

Benefits of the National Qualification System

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Speaker: John Ford

Presentation Abstract:

Are you looking for a way to qualify your personnel? Do you ever wonder where to start? Over time, FEMA has learned that catastrophic disasters can quickly overwhelm jurisdictions and the disaster workforce supporting the community. Findings in after-action reports, such as the Cascadia Subduction Zone Exercise, demonstrate that region-wide staffing and resource shortages occur frequently. The 2017 hurricane season proved to be another example of how the emergency management community needs to build additional capabilities and resources for responding to incidents. In response to the rising problem, FEMA is developing the National Qualification System (NQS), which aims to operationalize resource-sharing opportunities for disasters and incidents by creating an agile disaster workforce that is well equipped, educated, and trained to rapidly mobilize, deploy, and conduct missions. NQS provides the tools for jurisdictions and organizations to implement their own qualification and certification processes to share resources more seamlessly with other jurisdictions and organizations.

NQS enhances mutual aid. By speaking with one voice, entities can:

1. Rapidly identify personnel who have the needed qualifications for the job;
2. Supplement their team with confidence knowing that the mutual aid they receive consists of the capabilities for which they asked;
3. Efficiently define staffing requirements; and

4. Clarify recruitment and training requirements.

NQS also supports the National Preparedness Goal by creating a network of qualified personnel for potential nationwide deployment.

John Ford, Deputy Director

FEMA

Speaker Bio:

Mr. John Ford is currently the Deputy Director for the National Integration Center (NIC) at the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). He is responsible for the National Preparedness Goal, the NIC's Technical Assistance Program, and maintenance of the National Incident Management System (NIMS). John has also served FEMA in the Office of Training, Exercise and Doctrine as the Exercise Unit Chief from 2008 to 2012. John has deployed as an Operations Section Chief in support of many disasters. He also served as the Director of Emergency Services for Carteret County, North Carolina and was responsible for leading and coordinating emergency medical services, emergency communications, the emergency management program, and fire prevention activities for the county. Additionally, Mr. Ford was a Firefighter/Lieutenant with the City of Raleigh Fire Department from 1998 to 2008. He has a master's in public administration from the American University and obtained a graduate level certificate in Community Preparedness and Disaster Management (CPDM) from the University of North Carolina. He also has a Bachelor of Science in Emergency Management from Western Carolina University.