

**Verification Review of
District of Columbia's
Management of Homeland
Security Grant Program
Awards for Fiscal Years
2010 Through 2012**





DHS OIG HIGHLIGHTS

Verification Review of the District of Columbia's Management of Homeland Security Grant Program Awards for Fiscal Years 2010 Through 2012

October 10, 2017

Why We Did This Verification Review

In September 2014, the Office of Inspector General (OIG) issued an audit report entitled, *District of Columbia's Management of Homeland Security Grant Program Awards for Fiscal Years 2010 Through 2012* (OIG-14-147). We conducted this verification review to evaluate whether the District of Columbia (DC) Homeland Security Emergency Management Agency (HSEMA) adequately implemented prior recommendations and whether those recommendations achieved the intended results.

What We Recommend

We determined that DC HSEMA resolved our previously identified issues and demonstrated improvements to its monitoring and oversight of SHSP and UASI grant subrecipients. We are not making any additional recommendations.

For Further Information:

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

What We Found

We determined that DC HSEMA resolved previously identified issues and improved its monitoring and oversight of State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) and Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) grant subrecipients. We also confirmed DC HSEMA submitted the 2016 Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA) report required by FEMA. DC HSEMA's implementation of previous OIG recommendations achieved the intended results of strengthening grant program management, performance, and oversight.



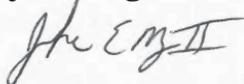
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Washington, DC 20528 / www.oig.dhs.gov

October 10, 2017

MEMORANDUM FOR: Thomas DiNanno
Assistant Administrator, Grants Program Directorate
Federal Emergency Management Agency

FROM: John E. McCoy II 
Acting Assistant Inspector General for Audits

SUBJECT: *Verification Review of District of Columbia's
Management of Homeland Security Grant Program
Awards for Fiscal Years 2010 Through 2012*

In September 2014, we issued an audit report entitled, *District of Columbia's Management of Homeland Security Grant Program Awards for Fiscal Years 2010 Through 2012* (OIG-14-147). In that report, we made 11 recommendations to improve both the Federal Emergency Management's and the District of Columbia's (DC) oversight and management of its Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) awards. All prior recommendations were closed by December 2015.

We conducted this verification review to evaluate whether the DC Homeland Security Emergency Management Agency's (HSEMA) implemented our recommendations with the intended results. We evaluated nine of the most critical recommendations from our previous report that include procurement and sole source contracting, property and inventory management, adequate support of personnel time charges, and grant awards management, reporting and oversight.

We determined that DC HSEMA resolved our previously identified issues and improved its monitoring and oversight of State Homeland Security Program and Urban Area Security Initiative grant subrecipients. DC's implementation of corrective actions addressed the recommendations, achieved the intended results of strengthening grant program management, performance, and oversight. This report contains no additional recommendations.

Consistent with our responsibility under the *Inspector General Act*, we will provide copies of our report to congressional committees with oversight and appropriation responsibility over the Department of Homeland Security. We will also post the report on our website for public dissemination.

Please call me with any questions, or your staff may contact Paul Wood, Acting Deputy Assistant Inspector General for Audits at (202) 254-4283.



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Background

In 2013 and 2014, we conducted an audit of the District of Columbia's (DC) management of the Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) for grants awarded from fiscal years 2010 through 2012. In September 22, 2014, we issued an audit report entitled, *District of Columbia's Management of Homeland Security Grant Program Awards for Fiscal Years 2010 Through 2012* (OIG-14-147), which included 11 recommendations to improve the overall effectiveness of DC's management of the Homeland Security Emergency Management Agency's (HSEMA) State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) and Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) funds. During the period of our prior audit, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) awarded DC and the National Capital Region (NCR) about \$189 million in SHSP and UASI grant funds.¹

In our prior audit, we identified several high-level areas of concern. During this verification review, we assessed DC HSEMA's implementation of the previously identified corrective actions in these overarching areas.

