

NIMS Terms and Definitions: *Institutionalizing the use of ICS*

To "institutionalize the use of ICS" means that government officials, incident managers and emergency response organizations at all jurisdictional levels adopt the Incident Command System and launch activities [in FY 2005] that will result in the use of the Incident Command System for all incident response operations. Actions to institutionalize the use of ICS take place at two levels – policy and organizational/operational.

At the policy level, institutionalizing the ICS means government officials, i.e., governors, mayors, county and city managers, tribal leaders and others:

1. Adopt through the ICS through executive order, proclamation or legislation as the jurisdiction's official incident response system; and
2. Direct that incident managers and response organizations in their jurisdictions train, exercise and use the ICS in their response operations.

At the organizational/operational level, evidence that incident managers and emergency response organizations are institutionalizing the ICS would include the following:

1. ICS is being integrated into functional and system-wide emergency operations policies, plans and procedures;
2. ICS training is planned or under way for responders, supervisors and command level officers;
3. Responders at all levels are participating in and/or coordinating ICS-oriented exercises that involve responders from multi-disciplines and jurisdictions.

While it is not expected that all these activities would be completed in FY 2005, it is expected that where possible they will be and that, at a minimum, planning for such activities would be initiated and actions taken to put them into practice.