

Sequestration Effects on State and Local Opportunities

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Several state programs could be in jeopardy beginning March 1st if the sequestration takes place. Programs that rely more heavily on grant funding through FEMA, such as emergency preparedness and disaster recovery, are more likely to be affected. Although, at this point, it is hard to determine the long-term effects; sequestration could potentially stunt any progress that has been made on these programs.

As previously highlighted by [Kristin Howe](#), sequestration will have an impact on the public safety sector. Funds that have been set aside for relief of disasters such as Hurricane Sandy could be cut including the Disaster Relief Fund (DRF). In addition, state 911 programs and emergency communication plans could also feel the aftermath of sequestration. States including: [Massachusetts](#), [California](#), [Colorado](#), [Michigan](#), [Oregon](#), [Pennsylvania](#), [Virginia](#), [Kentucky](#), [Florida](#), [Kansas](#), [New Hampshire](#), [North Carolina](#), [South Dakota](#) and [New Jersey](#) have all been making diligent efforts to implement or upgrade current 911 technologies to Enhanced or Next Generation systems. Some of these projects have already been put on hold in order to secure additional funding. Sequestration could potentially prolong that process.

Cuts to homeland security could diminish funds to the Assistance to Fire fighters Grant (AFG) program as well as state and local law enforcement grants from the Justice Department such as the Justice Assistance Grant (JAG). These cuts could harm a variety of information sharing initiatives taking place in [Arizona](#) and [Kansas](#) as well as offender management projects taking place in [Kansas](#), [Oregon](#), [Connecticut](#) and [Vermont](#).

Analyst's Take

It will be interesting to see how sequestration could affect the extent to which localities move forward with projects. Many localities who have expressed desire to update 911 systems and emergency communication capabilities are prolonging their efforts in order to align with the state. Sequestration may diminish trickling funds and localities may instead look for opportunities to piggyback off statewide contracts.

Vendors should also note that there are other ways to get around DHS grant funding for projects such as NG911 and emergency communications. While there are other grant options available for NG911, many state agencies may choose to rely on increased surcharge collections to obtain additional funding.

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