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Position statement: US National Grid map updates and systems configuration

The [Florida Fire Chief's Association](http://www.ffca.org) (FFCA) and its subsidiary, the [Florida Association for Search and Rescue](http://www.farsa.org), recommend the addition of the United States National Grid (USNG) coordinate reference system to all map products as part of regular map maintenance and update cycles. This recommendation applies to all jurisdictions having authority within the scope and interests of the FFCA in direct support of State of Florida, County, Municipality, Federal and National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards and best management practices. The use of standards saves lives through interoperability and the provision of common knowledge among operating forces. This concept is as applicable to maps as it is to hose threads and radio systems.

We further recommend the incorporation of USNG as a required selection element for all contracts for goods and services which involve the use of location-based information. This includes, but is not limited to Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) software, Mobile Display Terminal systems (MDT), geographic information systems, and incident management and reporting systems. When displaying electronic maps, such devices and systems must correctly depict a user-indicated position at the correct, scale-appropriate USNG coordinate and must accept and correctly map USNG coordinate input. In accordance with NFPA 950, '*Standard for Data Development and Exchange for the Fire Service*', systems must include USNG when transferring point-location information amongst systems.

A common operating grid has been a recommendation in after action reports since Hurricane Andrew. In 2010, USNG was added to both the Statewide Emergency Response Plan and the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan. In 2012, the latest edition of the Florida Field Operations Guide detailed the expected use of USNG in Florida. Since then, expanding technology has made USNG available to everyone with free or low cost smart phone applications available to citizens and responders. In addition, USNG is fully compatible with US Military partners that operate in Florida.

It should be noted that this position paper recognizes the use of other coordinate systems in certain situations, but strongly advocates that the US National Grid be made equally available and used when indicated. Making the US National Grid available allows the State of Florida to comport with the many recommendations for its use, including recommendations of the National Search and Rescue Committee (Land Search and Rescue Addendum) which names the US National Grid as the primary georeference system for land search and rescue, and with the Instruction Directive of the DoD Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCSI 3900.01C).

For additional information, please review the following;

['Implementation Guide to the USNG'](#), National Alliance for Public Safety GIS (NAPSG), September 2013

[USNGCenter](#)

[Florida's Division of State Fire Marshal website about USNG](#)

[Florida Field Operations Guide, Chapter 10](#)