

Mr Roland Hendricks

Originally from Cape Town, working and residing in Gauteng Province for the past 21 years, Director Hendricks commenced his career in fire services in 37 years ago, in 1989. Through consistent performance, operational excellence, and strategic leadership capability, he progressed steadily through the ranks and entered the senior management echelon in 1998.

His distinguished service record includes senior leadership roles within the City of Tygerberg Fire Services, City of Cape Town Fire & Rescue Service, the Gauteng Provincial Disaster Management Centre, the City of Tshwane Emergency Services Department, and currently the National Disaster Management Centre (NDMC).

His career trajectory reflects a rare blend of frontline operational credibility to engaging with high-level policy leadership, positioning him uniquely to drive national reform and sector-wide transformation within South Africa's fire services landscape.

He also holds a BCom Law Cum Laude and an Advanced Diploma in Management Cum Laude, combining legal expertise with executive management capability.



Establishment of a uniform Incident Management System (IMS)

Roland Hendricks - Director NDMC Fire Services
National Fire Indaba 2026

Purpose of the presentation

To ***outline the legislative and policy imperatives*** requiring the establishment of a uniform Incident Management System (IMS).



Problem Statement

| DIMENSION | CURRENT STATUS |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| National IMS Doctrine | Not established |
| Legislation | Partial |
| Regulations | Not issued |
| National Standards | Not developed |
| Training System | Fragmented |
| Municipal Implementation | Uneven |
| Interoperability | Limited |
| Provincial Oversight | Minimal |

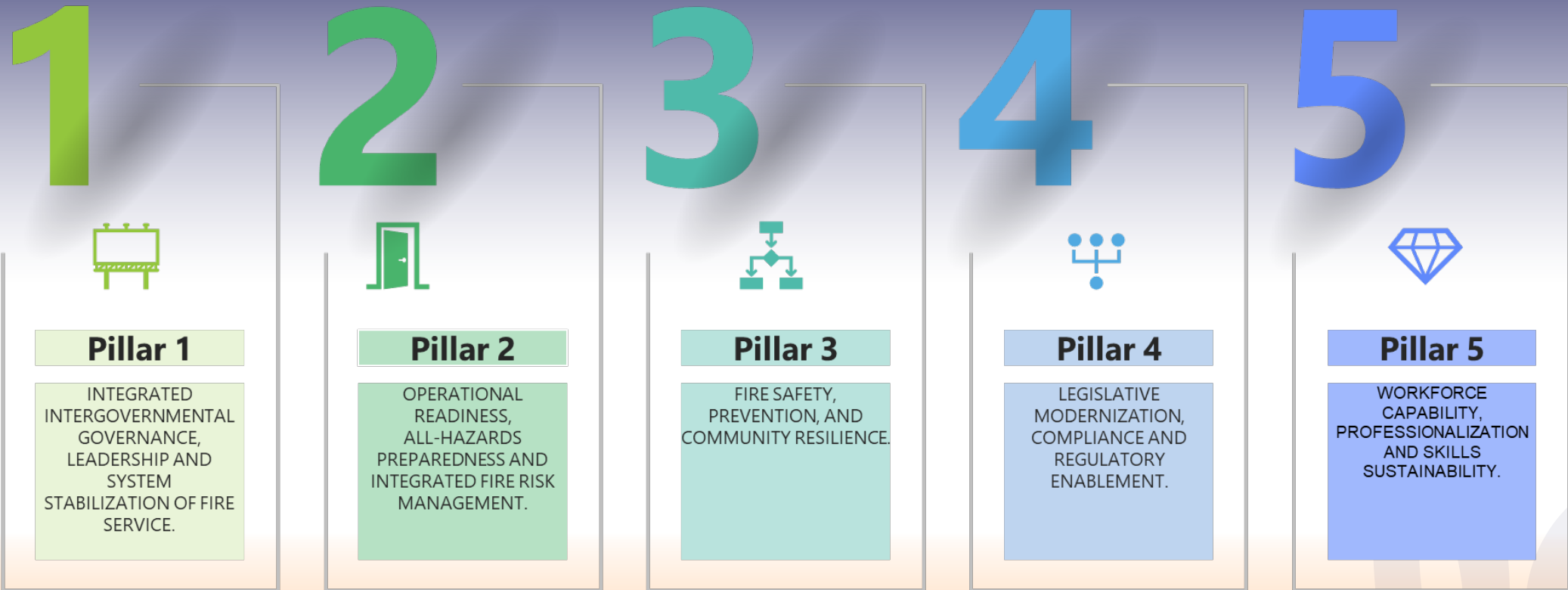
1. Different municipalities use different command systems.
2. While elements of *incident command* practice exist, they are fragmented, unevenly implemented, and *not governed by a single national doctrine*.
3. This *creates operational and governance inconsistencies* across municipalities and provinces.

