National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS)
NFIRS Data Entry Browser Interface (DEBI)

The United States Fire Administration is making available the NFIRS Data Entry Browser Interface (DEBI) to state NFIRS offices and fire departments. DEBI is the latest enhancement to make incident reporting more accessible and to make data collection more real-time. This communiqué answers questions about DEBI.

QUESTION	ANSWER
What is DEBI?	DEBI is a server based web browser application that provides an on-line portal via the Internet for entering a fire incident report in the NFIRS database at the national level. With approved permissions, a user can add, change, delete, or view incidents.
Whose incidents are available?	A user has access to incidents based on permissions that are granted by the user's state NFIRS program manager. Normally, the access is limited to the user's fire department.
What is the difference between DEBI and the DET?	DEBI and the NFIRS Data Entry Tool (DET) have similar functions. However, the DET requires the user to download client software on the user's computer. Periodically, the user downloads updates to the application. DEBI eliminates the need to download and to install software on the user's computer. Only an Internet browser (e.g., Microsoft Internet Explorer and Firefox) and a user account are needed to log on to DEBI.
Who creates a user account for DEBI access?	An NFIRS system administrator creates a user account for DEBI access. Normally, the state NFIRS program manager creates the account and assigns permissions.
How is DEBI started?	The user's Internet browser is launched. This is followed by opening the Internet address (URL) for DEBI and by entering the user's NFIRS account login information: user name, state, and password.
When is DEBI available?	DEBI is expected to be available 24/7 after April 1, 2010. A user acceptance test is scheduled for January 2010 prior to the deployment.
Is the DET available after DEBI becomes available?	The DET is available after the deployment of DEBI for an undetermined period. There is no plan to discontinue the DET within the near to mid future.
Does DEBI offer reports?	Feedback reports are not a function in DEBI, nor are the reports a function in the DET. Feedback reports are available using the NFIRS Web-base Reporting Tool.
Does DEBI offer off-line access?	There is no off-line database linked to DEBI. Connection to an off-line database is a feature of the DET.

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Can a user access DEBI on a Windows 7 computer or a non-Windows computer?	Access to DEBI is designed to work with any computer operating system using a standard Internet browser such as Microsoft Internet Explorer or Firefox. If the user can get to the Internet on the computer, the user can get to DEBI.
What Internet browsers work with DEBI?	DEBI has been developed specifically for the Microsoft Internet Explorer and the Firefox web browsers. Other browsers (such as Opera) may work with DEBI, but those products will not be supported initially.
What if the state's primary database is a local database?	If a state's primary NFIRS database is not at the national level, the state may choose not to grant users access to DEBI. This keeps the state from having to download incidents generated from DEBI to the state's local database.
What impact is there for a department using 3rd party NFIRS software?	There is no impact. The department continues to report using its current method of reporting.
Can DEBI be use to import/export incidents from the national server?	Importing or exporting incidents from the national server is not a function in DEBI. This is available using the NFIRS Web-based Tool or the DET.
More questions?	Contact: NFIRS Support Center 888-382-3827 fema-nfirshelp@dhs.gov