

Department of Homeland Security 32 Duplicative Programs

In FY 2010, the Department of Homeland Security received \$44.1 billion, a seven percent increase from last year's non-emergency discretionary level.

According to the Office of Management and Budget, a total of "31 agency budgets included federal homeland security funding in 2010. Five agencies—the Departments of Homeland Security, Defense, Health and Human Services, Justice, and Energy—account for approximately \$64.9 billion (93 percent) of total government-wide gross discretionary homeland security funding in 2010."¹

Emergency Operations Center Grant Program

Funded at \$60 million annually, the **Homeland Security's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Grant Program** was originally designed to support local emergency preparedness efforts, targeting areas of specific need in each state and locality. Unfortunately, the earmarking of EOC funds has significantly reduced the program's effectiveness in enhancing our national security. In addition, the program is duplicative of other Homeland Security efforts, including the **Emergency Management Performance Grant Program**, which allows funds to be used for the construction of Emergency Operations Centers across the country.

The President's FY 2010 budget called for the program's termination, stating that its "focus was compromised, and by 2009, 60 percent of the EOC grant funds were congressional earmarks not allocated by merit-based criteria.

Citizens Corps Program

Funded at \$12.5 million, the **Citizen Corps Programs** is designed to bring community and government leaders together to coordinate community involvement in emergency preparedness, planning, mitigation, response and recovery. The **State Homeland Security Program**, which is funded at \$950 billion in FY 2010, can also be used by state and local governments to coordinate community involvement in preparedness and response efforts.

Commercial Equipment Direct Assistance Program

Funded at \$17.6 million these grants funds are used to enhance regional response capabilities, mutual aid, and interoperable communications by providing technology and equipment, along with the training required to operate that equipment, to law enforcement and emergency responder agencies in smaller jurisdictions and certain metropolitan areas. This grant program duplicates many of the other FEMA grant programs including, **the five Homeland Security Grant Programs, the Regional Catastrophic Preparedness Grant Program, and the Interoperable Emergency Communications Grant Program.**

¹ OMB Cross Cutting Programs, pg. 16, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/fy2010/assets/crosscutting.pdf>

Intercity Passenger Rail Program (Amtrak)

Funded at \$20 million, this grant program provides funding to create a sustainable, risk-based effort to protect critical surface transportation infrastructure and the traveling public from acts of terrorism, major disasters, and other emergencies within the Amtrak rail system. Only Amtrak is eligible to apply for this grant program.² Moreover, this grant program duplicates the **Transportation Security Grant Program**.

Intercity Bus Security Grant Program

Funded at \$11.5 million, this grant program provides funding to create a sustainable program for the protection of intercity bus systems and the traveling public from terrorism. The program seeks to assist operators of fixed route intercity and charter bus services in obtaining the resources required to support security measures such as enhanced planning, facility security upgrades, and vehicle and driver protection. This grant program duplicates the **Transportation Security Grant Program**.

Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program

Funded at \$100 million, this program provides funds to states, localities and tribal governments for hazard mitigation planning and the implementation of mitigation projects prior to a disaster event. **FEMA administers four other mitigation grant programs: the Flood Mitigation Assistance Program, the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, the Repetitive Flood Claims Program, and the Severe Repetitive Flood Claims Program.** While these programs have some differences, they generally fund similar projects.³

Fire Grants for State and Local Firefighters

The Department of Homeland Security, through FEMA, administers three fire grant programs for state and local firefighters: **Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program (AFG), Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Grants (SAFER), and Fire Prevention and Safety Grants (FP&S).** In total, these three grant programs provided \$810 million in funding in FY 2009.⁴

While these three grants make up a significant amount of funding for state and local firefighters, DHS administers additional grants and funding programs that can be used by firefighters for prevention, preparedness, emergency response, and firefighting including:

- **Fire Station Construction Grants (SCG)** – established by the stimulus bill, this new grant program provided \$210 million for construction of fire stations.

² Fiscal Year (FY) 2010 Intercity Passenger Rail – Amtrak (IPR), Frequently Asked Questions, http://www.fema.gov/pdf/government/grant/2010/fy10_ipr_faq.pdf

³ CRS Report “FEMA’s Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program: Overview and Issues,” June 26, 2008, by Francis X. McCarthy, pg. 5.

⁴ the FY2010 Department of Homeland Security appropriations bill, P.L. 111-83

- **Federal Property Reimbursement Agreement – allows for fire departments to be reimbursed for fighting fire on property owned by the federal government.**⁵
- **National Fire Academy Training Assistance – allows local fire departments to be reimbursed for training at the National Fire Academy.**⁶
- **Hazard Mitigation Grant Programs (HMGP) - can be used by local fire stations for wildfire prevention.**⁷
- **Emergency Management Preparedness Grants (EMPG) –** These grants are used assist state and local governments sustain and improve all-hazards emergency management capabilities. Fire departments may not apply for EMPG funds directly. Instead, they must rely on the State Administrative Agency (SAA) or Emergency Management Agency (EMA) to apply on their behalf.
- **Regional Catastrophic Preparedness Grant Program (RCPGP) -** these grants are used to enhance catastrophic incident preparedness in selected high-risk, high-consequence urban areas and their surrounding regions. Fire preparedness and response is included in the RCPG program.

In addition to the DHS grants referenced above, there are numerous other federal sources of funding for state and local firefighters, many at the Department of Interior.

Interior Firefighting Programs

There are numerous firefighting programs within the Department of the Interior (DOI) and the USDA Forest Service (FS). Since FY 2001 funding for these activities has nearly doubled according to the Congressional Research Service.⁸

Despite this increase in funding, three of the past four years have seen a record amount of federal acreage burned. Within DOI and USDA there are almost identical accounts for how funds are intended to be spent – only that these funds are spent on lands managed by different federal agencies.⁹

There are even duplicative research accounts on wildfire research. \$975 million is appropriated for DOI activities and \$2.592 billion for FS wildfire activities. Total funding is \$3.567 billion in FY10, not including likely emergency appropriations – an increase of at least \$800 million over last year. GAO has also, since 1999, repeatedly found that these activities should be more cohesive and cost-effective.¹⁰

⁵ Section 11, **The Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974**

⁶ <http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/nfa/>

⁷ Congressional Research Service (CRS), “FEMA’s Hazard Mitigation Grant Program: Overview and Issues”, March 25, 2009, <http://www.crs.gov/Pages/Reports.aspx?Source=search&ProdCode=R40471#ifn3>.

⁸ <http://crs.gov/ReportPDF/RL33990.pdf>

⁹ These accounts included, “Preparedness,” “Suppression,” “Emergency Funds,” “Site Rehabilitation,” and “Fuel Reduction.”

¹⁰ <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d09877.pdf>

Additional Federal Grants and Funding for Firefighters

- **Community Facilities Grants and Loans** – offered through the Department of agriculture, these grants can be used by fire departments to construct or improve existing facilities that are used for emergency response.
- **Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)** – these grants provided by HUD are used for community projects that benefit low- and moderate-income persons, including fire and life safety protection.
- **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Local Governments Reimbursement Program** - provides federal funds to local governments for costs related to temporary emergency measures conducted in response to releases or threatened releases of hazardous substances.¹¹

¹¹ <http://www.epa.gov/osweroe1/content/lgr/>