



HAZARD MITIGATION GRANT PROGRAM (HMGP)

On January 29, 2013, President Barack Obama signed into law the Sandy Recovery Improvement Act (SRIA) of 2013. In many ways, the passage of SRIA represents the most significant legislative change to the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) substantive authorities since the enactment of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act.

The law authorizes several significant changes to the manner in which FEMA may deliver federal disaster assistance to survivors. Provisions of SRIA authorize FEMA to make changes to the Hazard Mitigation Grants Program (HMGP).

The HMGP provides grants to states and Native American tribal governments to implement long-term hazard mitigation measures after a major disaster declaration. The purpose of the HMGP is to reduce the risk of future damage, hardship, loss, or suffering in any area affected by a major disaster and to enable mitigation measures to be implemented during the recovery from a disaster.

Allows for Streamlined Procedures

SRIA directs FEMA to streamline HMGP activities and to adopt measures to expedite implementation of the program. Below are six areas where FEMA and the states or tribal governments will collaborate to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of HMGP. These areas present the first phase of our ongoing efforts to seek continuous improvements to HMGP. We will continue to incorporate efficiencies and best practices and encourage state partners, stakeholders and regional staff to identify additional actions as well. FEMA and the States or tribal governments will collaborate to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of HMGP, including the identification of:

- Minimum criteria for complete application
- Timeframes for reviewing actions and decisions
- Phasing projects
- Industry cost guides for estimates
- Industry design and construction standards
- Pre-calculated benefits

STATUS: In May 2013, FEMA issued pilot program guidance to begin the implementation of the procedures enacted in the law. In July 2013, FEMA issued the revised Hazard Mitigation Assistance Unified Guidance which incorporates the streamlining objectives for HMGP stated in SRIA. The next steps include monitoring effectiveness. FEMA may make adjustments as necessary.

More details about these streamlining procedures are available by viewing the pilot program guidance at: [SRIA HMGP Streamlining Memorandum](http://www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=7571) and <http://www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=7571>

Allows for Advance Assistance

SRIA allows FEMA to provide up to 25 percent of the estimated costs for eligible hazard mitigation measures to a State or tribal grantee before eligible costs are incurred. FEMA will continue to implement this Advance Assistance provision on a pilot basis for any state or tribe having a declaration with an open application period. The amount of assistance is limited to 25 percent of the HMGP ceiling or \$10 million, whichever is less.

STATUS: FEMA pilot guidance was issued for Sandy-declared states in April 2013. Pilot guidance was expanded to all states in May 2013. In July, 2013, FEMA issued Hazard Mitigation Assistance Unified Guidance which informs users of the availability of advance assistance and presents it as an option. Florida requested and received Advance Assistance. New Jersey has expressed interest in requesting Advance Assistance.

Allows for Program Administration by States

SRIA allows FEMA to implement, on a pilot basis, Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Administration by States (PAS). The PAS provides a framework for FEMA and its partner states to better utilize their collective resources to efficiently and effectively implement HMGP.

STATUS: FEMA pilot guidance issued was issued March 2013. The state of Florida has applied for PAS for two disasters. FEMA-State operational agreement was executed August 2013 with Florida.

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