

# SAA MONITORING PROTOCOL—FY 2015

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## 1. Purpose

State and local agency homeland security strategies must be monitored in order to track the progress of agencies against their strategies, track the support the SAA is providing to local and state agencies for implementation of their strategies and to determine whether planning, equipment, exercise, administrative and training grant funds are being obligated and expended in accordance with SAA and DHS guidelines and special conditions. Monitoring will provide a comprehensive picture of how preparedness and response capabilities are increasing state and region wide and will also allow the SAA to ensure it is providing its resources and support to local and state agencies in an efficient and effective manner.

The monitoring state agency homeland security strategies encompasses two main areas: grant monitoring of planning, equipment, exercise, administrative and training funds; and programmatic monitoring of an agency's progress against its own strategy, to include monitoring of the agency's needs. To perform grant monitoring, the SAA will be responsible for assessing subgrantees' general use of grant funds and compliance with SAA and DHS guidelines for planning, equipment, exercise, administrative, and training funds provided to local and state agencies by the SAA. To perform programmatic monitoring, the SAA will be responsible for assessing how SAA resources, including grants, training, direct exercise contractor support, and technical assistance support are enhancing preparedness and response capabilities on a local level within the state.

Grant and programmatic monitoring will be completed by two methods: office-based monitoring and on-site monitoring. The SAA will develop an annual monitoring plan that is created via the SAA's risk-based monitoring strategy. Monitoring will assist in identifying areas where a local and or state agency requires continued support and will also provide feedback to the SAA that can be used to improve our services. Prior to completing any monitoring effort, it is important to review other recent monitoring activities, including grant closeout progress, the type of grant, and the grants database.

## 2. Risk-based monitoring strategy

The SAA will employ a risk based monitoring strategy to determine the SAA's annual monitoring plan. Each subgrantee will be ranked according the following five factors:

**Prior monitoring** Has the subgrantee received prior site visits or desk reviews?

**Spending performance** Was any balance returned to the SAA on previous awards?

**Number of subgrants awarded** How many subgrants are currently awarded to the subgrantee?

**Average financial risk** A project's financial risk is a numerical rating based on award size, balance remaining, and time elapsed on the period of performance.

**Overall performance** Subgrantee performance in the management of grant-funded projects and compliance with grant requirements.

Based on the aggregate ranking, the top 25 subgrantees will receive an onsite monitoring visit. All quarterly status reports, regardless of whether the subgrantee is selected for a monitoring visit, will be fully reviewed by the SAA program manager.

### **3. Office-based monitoring**

Office-based monitoring entails a full review of the quarterly status reports for all subgrants, to ensure that all status report documentation is complete and up-to-date, and that any apparent problems are addressed.

#### **3.1. Quarterly status report review**

The SAA program manager should determine that all progress reports submitted are current and cover the entire subgrant program awarded to an agency. If progress reports are found to be inadequate, the SAA will advise the subgrantee during the telephone call or email. The SAA program manager will review the latest quarterly status report for any issues that may put the project at risk, including implementation delays, change of scope, discrepancies with the PMP, NCR | GMS, PASS, etc.

The SAA program manager will document this review by sending an email to the Grants Division Chief within 30 days following the subgrant status report due date for that quarter. For example, the status report for quarter 1 is due by April 10; the SAA program manager should send the email by May 10. The email should, at a minimum, contain the following:

1. Confirmation the PM has completed the review
2. List of subgrants for which the quarterly status report is missing
3. Any issues identified during the review

#### **3.2. Contacting subgrantee via telephone/email**

The program manager should discuss any issues or points identified during office-based monitoring, as appropriate. The SAA should inquire about the agency's progress against its goals, objectives, requirements, and timelines in the context of the agency's equipment, training, exercises, and development needs. Has equipment purchased with DHS grant funding been deployed? Is additional training required for responders to utilize that equipment? Additional questions may include: Have any goals or priorities changed? Is the agency on schedule with PMP timeline and spend plan?

#### **3.3. Follow-up**

During the subsequent quarterly review, the SAA program manager should ensure that the subgrantee has taken action to address the previously identified issues. If the issues persist, the SAA program manager may forward them to the Grants Division Chief for follow-up. The SAA should note these issues and what steps the grantee is taking to resolve them in the subgrant file.

### **4. On-site monitoring**

#### **4.1. Contact subgrantee**

The SAA program manager will contact the subgrantee by email at least four weeks before the anticipated timeframe of the monitoring visit to schedule the exact visit time and provide the subgrantee

monitoring report and project status table. No later than two weeks before the visit, the subgrantee will submit the completed report, project status table and requested documents to the SAA. No later than one week before the visit, the SAA will send the subgrantee a pre-visit email as a reminder and to confirm the SAA's arrival at the agreed upon location, date and time.

#### **4.2. Pre-site review of records**

The SAA monitoring visit team should conduct a pre-visit monitoring meeting at least one week prior to the visit. Pre-visit monitoring begins with a review of the subgrant file and grants data base to ensure that all documentation is examined and the persons monitoring an agency have a thorough understanding of what it is they are looking for. Notations of any apparent problems should be made in preparation for the visit. All SAA staff dealing with matters pertaining to the subgrantee should discuss the upcoming visit and any other relevant issues ahead of time (through an in-person meeting or email).

1. Review of subgrantee monitoring report submitted by the subgrantee
2. Review of the Project Status Table submitted by the subgrantee
3. If applicable, review subgrantee's previous monitoring report for issues identified and corrective actions
4. Identify major equipment purchases to inspect at the visit
5. Discussion with PMS and FMS to identify any current issues regarding projects (i.e. underperforming, missing reports/awards/GANS, non-compliance of SAA policy, etc.)

#### **4.3. Site visit**

The SAA staff will travel to the project site. Any discrepancies, administrative and financial issues (delinquent reports, delays in implementation of project) should be discussed with the appropriate subgrantee officials.

- **Programmatic review** conducted by the designated SAA program manager
- **Procurement review** determined by monitoring visit team during pre-site meeting
- **Financial review** conducted by the designated SAA financial manager
- **Documentation review** determined by monitoring visit team during the pre-site meeting

#### **4.4. Post visit**

1. No later than two weeks following the visit, the SAA monitoring visit team should meet to discuss the visit, including any issues raised and suggested corrective actions, and finalize the monitoring report. If there is disagreement on the nature of the corrective action needed, the issue should be elevated to the Division Chief for resolution. The program manager is responsible for submitting the final report, however all staff assigned to monitor the subgrantee must provide comments for their section of the report. The monitoring report should be submitted to the Division Chief for final review before dissemination.
2. No later than three weeks following the visit, the SAA program manager should send an email to thank the subgrantee for the visit and provide a copy of the monitoring report, highlighting any issues raised. The PM may suggest steps for the subgrantee to take to resolve them.
3. Within two weeks, after the monitoring report is sent, the subgrantee must provide the SAA with their corrective actions in the monitoring report.

4. Within a week, the SAA must review and approve the corrective actions or ask for revisions until such actions are deemed sufficient. The monitoring report is now considered complete. The SAA program manager should send an email informing the subgrantee that all identified issues have been addressed and the monitoring has concluded.
5. The SAA will follow up with the subgrantee during the subsequent site visit, or earlier as needed, to ensure that the corrective actions were properly implemented and the issues identified resolved.