
Unit 2: Understanding NIMS

Objectives

At the end of this unit, the participants should be able to describe:

- The intent of NIMS.
 - Key concepts and principles underlying NIMS.
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Scope

- Unit Introduction and Objectives
 - Introduction to NIMS
 - Video: What is NIMS?
 - NIMS Overview
 - What NIMS Is/What It's Not
 - Mandates
 - Collaborative Incident Management
 - NIMS Builds on Best Practices
 - NIMS Is Dynamic
 - Flexibility
 - Standardization
 - Voices of Experience
 - NIMS Components
 - Knowledge Review and Summary
-

Methodology

The instructors will begin by presenting the unit objectives and showing a video that provides an overview of the National Incident Management System (NIMS). They will then explain, in a general sense, what NIMS is and is not.

Next, the instructors will explain mandates guiding the development and implementation of NIMS. They will explain how NIMS is a dynamic, collaborative effort that builds on best practices in the field of incident management.

They will then explain the concepts of flexibility and standardization and how they apply to NIMS.

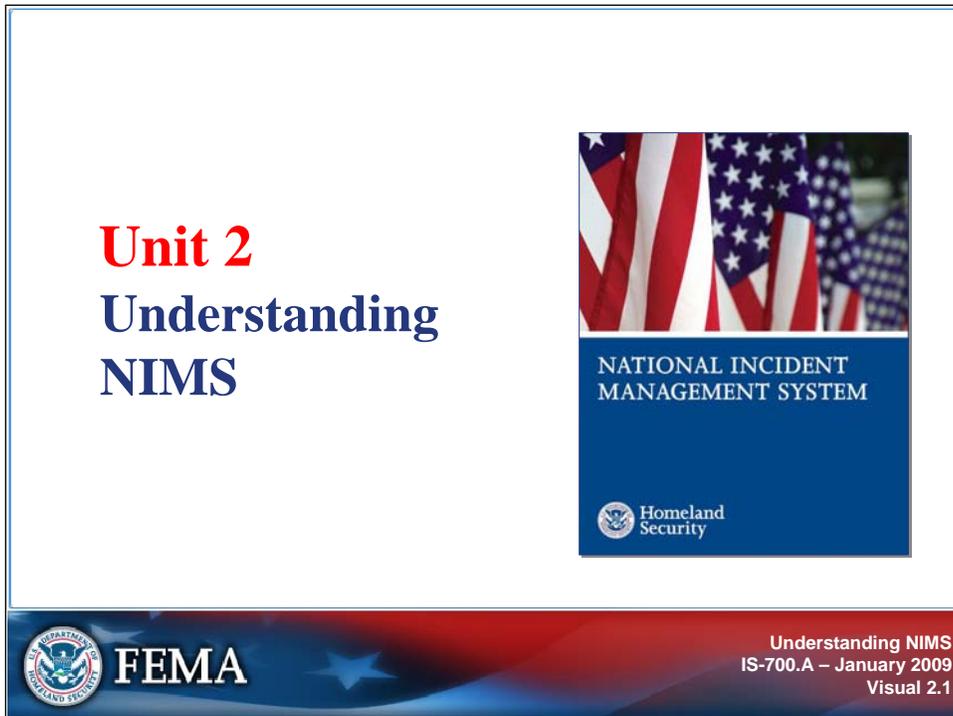
Then, the instructors will play a series of audio clips about the benefits of using NIMS. They will then facilitate a class discussion about best practices among the participants agencies/jurisdictions/organizations.

Finally, they will offer an overview of the course structure by presenting the components of NIMS. The participants will then take a brief Knowledge Review before the instructors move on to the next unit.

Time Plan

A suggested time plan for this unit is shown below. More or less time may be required, based on the experience level of the group.

