



PARTNER UPDATE

U.S. Fire Service: Partners In Safety

The National Fire Service, represented by these national leadership organizations, has recognized GIS as an important core competency for the nation's first responders. These fire and emergency service partners are leading the way to a safer nation by establishing standards, training and best practices to facilitate the use of GIS among local first responder agencies.

International Association of Fire Chiefs
National Association of State Fire Marshals
Metropolitan Fire Chiefs Association
Volunteer and Combination Chief Officers Section
Center for Public Safety Excellence

The relevance of GIS to the national Homeland Security (HLS) mission has become increasingly apparent in recent years, especially through the catastrophic impact of several national and international disasters. Unfortunately, a significant and seemingly universal challenge faced by HLS GIS proponents is bridging the gap between:

- a. the need to provide operationally relevant "transparent & seamless" GIS capability to support the local preparedness and response mission (ie getting data and maps to first responders), and
- b. the need to develop national policies, standards and functional models to enable data sharing and interoperability vertically and horizontally (ie furthering the goals of integrated and coordinated data exchange to support decision support and situational status to incident commanders during escalating events of national significance)

Through evolving partnerships, United States Fire Service has made significant progress in building a national unified policy framework to support local fire departments in building a GIS capacity. See the reverse side for more information on these and other initiatives:

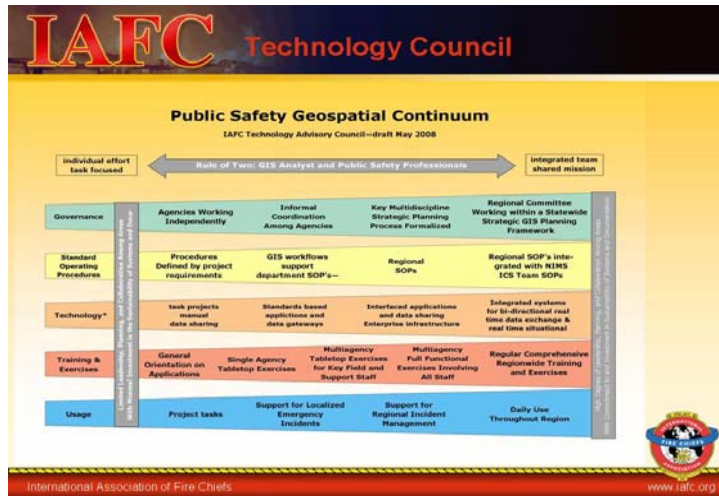
- ◆ NFPA Establishes an IT Standards Committee
- ◆ Fire Service/Haz Mat Data Model
- ◆ NWCG publishes GIS Standard Operating Procedures



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Download the Public Safety GIS Continuum
<http://www.esri.com/naps/g/projects/bestpractices.html>

The IAFC Technology Council has published a "Geospatial Interoperability Continuum" (adapted from the DHS SafeCom Interoperability Continuum) to describe five components which are critical to the success of a program designed to build a public safety geospatial capacity.

Working towards a national framework to support fire service GIS, initiatives underway among partner organizations follow the SafeCom guidance by addressing each of the five components identified in the Continuum. The partnership itself demonstrates the importance of the governance component, and the power of effective collaboration for improving safety and enhancing outcomes.

Building A National Fire Service GIS Capacity

Standards and SOP's

Six official pilot sites have been identified to implement a GIS system using the new fire/hazmat GIS data model to:

- ◆ Enhance content of Data Model and align with other relevant standards (ie GDM)
- ◆ Demonstrate value of data standards by showing benefits of real-time incident data reporting
- ◆ Correlate the data model and workflows to the NRF and NIMS.
- ◆ Extend data model to other public safety disciplines.

Training and Exercising

Working with the National Fire Academy's Committee on Fire EMS Standards For Higher Education, GIS professionals are developing objectives for core curriculum components for GIS training.

These objectives are being developed for first responders, officers, managers and GIS analysts to create learning pathways for public safety GIS professionals and end users.

Technology

Under consideration is the development of a set of tools to simplify how fire rescue agencies use GIS.

These tools would be intended to complement the functionality of the existing Fire Incident Mapping Tool (FIMT). Some possible components are:

- ◆ Cartographic Map Production
- ◆ Data Management utilities for QA/QC and data loading
- ◆ Functional implementation of data standards; symbology

Usage

Many local fire and EMS agencies are using GIS effectively for map book production, response time analysis and in-vehicle systems for pushing critical data to responders.

In other areas, workflows are less well developed, and workgroups could help identify methods to support the use of GIS in several critical mission areas such as:

- ◆ Map production
- ◆ Structural fire GIS SOP's
- ◆ Community Risk Assessment