



### Why This Matters

Hazard Mitigation is any sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to human life and property from hazards. It is most effective when based on an inclusive, long-term plan that is developed prior to the occurrence of a disaster.

A mitigation planning program is designed to encourage jurisdictions to identify the natural hazards that affect them and implement projects in order to reduce losses from disasters. A state must have an approved mitigation plan in order to receive certain non emergency assistance and mitigation grants.

### DHS Response

FEMA has concurred with both recommendations. The issue with rule making to change the frequency of the plan updates has been a top priority for the Federal Insurance and Mitigation Administration. FEMA has also developed and is testing an Interim Action Measures Collection Tool for use by FEMA staff to begin to track areas where identified mitigation actions have been initiated. This tool has already been deployed in early 2012 to the FEMA Regions to begin collecting data.

#### 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)

## Survey of Hazard Mitigation Planning

### What We Determined

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has made progress in the hazard mitigation planning program since the passage of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, as amended. Although the program is voluntary, all 50 states, the District of Columbia and several territories have participated since the program's inception, with over 26,000 jurisdictions that have developed plans. However, local and tribal plans expire every five years, so not all of the jurisdictions have updated plans. As of April 30, 2012, approximately 70% of the nation's population have current plans. FEMA is currently developing a system to monitor and track State, tribal, and local participation in the planning process in addition to planned or implemented mitigation projects.

The program has been relatively successful although some jurisdictions have shown reluctance to participate because of resource constraints, particularly in less populated areas that have not experienced recent disasters.

FEMA has received high marks from the mitigation grantees who rely on their assistance, guidance, and training that is made available to State, tribal, and local jurisdictions as well as their contractors. A common concern of the grantees is the frequency of the plan renewal process, which they would like to see lengthened to 5 years.

### What We Recommend

Associate Administrator, Federal Insurance and Mitigation Administration:

- 1) Continue ongoing efforts to accomplish a rule change for mitigation plan reporting schedule.
- 2) Proceed with current plans to develop a tool to track identified and implemented mitigation actions.