

Report Summary

Social Security Administration Office of the Inspector General

December 2009



Objective

To assess the Social Security Administration's (SSA) staffing plan associated with funds provided to disability determination services (DDS) under the *American Recover and Reinvestment Act of 2009* (ARRA).

Background

ARRA provided SSA an additional \$500 million to process retirement and disability workloads. At the time of our review, \$87 million of SSA's ARRA funds had been allocated for labor costs of DDS employees and additional overtime, including indirect costs.

To view the full report, visit <http://www.ssa.gov/oig/ADO/BEPDF/A-07-09-29156.pdf>

Disability Determination Services' Staffing Under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (A-07-09-29156)

Our Findings

SSA developed an appropriate plan for the \$87 million in ARRA funds it was given to process disability workloads. However, we identified the following matters for consideration to ensure ARRA funds are properly accounted for and efficiently used and their benefits are fully disclosed.

- SSA used a cost allocation methodology that charged ARRA funds based on the average workyear cost to process disability and retirement workloads instead of the actual cost. In our November 2009 report on ARRA funds allocated to SSA's Office of Operations, we recommended that SSA disclose its cost allocation methodology, the cost of new hires, and any overtime for processing disability and retirement workloads funded from the ARRA appropriations. In response to our recommendation, SSA revised its retirement and disability workload plan to make the recommended disclosures.
- The one performance measure for DDSs in the *Disability and Retirement Workload Plan* will not disclose all of the anticipated benefits of the ARRA funds.

Matters for Consideration

SSA should consider:

- Tracking and reporting how ARRA funds used for new hires and overtime in DDSs will impact the Agency's performance measures related to processing disability workloads.
- Including additional performance measures in its *Disability and Retirement Workload Plan* related to minimizing the average processing time for initial disability claims, the number of periodic continuing disability reviews processed, initial claims pending, and overall processing time for disability claims.