South Africa currently does not operate under a uniform incident command doctrine.

Global Benchmarks for a National Incident Management System

| QUESTION | NIMS (USA) | AIIMS (Australia) | JESIP (United Kingdom) |
|--------------|--|--|--|
| WHAT? | Provides a consistent nationwide incident management template based on standardised command structures and coordination mechanisms. | Provides a standardised incident management framework for coordinated emergency operations through structured command and control. | Provides a national interoperability framework to enable coordinated multi-agency emergency response. |
| WHO? | Enables national, state, tribal and local governments, private sector and NGOs to work together under a common system. | Enables emergency services, government agencies, local authorities, volunteers and private sector partners to operate under a unified incident control structure. | Enables police, fire, ambulance, local authorities and partner agencies to work together effectively during incidents. |
| HOW? | Uses standardised command structures, resource management systems and common terminology to manage incidents of any size or complexity. | Uses a scalable command structure with defined functional roles and clear incident control authority for incidents of any type or size. | Uses joint working principles, shared situational awareness and coordinated decision-making for multi-agency incidents. |
| WHY? | To reduce loss of life and property and protect the environment through coordinated national incident management. | To ensure safe and effective incident management that protects communities, property and the environment. | To ensure effective multi-agency coordination and improved public safety outcomes . |

2030 Strategic Roadmap – Strategic Pillars



FLAGSHIP PROJECTS

Fully functional National and Provincial Fire Services Directorates

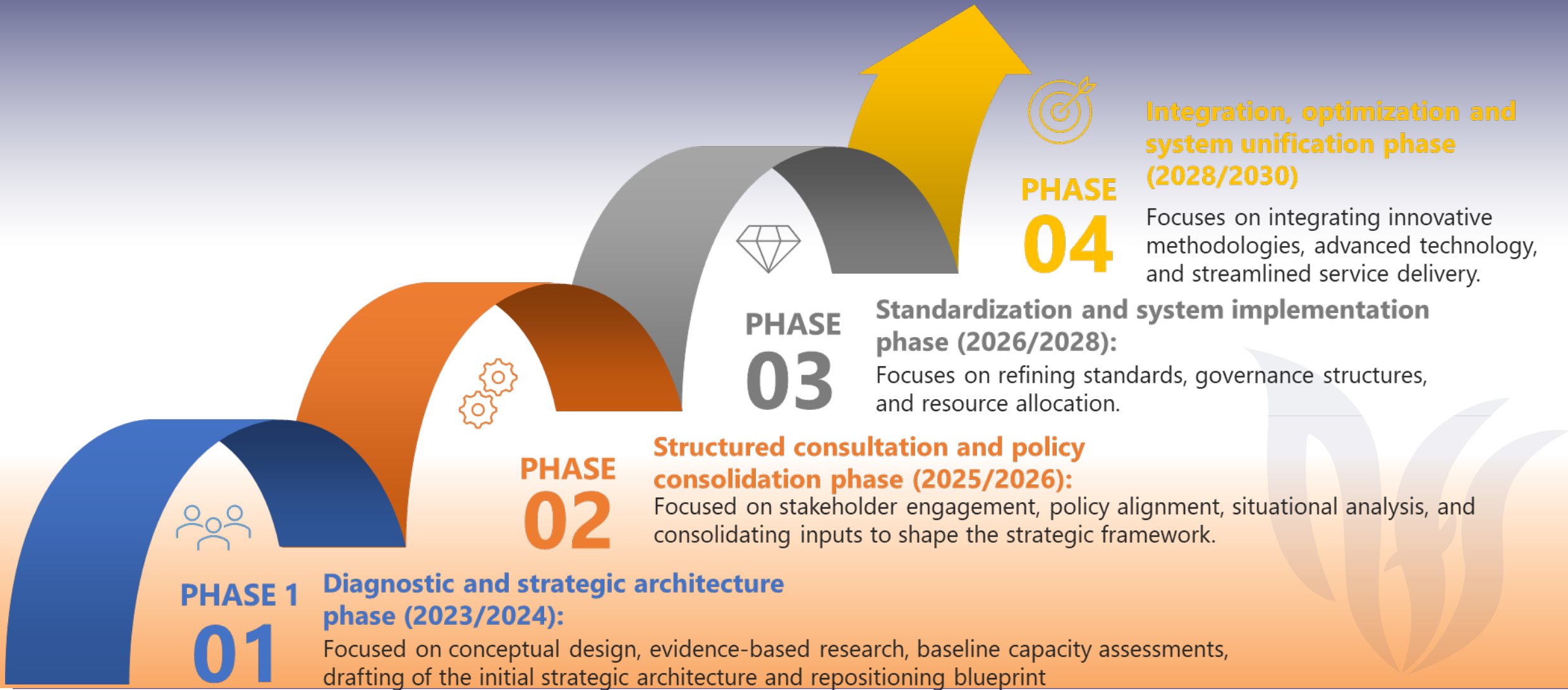
- Uniform incident management system.
- USAR Development Programme.

