

Spotlight

Department of Homeland Security



Office of Inspector General

April 2013 OIG-13-77

Why This Matters

Each year, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) spends millions of dollars purchasing goods and services to assist state and local governments in the aftermath of a disaster.

In 2012, FEMA could have saved more than a \$1 million by better leveraging the government's buying power through consolidation of requirement for commonly purchased goods and better oversight of disaster purchase cards, as required by Federal regulations.

DHS Response

FEMA concurred with both of our recommendations. FEMA reissued strategic sourcing guidance, updated DHS strategic sourcing data, developed training, and is in the process of implementing a new credit card transaction management system.

For Further Information:

Contact our Office of Public Affairs at (202)254-4100, or email us at DHS-OIG.OfficePublicAffairs@oig.dhs.gov

FEMA Can Improve Its Purchase Controls at Joint Field Offices

What We Determined

- 1) FEMA did not take advantage of cost savings available through strategic sourcing at Joint Field Offices, (JFOs) especially when making repeat purchases. FEMA could have estimated the need for common, repetitively used items such as paper and toner cartridges, and obtained them at discounted prices.
- 2) FEMA has not implemented a required electronic tracking system for purchase card transactions at JFOs. Because of the need for a focused approach to acquisition tracking, oversight requirements are not met, internal control processes are not in place, and FEMA risks wasteful or fraudulent transactions going undetected.

What We Recommend

Department of Homeland Security, Chief Procurement Officer, FEMA

- 1) Effectively communicate Federal Emergency Management Agency strategic sourcing guidance to acquisition staff at headquarters and in the field, including Joint Field Offices as they are established.

Department of Homeland Security, Administrator, FEMA

- 2) Implement an agency-wide electronic tracking system for JFO acquisitions, accessible on the FEMA headquarters intranet.