ITTF POLICY STATEMENT 2010 (6)


FROM: Mike Chamness, Chair, Illinois Terrorism Task Force

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SUBJECT: Illinois Terrorism Task Force Policy Statement Regarding the Emergency Responder Credentialing Program

INTRODUCTION

Governor’s Executive Order 2003 (17) created the statewide homeland security advisory committee, the Illinois Terrorism Task Force (ITTF). The ITTF is responsible for developing and helping to implement the state’s homeland security strategy as an advisory body to the Governor and overseeing the management and administration of the Homeland Security Grant Program. The task force continues to build upon a strong foundation of established working partnerships among its more than 60 members, which represent all public safety agencies and associations and every community in Illinois.

BACKGROUND

Homeland Security Presidential Directive-5 “Management of Domestic Incidents” (HSPD-5) required the adoption of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) by all federal departments and agencies. This directive also required that federal preparedness assistance funding for states, territories, tribes and local jurisdictions be dependent on NIMS compliance. NIMS implementation is also linked to the National Response Plan (NRP), Homeland Security Presidential Directive-8, National Preparedness (HSPD-8), and the National Infrastructure Protection Plan.
It is the intent of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to improve emergency management and response capabilities in the United States for all major disasters, emergencies, and other incidents where interstate mutual aid is required. In April 2010, the Department of Homeland Security released *NIMS Guideline for the Credentialing of Personnel*. This guideline provides core information to be used by all response organizations, including operational definitions for important terms and the key credentialing processes.

**GENERAL POLICY STATEMENT**

It is the policy of the ITTF to maintain an Emergency Responder Credentialing Program (ERCP) to ensure that the incident management community can plan for, request, and trust resources needed for emergency assistance; receive personnel resources that match requests; and appropriately manage officially dispatched responders. It is further the purpose of credentialing to ensure and readily validate the identity and attributes (such as affiliations, skills, or privileges) of an individual.

**GOVERNANCE**

Under the direction and control of the ITTF Chair or his designee, the ERCP governance body will be comprised of, as a minimum, the ITTF committee chairs. The governance body will be responsible for the management and implementation of the ERCP and maintenance of this policy. The ITTF Chairs may delegate responsibility for the administration and support of the ERCP to member agencies/entities of the ITTF, based on the approval of the ITTF Chair or his designee.

**TIERED AND DELEGATED CREDENTIALING**

Credentials issued and administered by the ITTF will be issued through a tiered and delegated model. This model will help ensure the appropriate level of review and vetting of credentials while optimizing the investment of ITTF funds in an efficient manner.

As part of the ERCP, two specific credentialing tiers will be utilized:

- **Tier 1** – Tier 1 credentials will be issued in compliance with Federal Information Processing Standard (FIPS) 201, the Personal Identification Verification requirements. Specifically, Tier 1 credentials will qualify as a Personal Identity Verification Interoperable (PIV-I) credential, as described in the guidance titled *Personal Identity Verification Interoperability for Non-Federal Issuers*, which is the recommended standard in the *NIMS Guideline for the Credentialing of Personnel*. Tier 1 credentials will be interoperable at the national level.

- **Tier 2** – Tier 2 credentials will be issued following the *NIMS Guideline for the Credentialing of Personnel* and will be issued predominately for use within the state of Illinois. Tier 2 credentials will match, to the extent possible, the format of Tier 1/PIV-I credentials. Tier 2 credentials will be interoperable within the state of Illinois.
Event Specific Credentials will be issued at the discretion of specific incident command. The issuance process and format of event specific credentials are also at the discretion of specific incident command. The ITTF will support this process through the allocation of equipment for local use when funding allows.

ISSUANCE

Emergency responder credentials will be issued in a manner that addresses the need for national interoperability while maximizing the effectiveness of investments in the ERCP. ITTF-recognized emergency responder credentials are issued:

- by federal agencies in compliance with FIPS 201,
- through the use of the ITTF Emergency Responder Credentialing System, or
- by systems that have received authorization by the ITTF to issue emergency responder credentials.

Illinois agencies and entities external to the ITTF will be authorized to issue emergency responder credentials when:

1. the agency or entity leadership who will authorize the issuance of credentials has been issued a FIPS 201 compliant credential,
2. the agency or entity has demonstrated that their issuance process is in compliance with the NIMS Guideline for the Credentialing of Personnel,
3. credentials issued will, to the extent possible, match the format of ITTF-issued credentials,
4. credentials issued will utilize any standardized bar-codes or other technology adopted by the ITTF to facilitate interoperability, and
5. the agency or entity will share specific information regarding credentials issued for the purpose of establishing credential verification capabilities and resource management.

Issuance of Tier 1 Credentials

Tier 1 credentials utilize "smart-card" technology, which provides electronic, real-time identity verification and authentication at very high levels of assurance. Therefore, Tier 1 credentials will be issued to individuals who:

1. are most likely to respond to and/or escort responders to an event outside of Illinois,
2. will access and/or escort others into highly secure facilities, or
3. will be responsible for the issuance of Tier 2 credentials.

Issuance of Tier 2 Credentials

The issuance of Tier 2 credentials will be authorized by leadership of agencies and entities who have first been issued an ITTF Tier 1 credential or a federally issued FIPS 201 compliant credential. This tiered and delegated model of issuance will help ensure the highest possible level of identity verification and authentication without utilizing "smart-card" technology. Tier 2 credentials will utilize bar-code or other technology that will provide an acceptable level of interoperability for use within the state of Illinois.
IDENTIFICATION AND BACKGROUND

The identity of any potential recipient of an emergency responder credential will be confirmed through one or both of the following:

1. the acquisition of a digital certificate/identification through the use of the state of Illinois Digital Signature Project
2. the in-person presentation of two forms of identity, one of which must be valid state or federal government-issued photo identification.

A fingerprint-based background check will be conducted for prospective recipients of a Tier 1 credential.

QUALIFICATIONS AND TYPING

Emergency responder credentials will be issued through systems and processes that identify type and qualify personnel in accordance with the published NIMS Job Titles located at: www.fema.gov/emergency/nims/ResourceMngmnt.shtm#item3

For personnel not covered by NIMS job titles, typing and qualification for the specific position will be developed and authorized by the ITTF.

CERTIFICATION

Certification of the identity, qualifications and typing of emergency responder personnel is the ultimate responsibility of the agency or entity head who has been issued a Tier 1 credential. Certification/approval for the issuance of an emergency responder credential may be appropriately delegated by the agency/entity head.

BADGING

Emergency responder personnel will receive a physical credential only after completion of certification of their identity, qualifications and typing. To the extent possible, credentials issued shall conform to the visual elements of FIPS-201 credentials.

AUTHORIZATION AND ACCESS

Recipients of emergency responder credentials will recognize that being credentialed is not an authorization to self-deploy. Authorization for deployment will be handled through specific policy and procedures developed by agencies and entities of the ITTF. Individuals who self-deploy will recognize that they may be turned away from a disaster site.
REVOCATION

Personnel who are credentialed will maintain that credential only while they maintain their affiliation with the certifying agency/entity as well as currency in the qualifications for the identified position(s). A credential should be revoked if an individual terminates employment with the certifying agency/entity or no longer possesses the appropriate qualifications.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF POLICY

This policy is effective as of September 22, 2010.