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FEMA Fails to Analyze Recurring OIG Recommendations and Misses Opportunities to Improve Its Preparedness Grant Program

A new Department of Homeland Security, Office of Inspector General (OIG) report reveals Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) missed opportunities to improve its oversight of the Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) because it failed to perform a root-cause analysis of OIG's recurring recommendations.

The report, OIG 16-49 "Analysis of Recurring Audit Recommendations Could Improve FEMA's Oversight of HSGP," cites that between 2009 and 2014, OIG issued 58 HSGP audit reports containing 490 recommendations; 448 (91 percent) of which address recurring issues. The OIG sought to determine whether FEMA has implemented permanent changes to its oversight of HSGP in response to the recommendations that addressed similar challenges year-after-year. The HSGP provides funds to state, territorial, local and tribal governments to enhance their ability to prepare for, prevent, protect, respond to, and recover from terrorist attacks, major disasters and other emergencies. FEMA allocated \$7.6 billion in HSGP funds between 2009 and 2014.

The report highlights FEMA's failure to conduct a substantive trend analysis of OIG's audit recommendations. Without this analysis, FEMA may not be able to develop proactive solutions to recurring and systemic problems.

"Without a plan to analyze recurring OIG recommendations, FEMA will continue to miss opportunities to improve its management and oversight," said Inspector General John Roth, "leaving taxpayers liable for future losses. FEMA has agreed to take corrective action in response to this report, which should help it determine trends and system-wide problems in HSGP."

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