National Engagement for Draft Incident Complexity Guide: Planning, Preparedness, and Training

Attached for your review is a working draft of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) Incident Complexity Guide: Planning, Preparedness, and Training. The Guide provides a framework for the concept of incident complexity and gives community members a common understanding of incident complexity types and allowing them to build on a shared foundation to address their specific needs across all hazards and jurisdictions.

FEMA developed the Incident Complexity Guide in collaboration with a range of stakeholders. To further expand our engagement efforts, we are seeking your ideas and input on this working draft. Though we welcome all ideas and comments, we are specifically seeking input on:

- Any areas of the Guide that are difficult to understand

- Potential gaps in incident complexity all-hazards use and applicability

- Additional ways that your discipline or organization could use incident complexity considerations to enhance incident planning, preparedness, and training

Please use the feedback comment form at https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/nims to capture your recommendations and comments. Please submit this form to FEMA-NIMS@fema.dhs.gov by 5:00 p.m. ET on February 11, 2021.

We look forward to receiving your feedback. If you have questions or need more information about the Incident Complexity Guide, send an e-mail to FEMA-NIMS@fema.dhs.gov.

National Incident Management System Incident Complexity Guide

Planning, Preparedness, and Training

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1.   Introduction

The Incident Complexity Guide: Planning, Preparedness, and Training supports the National Incident Management System (NIMS) doctrine by establishing guidance to support the emergency management community and inform emergency planning, preparedness, and training. This Guide provides a framework for and a common understanding of the tenets of incident complexity for the whole community.

The audience for this Guide is any Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ), including agencies and organizations at all levels of government, as well as private sector entities and nongovernmental organizations (NGO) with emergency management or incident support responsibilities. This Guide promotes a common understanding among whole community partners by using a consistent method to describe the principles of incident complexity and promoting a standard and repeatable method of classifying the complexity of an incident, event, or exercise. In addition to using this Guide for emergency planning, preparedness, and training, AHJs may use it as a foundation for developing tools to support incident response.

Some organizations and jurisdictions have already developed guides and tools for managing incident complexity. In these cases, this Guide supports existing resources to enhance the decision-making process across all hazards and jurisdictions.

This Guide applies nationally as part of a suite of incident and emergency management guidance from the FEMA National Integration Center (NIC). The concepts and instructions in this Guide can enhance national preparedness and improve the effectiveness and implementation of NIMS and the National Preparedness System.

2. Overview

2.1. Purpose

The Incident Complexity Guide is designed to support incident planning, preparedness, and training. This Guide can help incident and emergency management personnel identify the complexity type of each operational incident, planned event, training, or exercise ("the incident"[1]).

This Guide is not a decision-making tool for use during incident response. Yet, by supporting planning and training, this Guide may help better inform decisions and help users as they respond to incidents in their jurisdictions. In addition to helping incident and emergency management personnel prepare exercises or planning scenarios, identifying complexity type also supports incident and emergency management personnel as they manage additional, deployable resources.

The term "complexity type" quantifies the level of difficulty or resistance an incident presents to those working to successfully manage or mitigate it. As incidents may vary in their difficulty or resistance to mitigation or management, FEMA measures complexity type on a scale of 5 to 1, where Type 5 is the least complex incident and least resistant to management or mitigation.

> ### 💡 Incident Complexity Guide: Planning, Preparedness, and Training
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> The Incident Complexity Guide presents a national perspective that applies across multiple disciplines and incident types. This Guide gives AHJs a shared understanding of how to define incident complexity and a flexible approach to building on that understanding. The result will be an improved approach to incident complexity that suits the whole community's needs and resources.

2.1.1. SUPPORTING NIMS AND NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS

Using a common approach and consistent method for determining complexity type will improve the effectiveness and implementation of NIMS and the National Preparedness System. This approach to incident complexity promotes a common understanding among whole community partners – state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) and Federal government agencies, nongovernmental and nonprofit organizations, and the private sector.

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[1] For clarity and brevity, this document uses "incident" to refer to any operational incident, planned event, training, or exercise.