Topic	Time
Unit Introduction and Objectives	5 minutes
Introduction to NIMS	1 hour
Knowledge Review and Summary	10 minutes
Total Time	1 hour 15 minutes



The slide features a white background with a blue border. On the left, the text "Unit 2" is in red, and "Understanding NIMS" is in blue. On the right, there is a graphic with an American flag at the top, the text "NATIONAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM" in white on a blue background, and the "Homeland Security" logo at the bottom. A red and blue banner at the bottom of the slide contains the FEMA logo on the left and the text "Understanding NIMS IS-700.A – January 2009 Visual 2.1" on the right.

Instructor Notes

Explain that Unit 2 provides a general overview of the National Incident Management System, or NIMS. The next visual will outline the objectives for this unit.

Unit Objectives

Describe:

- The intent of NIMS.
- The key concepts and principles underlying NIMS.

Unit List

- ✓ Overview
- Understanding NIMS
 - Preparedness
 - Communications and Information Management
 - Resource Management
 - Command and Management
 - Additional Resources and Course Summary

 See pages 5-8 of the NIMS document.



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Instructor Notes

Explain that this lesson summarizes the information presented in the Introduction and Overview of the NIMS document, including:

- Introduction
- Concepts and Principles
 - Flexibility
 - Standardization
- Overview of NIMS Components

Refer the participants to pages 5 through 8 of the NIMS document.

What Is NIMS?



Click on the image to start the video.

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Instructor Notes

Tell the participants that this video provides an introduction to NIMS.

Instructions for playing the video: The videos are activated by a single click on the image in Slide Show mode. If you click a second time on the video, it will stop. The videos will not work unless you are in Slide Show mode.

Video Transcript: Each day communities respond to numerous emergencies. Most often, these incidents are managed effectively at the local level.

However, there are some incidents that may require a collaborative approach that includes personnel from:

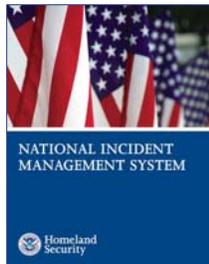
- Multiple jurisdictions,
- A combination of specialties or disciplines,
- Several levels of government,
- Nongovernmental organizations, and
- The private sector.

The National Incident Management System, or NIMS, provides the foundation needed to ensure that we can work together when our communities and the Nation need us the most.

NIMS integrates best practices into a comprehensive, standardized framework that is flexible enough to be applicable across the full spectrum of potential incidents, regardless of cause, size, location, or complexity.

Using NIMS allows us to work together to prepare for, prevent, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the effects of incidents. This course introduces you to the NIMS concepts, principles, and components.

NIMS Overview



What ? . . . NIMS provides a consistent nationwide template . . .

Who? . . . to enable Federal, State, tribal, and local governments, the private sector, and nongovernmental organizations to work together . . .

How? . . . to prepare for, prevent, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the effects of incidents regardless of cause, size, location, or complexity . . .

Why? . . . in order to reduce the loss of life and property, and harm to the environment.



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Instructor Notes

Explain to the participants that **the National Incident Management System (NIMS) provides a consistent framework for incident management at all jurisdictional levels regardless of the cause, size, or complexity of the incident.** NIMS is not an operational incident management or resource allocation plan.

Tell the participants that the NIMS document was developed through a collaborative intergovernmental partnership with significant input from the incident management functional disciplines, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and the private sector.

Originally published on March 1, 2004, the NIMS document was revised in 2008 to reflect contributions from stakeholders and lessons learned during recent incidents.

NIMS: What It Is/What It's Not

<p>NIMS is . . .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ A flexible framework of:<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Doctrine▪ Concepts▪ Principles▪ Terminology▪ Organizational processes▪ Applicable to all hazards and jurisdictions	<p>NIMS is <u>not</u> . . .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ An operational incident management plan▪ A resource allocation plan▪ A terrorism/WMD-specific plan▪ Designed to address international events
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Instructor Notes

Refer the participant to items on the visual stating “What NIMS Is” and “What NIMS Is Not.” Read aloud the following situations (or other examples that would be relevant to the audience). Tell the participants to indicate if they are consistent or inconsistent with NIMS:

- Local officials are using the Incident Command System (ICS) to plan for the upcoming Fourth of July celebration.

