

Amateur Radio And The Next Step

As the New Year has come so does the need for Amateur Radio operators to take the next step. In this article, I will be using information gathered from *Federal Fiscal Year 2005 NIMS Requirements* e-mail the first week of January '06 put out by Thomas H. Arnold, Director of Training Programs and State National Incident Management System Compliance Office. I will have the article in its entirety on the Kentucky ARRL web page and will ask Pat Spencer, KD4PWL to put it on KyHam.

Amateur Radio is now considered a first responder in Kentucky. Therefore, incorporating NIMS requirements have to be met. We need to promote intrastate mutual aid agreements. Coordinating and providing technical assistance to local entities (of which Amateur Radio is a part) regarding NIMS, it also identifies how compliant our agency is. This tool is available currently at www.NIMSONline.com and should be used immediately to measure your agency's compliance, institutionalizing the use of Incident Command System (ICS). We must be consistent with concepts and principles taught by the Department of Homeland Security.

Preparedness and training is something that we as hams have prided ourselves on for many years. Just think back at how you felt when you took your first ham test and were either notified by mail from the FCC that you passed or by a VE team, what a feeling. So, think about the feeling you'll have when you complete the following IS-700 training program by September 30, 2006 from F.E.M.A. web site <http://training.fema.gov/emiweb/IS/crslist.asp>. Additional training needed is IS-800, which is part of your ongoing training program for new employees, recruits and *first responders* by September 30, 2006 (Emergency managers or personnel whose primary responsibility is emergency management must complete the IS-800). Then complete the training with ICS 100 and 200 by September 30, from the same website as listed earlier. The IS-800 is at this time the way I read is optional except for those organizations that are 501(C)(3) and expect to receive monies from KyDHS. Unfortunately, if we plan on being used or expect to be used by Emergency Management or any of the other served agencies then this training is a must. At the time of the writing of this article I am awaiting an answer from Ky Homeland Security Office (KyDHS) to see whether or not we will be required to have a Weapon of Mass Destruction (WMD) class and when the state plans on starting the courses for us at their cost. This might only be required if your organization receives money directly from KyDHS.

We can thank the terrorist attacks of 2001 for our additional training. Of course those of us living close to bordering states will hear how different the training avenues might be. To the point that they (the bordering state) will require something different than us here in Kentucky. All I can say to that is this is what Kentucky has decided what the Federal Office Of Homeland Security wants and that is how they are going to do it. We cannot worry about how another state has decided to interpret the meaning of the Federal Government. We have to go by what Kentucky wants and expects from the first responders.

What it all boils down to is loss of Federal Funds. A city, county or state that is not compliant or using first responders that are not compliant stand a chance of losing federal dollars, grants or both. Simply put, we either do it or we're not going to be part of the equation. So, let us take the bull by the horn and do what we can to become compliant. Is there a chance for an extension of the projected time, possible? How many of you think that each city, county or the state will have everyone in their government circle, much less their employees and first responders compliant by 1Oct06? But let us not be the nut that the bolt is waiting for. Go for it and make a believer out of everyone.

Thanks, 73

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