

## Homeland Security Grants

Triad Associates

The core mission of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is to enhance the ability of state, local and tribal governments to prepare, prevent and respond to terrorist attacks and other disasters. **The Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP)** is a primary funding mechanism for building and sustaining national preparedness capabilities.

HSGP is comprised of five separate grant components:

1. Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI)
2. State Homeland Security Program (SHSP)
3. Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Program (LETPP)
4. Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS)
5. Citizen Corps Program (CCP).

Together, these grants fund a range of preparedness activities, including planning, organization, equipment purchase, training, exercises and management and administration costs. However, for as well financed as the above programs are, only a select few communities within New Jersey are eligible for and/or are willing to apply for these complex funding programs. With the exception of the UASI Program, which does have a Tier I Area identifying the New York City/Northern New Jersey Area as an eligible applicant, the majority of New Jersey municipalities are ineligible to apply for many of the programs offered.

The Department of Homeland Security is a complex agency with large funding coffers and multiple agencies under its jurisdiction including the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Understanding their funding programs is vital to receiving DHS funding.

In general, Homeland Security funding can be sorted into three categories. The above noted **HSGP** program is one element of the DHS's funding matrix. The five HSGP components outlined above are included in the following three general categories:

1. **Public Safety Grants** - Of particular interest to the majority of communities would be the Public Safety Grants, as these grants are intended to provide support for those working to ensure public safety in times of crisis: whether they are police or fire departments, hazmat teams or other first responders. This would include the Firefighter Assistance Grant program. More information on the Firefighter Program is included later in this article.
2. **Health Safety and Security Grant** - The threat of bioterrorism has created new challenges for public health officials requiring them to invest heavily in integration, communication and response systems. The grant programs considered within the Health Safety and Security Program are significant for their potential to support efforts to create, strengthen, test or plan for response,

mitigation and alert systems intended to protect the public in the event of a bioterrorist attack.

3. **Critical Infrastructure and Protection Grants** may be used to provide for various critical infrastructure protection as long as those priorities are listed in the state or urban homeland security plan. The bad news is that the competitive grant world has been slow to respond to such issues, choosing instead to focus on areas where specific models can be developed and disseminated to create best practices for different sectors.

Homeland Security funding, for the most part, are formula grants, meaning that funds are distributed based on a calculation to address a specific issue or need. These calculations, or formulas, are frequently based at least in part on population. Other factors, depending upon the purpose of the grant, may include crime statistics or poverty indexes. In most of the cases, formula grants are awarded by the federal government to a State Administrative Agency (SAA) as designated by the State's governor. If you are interested in a formula grant, you should contact the New Jersey SAA to see whether your organization/municipality is eligible for funding.

#### *Public Safety Interoperable Communications Funding*

It has recently come to our attention that the State of New Jersey is the recipient of \$ 30,806,646 in **Public Safety Interoperable Communications (PSIC)** funding for fiscal year 2008. The PSIC grant program awarded \$968 million in funds to states and territories to enable and enhance public safety agencies' interoperable communications capabilities. The PSIC grant program is a one-time grant opportunity to enhance interoperable capabilities with respect to voice, data and/or video and to encourage the use of innovative cost- and spectrum-efficient technology solutions.

The SAA, designated by the governor, is responsible for obligating PSIC funds to eligible pass-through recipients. Pass-through recipients must be public safety agencies, which include state, local or tribal government entities or authorized nongovernmental organizations.

The program received applications on August 22, 2007 from 56 states and territories, and every state and territory received an award on September 30, 2007. As part of the award, each state and territory was required to submit an Investment Justification by December 3, 2007 with up to ten PSIC Investments. The State Department of Homeland Security submitted that document, hence the approximate award of \$31 million.

The League is not aware of a formal RFP process for municipalities or municipal consortiums to apply for funding from either the county or directly to the State. However, with the 2008 federal appropriation recently being made to New Jersey, it would appear to be an opportune time to reach out to county Office of Emergency

Management Directors to request funding for municipal communication Projects and Activities. In this regard, you may wish to consider developing a matrix of potential projects along with profiles for these projects identifying need, cost and relevance to national, state and county Homeland Security goals and objectives.

### *Fire Grants*

With regard to the **Firefighters Assistance Grant Program (AFG)**, the primary goal is to meet the firefighting and emergency response needs of fire departments and nonaffiliated emergency medical services organizations. The AFG program has become a prominent component of federal support for first responders. These direct federal-to-local grants are further distinguished by the fact that each fire department is allowed to submit only one application, resulting in a broader distribution of the funding to as many departments across the country as possible. There are three major grant programs under AFG:

- **Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) - “Fire Grants”**

AFG has helped firefighters and other first responders to obtain critically needed equipment, protective gear, emergency vehicles, training and other resources needed to protect the public and emergency personnel from fire and related hazards.

Applications are expected to be announced late spring with a deadline approximately four weeks after the RFP is released.

- **Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response - “SAFER Grants”**

The SAFER grant was created to provide funding directly to fire departments and volunteer firefighter interest organizations in order to help them increase the number of trained "front-line" firefighters available in their communities.

Applications are generally released in the summer with a due date some six weeks after the RFP has been announced.

- **Fire Prevention and Safety - “FP&S Grants”**

The primary goal of these grants is to target high-risk populations and mitigate high incidences of death and injury. Examples of the types of projects supported by FP&S include fire prevention and public safety education campaigns, juvenile fire-setter interventions, media campaigns and arson prevention and awareness programs.

Applications are generally released in the fall with a due date approximately four weeks after the release of the RFP.

### *Public Safety Interoperable Communications Funding*

The New Jersey State League of Municipalities would like to make you aware of the opportunity to pursue **Public Safety Interoperable Communications (PSIC)** funding either through the receipt of resources for implementation of projects directly or through participation in a countywide communication initiative. If not for this funding opportunity, opening the lines of communication with your county's Office of Emergency Management and/or the SAA is a key first step to securing Homeland Security funds.

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*Triad Associates is currently the League's Grant Consulting Firm. Their firm, which is known for its expertise in community and economic development, including strategic planning, redevelopment, acquisition, relocation and funding, has brought diverse plans and projects to life by generating more than \$580,000,000 for over 120 public, private and nonprofit clients throughout the Northeast region since 1978. Every member of the Triad team is personally committed and dedicated to the success of its clients and the projects that benefit communities.*