a minimum, a combination fire department must have at least one active firefighter that receives financial compensation for services (including paid-on-call) and/or at least one active firefighter that does not receive financial compensation for services other than life, health, and workers' compensation insurance. Additionally, a department whose membership is comprised of paid-on-call firefighters is considered a combination fire department for the purposes of this program.

How do you define a national, state, local, or tribal volunteer firefighter interest organizations?

These are defined as organizations that support, or represent the interests of firefighters in front of legislative bodies at the local, state, tribal, and federal level. Such organizations include, but are not limited to, state or local firefighter and/or fire chiefs' associations, volunteer firefighter relief organizations, and associations. FEMA shall make the final determination as to whether an applicant is an appropriate volunteer firefighter interest group.

The SAFER Grants prohibit "for-profit" organizations from applying for grant funding. How do I determine if my department is for-profit?

If you are a municipally-based organization, (i.e., an organization providing services on behalf of a governmental entity), or if you are registered with the IRS as a 501(c)(3) corporation, you are NOT a for-profit organization and are eligible to receive SAFER Funding.

Completing the Application

When can I apply?

Applications will be accepted only from 8:00 a.m., **Monday, February 9, 2015**, until 5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST) on **Friday, March 6, 2015**.

When is the grant application due?

The application deadline is **Friday, March 6, 2015**. Applications must be received by 5:00 p.m. EST. Applications received after the close of the application period will not be accepted.

How do I access the FY 2014 SAFER e-Grant application?

Applications under the FY 2014 SAFER will be accessible at https://portal.fema.gov. The application will also be linked via the US Fire Administration's (USFA) Website http://www.usfa.fema.gov and the Grants.gov Website http://www.grants.gov.

Regional Applications

Who may apply for a regional grant?

Eligible national, state, local, or tribal volunteer firefighter interest organizations and individual volunteer and combination fire departments may apply for regional grants in the Recruitment and Retention Category if their request will have an impact beyond the immediate boundaries of the applicant's first-due area. An eligible applicant will serve as the "host applicant" and apply on behalf of the other eligible organizations and fire departments benefitting from the grant.

Note: The Hiring of Firefighters category is not eligible as a regional project.

I'm planning to submit an application as a host for a regional project. When I answer the questions in the Applicant Characteristics section of the online application, do I use the statistics for the entire region that will be affected by the project or do I use my department's local statistics?

In completing the Request Details and Narrative Statement sections of the application, the applicant must include a list of participating third-party organizations that will benefit from the regional project if the project is approved. In completing the Department Characteristics section of the application, the regional applicant must include data that approximates the characteristics of all fire departments affected by the grant.

I'm applying as the host for a regional project, but I also have needs in my own department. Can I include my own department needs in the application?

Yes. An eligible applicant, which can include a fire department, may act as a "host applicant" and apply for support of both a regional initiative and its own department's internal needs on one application.

A regional host must include a list of all the participating organizations benefitting from a proposed regional project, and provide clear and detailed information on which activities are regional specific versus those that are host specific.

If awarded, the host applicant must agree to be responsible for all aspects of the grant. This includes, but is not limited to, accountability for the assets and all reporting requirements. Regional host applicants and participating partner agencies must execute a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or equivalent document, signed by all parties participating in the award, prior to submitting an application under the Regional Program activities.

Technical Assistance for Applicants

Where can I obtain technical assistance in filling out the application?

The AFG Program Help Desk at 866-274-0960 will be available to provide technical assistance with completing your SAFER Application.

Normal business hours for the Help Desk are Monday through Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Eastern Time. During the application period, **February 9, 2015 - March 6, 2015**, the Help Desk will be staffed between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. EST, Monday through Friday; and until 5:00 p.m. EST on **March 6, 2015**. However, these hours may change as the application period progresses. The toll-free number also accepts voicemail messages after hours or if the line is busy. In addition, questions may be faxed to 866-274-0942 or e-mailed to FireGrants@dhs.gov.

What is the "Request Details" section of the application?

The Request Details section is where applicants answer activity specific questions and enter the budget details of their grant proposal.

Do I need to register in SAM.gov?

Yes. Per 2 CFR § 25.205, SAM registration is required to receive a SAFER Grant Award. SAM registration is only active for one year and must be renewed annually; therefore, please ensure that your entity has an active registration in SAM.gov prior to submitting your application.

Payments and amendments are also contingent on the information provided in SAM, so it is imperative that the information in the application is correct, current, and matches the information in SAM.gov. Please ensure that your organization's name, address, DUNS number, and EIN are up to date in SAM, and that the DUNS number used in SAM is the same one used to apply for all other FEMA awards.

