



GOVERNOR GREG ABBOTT

OOG Program Review Summary Sheet
Findings and Recommendations

Grant Number: HS 2992704
Grantee Name: Houston-Galveston Area Council
Project Title: FY 2018 H-GAC Regional Planning Initiative
Date Review Opened: 6/3/2019 **Staff Reviewer:** Will Ogletree

Eligibility - Other

Finding or Recommendation:

Finding: Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD)-5, Management of Domestic Incidents, made adoption of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) a condition for Federal preparedness assistance through grants, contracts, and other activities. The Homeland Security Grants Division's State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) Request for Application, requires grantees to maintain adoption and implementation of NIMS. The NIMS uses a systematic approach to integrate the best existing processes and methods into a unified national framework for incident management across all homeland security activities including prevention, protection, response, mitigation, and recovery. Grantees must use standardized resource management concepts for resource typing, credentialing, and an inventory to facilitate the effective identification, dispatch, deployment, tracking and recovery of resources. Although the Grantee indicated that the Houston-Galveston Area Council (HGAC) formally adopted NIMS in 2012, they were unable to provide a signed copy of the NIMS adoption. Further, the Grantee does not have a written implementation plan to ensure NIMS objectives are being achieved and personnel are reaching the required training levels.

Corrective Action(s):

The Grantee should provide an official copy of their agency's NIMS adoption. If unable to locate a signed copy of the original NIMS adoption, HSGD asks that your agency re-adopt NIMS and provide a copy of that adoption.

In addition, HSGD recommends that, going forward, HGAC create a NIMS Implementation Plan to ensure the agency is working towards meeting the NIMS objectives and personnel are achieving the required training levels. A copy of the 2018 NIMS Implementation Objectives Chart is attached and additional information may be found at: <https://www.fema.gov/nims-doctrine-supporting-guides-tools>.

Date Resolved: Pending

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H-GAC Response

Please see the attached:

- Signed NIMS Resolution from August 21, 2012
- Updated H-GAC Emergency Preparedness Program Policies to include NIMS Implementation (Section 8).

H-GAC Public Safety Program Manager will complete required NIMS training by end of the grant's period of performance (9/30/2019).



RESOLUTION

SUPPORTING COMPLIANCE AND RECOGNITION OF NIMS FOR THE HOUSTON-GALVESTON AREA REGION

WHEREAS, Eligibility requirements for FY2012 Homeland Security grants include compliance with and recognition of the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

WHEREAS, NIMS is a nationwide, systematic guide for departments and agencies at all levels of government and the private sector to work seamlessly to respond and recover from incidents.

WHEREAS, H-GAC Homeland Security staff have completed the required NIMS courses and are prepared to provide technical assistance to jurisdictions. This technical assistance includes communication of NIMS requirements to local responding agencies.

WHEREAS, the Houston-Galveston Area Council Board of Directors adopts NIMS as the recognized Incident Management system for the Houston-Galveston Area Council region during any emergency operation.

PASSED AND APPROVED at a regular duly called meeting of the Houston-Galveston Area Council Board of Directors, this twenty-first day of August 2012

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

The Honorable Darrell Morrison
Councilman, City of Pasadena
H-GAC Vice Chair

The Honorable Delores Martin
Mayor, City of Manvel
H-GAC Chair



Houston-Galveston Area Council
Emergency Preparedness Program Policies

Revised July 30, 2019

The Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) Emergency Preparedness Program (formerly Homeland Security Program) covers the counties of Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Colorado, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Matagorda, Montgomery, Walker, Waller, and Wharton. H-GAC staff administer the planning and services provided via the Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) and provides management and oversight of the Regional Homeland Security Coordinating Council, an advisory committee to the H-GAC Board of Directors.

The policies contained within this document supplement the H-GAC Board-approved Regional Homeland Security Coordinating Council bylaws and provide flexibility to accommodate revisions to the Interlocal Agreement between the Texas Office of the Governor, Public Safety Office, Homeland Security Grants Division (HSGD) and the H-GAC and provide specificity to program requirements not typically contained in governing bylaws.

H-GAC will upload a copy of the current Emergency Preparedness Program Policies and committee bylaws into eGrants. H-GAC will make available relevant policies and bylaws to potential grantees and other interested parties by request and ensure copies are available during program meetings and workshops.

1. H-GAC Homeland Security Program Strategic Vision

The H-GAC Emergency Preparedness Program works to support the region's ability to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from large-scale incidents, including acts of terrorism. To that end, H-GAC strives to foster a risk-based regional approach to all-hazard preparedness activities.

