

Inaugural KQS Credentialing Ceremony 22 April 2025



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April 22, 2025

State Emergency Operations Center, Frankfort, KY

On a proud day for Kentucky Emergency Management, history was made as the first two people ever were officially credentialed through the Kentucky Qualification System (KQS). The special ceremony celebrated Mr. Dustin Heiser and Mrs. Re'Jeana Craft for successfully completing the tough training and education needed to earn their KQS credentials.

Both Mr. Heiser and Mrs. Craft are now certified to serve on Incident Management Teams (IMTs). These teams help manage large disasters and big public events by keeping things safe, organized, and running smoothly. It takes a lot of knowledge and experience to do that—and thanks to KQS; Kentucky now has its first officially qualified team members.

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KQS is a relatively new program in Kentucky; it represents the Commonwealth’s implementation of the National Qualification System (NQS). It began with the formation of an Advisory Committee in 2023 of state and local partners. The goal was to establish and maintain fully trained persons for service on IMTs and Emergency Operation Center Assistance Teams that can assist within the Commonwealth or, if requested, outside the state.

These teams usually assist with the management of operational, logistical, informational, planning, fiscal, community, and safety issues associated with large public events and complex emergency incidents. Specifically, IMTs are a rostered group of qualified personnel consisting of an Incident Commander; Command and General staff such as Finance, Operations, and Planning Section Chiefs, Public Information and Safety Officers; along with other key positions.

“KQS is all about building a strong team of professionals who can step up when our communities need them most,” said the KQS Program Manager, Dr. Charlie Harris. “Seeing our first two credentialed members is a big moment—not just for them, but for all of Kentucky.”



Mr. Heiser was certified as an Incident Commander. He currently serves as the Assistant Director for Operations at Kentucky Emergency Management and has years of experience in emergency response, including his time as a firefighter and as the Emergency Management Director in Madison County.

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Mrs. Craft was certified as an Operations Section Chief. She is the Deputy Director for Scott County Emergency Management and has been a key part of major disaster responses, including the 2021 Western Kentucky tornado, the 2022 Eastern Kentucky floods, and the 2024 floods in North Carolina.



Eric Gibson, Director of the Kentucky Division of Emergency Management, presented a framed certificate of accreditation and two official KQS patches for their uniforms. A qualification review board, composed of first responders, emergency management, emergency response, law enforcement, and other professionals review all certification packets.

Congratulations to Mr. Heiser and Mrs. Craft on this exciting achievement. We are proud to call you Kentucky's first KQS credentialed professionals!

For more information about KQS contact the Program Manager, Dr. Charlie Harris, at (502) 607-5707, charlie.harris@ky-em.org, or visit the program's website at: <https://kyem.ky.gov/programs/Pages/Kentucky-Qualification-System.aspx>