

Letter of Instruction

Implementation Guidance

General

The National Response Plan (NRP) is effective upon issuance with a phased implementation process during the first year. During the first 120 days of this implementation process, the Initial NRP (INRP), Federal Response Plan (FRP), U.S. Government Domestic Terrorism Concept of Operations Plan (CONPLAN), and Federal Radiological Emergency Response Plan (FRERP) remain in effect. The implementation phases are as follows:

- **Phase I – Transitional Period (0 to 60 days):** This 60-day timeframe is intended to provide a transitional period for departments and agencies and other organizations to modify training, designate staffing of NRP organizational elements, and become familiar with NRP structures, processes, and protocols.
- **Phase II – Plan Modification (60 to 120 days):** This second 60-day timeframe is intended to provide departments and agencies the opportunity to modify existing Federal interagency plans to align with the NRP and conduct necessary training.
- **Phase III – Initial Implementation and Testing (120 days to 1 year):** Four months after its issuance, the NRP is to be fully implemented, and the INRP, FRP, CONPLAN, and FRERP are superseded. Other existing plans remain in effect, modified to align with the NRP. During this timeframe, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) will conduct systematic assessments of NRP coordinating structures, processes, and protocols implemented for actual Incidents of National Significance (defined on page 4 of the NRP), national-level homeland security exercises, and National Special Security Events (NSSEs). These assessments will gauge the plan's effectiveness in meeting specific objectives outlined in Homeland Security Presidential Directive-5 (HSPD-5). At the end of this period, DHS will conduct a 1-year review to assess the implementation process and make recommendations to the Secretary on necessary NRP revisions. Following this initial review, the NRP will begin a deliberate 4-year review and reissuance cycle.

The Secretary of Homeland Security may accelerate the implementation of the NRP if warranted by circumstances.

Requirements

This section provides specific requirements or recommendations for the Secretary of Homeland Security; Federal departments and agencies; State, local, and tribal governments; and private-sector and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to enable full NRP implementation.

Secretary of Homeland Security

Within 120 days of the issuance of this plan, in coordination and consultation with other departments and agencies, the Secretary of Homeland Security will:

- Develop and publish detailed operational procedures for the Homeland Security Operations Center (HSOC), National Response Coordination Center (NRCC), Interagency Incident Management Group (IIMG), and Joint Field Office (JFO);
- Identify appropriate assets and establish agreements and procedures for their rapid deployment and employment in accordance with the NRP Catastrophic Incident Supplement;
- Designate representatives to staff the HSOC, NRCC, and IIMG; and
- Develop appropriate training programs for HSOC, IIMG, NRCC, Principal Federal Official (PFO), and Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO) cadres.

Within 1 year of its effective date, the Secretary of Homeland Security will conduct an interagency review to assess the effectiveness of the NRP, identify improvements, and provide recommendations regarding plan modifications and reissuance, if required.

Federal Departments and Agencies

As required by HSPD-5, Federal departments and agencies will:

- Provide cooperation, resources, and support to the Secretary of Homeland Security in the implementation of the NRP, as appropriate and consistent with their own authorities and responsibilities;
- Designate representatives to staff the HSOC, NRCC, and IIMG;

- Carry out responsibilities assigned in the Emergency Support Function (ESF) Annexes to the NRP, developing supplemental plans and procedures as required;
- Establish connectivity with and report incidents to the National Joint Terrorism Task Force (NJTTF), the HSOC, and the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) as outlined in section V (page 46) of this document; and
- Within 120 days of the issuance of this plan, modify existing interagency incident management and emergency response plans and protocols, to the extent authorized by law, incorporating:
 - Linkages to key NRP processes and coordinating structures (i.e., the IIMG, HSOC, NRCC, Regional Response Coordination Center (RRCC), JFO, etc.);
 - Principles and terminology used in the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and NRP;
 - NRP incident-reporting requirements;
 - Procedures for transitioning from localized incidents to Incidents of National Significance; and
 - Accelerated resource activation, mobilization, and deployment requirements outlined in the NRP Catastrophic Incident Annex.
- Coordinate with the HSOC regarding procedures for establishing connectivity for domestic incident management purposes. Local government procedures should be coordinated with the respective State government and/or emergency management agency.
- Modify existing incident management and emergency operations plans within 120 days (or no later than the next major plan maintenance cycle) to ensure proper alignment with NRP coordinating structures, processes, and protocols.
- Notify the Secretary of Homeland Security of any substantial conflicts between this plan and State or tribal government laws or regulations. This plan is not intended to compromise existing State or tribal government laws or corresponding incident management or emergency response plans.

Modifications to existing Federal interagency plans must be completed and reported to DHS within 120 days of the publication of the NRP. When it may not be feasible for plan modifications to be completed within 120 days (such as the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (NCP)¹), agencies must commence modification within this timeframe and provide a timeline for completion to the Secretary of Homeland Security.

State, Local, and Tribal Governments and Nongovernmental Organizations

State, local, and tribal governments and NGOs are requested to:

- Utilize established incident reporting protocols to notify local and regional Joint Terrorism Task Forces (JTTFs) and the HSOC, as appropriate, as outlined in section V (page 46) of this document.

Federal Regional Organizations

Federal regional organizations will:

- Designate representatives to the RRCC and Regional Interagency Steering Committee (RISC) at the request of the Secretary of Homeland Security;
- Develop regional supplements to the NRP as required; and
- Update existing standard operating procedures (SOPs) pertaining to the RRCC to align with NRP requirements.

Private Sector

Private-sector owners and operators, particularly those who represent critical elements of infrastructure or key resources whose disruption may have national or major regional impact, are encouraged (or in some cases required under law) to develop appropriate emergency response and business continuity plans and information-sharing and incident-reporting protocols that are tailored to the unique requirements of their respective sector or industry, and that clearly map to regional, State, and local emergency response plans and information-sharing networks.

These plans and information-sharing and reporting protocols should be consistent with the NRP Base Plan and supporting annexes.

¹ The NCP is a regulation subject to notice and comment requirements. For modifications to the NCP, rulemaking activities will be commenced within 120 days of publication of this plan.