1. Homeland Security Strategies, Performance Goals and Assessments (Recommendations 1 and 2);
2. Contracting Policies and Procedures (Sole Source) (Recommendations 3, 4, and 5);
3. Inventory Monitoring (Recommendations 6 and 7);
4. Personnel Costs (Recommendations 8 and 9);
5. Project Management Plans (Recommendations 10 and 11); and
6. Sub-recipient Monitoring and Oversight (Recommendation 11).

We noted that, in most instances, DC HSEMA awarded its grant subrecipients and spent its own grant awards in compliance with applicable Federal laws and regulations.² However, we recommended potential improvements in its grant management practices, including: (1) developing homeland security strategies with defined objectives to measure performance; (2) developing a formal process to measure progress and improvements in preparedness and its ability to respond to disasters; (3) monitoring its subrecipients to ensure full compliance with Federal and state procurement requirements; (4) enforcing property management and inventory control requirements; (5) ensuring that

¹ The NCR encompasses DC and parts of Maryland and Virginia, including the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Manassas, and Manassas Park and the counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William in Virginia, and Frederick, Montgomery, and Prince George's in Maryland, which include the municipalities of Bowie, College Park, City of Frederick, Gaithersburg, Greenbelt, Rockville, and Takoma Park.

² As the State Administrative Agency for DC and the NCR, DC HSEMA is responsible for managing the SHSP and UASI grants.



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personnel time charges are adequately supported; and (6) improving oversight of grant awards management and reporting. According to the audit, improvements in these areas would enhance DC's "effectiveness in the overall use of grant funds to improve preparedness and response capabilities, as well as reduce the risk associated with managing FEMA grant funds."

FEMA's Assistant Administrator of the Grant Programs Directorate concurred with all 11 recommendations and provided us with a proposed corrective action plan (CAP) dated November 25, 2014. The CAP included an explanation of additional information we needed to resolve recommendations 3–11.³ FEMA subsequently delivered two CAP updates, one dated May 6, 2015, and the other dated October 6, 2015. By December 9, 2015, the Office of Inspector General (OIG) had closed all 11 recommendations in the report.

During this review, we evaluated about \$57 million in SHSP and UASI grants that DC received in FY 2016. We reviewed a select number of subrecipients in DC and the NCR, including Maryland and Virginia. We verified actions taken as a result of the prior audit and determined whether the recommendations achieved the intended results. A list of subrecipients is detailed in the Objective, Scope, and Methodology section, and appendix A contains a complete list of recommendations made during our prior audit.

Verification Review Results

We determined that DC HSEMA met the intent of our prior recommendations and demonstrated improvements in its SHSP and UASI subrecipient monitoring and oversight. We also confirmed DC HSEMA submitted required THIRA reports to FEMA. Overall, FEMA and DC HSEMA's implementation of our prior recommendations achieved the intended results of strengthening grant program management, performance, and oversight.

Implementing a SharePoint Comprehensive Grants Management System (CGMS) is the most significant improvement DC HSEMA made in 2015. The CGMS enhanced DC HSEMA's monitoring of subrecipient procurements, financial management of grant awards, equipment inventory management, and grant closeouts. Additionally, DC HSEMA updated its subrecipient handbooks in 2015 and 2016. The handbooks include references to 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 200, *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards*. DC HSEMA also revised and updated its grant terms and agreements, monitoring protocols and frequency of monitoring visits, including desk reviews and site visits.

³ Recommendations 1 and 2 in the report were closed on September 22, 2014.
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FEMA's Actions and OIG Verification

For this review, we identified several high-level areas of concern from our prior audit and verified DC HSEMA's implementation of reported corrective actions. In each area, we reviewed our original recommendation; confirmed the actions FEMA and DC HSEMA took to close the original recommendation; and assessed any subsequent actions taken as of the FY 2016 subrecipient's awards.