This Guide also promotes a better understanding of the complexity type assigned to the exercise or incident management personnel complete to improve or maintain their qualifications. For further information on position qualifications, please refer to the following topics on the FEMA website:

- FEMA NIMS National Qualification System (NQS) – guidance and tools to help stakeholders develop processes for qualifying, certifying and credentialing deployable emergency personnel

  - https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/nims/components#nqs

- FEMA NIMS Job Titles/Position Qualifications – documents defining the minimum criteria personnel serving in specific incident-related positions must attain before deploying to an incident

  - https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/nims/components/positions

2.2.   Incident Complexity Types

2.2.1.   FACTORS IN IDENTIFYING INCIDENT COMPLEXITY TYPES

Incident complexity reflects the combination of involved factors that affect how severe, widespread, and difficult to control an incident is. Many factors determine complexity type, including the following:

- Geographic area involved

- Level of threat to life and property

- Political sensitivity

- Organizational complexity

- Jurisdictional boundaries

- Values at risk

- Weather

- Strategy and tactics

- Agency policy

Incident and emergency management personnel consider complexity type when making decisions about incident management training, staffing, and safety.

2.2.2. CHARACTERISTICS OF INCIDENT COMPLEXITY TYPES

The complexity type (5 through 1) are determined by reviewing a standard set of observable characteristics an incident displays or an exercise encompasses. These characteristics are divided into two categories:

Incident Effect Indicators

Incident Effect Indicators are observable characteristics that help determine complexity type based on the impact an incident has. These characteristics vary in scale as the complexity of an incident increases or decreases. FEMA defines Incident Effect Indicators as observable "damage, consequence, or disruption to the residents, population, infrastructure, and government operations surrounding the incident or event."

Incident Management Indicators

Incident Management Indicators are the second set of characteristics that incident or emergency management personnel can expect as an Incident Command System (ICS) expands or contracts in relationship to the complexity of an incident. These indicators can assist incident and emergency personnel in managing and supporting incidents of any complexity type by helping them:

- Understand and anticipate incident management conditions and determine appropriate management structure

- Provide necessary and appropriate response structures, supporting management, and coordination structures

- Align off-site resources and logistical support requirements

The Incident Complexity Type Table on the pages that follow lists specific characteristics for each of these two sets of indicators for each complexity type.

3. Instructions

3.1. How to Select Incident Complexity Type

To select the appropriate complexity type, AHJs can refer to the Incident Complexity Type Table on the following pages and follow these steps:

- First, review the Incident Effect Indicators, starting with Type 5 (the least complex incident type). If the incident displays all or most of the Incident Effect Indicators, move on to Type 4. If the incident displays only a few of the Incident Effect Indicators, the incident likely aligns with complexity Type 5.

- Review the Incident Effect Indicators for Type 4. If the incident displays all or most of the Incident Effect Indicators, move on to Type 3. If the incident displays only a few of the Incident Effect Indicators, the incident likely aligns with complexity Type 4.

- Continue to review the Incident Effect Indicators at each type. The most likely complexity type is indicated when all or most of the Incident Effect Indicators are displayed at that type, but not at the next complexity type. Once the incident no longer displays most of the Incident Effect Indicators, then you have found the right complexity type.

- Once you have determined the complexity type, use the Incident Management Indicators to guide and inform a scalable response to the incident within ICS.

- Note the following:

  o In rapidly escalating incidents, the Incident Management Indicators often lag behind the Incident Effect Indicators.

  o If the incident displays all or most of the Incident Effect Indicators at a particular complexity type but none or few of the Incident Management Indicators, it's likely that you have found the correct complexity type but that the response has not yet been scaled to address the needs indicated under the Incident Management Indicators.

4. Incident Complexity Type Table

The language in the Incident Complexity Type Table is intentionally flexible, allowing AHJs to apply this Guide to their specific needs and situations. This Guide applies to all hazards and is available for the whole community to use as appropriate.

