



Why This Matters

Cameron Parish School Board, Cameron, Louisiana, received a \$65.1 million award from the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP), a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) grantee, for damages caused by Hurricane Rita, which occurred September 24, 2005. FEMA provides such assistance to state, Tribal, and local governments, and certain types of private nonprofit organizations so that communities can respond to and recover from major disasters or emergencies. We perform audits of FEMA grantees and subgrantees, focusing on grants with potential for problems and areas that are of interest to Congress and FEMA.

DHS Response

FEMA officials agreed with our findings and recommendations. FEMA's written response is due within 90 days.

FEMA Public Assistance Grant Funds Awarded to Cameron Parish School Board, Cameron, Louisiana

What We Determined

Generally, Cameron accounted for and expended FEMA grant funds according to federal regulations and FEMA guidelines. However, although Cameron used full and open competition in awarding \$49.6 million in contracts, it did not include required provisions in its contracts and did not take sufficient steps to ensure the use of small businesses, minority-owned firms, women's business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms for its contract work. In addition, FEMA should complete its insurance review and allocate approximately \$1 million of insurance proceeds to Cameron's projects.

What We Recommend

We recommend that the Regional Administrator, FEMA Region VI:

Recommendation #1: Require GOHSEP to direct Cameron to establish the necessary affirmative steps to ensure the use of small businesses, minority-owned firms, women's business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms; and to include federally required contract provisions in its contracts.

Recommendation #2: Complete the insurance review and allocate approximately \$1,000,000 (\$1,000,000 federal share) of insurance proceeds to Cameron's projects; because these costs are funded from another source, they are ineligible.

For Further Information:

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