Homeland Security Strategies, Performance Goals, and Assessments (Recommendations 1 and 2)

We previously recommended that FEMA require DC HSEMA and the NCR to: (1) develop a comprehensive performance measurement system for SHSP and UASI homeland security goals and objectives, including target levels of performance and the means to measure progress toward enhancing preparedness. This system should include Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timely (SMART) objectives; and (2) develop and provide subrecipients with consistent and comprehensive measurement tools that include baselines for measuring and demonstrating progress toward enhancing their level of preparedness through the use of SHSP and UASI grant funds.

Subsequent to our audit, FEMA developed and implemented performance assessments that measure progress toward achieving the National Preparedness Goals. FEMA released a consistent methodology for determining risks in the *THIRA Comprehensive Preparedness Guide 201*, Second Edition, in August 2013. The guidance details a four-step process based on risk that a jurisdiction can use to achieve desired outcomes and capability targets for each of the core capabilities. States, territories, and major urban areas receiving HSGP funds were required to submit their THIRA reports to FEMA by December 31, 2013. States and territories were also required to submit a State Preparedness Report (SPR) to FEMA. THIRA and SPR results highlight gaps in capability as well as grantee progress in closing those gaps over time.

During this review, we assessed and confirmed that DC HSEMA submitted the required FEMA reports for DC and the NCR, but did not assess whether the overall THIRA program was achieving its intended results. We have prepared a separate audit proposal to review the THIRA program



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Contracting Policies and Procedures (Sole Source) (Recommendations 3, 4, and 5)

We previously recommended that FEMA ensure DC HSEMA and the NCR: (3) review and remove the outdated DHS sole source requirement included in its subrecipient program terms and conditions; (4) ensure that a cost analysis is performed and included in sole source procurement justifications, according to Federal regulations; and (5) ensure that subrecipients review and justify any sole source contract each grant award performance period to ensure selection of the best and most effective goods and services.

In FYs 2015 and 2016, DC HSEMA updated subrecipient handbooks and removed an outdated DHS sole source requirement from its subrecipient terms and conditions. DC HSEMA's standard terms and conditions require its subrecipient to notify DC HSEMA when it executes a procurement of more than \$100,000 by noncompetitive proposal. DC HSEMA's updated handbook and terms and conditions include 2 CFR 200.317 and 200.318(a) for procurements by states and general procurement standards.

In November 2014, DC HSEMA modified and implemented its updated monitoring protocols policy. The modifications specifically changed the subrecipient monitoring report form to include additional questions specific to procurement. In particular, DC HSEMA added a question to the checklist to verify whether a subrecipient performs a cost and price analysis for its sole source procurements.

According to DC HSEMA officials, this provides them with a monitoring mechanism to verify and evaluate a subrecipient's use of cost-price-analysis and sole source contract justification. We confirmed DC HSEMA also tracks subrecipient required cost analysis for sole source contracts in its monitoring protocols and reports.

Inventory Monitoring (Recommendations 6 and 7)

We previously recommended that FEMA ensure DC HSEMA and the NCR: (6) direct subrecipients to establish and maintain property management records and policies in accordance with Federal requirements; and conduct 2 year inventory inspections, plus reconcile inventory inspection results with property records; and (7) monitor subrecipients to ensure compliance with property management requirements.

We confirmed that DC HSEMA revised its subrecipient monitoring protocols to provide additional safeguards and tools for its grant managers to use during onsite and desk-monitoring visits. According to DC HSEMA officials these



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protocols strengthen management controls and subrecipient management and oversight of property records. For example, officials said, they can query the CGMS for the specific date of the last inventory performed on equipment items purchased and then use the results to develop a corrective action plan as needed to assist subrecipients with their property and inventory management.

DC HSEMA conducts periodic monitoring of subrecipients' physical inventory reviews to ensure they meet the Federal guidelines related to 2-year inventory inspections, plus reconciling inventory inspection results with property records for equipment \$5,000 and over purchased with SHSP or UASI grants.