National fire safety and prevention strategy.

- Career paths and professional Standards;
- Training and capacity building Strategy;
- National Physical Fitness & Mental Health Framework

Establishment of a National Fire Services Training Academy

2030 Strategic Roadmap Implementation



Constitutional location of firefighting function

CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Schedule 4B: Firefighting services are a local government functional area

Section 152:

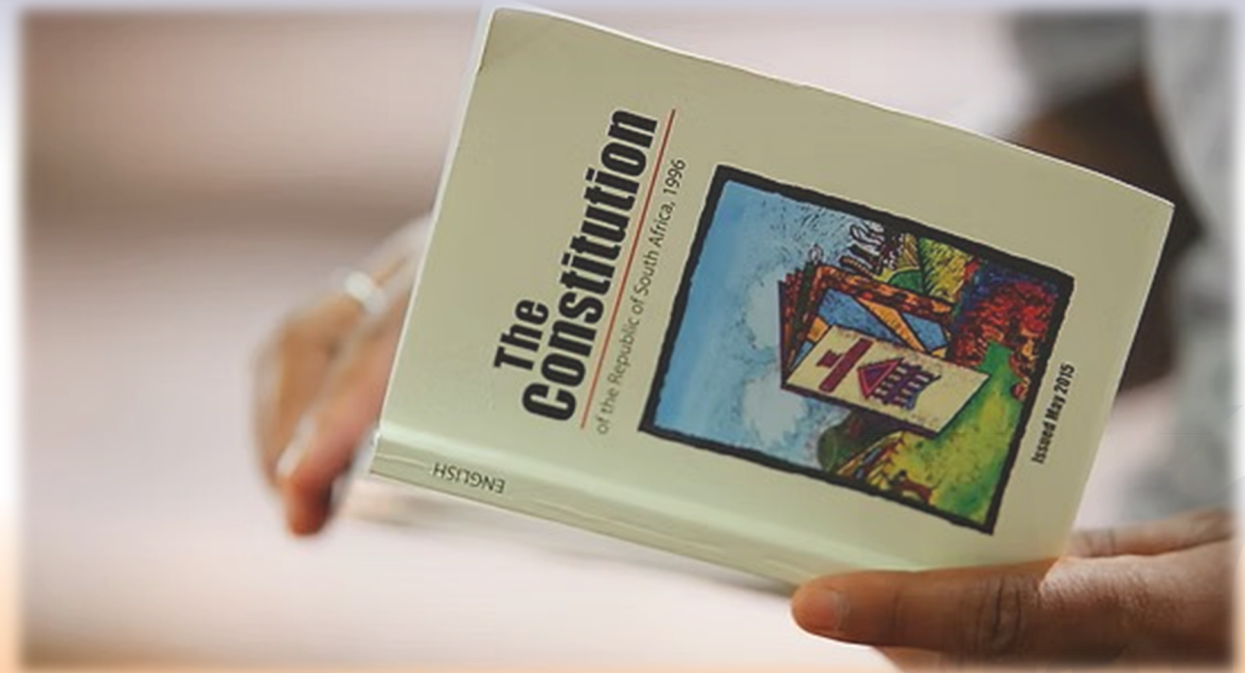
Municipalities must ensure:

- Sustainable service delivery
- Safe and healthy environment
- Accountable governance

Legal Interpretation

Effective firefighting presupposes:

- Organised command
- Coordinated resource deployment
- Structured accountability



WITHOUT AN IMS, OPERATIONAL COMMAND MAY FAIL CONSTITUTIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY STANDARDS.



Frames the FBSA obligations emphasizing the need to reform and align fire services legislation for effective execution of these duties.

FBSA Statutory duties on municipalities for fire brigade establishment and firefighting capability. **01**

Fire Services White Paper Reinforces that these duties require a uniform Incident Management System **02**

To achieve this, municipalities must ensure:

Structured command and control A uniform Incident Management System (IMS) to streamline command structures across all fire services. **03**

Defined authority at incident scenes The White Paper emphasizes the need to standardize how Chief Fire Officer authority is exercised through a uniform system. **04**

Clear lines of accountability A uniform IMS strengthens accountability frameworks, **05**

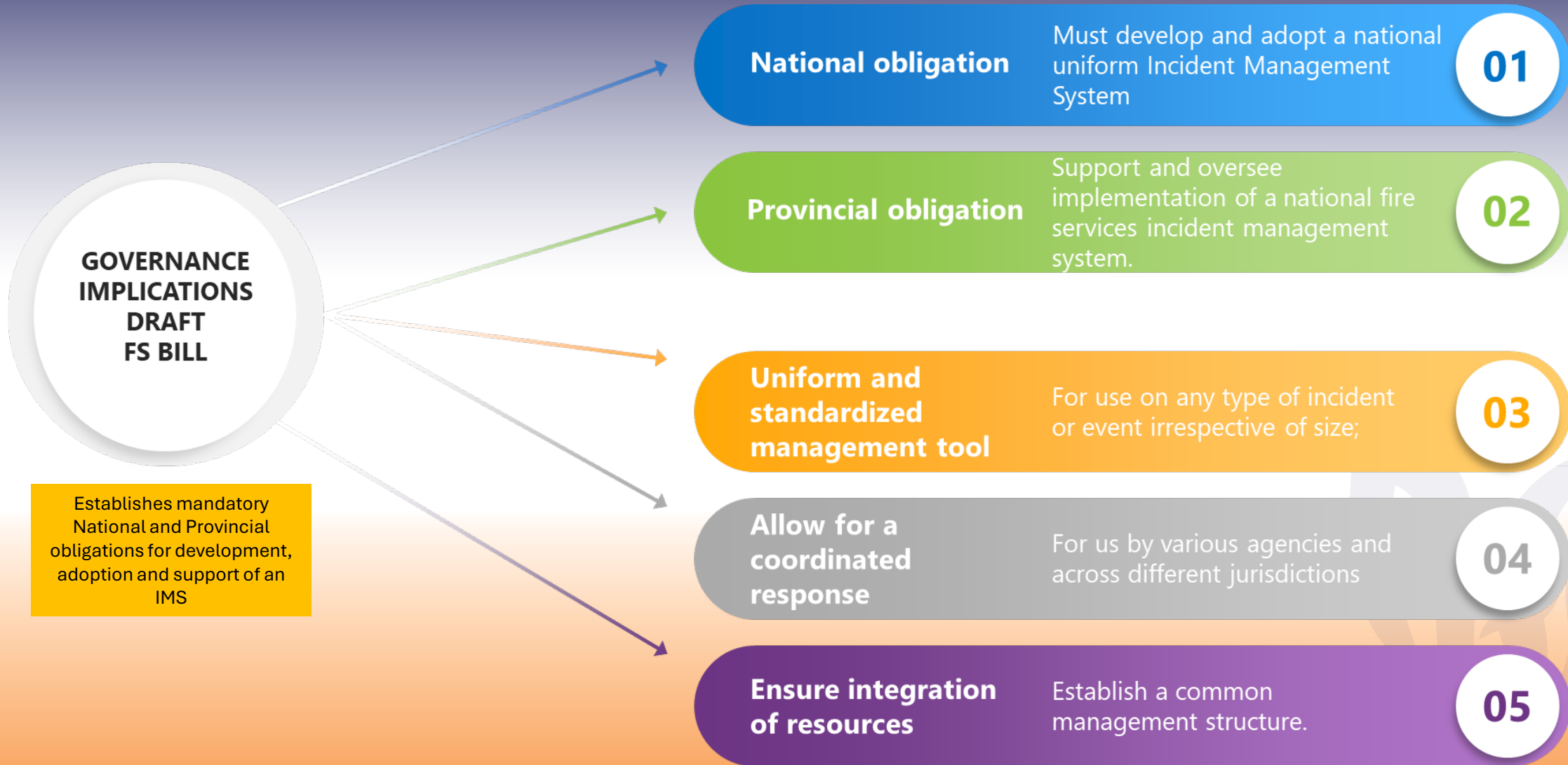
Bridging duty and governance reform

Why a uniform IMS is needed:

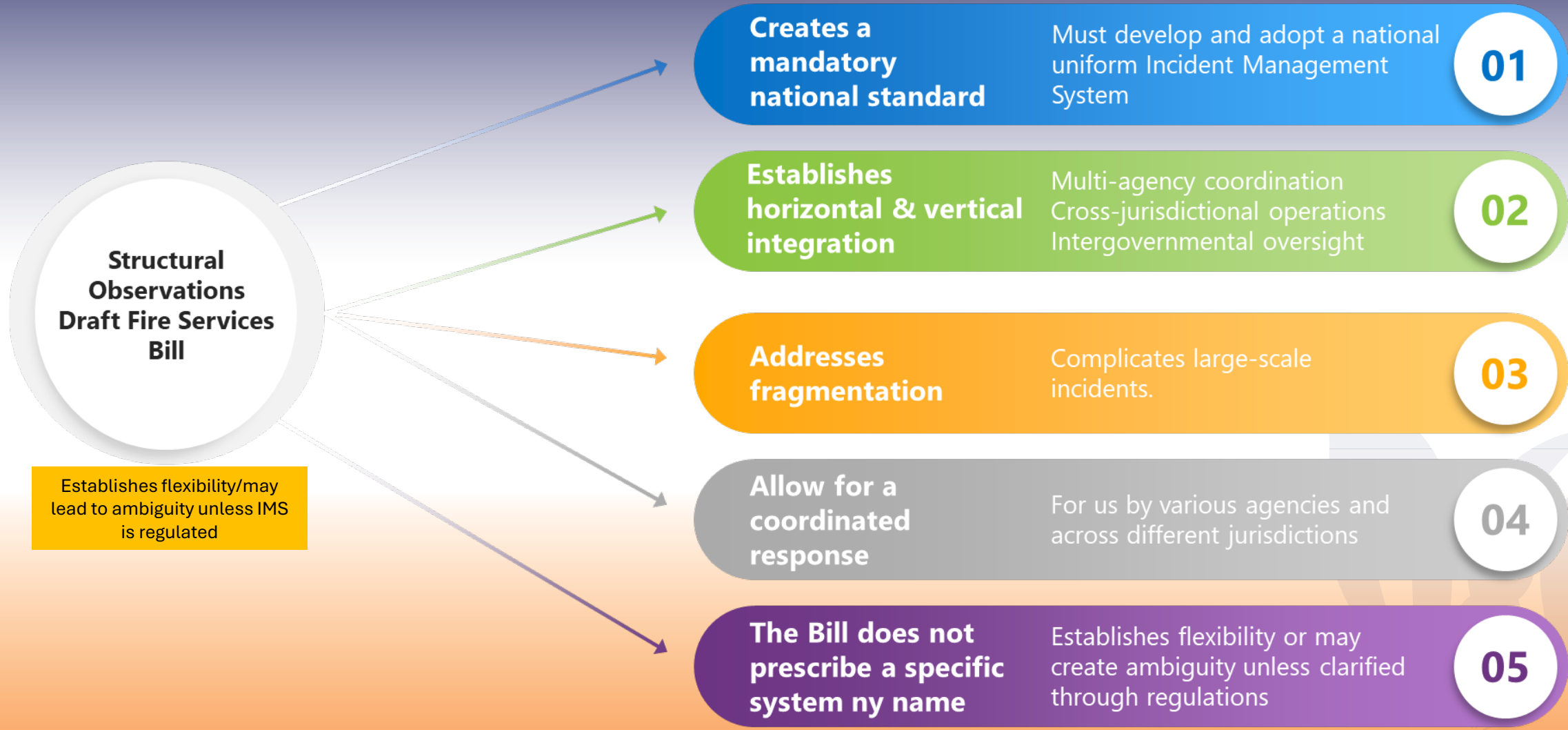
The White Paper recognises that existing legislation (including the FBSA) lacks the operational detail required for effective, coordinated incident response across local government. It therefore proposes reform through:

- **Modernisation of legal frameworks** (including an updated Fire Services Act) to embed standardised incident management;
- **A national uniform IMS** as a policy tool to ensure fire services meet both statutory and governance expectations.

Governance implications – Draft FS Bill



Structural observations - Draft FS Bill



National Standard Response Management System – Policy Requirement

Routine incidents are typically managed by an agency-specific incident commander. However, significant events and disasters require a formal response management system to ensure the systematic and coordinated utilization of:

- Facilities, Personnel
- Equipment, Resources
- Procedures, Communications

Such a system must provide:

- Clear allocation of responsibilities
- Strategic, tactical and operational direction
- Coordinated and participative event/incident management



Regulatory and Institutional Requirements

The NDMC must develop regulations to implement a ***national standard response management system***, applicable across all spheres of government.

The system must:

- ***Define roles and responsibilities*** for response and recovery activities.
- Establish mechanisms to ***scale response*** based on event magnitude and institutional capacity.
- ***Promote partnerships*** with private sector, NGOs, traditional leaders, communities and volunteers.
- Require agencies to ***develop aligned Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)***.
- Ensure ***compliance with relevant legislation and standards***.

While not explicitly labelled as IMS provisions, the following sections can structurally reinforce it:

(a) National Norms and Standards - Section 5(2)(e)

The Department must develop and oversee implementation of national norms and standards for provision of fire services.

IMPLICATION: The IMS can be embedded within national norms and standards.

(b) Incorporation of Standards by Reference - Section 17

Allows incorporation of SANS and international standards.

IMPLICATION: This enables adoption of internationally recognized command standards (e.g., ICS doctrine) without reproducing full technical texts in legislation.

(c) Municipal SOP Requirement - Section 26(1)(n)(ii)

Development and implementation of standard operating procedures for use during emergency operations.

IMPLICATION: Municipal SOPs must logically align with the national IMS.

The risk of not having a uniform IMS



In conclusion

A National uniform IMS is no longer optional — ***it is a constitutional, legislative and governance imperative*** to ensure structured command, coordinated response and accountable service delivery across all municipalities.

In conclusion

International practice shows that effective emergency response systems combine:

Standardised command structures (NIMS)

Clear incident control (AIIMS)