Answer: Consistent With NIMS

Explanation: NIMS encourages the use of ICS for both planned events and incidents.

- A jurisdiction/agency follows NIMS only when incidents are complex enough to involve other jurisdictions.

Answer: Not Consistent With NIMS

Explanation: NIMS applies to all hazards independent of size or complexity.

- An agency is replacing its operational plan for responding to incidents with the guidance provided in NIMS.

Answer: Not Consistent With NIMS

Explanation: NIMS provides overall response principles and structures but does not provide specific plans.

- An organization is reorganizing and using NIMS/ICS titles for day-to-day routine activities.

Answer: Not Consistent With NIMS

Explanation: NIMS is designed to manage incidents rather than day-to-day business operations.

HSPD 5 Management of Domestic Incidents

Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5 (HSPD-5) directed the Secretary of Homeland Security to:

- Develop and administer a National Incident Management System (NIMS).
- Develop the National Response Framework (NRF).



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Instructor Notes

Explain that Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5 (HSPD-5), "Management of Domestic Incidents," directed the Secretary of Homeland Security to:

- Develop and administer a National Incident Management System (NIMS).
- Develop the National Response Framework (NRF).

The NIMS Mandate

HSPD-5 requires all Federal departments and agencies to:

- Adopt and use NIMS in incident management programs and activities.
- Make adoption of NIMS a condition for Federal preparedness assistance (through grants, contracts, and other activities).



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Instructor Notes

Explain that HSPD-5 requires all Federal departments and agencies to:

- Adopt NIMS and use it in their individual incident management programs and activities.
- Make adoption of NIMS by State, tribal, and local organizations a condition for Federal preparedness assistance (through grants, contracts, and other activities).

Collaborative Incident Management

NIMS:

- Is **not** an operational incident management or resource allocation plan.
- Represents a core set of doctrines, concepts, principles, terminology, and organizational processes
- Enables effective, efficient, and collaborative incident management.



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Instructor Notes

Tell the participants that NIMS is **not** an operational incident management or resource allocation plan.

Explain that NIMS represents a core set of doctrines, concepts, principles, terminology, and organizational processes that enables effective, efficient, and collaborative incident management.

NIMS Builds on Best Practices



NIMS integrates emergency management best practices that:

- Lay the groundwork for the components of NIMS.
- Provide for the further development and refinement of supporting national standards, guidelines, protocols, systems, and technologies.



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Instructor Notes

Explain how, by building on the foundation provided by existing emergency management and incident response systems used by jurisdictions, organizations, and functional disciplines at all levels, NIMS integrates best practices into a comprehensive framework.

Tell the participants that these best practices lay the groundwork for the components of NIMS and provide the mechanisms for the further development and refinement of supporting national standards, guidelines, protocols, systems, and technologies.

NIMS Is Dynamic

NIMS:

- Is **not** a static system.
- Fosters the development of specialized technologies that facilitate response.
- Allows for the adoption of new approaches that will enable continuous refinement of the system.



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Instructor Notes

Note that NIMS is **not** a static system.

Explain that NIMS fosters the development of specialized technologies that facilitate emergency management and incident response activities, and allows for the adoption of new approaches that will enable continuous refinement of the system over time.

Flexibility



Planned Events



Forecasted Events



No-Notice Events



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Instructor Notes

Explain to the participants that the components of NIMS are adaptable and scalable to any situation, from routine, local incidents, to incidents requiring the activation of interstate mutual aid, to those requiring a coordinated Federal response. NIMS applies to all types of incidents.

Standardization

Standardized organizational structures:

- Improve integration and connectivity among jurisdictions and disciplines.
- Allow those who adopt NIMS to work together.
- Foster cohesion among various response organizations.



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Instructor Notes

Describe how NIMS provides a set of **standardized** organizational structures that improve integration and connectivity among jurisdictions and disciplines, starting with a common foundation of preparedness and planning.

Personnel and organizations that have adopted the common NIMS framework are able to work together, thereby fostering cohesion among the various organizations involved in all aspects of an incident.

