

## DHS Grant Program 2011 Blog Series: Day 3

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To capture the bigger picture, this last installment of GovWin's three-part blog series on the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) grant programs examines DHS grant funding priorities and how they relate to state and local agencies.

Secretary Napolitano clearly expressed the DHS's interest in public safety grant spending, as she has significantly increased the budgets of two of the largest DHS grant programs for state and local agencies in FY 2011 - the Urban Area Security Initiative Grant (UASI) and the State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSGP). A combined increase of 56 percent signals a high priority to fund programs that will specifically focus on the UASI and SHSGP priorities. This amounts to about 300 million more dollars that the DHS will be able to allocate to state and local agencies.

In comparison with total DHS past spending, grants have remained pretty constant at two percent of the DHS's total spending. In 2009, the DHS spent \$10.6 billion – or two percent of the total \$460.9 billion budget – on grant programs. In 2010, grant assistance totaled \$6.6 billion, or 2.6 percent of the total spending for 2010 (\$249.7 billion). An overall increase in DHS's spending accounts for this year-over-year increase, with no change in the percentage of total spending.

In FY 2011, grants will be utilized for technology to cover the shortfalls state budget cuts have caused in the public safety industry. These budget cuts have affected public safety IT projects and state and local agencies' hope to utilize some of DHS's funding for new technology requirements previously put on hold due to funding constraints. State and local agencies also hope to procure technologies that allow them to better deal with budget shortfalls. Technologies with better coverage, reliability, and data capabilities will be utilized in place of decreased personnel, closed radio communications offices, and fire stations deemed less needed than others. The FCC mandated [narrowbanding requirements](#) will affect which projects state and local agencies apply for grant funding for. As the January 1, 2013 deadline nears, funding required to update or replace radio systems and equipment will be continually needed.

The Department of Homeland Security has its own focus and project priorities it would like to see state and local agencies deploy; and the DHS has the ability to change grant funding guidelines to fit those interests. On the top of its list, the DHS is interested in expanding information-sharing programs in states. SAR, NSI, and NDEx are included in the information-sharing environment (ISE). The DHS, in hand with continued information-sharing expansion efforts, continues to look for the enhancement of fusion centers to continue collaboration with the federal government. Finally, emergency preparedness for state and local agencies is always a high priority, as is the ability to plan for, and react to disasters in a timely and effective manner.

Other DHS priorities for the grant programs come from the [National Preparedness Guidelines](#). The department expanded these guidelines from four to eight in 2010, as further interest in more programs increased. The eight National Preparedness Guidelines developed by the DHS include:

- Expand Regional Collaboration
- Implement the National Incident Management System and National Response Framework
- Implement the National Infrastructure Protection Plan
- Strengthen Information Sharing and Collaboration Capabilities
- Strengthen Interoperable and Operable Communications Capabilities
- Strengthen CBRNE Detection, Response, and Decontamination Capabilities

For the Port Security Grant Program (PSGP), two priorities continually paramount to the program are risk-based funding and regional security cooperation. The DHS is interested in allocating the bulk of its funding to those high-risk ports. The rest of the PSGP funding will be given to those ports interested in developing or expanding regional coordination and providing an investment strategy that institutionalizes regional security strategy integration.

Relatively unchanged in past years, the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program (AFG) will remain focused on firefighter life and safety as well as the safety of the public. This breaks down to training, personal protective

equipment (PPE), and the purchase of rescue, EMS, and CBRNE firefighting equipment.

GovWin will continue to monitor the DHS Grant Guideline release for further FY 2011 information.