



# NATIONAL SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION

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September 14, 2012

The Honorable Janet Napolitano, Secretary  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Napolitano:

I write on behalf of the National Sheriffs' Association (NSA) and more than 3,000 Sheriffs nationwide to express our support for the June 26, 2012 resolution (attached) of the State Search and Rescue Coordinators Council (SSARCC) regarding the typing and credentialing of search and rescue resources by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, National Integration Center (NIC). SSARCC is a semi-independent entity operating under the auspices of the National Association for Search and Rescue, a not-for profit organization.

The efforts of NIC to type and credential search and rescue resources, as well as other law enforcement resources, are critical and will have significant impact on the elected Sheriffs across the U.S. In 44 of the 50 States, the Sheriff has statutory responsibility for search and rescue services within his/her county. Thus, the development of a national *standard* must reflect the needs and current application of search and rescue resources by those authorities having jurisdiction.

Sheriffs across this country greatly appreciate your consideration of our request; and NSA is available to assist in any effort to bring this crucially important matter to successful resolution.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Aaron D. Kennard".

Sheriff (ret.) Aaron D. Kennard  
Executive Director

STATE SEARCH AND RESCUE COORDINATORS COUNCIL:  
TYPING AND CREDENTIALING RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the State Search and Rescue Coordinators Council recognizes the need for National guidance on the organization, typing, and credentialing of Search and Rescue resources. The present FEMA typing and credentialing documents (FEMA 508-8 dated Nov 2005, Job Title Criteria Nov 2006) were acknowledged as flawed upon publication and in itself prevents States from complying with Federal guidance (HSPD #5 and PPD#8).

WHEREAS, FEMA has acknowledged that typing and credentialing guidance has been forthcoming for the last five years. The inability to produce workable typing and credentialing guidance has compromised the safety of our citizens. The lack of a correct national level guidance document prevents establishing a national level benchmark for preparation and response. Such national guidance is a core function of FEMA to facilitate mutual aid and response across whole communities.

WHEREAS, FEMA's National NIMS Integration Center (NIC) formed a SAR Working Group of Subject Matter Experts who spent the past five years re-writing the typing and credentialing guidance utilizing best practices to meet the needs of the States. Unfortunately, FEMA NIC dissolved the SAR Working Group and the documents the working group developed have not been published for public comment.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the State Search and Rescue Coordinators Council calls upon Secretary, Department of Homeland Security to require that FEMA immediately remove the flawed typing and credentialing documents from the FEMA website and remove from Agency use.

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, we request that the Secretary require FEMA to publish for public comment and review updated and correct typing and credentialing guidance documents which incorporates the work and recommendations of the SAR Working Group no later than 01 December, 2012.

AND THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the State Search and Rescue Coordinators Council intends to bring this issue to the attention of our State Officials so that they may further engage the Department of Homeland Security to rapidly resolve this threat to our citizens.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, upon unanimous consent of members present, we hereunto sign our names on behalf of the State Search and Rescue Coordinators Council at the Annual Meeting of the State Search and Rescue Coordinators Council in the State of Nevada, County of Douglas this sixth day of June in the year of our Lord two thousand and twelve, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-sixth.



Paul Burke  
Chairman

ATTEST:



Byron Thompson  
Secretary