Voices of Experience: NIMS Benefits



Steve Grainer
Chief, Incident Management Programs
VA Dept. of Fire Programs



Curry Mayer
Training & Exercise Chief
Governor's Office of Emergency Services (CA)



Kristy Plourde
NIMS Program Coordinator
U.S. Coast Guard



Roberta Runge
National NIMS Coordinator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Click on icons to play audio.



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Instructor Notes

Tell the participants they will be hearing “voices of experience” about the advantages of using NIMS. Click on each icon to hear the “voice of experience.” **Instructor note:** Be sure to listen to all the audio clips before beginning the course. You may want to make note of portions that strike you as especially valuable to use as talking points while teaching.

Steve Grainer, Chief, Incident Management Programs, VA Dept. of Fire Programs: NIMS is a national initiative to standardize the fundamental processes that are necessary for effectively managing significant emergencies, and it's applicable in all size and scale and scope emergencies. Having been involved at the local, State, and Federal level in a number of different venues during my career, I'm truly and honestly pleased to say that this is an opportunity for us all to better establish a baseline of competencies for not only emergencies, obviously that would be the primary focus, but also to utilize a nationally vetted process that will work given A) participation and B) commitment. So I'm all for the idea of establishing a national systems approach as is pretty much formatted through the concepts of NIMS in their entirety. It's a good thing, that's about the best I can say.

Curry Mayer, Training & Exercise Chief, Governor's Office of Emergency Services (CA): NIMS is the national structure that includes roles and responsibilities for responding to an incident that would require the Federal Government to be involved, a catastrophic or large-scale incident. It's also a system that provides common terminology, roles, and responsibilities so that everyone in the country can basically plug into the national system of response.

Kristy Plourde, NIMS Program Coordinator, U.S. Coast Guard: NIMS has helped us be better structured, have less duplication, be more organized and more efficient, and it covers the whole gambit of organization, communications, preparedness, it's the whole, it's everything.

Roberta Runge, National NIMS Coordinator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency: NIMS is a system that allows us to plan and prepare and execute a response more effectively with our response partners. The biggest benefit to us as an agency is to be able to understand how our response partners are also going to be executing the response. EPA is a fairly large organization but we hardly ever respond to something very large and very complicated without other Federal and State and local partners. If everyone is operating the response using different terminology or a different management structure, it becomes very difficult, very fast.

Discussion Question

What actions does your organization take that exemplify NIMS best practices?



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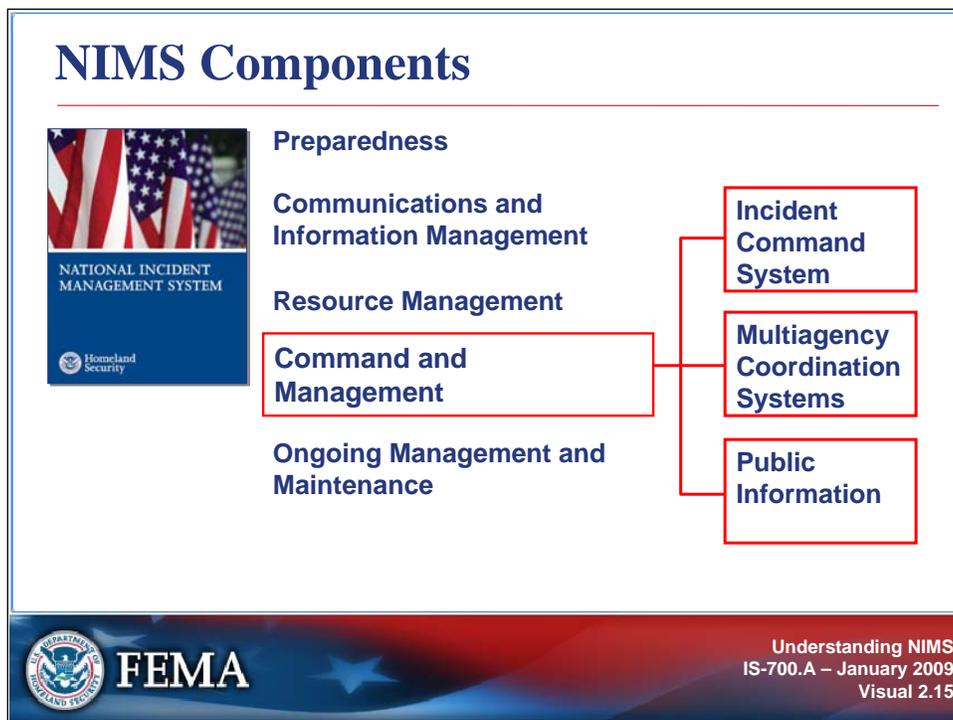
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Instructor Notes