H-GAC partners with the Houston Urban Area Security Initiative to produce the following homeland security strategic planning documents annually to support a risk-based allocation of resources to preparedness initiatives:

- Regional Threat Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA)
- State Preparedness Report (SPR)
- Regional Homeland Security Implementation Plan (HS-IP)

These documents lay the foundation of H-GAC's formula for assessing potential preparedness investments, or "risk-informed methodology". H-GAC will protect any sensitive data contained within these documents from wide distribution, and mark as "For Official Use Only".

2. Notification of Grant Opportunities

H-GAC shall notify current grantees and other requesters in the H-GAC region regarding the availability of current, homeland security grant funding opportunities (e.g., State Homeland Security Program, and the Nonprofit Security Grant Program). At a minimum, homeland security grant notifications shall include the following:

- Name of the funding opportunity
- The Request for Applications issued by HSGD
- Instructions for completing an application
- Submission due dates

H-GAC will notify potential applicants regarding date, time and location of grant application workshops, technical assistance opportunities, application and funding cycle dates, and grant application submission deadlines within 72 hours of receiving notice from the Office of the Governor. H-GAC will utilize an array of notification methods to insure all available grant applicants are made aware of grant funding opportunities. H-GAC maintains a large database of contacts- which includes a robust collection of contact information for local governments and community organizations. Examples of the types of contacts include City Managers, elected officials, emergency management coordinators, and public safety departments.

3. Grant Application Workshops

H-GAC will hold grant application workshops in accordance with the requirements set forth in the Interlocal Agreement between H-GAC and the HSGD. H-GAC will notify all interested parties of the date, time and location of grant application workshops via email and/or the H-GAC website. Grant-specific information and materials will be distributed to workshop attendees. At the workshops, H-GAC shall distribute any information specified by HSGD and instruct applicants on the following:

- Applicant and project eligibility;
- Requirements for constructing a successful application (e.g., project narrative development, target outputs/outcome measures, budget construction);
- Applicable rules, regulations, and certifications for each opportunity;
- Applicable civil rights rules;

- State homeland security strategy/priorities (as identified by HSGD and/or the Texas Homeland Security Strategy);
- Local homeland security priorities as determined by the Regional Homeland Security Coordinating Council;
- Submission requirements (including due dates and certification requirements); and
- Copies of the current approved scoring criteria, Risk-Informed Methodology, current Threat Identification Risk Assessment, Regional State Preparedness Report, and Homeland Security Implementation Plan.

Attendance is mandatory for all grant applicant organizations. Current grantees, new applicants, or newly assigned grant personnel within an organization responsible for writing an application and/or budget are highly encouraged to attend. H-GAC will submit to HSGD workshop attendee data along with copies of all workshop materials used and distributed to potential applicants. Applicants will be urged to schedule a technical assistance appointment with H-GAC Emergency Preparedness Program staff to assist in drafting their grant applications.

4. Grant Application Prioritization Process

In accordance with the Interlocal Agreement between HSGD and H-GAC, H-GAC will recommend funding amounts for each project prioritized by the Regional Homeland Security Coordinating Council. The Regional Homeland Security Coordinating Council is required to have a quorum to conduct business. Determination of a quorum is contained within the committee bylaws. Although not required, H-GAC recommends grant applicants attend prioritization meetings to respond to questions about their grant applications, gain experience in the prioritization and scoring process, and strengthen future grant applications.

Eligible applications received by H-GAC will be forwarded to the Regional Homeland Security Coordinating Council for review prior to priority hearings. During priority hearings, Regional Homeland Security Coordinating Council members will review and together determine a consensus score for each application based upon an approved scoring mechanism and the regional risk-informed methodology. Every eligible project application will be reviewed and receive a score. Once each project has received a consensus score, the committee will vote to approve the consensus score. Abstentions will be noted by H-GAC staff. Applications will be ranked in order of priority based upon scores from highest to lowest. In the event of a tie H-GAC staff will utilize predetermined criteria including, but not limited to project categorization and/or the ability to address capability gaps across the region (i.e., build regional response capacity).

The Regional Homeland Security Coordinating Council strives to recommend funding for as many eligible projects as possible. To that end, the Regional Homeland Security Coordinating Council may choose to recommend a reduced amount of funding for a project to the HSGD.

When adjusting the recommended funding amount for a project the Regional Homeland Security Coordinating Council may consider several factors including, but not limited to: previous grant awards, project activities, equipment cost, or the availability of other funding sources. During the scoring/ranking process the Regional Homeland Security Coordinating Council may consider additional federal/state requirements (e.g., Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Activities) during the scoring process.