We selected and reviewed three subrecipients that purchased equipment using SHSP and UASI grants: Montgomery County Office of Emergency Management Homeland Security, DC Office of Unified Communications, and Fairfax County Police. We verified that all are following Federal property management and inventory guidelines in accordance with 2 CFR 200.313(b) and (d). Each subrecipient's equipment management policies were in compliance with 2 CFR 200.33 and 200.313(d). For FYs 2015–2016 we specifically reviewed each subrecipient's:

- equipment purchases;
- last physical inventory;
- oversight and corrective actions; and
- equipment management policies.

We concluded that the subrecipients established and maintained property management records and policies in accordance with Federal requirements.

Personnel Costs (Recommendations 8 and 9)

We previously recommended, that FEMA ensure DC HSEMA and the NCR: (8) implement procedures to ensure compliance with Federal requirements for personnel costs charged to Federal awards by requiring employees to prepare activity reports or timesheets signed by employees, and (9) verify the personnel costs claimed against the FY 2011 UASI grant award were expended on inauguration activities by providing documentation that adequately supported the questioned \$1.3 million as valid charges to the FEMA award, or return to FEMA the amount not supported.

We determined that recommendation 8 was superseded by a new law that eliminates the need for employee-signed personnel activity reports. Specifically, 2 CFR 200.430(i) requires that charges to Federal awards for salaries and wages be based on records that accurately reflect the work performed.



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In terms of recommendation 9, DC HSEMA provided documentation related to a Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) award package, which authorized reimbursement for overtime expenditures incurred during the 2015 World Police and Fire Games. VDEM's request for grant funding to cover these expenses was approved by FEMA on June 4, 2015, and designated for reimbursement under the FY 2014 UASI grant. The DC HSEMA and FEMA approval package includes a letter addressed to VDEM itemizing exact requirements for reimbursement of personnel costs charged to Federal awards.

We met with VDEM and discussed their procedures for ensuring compliance with the Federal reimbursement regulations for personnel costs. We reviewed the reimbursement packages VDEM submitted to DC HSEMA to verify such compliance as well as to determine the adequacy of DC HSEMA's oversight efforts. We determined that the reimbursement documentation submitted by VDEM was adequately supported and in accordance with Federal regulations. In addition, we determined that DC HSEMA's oversight and monitoring efforts were effectively administered.

Project Management Plans and Subrecipient Monitoring and Oversight (Recommendations 10 and 11)

We previously recommended that DC HSEMA: (10) establish effective internal controls for documenting the review and approval of revisions made to Project Management Plans (PMP) submitted by subrecipients; and (11) reevaluate its monitoring and oversight efforts to ensure subrecipients are submitting valid information in reports and adhering to internal policies and procedures.

To address these recommendations, DC HSEMA established internal controls for documenting the review and approval of subrecipient revisions submitted to PMPs. HSEMA implemented and updated its Quarterly Status Report (QSR) form and instructional guide. 2 CFR 200.331(d) requires all pass-through entities to monitor the activities of subrecipients as necessary to ensure that the sub-award is used for authorized purposes, in compliance with Federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of the sub-award and that sub-award performance goals are achieved. Pass-through entity monitoring of the subrecipient must include reviewing financial and performance reports required. DC HSEMA uses PMPs and QSRs to monitor grant awards and ensure compliance with Federal requirements and performance expectations.

We reviewed select subrecipient grant files in the CGMS. We also analyzed DC HSEMA's FY 2016 *Sub-Recipient Handbook* and DC HSEMA's *Monitoring Protocols*, along with their FYs 2015–2017 completed Monitoring Reports, to ensure related oversight and monitoring is an ongoing process and is



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communicated to subrecipients. We conclude that DC HSEMA's CGMS vastly improved its grant program management and oversight.