Type 5	*Incident Effect Indicators*	*Incident Management Indicators*
5	▪ Incident shows no resistance to stabilization or mitigation ▪ Incident objectives typically met within one or two hours once resources arrive on scene ▪ Minimal effects to population immediately surrounding the incident; few or no evacuations needed during mitigation ▪ No adverse impact on critical infrastructure and key resources (CIKR) ▪ Elected/appointed governing officials and stakeholder groups require little or no interaction and may not need notification ▪ Conditions or actions that caused the original incident do not persist; as a result, there is no probability of a cascading event or exacerbation of the current incident	▪ Incident Commander (IC) position is filled, but Command and General Staff positions are not needed to reduce workload or span of control ▪ Unified Command is not typically necessary ▪ One or more resources are needed and receive direct supervision from the IC ▪ Resources may remain on scene for several hours but require no logistical support ▪ Formal incident planning process not necessary ▪ Written Incident Action Plan (IAP) not necessary
	Examples: Type 5 incidents and exercises can include a vehicle fire, a medical response to an injured/sick person, or a high-risk felony traffic stop. Planned events can include a 5K or 10K road race.	

Type 4	*Incident Effect Indicators*	*Incident Management Indicators*
4	- Incident shows little resistance to stabilization or mitigation - Incident objectives typically met within several hours once resources arrive on scene - Incident may extend from several hours to 24 hours - Limited effects to population surrounding incident; few or no evacuations necessary during mitigation - Incident threatens, damages, or destroys a minimal number of residential, commercial, or cultural properties - CIKR may suffer adverse impacts, but mitigation measures are uncomplicated and can be implemented within one operational period - Elected/appointed governing officials and stakeholder groups require little or no interaction, but they may need to be notified - Conditions or actions that caused the original incident do not persist; as a result, there is little to no probability of a cascading event or exacerbation of the current incident	- IC/Unified Command role is filled, but Command and General Staff positions are typically not necessary to reduce workload or span of control - Resources receive direct supervision either from the IC/Unified Command or through an ICS leader position, such as a Task Force or Strike Teams/Resource Teams, to reduce span of control - Division or Group Supervisor position may be filled for organizational or span of control purposes - Multiple resources may be necessary - Aviation operations may be involved - Resources may remain on scene for up to 24 hours and may require limited logistical support - Formal incident planning process not necessary - Written IAP not necessary
	Examples: Type 4 incidents and exercises can include a barricaded suspect, a hazardous materials (HAZMAT) spill on a roadway or waterway, a large commercial fire, or a localized flooding event affecting a neighborhood or subdivision. Planned events can include a march, protest, festival, fair, or parade.	

Type 3	*Incident Effect Indicators*	*Incident Management Indicators*
3	▪ Incident shows some resistance to stabilization or mitigation ▪ Incident objectives typically not met within the first 24 hours after resources arrive ▪ Incident may extend from several days to one week ▪ Population within and immediately surrounding incident area may require evacuations during mitigation ▪ Incident threatens, damages, or destroys residential, commercial, or cultural properties ▪ CIKR may suffer adverse impacts, and mitigation actions may extend into multiple operational periods ▪ Elected/appointed governing officials and stakeholder groups require some level of interaction ▪ Conditions or actions that caused the incident may persist; as a result, there is some possibility of a cascading event or exacerbation of the current incident	▪ IC/Unified Command role is filled ▪ Command Staff positions are filled to reduce workload or span of control ▪ One or more General Staff position(s) are filled to reduce workload or span of control ▪ Numerous resources receive supervision indirectly through the Operations Section and its subordinate positions ▪ Branch Director position(s) may be filled for organizational purposes and occasionally for span of control ▪ Division Supervisors, Group Supervisors, Task Force, Strike Teams/Resource Teams are necessary to reduce span of control ▪ ICS functional units may be necessary to reduce workload ▪ Incident typically extends into multiple operational periods ▪ Resources may need to remain on scene for over a week and will require logistical support ▪ Incident may require an incident base to support resources ▪ Numerous kinds and types of resources may be required ▪ Aviation operations may involve multiple aircraft ▪ Number of responders depends on the kind of incident but could include several hundred personnel ▪ Formal incident planning process initiated and followed ▪ Written IAP necessary for each operational period
	Examples: Type 3 incidents and exercises can include a tornado that damage a small section of a city, village, or town; railroad tank car HAZMAT leak requiring evacuation of a neighborhood or section of a community; an active shooter; a sink hole; a water main break; a Category 1 or 2 hurricane; or a small aircraft crash in a populated area. Planned events can include a county fair or an auto racing event.	

