

# Report Summary

Social Security Administration Office of the Inspector General

October 2009



## Objective

To determine whether the Social Security Administration's (SSA) Office of Acquisition and Grants (OAG) had sufficient qualified staff to process Agency acquisitions funded with *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009* (Recovery Act) dollars.

## Background

Under the Recovery Act, SSA received \$1.09 billion for program and operational purposes.

At the request of, and in consultation with, the Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board, the Department of Commerce's Office of Inspector General developed a survey to obtain a current benchmark of the acquisition and grant staffing levels in the Government. We reviewed SSA's completion of the Contract and Grant Staffing and Qualification Survey and validated the responses.

To view the full report, visit <http://www.ssa.gov/oig/ADO/BEPDF/A-15-10-11011.pdf>

## Office of Acquisition and Grants' Staffing to Process American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 Acquisitions (A-15-10-11011)

### Our Findings

SSA OAG has taken steps to ensure it has sufficient qualified staff to process Agency acquisitions funded with Recovery Act dollars. The Agency hired new staff and assigned them to existing workloads to allow existing staff to handle the Recovery Act workload.

The Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) issued guidance to promote the development of a professional acquisition workforce, through training and certification. SSA had internal certification programs for contract officers (CO) and Program and Project Managers (P/PM) in place before converting to the OFPP programs, but did not have a program for Contracting Officer Technical Representatives (COTR). During our review, we determined that eligible COs were either certified or received the necessary training and experience to become eligible to apply for Federal Acquisition Certification (FAC), including all COs processing Recovery Act awards. SSA requires that individuals obtain 40 hours of training before serving as a COTR and had a draft plan to implement the FAC-COTR program by July 2010. All SSA's P/PMs met the training and experience requirements for certification as FAC-P/PMs including those processing Recovery Act awards.

Using newly hired and existing acquisition staff, SSA should have sufficient and adequately trained and certified staff to process all its planned and actual Recovery Act acquisitions.

### Matters for Consideration

SSA has a database to document the names of staff who have taken the Agency's required COTR training. We found the database was not updated as employees left the Agency or transferred from one Agency component to another. The database should be periodically reconciled with SSA's Office of Personnel. Additionally, the Agency should continue its plan to implement the FAC-COTR structured training program for COTRs and other individuals performing these functions to achieve standard competencies and training. Once SSA implements the FAC-COTR program in July 2010, it will no longer need the COTR training database.