Conclusion

DC HSEMA took corrective actions and satisfied the intent of recommendations 3–7 and 9–11 from our prior audit report (OIG-14-147). The underlying basis for recommendation 8 was eliminated by law. We also determined that DC HSEMA timely submitted its required 2016 THIRA. Therefore, we are not making any further recommendations as a result of this review.

Objective, Scope, and Methodology

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office of Inspector General (OIG) was established by the *Homeland Security Act of 2002* (Public Law 107–296) by amendment to the *Inspector General Act of 1978*.

We conducted this review to follow up on select audit recommendations as part of our responsibility under Office of Management and Budget Circular A-50. We verified whether prior audit corrective actions were implemented and achieved the intended results. We conducted the verification review between January and June 2017 under the authority of the *Inspector General Act of 1978*, as amended, and according to the *Quality Standards for Inspections* issued by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency.

We identified high-level areas of concern (recommendations 3–11) from the prior audit work and assessed DC HSEMA's implementation of reported corrective actions. The areas included: contracting policies and procedures, specifically sole source contracts; inventory monitoring; personnel costs related specifically to extraordinary use of UASI funding for overtime; project management plans; and subrecipient monitoring and oversight. Recommendations 1 and 2 are related to the implementation of the Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA), initial completion required by December 31, 2012, intended to be a global and consistent methodology/approach for conducting risk assessments and determining capability gaps and resources needed to fill those gaps. We believe an in-depth review of whether the HSGP improved DC's preparedness for a disaster would require more time and resources than a verification review. Therefore, we limited our assessment of recommendations 1 and 2 to confirming DC HSEMA's 2016 THIRA submission for DC and the NCR.

DC HSEMA's received more than \$57 million in SHSP and UASI grant funds in FY 2016. We reviewed more than \$11 million for the following subrecipients:



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- DC's Metropolitan Police Department
- DC's Office of Unified Communications
- Fairfax County Police Department
- Montgomery County Office of Emergency Management for Homeland Security
- Virginia Department of Emergency Management
- DC HSEMA – monitoring and oversight of -
 - Northern Virginia Emergency Response System
 - Northern Virginia Hospital Alliance
 - Maryland Emergency Management Agency

We also analyzed DC HSEMA's FY 2016 *Sub-Recipient Handbook*, and DC HSEMA's Monitoring Protocols, along with their FYs 2015–2017 completed Monitoring Reports to ensure equipment management policy updates complied with 2 CFR 200.331, that subrecipients used the property standards for equipment and management checklist to establish and maintain property management records and policies in accordance with Federal requirements.

We evaluated prior OIG and Government Accountability Office audit reports for related work and open recommendations. We researched and reviewed applicable Federal guidelines, including: 2 CFR Part 200, *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards*; *DHS Standard Administrative Terms and Conditions*; *Homeland Security Grant Program Notice of Funding Opportunities*; *DC HSEMA's Comprehensive Grants Management System (Guide)*; *DC HSEMA's Sub-Recipient Handbook*; and *DC HSEMA's Standard Sub-award Terms and Conditions*.

We interviewed FEMA officials, grant managers, financial personnel, and program analysts responsible for the administration, monitoring, and oversight related to SHSP and UASI grants. We visited FEMA HQ; DC HSEMA; Montgomery County Office of Emergency Management, Homeland Security; Fairfax County Police Department; DC's Office of Unified Communications and the DC Metropolitan Police Department.

We reviewed and verified local and Federal procurement and sole source policies and documents; equipment management procedures, inventory accountability systems and audits; personnel overtime records; agreements and approval documents; monitoring protocols; and checklists and final monitoring reports. We received a demonstration of the CGMS and conducted a limited data reliability test observing DC HSEMA approvals and changes to subrecipient grant records. We did not identify any significant discrepancies and believe the CGMS data was sufficiently reliable to meet our audit objectives.