Type 2	*Incident Effect Indicators*	*Incident Management Indicators*
2	■ Incident shows high resistance to stabilization or mitigation ■ Incident objectives typically not met within the first several days ■ Incident may extend from several days to two weeks ■ Population within and surrounding the general incident area are affected and may require evacuation during mitigation ■ Incident threatens damages, or destroys residential, commercial, and cultural properties ■ CIKR may suffer adverse impacts, including destruction, and mitigation actions may extend into multiple operational periods, requiring considerable coordination ■ Elected/appointed governing officials, political organizations, and stakeholder groups require a moderate level of interaction ■ Incident has resulted in external influences, has widespread impact, and involves political and media sensitivities requiring comprehensive management ■ Conditions or actions that caused the original incident may persist, so a cascading event or exacerbation of the current incident is likely	■ IC/Unified Command role is filled ■ All Command Staff positions are filled ■ All General Staff positions are filled ■ Large numbers of resources receive supervision indirectly through Operations Section and its subordinate positions ■ Branch Director position(s) may be filled for organizational or span of control purposes ■ Division Supervisors, Group Supervisors, Task Forces, Strike Teams, and Resource Teams are necessary to reduce span of control ■ Most ICS functional units are filled to reduce workload ■ Incident extends into numerous operational periods ■ Resources may need to remain on scene for two to three weeks and will require complete logistical support, as well as possible personnel replacement ■ Incident requires an incident base and other ICS facilities to provide support ■ Numerous kinds and types of resources may be required ■ Complex aviation operations involving multiple aircraft may be involved ■ Size and scope of resource mobilization necessitates a formal demobilization process ■ Length of resource commitment may necessitate a transfer of command from one incident management team to a subsequent incident management team ■ Number of responders depends on the kind of incident but could include over 1,000 personnel ■ Formal incident planning process initiated and followed ■ Written IAP necessary for each operational period

Type 2	*Incident Effect Indicators*	*Incident Management Indicators*
	Examples: Type 2 incidents and exercises can include a tornado with damage to an entire section of a city, village, or town; a railroad tank car HAZMAT leak requiring a several-days-long evacuation of an entire section of a city, village, or town; a wildland fire in an area with numerous residences, requiring evacuations and several days of firefighting to bring under control; or a river flooding event affecting an entire section of a city, village, or town, with continued precipitation anticipated. Planned events can include a VIP visit, a large demonstration or strike, or a large concert.	

Type 1	*Incident Effect Indicators*	*Incident Management Indicators*
1	▪ Incident shows high resistance to stabilization or mitigation ▪ Incident objectives cannot be met within numerous operational periods ▪ Incident extends from two weeks to over a month or longer ▪ Population within and surrounding the region or state where the incident occurred is significantly affected ▪ Incident threatens, damages, or destroys significant numbers of residential, commercial, and cultural properties ▪ Incident damages or destroys numerous CIKRs; mitigation extends multiple operational periods and requires long-term planning and extensive coordination ▪ Evacuated and relocated populations may require sheltering and housing for weeks or months ▪ Elected/appointed governing officials, political organizations, and stakeholder groups require a high level of interaction ▪ Incident has resulted in external influences, has widespread impact, and involves political and media sensitivities requiring comprehensive management ▪ Conditions or actions that caused the original incident still exist, so a cascading event or exacerbation of the current incident is likely	▪ IC/Unified Command role is filled ▪ Unified Command is complex due to the number of jurisdictions involved ▪ All Command Staff positions are filled; many include assistants ▪ All General Staff positions are filled; many include deputy positions ▪ Many resources receive supervision indirectly through an expanded Operations Section and its subordinate positions ▪ Branch Director Position(s) may be filled for organizational or span of control purposes ▪ Division Supervisors, Group Supervisors, Task Forces, Strike Teams, and Resource Teams are necessary to reduce span of control ▪ Most or all ICS functional units are filled to reduce workload ▪ Incident extends into many operational periods ▪ Resources may need to remain on scene for two to three weeks and will require complete logistical support, as well as possible personnel replacement ▪ Incident requires an incident base and numerous other ICS facilities for support ▪ Numerous kinds and types of resources may be required, including many that trigger a formal demobilization process ▪ Department of Defense (DOD) assets and other nontraditional organizations like Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) and nongovernmental Organizations (NGO) may be involved in the response, requiring close coordination and support ▪ Complex aviation operations involving numbers of aircraft may be involved ▪ Size and scope of resource mobilization necessitates a formal demobilization process

	▪ Length of resource commitment may necessitate a transfer of command from one incident management team to a subsequent incident management team
	▪ Number of responders depends on the kind of incident but could include over 1,000 personnel
	▪ Formal incident planning process initiated and followed
	▪ Written IAP necessary for each operational period
Examples: Type 1 incidents and exercises can include a tornado with damage or destruction to an entire community; a multi-level terrorist attack; a Category 3, 4, or 5 hurricane; a pandemic; a railroad tank car explosion destroying several neighborhoods and damaging others; a large wind-driven wildland fire threatening an entire city, village, or town, causing several evacuations and destroying many homes, businesses, and critical infrastructure assets; or a widespread river flooding event in a city, village, or town, with continued precipitation anticipated. Planned events could include a political convention, the Super Bowl, the World Series, or a presidential visit.	

Abbreviations

AHJ	Authority Having Jurisdiction
CIKR	Critical Infrastructure and Key Resources
DOD	Department of Defense
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
HAZMAT	Hazardous Materials
IAP	Incident Action Plan
IC	Incident Commander
ICS	Incident Command System
IMT	Incident Management Team
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NIC	National Integration Center
NIMS	National Incident Management System
NQS	National Qualification System
PTB	Position Task Book
SLTT	State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial
VOAD	Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster

Glossary

Agency: A government element with a specific function offering a particular kind of assistance.

Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ): An entity that has the authority and responsibility for developing, implementing, maintaining, and overseeing the qualification process within its organization or jurisdiction. The AHJ may be a state or Federal agency, training commission, NGO, private sector company, or a tribal or local agency such as a police, fire, or public works department. In some cases, the AHJ may support multiple disciplines that collaborate as part of a team, such as an Incident Management Team (IMT).

Command Staff: A group of incident personnel that the IC or Unified Command assigns to support the command function at an Incident Command Post (ICP). Command Staff often include a PIO, a Safety Officer, and a Liaison Officer, who have assistants as necessary. Additional positions may be necessary, depending on the incident.

Critical infrastructure and key resources (CIKR): Assets, systems, networks, functions, and resources—physical or virtual—that are so vital to the United States that their incapacitation or destruction would have a debilitating impact on security, national economic security, or public health and safety.

Deputy: A qualified individual who, in the absence of a superior, can be delegated the authority to manage a functional operation or perform a specific task. In some cases, a deputy can act as relief for a superior; therefore, the deputy should be fully qualified in the position. Generally, deputies can serve the IC, EOC director, General Staff, and branch directors.

Director: The ICS title for an individual responsible for supervising a branch. Also, an organizational title for an individual responsible for managing and directing the team in an EOC.

Division: The organizational level having responsibility for operations within a defined geographic area. Divisions are established when the number of resources exceeds the section chief's manageable span of control.

Emergency: Any incident, whether natural, technological, or human caused, that necessitates responsive action to protect life or property.

Evacuation: The organized, phased, and supervised withdrawal, dispersal, or removal of people from dangerous or potentially dangerous areas, and their reception and care in safe areas.

Event: See *Planned event*.

General Staff: A group of incident personnel organized according to function and reporting to the IC or Unified Command. The ICS General Staff consists of the Operations Section Chief, Planning Section Chief (PCS), Logistics Section Chief, and Finance/Administration Section Chief.

Hazard: Something potentially dangerous or harmful; often the root cause of an unwanted outcome.

Incident: Per NIMS, an occurrence, natural or human caused, that necessitates a response to protect life or property. In this document, *incident* includes planned events as well as emergencies and disasters of all kinds and sizes.

Incident Action Plan (IAP): An oral or written plan outlining the IC's or Unified Command's objectives, tactics, and support activities for the planned operational period, generally 12 to 24 hours.

Incident base: A location where personnel coordinate and administer logistics functions for an incident. There is typically only one base per incident. The ICP may be co-located with the incident base.

Incident Command Post (ICP): The field location where staff perform the primary functions of incident command. The ICP may be co-located with the incident base or other incident facilities.

Incident Command System (ICS): A standardized approach to the command, control, and coordination of on-scene incident management, providing a common hierarchy within which personnel from multiple organizations can work. ICS brings procedures, personnel, facilities, equipment, and communications into a common organizational structure to aid in the management of on-scene resources during incidents. ICS applies to small, large, and complex incidents of all kinds, including planned events.

Incident Commander (IC): The individual responsible for all incident activities, including developing strategies and tactics and ordering and releasing resources. The IC has overall authority and responsibility for conducting incident operations and is responsible for the management of all incident activities.

Incident Complexity: Incident level determined by the level of difficulty, severity, or overall resistance the incident or event presents to incident management or support personnel as they work to manage it; a categorization that helps leaders compare one type of incident or event to another.

Incident Effect Indicators: Characteristics that help leaders determine the incident complexity type based on the impact an incident has. These indicators vary in scale with the complexity of an incident. FEMA defines them as "the characteristics seen as damage, consequence, or disruption to the residents, population, infrastructure, and government operations surrounding the incident or event." See also *Incident Management Indicators.*

Incident management: The broad spectrum of activities and organizations providing operations, coordination, and support at all levels of government, using both governmental and nongovernmental resources to plan for, respond to, and recover from an incident, regardless of cause, size, or complexity.

Incident Management Indicators: Characteristics that incident or emergency management personnel likely observe as the ICS expands or contracts in relationship to the complexity of an

incident. These indicators can assist emergency and incident managers in managing and supporting an incident of any complexity type. See also *Incident Effect Indicators.*

Incident Management Team (IMT): A rostered group of ICS-qualified personnel consisting of an IC, Command and General Staff, and personnel assigned to other key ICS positions.

Jurisdiction: Jurisdiction has two definitions depending on the context:

- A range or sphere of authority: Public agencies have jurisdiction at an incident related to their legal responsibilities and authority. Jurisdictional authority at an incident can be political or geographical (for example, SLTT or Federal boundary lines) or functional (for example, law enforcement or public health).

- A political subdivision (for example, municipal, county, parish, state, or Federal) with the responsibility to ensure public safety, health, and welfare within its legal authorities and geographic boundaries.

Mitigation: Applying the capabilities necessary to reduce loss of life and property by lessening the impacts of natural and human-caused disasters, incidents, and events.

Mutual Aid Agreement: A written or oral agreement between or among agencies, organizations, and jurisdictions that provides a mechanism for quickly obtaining assistance in the form of personnel, equipment, materials, and other associated services. The primary objective is to facilitate the rapid, short-term deployment of support before, during, and after an incident.

National: Of a nationwide character, including the SLTT and Federal aspects of governance and policy.

National Incident Management System (NIMS): A systematic, proactive approach to guide all levels of government, NGOs, and the private sector to work together to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from the effects of incidents. NIMS provides stakeholders across the whole community with the shared vocabulary, systems, and processes to successfully deliver the capabilities described in the National Preparedness System. NIMS provides a consistent foundation for dealing with all incidents, ranging from daily occurrences to incidents requiring a coordinated Federal response.

National Integration Center (NIC): A FEMA office that develops doctrine and tools to lead the whole community in implementing the National Preparedness System and NIMS.

National preparedness: Planning, organizing, equipping, training, and exercising to build and sustain the capabilities necessary to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from the threats that pose the greatest risk to national security.

National Preparedness Goal (NPG): Doctrine describing what it means for the whole community to be prepared for the types of incidents that pose the greatest threat to national security, including acts of

terrorism, emergencies, and disasters, regardless of cause. The goal reads, "A secure and resilient Nation with the capabilities required across the whole community to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from the threats and hazards that pose the greatest risk."

National Preparedness System: An organized process to achieve the NPG's stated goal of a secure and resilient nation.

National Qualification System (NQS): A nationwide approach, including best practices, for AHJs to use in qualifying, certifying, and credentialing incident management and support personnel.

Nongovernmental Organization (NGO): A nonprofit group that is based on the interests of its members, individuals, or institutions. An NGO is not created by a government, but it may work cooperatively with government. Examples of NGOs include faith-based groups, relief agencies, and animal welfare organizations.

Operational period: The time scheduled for executing a given set of operation actions, as the IAP specifies. Operational periods can vary in length but are typically 12 to 24 hours.

Planned event: A scheduled, non-emergency activity such as a sporting event, concert, or parade.

Position Task Book (PTB): A document that describes the minimum competencies, behaviors, and tasks necessary for a person to qualify or recertify for a NIMS position. The PTB documents a trainee's performance of given tasks.

Resource management: Systems for identifying available resources at all jurisdictional levels to enable timely, efficient, and unimpeded access to resources necessary to prepare for, respond to, or recover from an incident.

Resources: Personnel, equipment, teams, supplies, and facilities available or potentially available for assignment to incident operations. NIMS describes resources by kind and type and uses them in operational support or supervisory capacities at an incident or at an EOC.

Response: The capabilities necessary to save lives, protect property and the environment, and meet basic human needs after an incident has occurred.

Span of control: The number of subordinates for which a supervisor is responsible, usually expressed as a ratio of supervisors to individuals.

Unified Command: An ICS command structure that applies when more than one agency has incident jurisdiction or when incidents cross political jurisdictions.

Whole community: A focus on enabling a wide range of players from the private and nonprofit sectors to participate in incident management activities to foster better coordination and working relationships. Stakeholders include NGOs, the general public, and all levels of government.

Reference Resources

National Incident Management System (NIMS)

- On the NIMS website, users can find links to NIMS documents, guidelines, and operational tools, as well as training information, implementation guidance, updates, and contact information for the FEMA Regional NIMS Coordinators.

  o   https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/nims

National Qualification System (NQS)

- The NIMS Guideline for the NQS describes the components of a qualification and certification system, defines a process for certifying the qualifications of incident personnel, describes how to establish and implement a peer review process, and introduces the process of credentialing personnel.

- NQS also provides Job Titles/Position Qualifications and Position Task Books (PTB) for a range of incident management, incident support, and emergency management positions.

  o   https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/nims/components#nqs

Incident Command System (ICS) Resource Center

- The Emergency Management Institute's ICS Resource Center provides information about and links to an extensive array of ICS training materials, job aids, position checklists, and forms.

  o   https://training.fema.gov/emiweb/is/icsresource/index.htm

NIMS Training Program

- The NIMS Training Program specifies NIC and stakeholder responsibilities and activities for developing, maintaining, and sustaining NIMS training.

  o   https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/nims/implementation-training#training

NIMS Guideline for Mutual Aid

- The NIMS Guideline for Mutual Aid outlines common practices for mutual aid agreements, compacts, and plans for use before and after an incident or planned event. Private and nonprofit sectors, faith-based organizations, and governments can use this guidance as a resource in developing or refining mutual aid agreements or plans.

  o   https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/nims/components#mutual-aid