

# Report Summary

Social Security Administration Office of the Inspector General

December 2009



## Objective

To assess the Social Security Administration (SSA), Office of Disability Adjudication and Review's (ODAR) staffing plans associated with funds provided under the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009* (ARRA).

## Background

ARRA provided SSA \$500 million to process increasing retirement and disability workloads due to both the economic downturn and the baby boom retirement wave. ODAR was allocated a portion of the ARRA funds to hire additional staff in Fiscal Years (FY) 2009 and 2010. The Agency anticipated additional hearing requests compared to FY 2008 due to the economic downturn. Adequate hearing office staffing will be essential for ODAR to meet its workload goals.

To view the full report, visit <http://www.ssa.gov/oig/ADO/BEPDF/A-12-09-29140.pdf>

## ***The Office of Disability Adjudication and Review's Staffing Plans Under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (A-12-09-29140)***

### Our Findings

SSA allocated \$30 million to ODAR during FY 2009 and another \$93 million in FY 2010 to hire administrative law judges and support staff. However, at the time of our review, we estimated that the actual cost of the new hires will be less than ODAR planned for FY 2009. As part of a related review of staffing plans in the Office of Operations, the Agency recently issued an updated plan disclosing both SSA's cost allocation methodology as well as the impact of charging the average salary and benefits of all ODAR employees compared to the actual costs of new hires.

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) accepted SSA's plan for how it will spend ARRA resources to process additional hearing workloads. Nonetheless, we found the final staffing plan submitted to OMB did not provide information on a number of areas that would be useful to those relying on the staffing plan, including

- a clear breakout of ODAR's allocation in FY 2010 and anticipated use of overtime;
- the goals used to allocate new hires by location and skills; and
- the key productivity measures for the hearings workload as well as factors that may affect productivity while new hires are coming onboard and being trained.