



# DEPUTY SHERIFFS' TRAINING BULLETIN

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## National Incident Management System (NIMS)

Recently there have been a number questions and concerns voiced about the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the Incident Command System (ICS) requirements. This bulletin will try to answer those questions and identify those requirements sheriff's offices should be meeting.

The objective of NIMS is to ensure that all levels of government across the Nation have the capability to work efficiently and effectively together, using a single comprehensive national approach to domestic incident management. The point is that all responders at all levels use the same organizational structures, terminology, procedures and systems all the time. The idea is to achieve interoperability among jurisdictions and disciplines.

In plain speak, NIMS and ICS is an attempt to avoid the turf battles that so often flair up at a disaster or other serious incidents that require law enforcement, fire, emergency medical services, and emergency response/management to work together and often brings response from local, state, federal, and private agencies.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) requires that all agencies adopt and use NIMS. The first step is for first responders to complete the basic level ICS training and supervisors complete introductory NIMS training. This is the most transparent way to demonstrate compliance.

This training can be completed online at no cost. Information on NIMS and ICS and the links to the online training courses can be found at <http://www.fema.gov/nims/>. There are a number of excellent training courses available. As a minimum, sheriffs should consider:

IS 100.LE	Introduction to ICS for Law Enforcement	All Personnel
IS 700	NIMS An Introduction	All Supervisory Personnel

Once training is completed, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will issue each individual a completion certificate. We would recommend that each Agency keep these in their training records. If desired, you may mail a copy of those completion certificates to the Deputy Sheriffs' Education and Training Board. The Deputy Sheriffs' Information System is set up to accept outside training and reflect it on the respective deputy's training transcripts. Additionally, FEMA will forward training reports to the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) who is tasked with maintaining compliance records for Pennsylvania.

You may question why you and your deputies should complete these programs? First of all, if you do not understand, integrate, and practice NIMS when a situation arises, you will be behind the curve when it comes to working with your contemporaries in a crisis. Additionally, there may come a time when you may be excluded from planning, exercises, and implementation of local emergency plans if you can't demonstrate compliance. Finally, the Department of Homeland Security has tied compliance to the ability to receive any federal preparedness funds from any federal agency.

Your next question may be what defines compliance? That is a harder question to answer. To date, the only guidance we can get is "a good faith attempt". That will obviously be a judgment call but 0% will probably not make the grade.

Finally, many of you will recall that the last Supervisory Continuing Education Cycle was on "Incident Command". While by all accounts it was an excellent training program, unfortunately it's the case of being too responsive. We were ahead of the game but that training will not replace the NIMS requirements.