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The Offices of Emergency Management Oversight and Audits' major contributors to this report are Brooke Bebow, Director; Cecilia Carroll, Audit Manager; John Woo, Auditor-in-Charge, Nancy Pergolizzi, Auditor-in-Charge; Kalimuddin Ahmad, Auditor, Toni Johnson, Auditor, Ellen Gallagher, Communication Analyst, and John Skrmetti, Independent Referencer.



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Appendix A
Prior Audit Report (OIG-14-147)
Findings and Recommendations

Recommendations 1 and 2 – Performance Goals and Assessments

Findings:

FEMA did not develop and implement performance assessments to measure progress toward achieving the National Preparedness Goal.

Recommendation: for the Assistant Administrator, Grant Programs Directorate, require DC HSEMA and the NCR to:

- Develop a comprehensive performance measurement system for SHSP and UASI homeland security goals and objectives that include target levels of performance and the means to measure progress toward enhancing preparedness. This system should include SMART objectives.
- Develop and provide subgrantees with consistent and comprehensive measurement tools that include baselines for measuring and demonstrating progress toward enhancing their level of preparedness through the use of SHSP and UASI grant funds.

Recommendations 3, 4, and 5 – Procurement, Sole Source Contracts, and Cost Analysis

Finding: DC did not effectively monitor its subrecipients to ensure full compliance with Federal and state procurement requirements.

Recommendation: for the Assistant Administrator, Grant Programs Directorate, require DC HSEMA and the NCR to:

- Review and remove the outdated DHS sole source requirement included in its subgrantee terms and conditions.
- Ensure that a cost analysis is performed and included in sole source procurement justifications, according to Federal regulations.
- Ensure that subgrantees review and justify any sole source contract each grant award performance period to ensure selection of the best and most effective goods and services.



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Recommendations 6 and 7 – Property Management and Inventory Controls

Finding: DC HSEMA did not ensure that SHSP and UASI subgrantees adhered to inventory control policies for grant-funded equipment. Additionally, subgrantees did not include all required information on inventory lists and did not provide evidence that they conducted physical inventories and reconciliations as required.

Recommendation: for the Assistant Administrator, Grant Programs Directorate, require DC HSEMA and the NCR to:

- Direct subgrantees to establish and maintain property management records and policies in accordance with Federal requirements, conduct the required 2-year inventory inspections, and reconcile inventory inspection results with property records. Ensure that a cost analysis is performed and included in sole source procurement justifications, according to Federal regulations.
- Monitor subgrantees to ensure compliance with property management requirements.

Recommendations 8 and 9 – Personnel Time Charges

Finding: Personnel time charges for UASI funds were not supported by adequate activity reports or timesheets. The NCR used the FY 2011 UASI Grant to fund officers from several state police departments to provide security at the 2013 presidential inauguration.

Recommendation: for the Assistant Administrator, Grant Programs Directorate, require DC HSEMA to:

- Implement procedures to ensure compliance with Federal requirements for personnel costs charged to Federal awards by requiring employees to prepare activity reports or timesheets signed by employees.
- Verify the personnel costs claimed against the FY 2011 UASI grant award were expended on inauguration activities by providing documentation that adequately supports the questioned \$1.3 million as valid charges to the FEMA award, or return to FEMA the amount not supported.



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Recommendations 10 and 11 – Grants Management Monitoring/Oversight - Project Management Plans

Finding: DC HSEMA and its subgrantees did not always follow grant administration and reporting procedures. Additionally, DC HSEMA did not have a formal process for documenting the review and approval of changes to the project management plans.

Recommendation: for the Assistant Administrator, Grant Programs Directorate, require DC HSEMA to:

- Establish effective internal controls for documenting the review and approval of revisions made to Project Management Plans submitted by subgrantees.
- Reevaluate its monitoring and oversight efforts to ensure subgrantees are submitting valid information in reports and adhering to internal policies and procedures.



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Appendix B
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