Ask the participants the following discussion question:

- **What actions does your organization take that exemplify NIMS best practices?**

Acknowledge the examples offered by participants. Add any examples that you may have.



Instructor Notes

Tell the participants that NIMS is much more than just using the Incident Command System or an organization chart.

Following is a synopsis of each major component of NIMS.

- **Preparedness.** Effective incident management and incident response activities begin with a host of preparedness activities conducted on an ongoing basis, in advance of any potential incident. Preparedness involves an integrated combination of planning, procedures and protocols, training and exercises, personnel qualification and certification, and equipment certification.
- **Communications and Information Management.** Emergency management and incident response activities rely on communications and information systems that provide a common operating picture to all command and coordination sites. NIMS describes the requirements necessary for a standardized framework for communications and emphasizes the need for a common operating picture. NIMS is based on the concepts of interoperability, reliability, scalability, portability, and the resiliency and redundancy of communications and information systems.
- **Resource Management.** Resources (such as personnel, equipment, and/or supplies) are needed to support critical incident objectives. The flow of resources must be fluid and adaptable to the requirements of the incident. NIMS defines standardized mechanisms and establishes the resource management process to: identify requirements for, order and acquire, mobilize, track and report, recover and demobilize, reimburse for, and inventory resources.
- **Command and Management.** The Command and Management component within NIMS is designed to enable effective and efficient incident management and coordination by providing flexible, standardized incident management structures. The structure is based on three key organizational constructs: the **Incident Command System, Multiagency Coordination Systems, and Public Information.**
- **Ongoing Management and Maintenance.** DHS/FEMA manages the development and maintenance of NIMS. This includes developing NIMS programs and processes as well as keeping the NIMS document current.

Knowledge Review and Summary

Instructions:

- Answer the review questions on the next page in your Student Manual.
- Be prepared to share your answers with the class in 5 minutes.
- If you need clarification on any of the material presented in this unit, be sure to ask your instructors.



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Instructor Notes

Conduct the Unit 2 review as follows:

- Direct the participants to the Knowledge Review located on the next page in their Student Manuals.
- Allow 5 minutes for the participants to answer the questions.
- Monitor the time. When 5 minutes have passed, ask for volunteers to provide their answers.
- If not mentioned by participants, provide the correct responses from the answer key on the next page.
- Ask the participants if they have any questions on the material covered in this unit. Be sure to answer all questions before moving on to Unit 3.

Transition to the next unit by explaining that it presents the NIMS Preparedness component.

Unit 2: Knowledge Review

1. Indicate if the following statements are TRUE or FALSE:

Statement	True	False
NIMS is an operational incident management plan.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
NIMS is based on best practices collected from all levels of responders.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
NIMS integrates best practices into a comprehensive, standardized framework.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
NIMS provides a terrorism/WMD-specific plan for Federal, State, tribal, and local responders.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
NIMS is applicable across the full spectrum of potential incidents, regardless of cause, size, location, or complexity.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
NIMS specifies how Federal and interstate mutual-aid resources will be allocated among jurisdictions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

2. Describe one benefit of NIMS.

Possible Answer: Establishment of standardized organizational structures that improve integration among jurisdictions and disciplines.

3. Use the space below to make note of any questions you have about the material covered in this unit.

Your Notes: