



### Why This Matters

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) maintains 10 Regional Offices, which are responsible for implementing the agency's programs and policies. The Regions' mission parallels and augments the FEMA headquarters mission, which is to support citizens and first responders to ensure that the Nation works together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate against all hazards.

The regional level is where FEMA engages most directly with state, local, and tribal partners, as well as disaster survivors, to deliver frontline services. The Regions also lead the federal response and recovery efforts for incidents across the spectrum of all-hazards events.

### DHS Response

FEMA concurred with six of our eight recommendations.

FEMA indicated it will in-source a critical position in the Individual and Community Preparedness Division. FEMA is addressing internal control weaknesses with respect to grants closeout and will assess resource needs in Region IX's Grants Division. Region IX is increasing outreach to the access and functional needs community and is emphasizing the particular needs of all stakeholders in its training programs.

FEMA believes it has provided the Regions with adequate guidance to fulfill the Protection and Prevention mission area and disagreed with our recommendation regarding contractor management in the Regional Exercise Support Program.

### For Further Information:

Contact our Office of Public Affairs at (202)254-4100, or email us at [DHS-OIG.OfficePublicAffairs@dhs.gov](mailto:DHS-OIG.OfficePublicAffairs@dhs.gov)

## Inspection of FEMA's Regional Offices - Region IX

### What We Determined

Region IX has engaged its stakeholders at the state, local, and tribal levels in order to identify and address regional priorities across all phases of the emergency management cycle. Region IX has made great efforts to fulfill its legislated responsibilities and implement several delegated authorities; however, we identified areas for improvement.

There are both budgetary and staffing shortfalls across Region IX's divisions and programs. Region IX needs additional guidance in the area of preparedness, and requires further guidance or instruction on the roles and responsibilities of the Protection and Prevention mission area. Improvements are needed in the disaster grants closeout process, and FEMA needs to identify issues that may be causing delays. Region IX is also limited in its ability to conduct financial and programmatic monitoring of disaster and non-disaster grant programs.

The Regional Advisory Council has not been maintained; therefore, Region IX is missing opportunities to identify and remediate weaknesses or deficiencies in preparedness, protection, response, recovery, and mitigation activities.

### What We Recommend

We issued recommendations that, when implemented, should improve the effectiveness of FEMA's Region IX office, by:

- 1) Providing more support to the Individual and Community Preparedness initiatives, the Protection and Prevention mission area, and the Regional Exercise Support Program.
- 2) Improving the timeliness of the disaster grant closeout process.
- 3) Ensuring that the Grants Division has the resources to conduct financial and programmatic monitoring of disaster and non-disaster grant programs.
- 4) Improving the Region's training curriculum and including training to incorporate those with access and functional needs into regionwide disaster planning.
- 5) Ensuring that the Regional Advisory Council is reconvened.