Following the priority hearings, H-GAC staff will submit preliminary results to the HSGD in accordance with requirements set forth with the Interlocal Agreement between HSGD and H-GAC. H-GAC staff will present the recommended priority list and funding recommendations to the H-GAC Plans and Projects Review Committee, who will then present to the H-GAC Board of Directors for final adoption. H-GAC staff will inform applicants of H-GAC Board decisions within fourteen days.

5. Conflicts of Interest

Regional Homeland Security Coordinating Council members must abstain from voting on their own projects. Members must refrain from discussing or suggesting consensus scores for all projects where a conflict of interest exists. A member who abstains from voting on any application will document the abstention by signing the appropriate project abstention record.

In addition, Regional Homeland Security Coordinating Council members must abstain from voting on any grant application, other than a grant application submitted by H-GAC, during the prioritization process if the member or an individual related to the member within the third degree by consanguinity or within the second degree by affinity:

- Is employed by the applicant agency and works for the unit or division that would administer the grant, if awarded
- Owns or controls any interest in a business entity or other non-governmental organization that benefits, directly or indirectly, from activities with the applicant agency; or
- Receives any funds, or a substantial amount of tangible goods or routine services, from the applicant agency as a result of the grant, if awarded.

6. Oversight of the Regional Homeland Security Coordinating Council

The Regional Homeland Security Coordinating Council advises the H-GAC Board on matters relating to emergency preparedness, including acts of terrorism, and presents recommendations for prioritizing homeland security grant applications. H-GAC manages and oversees advisory committee activities and is responsible for:

- Presenting nominations for committee membership to the H-GAC Board of Directors;
- Providing guidance on meeting and program requirements;

- Organizing and supporting grant prioritization hearings by:
 - Managing meeting logistics;
 - Documenting decisions made by the committee; and,
 - Conducting required communication to eligible applicants.
- Actively facilitating all meetings as stipulated in the Interlocal Agreement between HSGD and H-GAC.
- Informing committee members of any all/all pertinent updates from the Office of the Governor in a timely manner.

All official Regional Homeland Security Coordinating Council meetings will be announced by H-GAC staff. H-GAC staff will be present at all Regional Homeland Security Coordinating Council meetings to ensure that decisions are being made in accordance with the requirements set forth in the Interlocal Agreement between HSGD and H-GAC, and follow the Texas Government Code, Chapter 551 (Texas Open Meetings Act).

7. Compliance with Texas Open Meetings Act

H-GAC Board of Directors meetings are conducted in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act. In addition, H-GAC will insure notification of Regional Homeland Security Coordinating Council meetings will be posted in four places: online with the Texas Secretary of State Office, with the Harris County Clerk, outside and on the fifth-floor of the H-GAC office building. Each posting will include an agenda. H-GAC staff will document all Regional Homeland Security Coordinating Council proceedings related to HSGD business by either recording or preparing certified written minutes.

8. Implementation of the National Incident Management System (NIMS)

Recipients of Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) funding are required to implement the National Incident Management System (NIMS). NIMS defines a national, interoperable approach for sharing resources, coordinating and managing incidents, and communicating information. NIMS provides stakeholders across the whole community with the shared vocabulary, systems, and processes to successfully deliver the capabilities described in the National Preparedness System. H-GAC is a planning organization and not responsible for incident management or response, therefore the following pertinent NIMS objectives have been implemented:

- **Adoption** – NIMS was officially adopted by the H-GAC Board of Directors on August 21, 2012.
- **Training** – Public Safety Personnel with any percentage of salary paid utilizing HSGP funds will complete the following required core NIMS courses within one year of hire date or being added to HSGP grants:
 - IS – 100 Introduction to the Incident Command System

- IS – 200 Basic Incident Command System for Initial Response
- IS - 700 An Introduction to the National Incident Management System
- IS - 800 National Response Framework, an Introduction

Staff will complete refresher courses as NIMS and National Response Framework doctrine is changed and/or updated

- **Resource Management** – H-GAC will manage grant funded resources consistent with NIMS doctrine. The agency will maintain a database of any shareable/deployable physical assets purchased with HSGP funds, and of any position specific credentials of H-GAC employees.
- **Communications and Information** – All regional catastrophic plans, trainings, after-action reports, and other preparedness planning products will utilize plain language and clear text communication standards.
- **NIMS Point-of-Contact** – H-GAC has appointed a NIMS Point-of-Contact (POC) responsible for the overall coordination and development of NIMS related activities and documents for the agency. Upon termination, the Public Safety Program Manager will assume the role of NIMS POC until a new POC is appointed. The agency’s current (effective 7/30/2019) NIMS POC is:

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