



Risk MAP Guidelines and Standards (G&S) 2016 Fall Maintenance Cycle

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) maintains guidelines and standards to support the Risk Mapping, Assessment and Planning (Risk MAP) Program. These guidelines and standards define the specific implementation of the statutory and regulatory requirements for the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). These also outline the performance of Flood Risk Projects, processing of Letters of Map Change (LOMCs) and related Risk MAP activities. More information is available at FEMA.gov.

FEMA has a maintenance plan for the Risk MAP guidelines and standards and issues updates on a semi-annual basis. This notice provides information about the fall semi-annual update, expected to be released in November 2016.

This update includes routine updates and ongoing transformation of legacy guidelines and specifications to produce new guidance documents that align with the current structure of the Risk MAP Program.

In addition to this routine maintenance, FEMA plans to issue new and updated standards, guidance documents, technical references and related templates to address recommendations from the Technical Mapping Advisory Council (TMAC), a Federal Advisory Committee that advises FEMA on the flood mapping program. The TMAC changes for November will address the recommendations that FEMA:

- document the accuracy of elevation data used for modeling and mapping in a way that is easily accessible to users;
- periodically review new publicly available statistical models;
- provide more guidance on the selection and use of various models for flood mapping; and,
- assess the cost impact of new requirements and provide guidance to consistently address the impact. This will be accomplished mainly through process changes in the standards and guidelines maintenance process.

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Listed below is a summary of the proposed changes to standards, guidance and related documents.

The [Policy for Flood Risk Analysis and Mapping](#)¹ comprises the standards for practitioners of the Risk MAP program. As part of the guidelines and standards maintenance cycle, FEMA provides an opportunity for stakeholders to review and comments on proposed changes to standards. There are 13 proposed changes to standards included in the summary of changes below. The proposed language for the standards is included below after the overall summary of proposed changes. Instructions for commenting on the draft language are provided.

If you have feedback about FEMA’s guidelines and standards, submit comments or suggestions by e-mail to FEMA.GS@riskmapcds.com.

TMAC Changes

Item #	Document Type	Subject	Description
1	Guidance / Technical Reference	Elevation Accuracy	Address the recommendation that FEMA document the accuracy of elevation data used for modeling and mapping in a way that is easily accessible to users.
2	Standard / Guidance	Acceptable Models	Address the recommendation that FEMA periodically review new publicly available statistical models

¹ www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/35313

Item #	Document Type	Subject	Description
3	Guidance	Hydraulics Guidance	Address the recommendation that FEMA should provide more guidance on the selection and use of various models for flood mapping.

Routine Changes

Item #	Document Type	Subject	Description
1	Standard	Standard ID (SID) 169 & 368	Combine SIDs 169 and 368 into one standard (SID 169). Update the wording to clarify that Letters of Map Revision (LOMRs) that are issued or become effective prior to the Letter of Map Change (LOMC) cutoff date must be incorporated.
2	Standard	SID 444	Update to indicate that Emergency Preparedness Plans will be required for levee accreditation.
3	Guidance/ Technical Reference/ Templates	Coordinated Needs Management Strategy (CNMS) Updates	Incorporate updates associated with performing and documenting validation activities for coastal flooding sources, and other minor updates as needed.
4	Technical Reference/ Templates	Metadata Profile for Automated Engineering	Add new metadata profile for Automated Engineering and associated templates / xmls.
5	Standard/ Guidance	SID 268, Flood Insurance Study (FIS) Report and Index distribution	Clarification to SID 268 and the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) Index guidance on the distribution of the FIS Report and Index.
6	Standard	SID 551	Update the standard for Physical Map Revision (PMR) to clarify responsibility for addressing issues on the panels versus the study footprint.
7	Standard/ Guidance	Countywide Format	Updates to FIS Report and PMR guidance to reflect a consistent approach to countywide format.
8	Standard	New Letter of Map Amendment (LOMA) Standards	New standard to document existing procedure that a Letter of Map Revision based on Fill (LOMR-F), Conditional Letter of Map Revision based on Fill (CLOMR-F) or Letter of Map Revision Floodway (LOMR-FW) cannot be issued without a Community Acknowledgement Form.
9	Standard	New LOMA Standards	New standard to document existing procedure that compliance of no-rise data or certifications cannot be completed through LOMA, Conditional LOMA (CLOMA), CLOMR-F, LOMR-F, or LOMR-FW reviews.
10	Standard	New LOMA Standards	New standard to document existing procedure to account for amend-in-and-deny cases where a structure or property is not shown within the SFHA, but the application or included information indicates that the lowest adjacent grade to a structure or lowest lot elevation of a property lies below the base flood elevation.

Item #	Document Type	Subject	Description
11	Standard	New LOMA Standards	New standard to document the requirement that intervening high ground must be naturally occurring.
12	Standard	New LOMA Standards	New standard to document existing procedure that any proposed or existing structures must be located inside of the area for which a determination has been requested. This clarifies that portions of a property may not include flooding sources or waterways that are shown on the effective FIRM.
13	Standard	SID 227	Updating the existing standard to add a reference to the National Flood Hazard Layer (NFHL), which may be updated through a Notice to Users (NTU), and clarify that levee accreditation status cannot be changed via an NTU.
14	Guidance	Quality Guidance Updates	For the Quality Review (QR) guidance, updates to the checklists and language related to QRs and Key Decision Point (KDPs). Minor updates and clarification will also be performed in the Quality Management guidance.
15	Standards/ Technical Reference	Flood Risk Products Update (SID 440 and FRD Technical Reference)	Updates to the Flood Risk Database (FRD) Technical Reference and SID 440 to adjust attribute population requirements, based on the results of current and ongoing user feedback efforts
16	Guidance/ Technical Reference	Minor Document Maintenance	<p>Minor updates to guidance and technical references to provide additional clarification and improve consistency with other documents.</p> <p>Guidance Documents: Appeal & Comment Processing, Automated Engineering, Coastal General Study Considerations, Database Verification Tool (DVT), FIRM Database, FIRM Graphics, FIRM Index, MT-1 Technical, NFHL, NTU, Post-Preliminary Deliverables, and Riverine Mapping and Floodplain.</p> <p>Technical References: Domain Tables, FIRM Database, FIRM Panel, and FIS Report</p>

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Guidance Transformation

Item #	Guidance Transformation Topic Name
1	Alluvial Fan
2	Coastal: Flood Frequency and Extreme Value Analysis
3	Coastal: Statistical Simulation Methods
4	Flood Profiles
5	Floodway Analysis & Mapping
6	General Hydraulics
7	Hydraulics: One-Dimensional Analyses
8	Hydraulics: Two-Dimensional Analyses
9	MetaMan
10	MT-1 Processing
11	Shallow Flooding
12	Summary of Map Actions (SOMA)/Revalidation
13	Stakeholder Engagement: FIS & FIRM Delivery
14	Stakeholder Engagement Planning for Mitigation Actions
15	Survey

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Standards Public Review

The table below lists proposed updates to existing standards and drafts of new standards.

FEMA intends to publish these standards as a part of the 2016 Fall update to the Policy for Flood Risk Analysis and Mapping. The draft updates are being made available for public review to provide an opportunity for comment prior to incorporation into the policy. The reasons for the changes are summarized above.

The proposed changes are listed below with the Standard Identification Number (SID #), primary key words, current version of the standard (if applicable) and the proposed updates or revisions.

SID #	Keyword Tags	Primary Keyword	Original Standard	Revised/New Standard
169	Letter of Map Revision (LOMR), Flood Insurance Study (FIS), Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM), Regulatory Products	LOMR Incorporation	All LOMRs issued during post-preliminary prior to the LOMC cutoff date (which is 60 days before the project's LFD date) must be incorporated into the new FIS Report and FIRM. LOMRs that are issued after this time must be re-issued after the revised FIRM date.	All LOMRs that are either issued or become effective during post-preliminary for a study or PMR prior to the LOMC cutoff date (which is 60 days before the project's LFD date) must be incorporated into the new FIS Report, FIRM, and FIRM Database. LOMRs that are issued after this time must be re-issued after the revised FIRM date.
227	FIS, FIRM, Regulatory Products, Notice-to-Users	Notice-to-User	The Notice-to-Users revision only shall be used to correct errors or omissions in the FIS Report, FIRM Database, or on the FIRM that do not affect due process. A Notice-to-Users revision shall not change the effective date.	The Notice-to-Users process shall only be used for errors or omissions in the FIS Report, FIRM Database, NFHL, or on the FIRM that do not affect due process. The Notice-to-Users revision process shall not change the accreditation status of a levee or the effective date of the FIRM and FIS.
268	FIS, FIS Format, Watershed, Regulatory Products	FIS Report	All communities whose FIS Report is being updated to comply with the FIS Report Technical Reference must receive a copy of the new FIS Report, regardless of whether they are affected by the new Flood Risk Project or are outside the project area.	All communities must receive a copy of the new FIS Report during Final Distribution, regardless of whether they are affected by the new Flood Risk Project or are outside the project area.

SID #	Keyword Tags	Primary Keyword	Original Standard	Revised/New Standard
368	Letter of Final Determination (LFD), FIRM Database, Preliminary FIRM Database (Deliverables), Final FIRM Database (Regulatory Deliverables), LOMCs Incorporated, Flood Theme, Floodplain Delineation	LOMR Incorporation	All LOMRs that are located within the PMR panel footprint and are effective prior to the LOMC cutoff date (which is 60 days before the project's LFD date) must be incorporated into the FIRM Database.	Proposed to be rescinded.
440	Flood Risk Database (FRD), Flood Risk Report (FRR), Flood Risk Map (FRM), Non-Regulatory Products, Flood Risk Data	Flood Risk Database	The Flood Risk Map must be derived directly from the Flood Risk Database. The Flood Risk Database must be in agreement with the information shown in the Flood Risk Report.	The Flood Risk Database must be in agreement with the information shown in the Flood Risk Report and on the Flood Risk Map.
444	Levee	Levee	Levee systems can only be accredited in their entirety when compliance with 44 CFR Part 65.10 is demonstrated.	Levee systems can only be accredited when compliance with 44 CFR Part 65.10 is demonstrated. This will include a current emergency preparedness plan that must, at a minimum, be adopted by the community, include the area impacted by the levee system, and include procedures for emergency operation and public evacuation, meeting the standards of 65.10(c)(3).
551	Physical Map Revision (PMR)	PMR	For PMRs, the footprint shall be defined as the boundary of the FIRM panel(s) affected by the PMR's study area.	For PMRs, the footprint shall be defined as the boundary of the FIRM panel(s) affected by the PMR's study area. All standards and quality reviews apply to footprint and are not limited to the PMR's study area.

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SID #	Keyword Tags	Primary Keyword	Original Standard	Revised/New Standard
623	Letters of Map Amendment (LOMA), Letter of Map Revision based on Fill (LOMR-F), Letter of Map Change (LOMC), Conditional Letter of Map Amendment (CLOMA), Conditional Letter of Map Revision based on Fill (CLOMR-F)	Letters of Map Amendment (LOMA)	N/A	LOMR-Fs, CLOMR-Fs and Letter of Map Revision Floodways (LOMR-FWs) cannot be issued within non-participating communities, because LOMR-F, CLOMR-F, and LOMR-FW reviews require the submission of a completed, signed, and dated Community Acknowledgement Form, which confirms compliance with the community's adopted floodplain management ordinance.
624	LOMA, LOMR-F, LOMC, CLOMA, and CLOMR-F	Letters of Map Amendment (LOMA)	N/A	For LOMA, CLOMA, LOMR-F, CLOMR-F, LOMR-FW, or Letter of Map Revision-V Zone (LOMR-VZ) reviews, the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) designation shall not be conditionally or effectively removed from a structure or property if the adjacent grade to a structure or lowest point of a property is below the base flood elevation (BFE).
625	LOMA, LOMR-F, LOMC, CLOMA, and CLOMR-F	Letters of Map Amendment (LOMA)	N/A	For LOMA, CLOMA, LOMR-F, CLOMR-F, LOMR-FW, or LOMR-VZ reviews, intervening high ground shall only be considered as a basis for removing a structure or property from the SFHA if the intervening high ground is naturally occurring and not based on fill material or any other manmade alterations.
626	LOMA, LOMR-F, LOMC, CLOMA, and CLOMR-F	Letters of Map Amendment (LOMA)	N/A	For LOMA, CLOMA, LOMR-F, CLOMR-F, LOMR-FW, or LOMR-VZ reviews, the subject of a property or portion-of-property request must not include 1) a portion of a proposed or existing structure; or 2) any flooding sources identified on the effective NFIP map.

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How to Submit Comments to FEMA

You may provide comments via email at: FEMA.GS@riskmapcds.com. Comments received prior to August 31, 2016, will be reviewed and addressed as appropriate before the standards are finalized.