Please also refer to the SAM.gov Get Ready Guide available on the AFG Website at http://www.fema.gov/welcome-assistance-firefighters-grant-program for additional assistance.

National Standards for SAFER

What standards does SAFER involve?

The industry minimum standards to be addressed by SAFER are the staffing and deployment sections of: **NFPA 1710, Section 5.2.4.2 (Initial Full Alarm Assignment Capability)**, which primarily applies to all-career fire departments and at the combination department's election; and **NFPA 1720 Section 4.3 (Staffing and Deployment)**, which primarily applies to all-volunteer fire departments and combination departments that do not elect to comply with NFPA 1710. The NFPA established a link providing information regarding these standards: www.nfpa.org/SAFERActGrant.

NFPA 1001

Standard for Firefighter Professional Qualifications (FFI and II)

This standard identifies the minimum job performance requirements for career and volunteer firefighters whose duties are primarily structural in nature. The purpose of this standard is to specify the minimum job performance requirements for firefighters. It is not the intent of the standard to restrict any jurisdiction from exceeding these requirements.

NFPA 1582

Standard on Comprehensive Occupational Medical Program for Fire Departments

To help fire departments ensure that personnel are medically capable of performing their required duties, the 2013 NFPA 1582 incorporates current research and knowledge to present the latest provisions for a comprehensive occupational medical program. The Standard provides separate chapters for the medical evaluation of candidates/prospective employees and for the occupational medical and fitness evaluations for fire department members. Requirements are equated against the essential job tasks based on several NFPA Professional Qualification Standards and apply to career, volunteer, private, industrial, governmental, and military fire department. For specific physical requirements, Recruitment and Retention applicants should refer to **NFPA 1582 Chapter 6, Medical Evaluations of Candidates 6.1** and **Chapter 9, Essential Job** Tasks — Specific Evaluation of Medical Conditions in Members (http://www.nfpa.org/freeaccess).

National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS)

Do fire departments who apply for a SAFER Grant have to report to the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS)?

No. FEMA does not require FY 2014 SAFER Applicants to report to NFIRS.

Do volunteer firefighter interest organizations have to report to NFIRS?

No. Only fire departments provide reports to NFIRS.

National Incident Management System (NIMS)

Do fire departments that receive SAFER Grants have to comply with the requirements of the National Incident Management System (NIMS)?

Yes. Homeland Security Presidential Directive-5 requires that, beginning October 1, 2005, all recipients of federal preparedness funds (including recipients of federal grants and contracts) adopt the National Incident Management System (NIMS) as a condition for the receipt of the federal funds. Recipients of FY 2014 SAFER Grants will be considered to be in compliance with the NIMS requirement if the grantee: **(a)** has an operational knowledge of the Incident Command System (ICS); **(b)** has an understanding of NIMS' principles and policies; and **(c)** agrees to adopt and/or comply with all directives, ordinances, rules, orders, edicts, etc., passed down by the local or state authorities with respect to incident management. Responders who have already been trained in ICS do not need retraining if their previous training is consistent with DHS standards. In order for us to document compliance, grantees will be required to certify their compliance with the NIMS/ICS requirements as part of their grant closeout process. Grantees may contact their State Emergency Preparedness Officer or State Fire Marshal for local NIMS compliance requirements.

For Regional applications, are all of the benefiting organizations required to be NIMS compliant or just the host applicant?

Yes. All departments receiving equipment or services from a regional SAFER Grant must be compliant with all local edicts regarding NIMS.

Miscellaneous

Are there targeted funding amounts for the two SAFER Activities?

A total of $340,000,000 has been appropriated for the FY 2014 SAFER Grants.

The appropriated funds are to be administered as indicated below. Specific funding parameters are highlighted as the result of a recommendation via the criteria development process (CD) or as required by *Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974, as amended:*

- 10 percent is set aside for the recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters (15 USC § 2229a(a)(2))
  - No more than 33 percent of the total amount allocated for the recruitment and retention of volunteers can be awarded to national, state, local, or tribal organizations that represent the interests of volunteer firefighters (CD)
- 10 percent is set aside for grants awarded to volunteer or majority volunteer departments for hiring of firefighters. A majority volunteer fire department is made up of more than 50 percent of personnel who do not receive financial compensation for their services, other than life, health, and worker's compensation insurance, or a nominal stipend payment, including certain paid-on-call personnel. It may be necessary to go out of rank order to select a sufficient number of applications in order to meet the 10 percent requirement. (15 USC § 2229a(a)(1)(H))
- If less than 10 percent of the funds available for the hiring of firefighters are awarded to volunteer and majority volunteer fire departments, the remaining funds must be transferred to provide grants for the recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters (15 USC § 2229a(a)(1)(H))