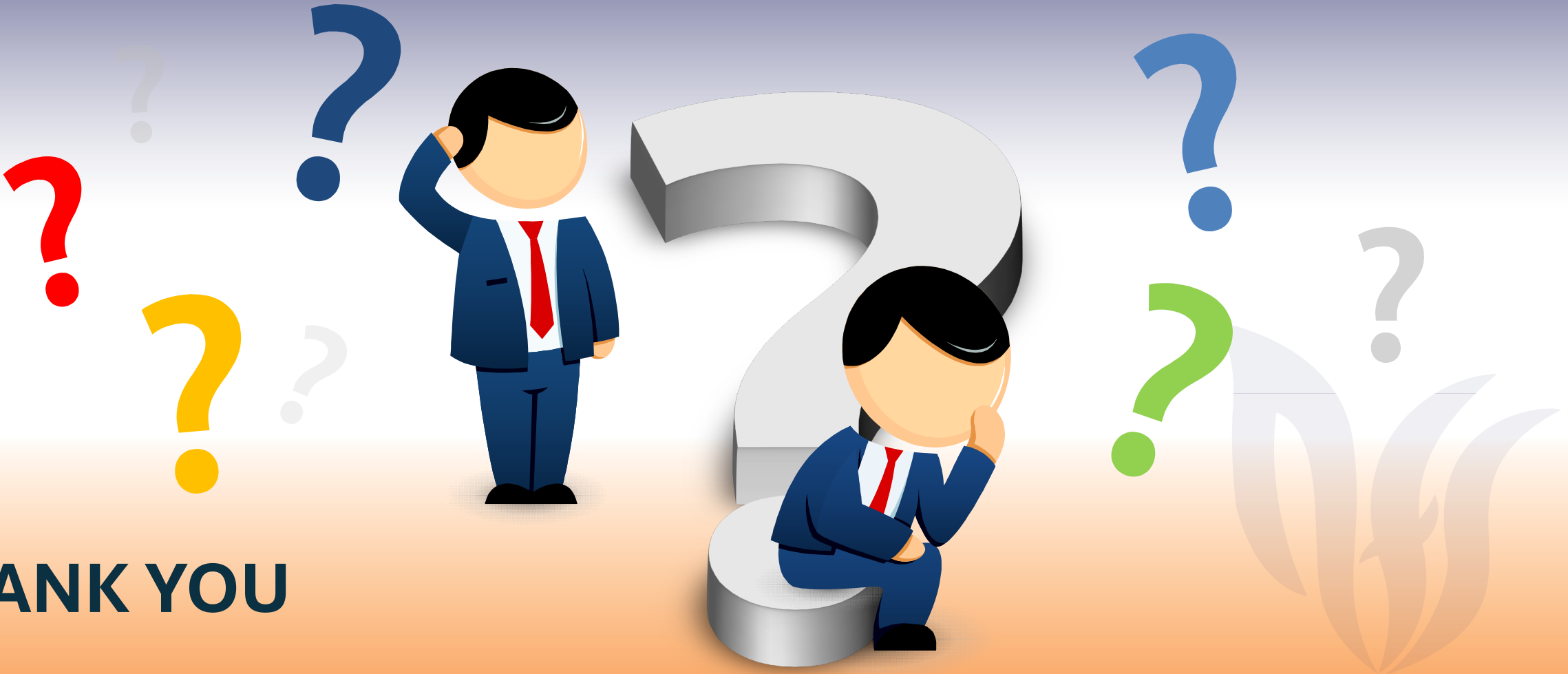
Multi-agency interoperability (JESIP)

A South African National IMS should integrate all three elements.

Way forward

| STEP | STRATEGIC ACTION | NDMC RESPONSIBILITY | KEY DELIVERABLE | INDICATIVE TIMEFRAME |
|------|---|--|---|----------------------|
| 1 | Formal Policy Positioning | Issue an official NDMC Policy Position Paper confirming the need for a National Uniform IMS and alignment legislative requirements. | NDMC Circular & Policy Position Paper | Q1–Q2 2026 |
| 2 | Establish National IMS Technical Steering Committee | Convene a multi-stakeholder technical structure (NDMC, Provinces, SALGA, Legal Services) to design the national IMS architecture and define minimum command standards. | Draft National IMS-Framework (Version 1) | Q2 2026 |
| 3 | Regulatory Development | Draft IMS Regulations in terms of enabling legislative provisions, defining command levels, escalation triggers, coordination protocols and compliance requirements. | Gazetted Draft IMS Regulations for Public Comment | Q3–Q4 2026 |
| 4 | Develop National Norms & Standards | Embed IMS within National Fire Services Norms & Standards and issue model SOP alignment guidelines for municipalities and provinces. | National IMS Normative Standards Pack & Model SOP Templates | 2026–2027 |
| 5 | Provincial Oversight Enablement | Develop tools and guidance for provinces to monitor municipal IMS implementation and integrate IMS into oversight frameworks. | Provincial IMS Implementation Toolkit | 2027 |
| 6 | Capacity Development & Phased Roll-Out | Coordinate national training, certification pathways for Incident Commanders, and conduct simulation exercises to test interoperability. | National IMS Training & Accreditation Framework | 2027–2029 |
| 7 | Monitoring & Compliance Framework | Develop measurable IMS compliance indicators and reporting mechanisms aligned to Roadmap 2030 strategic pillars. | National IMS Compliance Dashboard & Annual Capability Assessments | 2028 onwards |

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS



THANK YOU