

Spotlight

Department of Homeland Security



Office of Inspector General

November 2011 OIG-12-04

Why This Matters

Public Law 110-53, Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007, requires the Department of Homeland Security, Office of Inspector General, to audit individual states' management of State Homeland Security Program and Urban Areas Security Initiative grants.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) awarded the State of Colorado (State) approximately \$60 million in Homeland Security Grant Program funds during fiscal years 2007- 2009, of which, almost \$52 million was for State Homeland Security Program and Urban Areas Security Initiative grants.

DHS Response

FEMA, along with officials from the State of Colorado, concurred with all ten of the report's recommendations.

FEMA acknowledged that the findings in the report will be used to strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of how the Homeland Security Grant Programs are executed and measured. FEMA recognized the need to continue to improve the process, including addressing the recommendations raised in our report.

For Further Information:

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

The State of Colorado's Management of State Homeland Security Program and Urban Areas Security Initiative Grants

What We Determined

Generally, the State did an effective job of distributing grant funds and ensuring that all available funds were used. The State rewrote its Homeland Security State Strategy to align with the National Strategy and national guidelines. The strategy incorporated capabilities-based planning to address the threats and hazards faced by Colorado's first responders and communities. However, the State's subgrantee guidance did not adequately detail the State's expectations, methodologies, or functional administration requirements unique to the State.

The State Administrative Agency was not timely in its on-site monitoring of subgrantees and performed only limited on-site visits. Early detection and correction of deficiencies found during monitoring visits can reduce the time, effort, and cost of corrective actions. The Director of the State Administrative Agency was aware of the lack of timeliness of on-site monitoring visits, and stated the agency had difficulty meeting its grant monitoring schedule due to staffing shortages, but anticipated being on schedule by the end of 2011.

Neither FEMA nor the State had an adequate performance measurement system to evaluate operational effectiveness and grant funds administration. The tools used to measure program performance and preparedness were either inadequate and unreliable, or not tracked and managed. As a result, neither FEMA nor the State could determine whether grant funds were used effectively to improve preparedness.

What We Recommend

Assistant Administrator, Grant Programs Directorate, FEMA:

- Direct the State to revise its subgrantee guidance to provide grant implementation expectations, methods, and administration activities that are in line with state and federal requirements.
- Direct the State to improve its program support, including continual and proactive mentoring, training, and engagement of subgrantee grant administration staff.
- Direct the State to perform on-site monitoring of subgrantees in a more timely and routine basis.
- Develop and incorporate into guidance, a comprehensive performance measurement system including specific, measurable, and outcome-based program and operation performance measures, including training and exercise effectiveness, to accurately capture the program's overall performance.
- Direct the State to implement and manage specific milestones for achieving progress toward desired Target Capability levels and investment goals at State and subgrantee levels.