



U.S. Department of Justice

Office of the Inspector General

October 28, 2009

MANAGEMENT ADVISORY MEMORANDUM FOR:

CATHERINE PIERCE
ACTING DIRECTOR
OFFICE ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "R. Beaudet", is written over the printed name of Raymond J. Beaudet.

FROM: RAYMOND J. BEAUDET
ASSISTANT INSPECTOR GENERAL
FOR AUDIT

SUBJECT: Recovery Act STOP Program Award to the
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

The Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) received \$225 million through the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act of 2009 (Recovery Act) to fund Violence Against Women Prevention and Prosecution programs. OVW allocated \$140,376,000 of its Recovery Act funds to grants made under the Services, Training, Officers, and Prosecutor's (STOP) formula grant program to enhance the ability of state and territorial governments to respond to violent crimes against women.

For each STOP program appropriation, OVW makes one award to each state or territory based upon a formula that uses the proportion of the population of each state or territory relative to the total population of the United States.¹ The award amounts therefore can be predetermined by OVW staff according to the jurisdiction's population. To receive an award, states and territories must submit applications certifying that they have met all the requirements outlined in the statute authorizing the STOP program. Because STOP program award amounts are based solely on formulas, OVW was able to announce 56 Recovery Act STOP program award amounts by state and territory in February 2009, well before the program's application deadline of March 25, 2009.

¹ In FY 2009, each state and territory was eligible to receive two separate STOP awards because there were two appropriations that year: one FY 2009 appropriation and the supplemental appropriations authorized in the Recovery Act.

According to OVW staff, Recovery Act STOP program awards were to be finalized by September 30, 2009. After this time, we reviewed award information in the Grants Management System (GMS), which OVW uses to track and record award documentation. We determined that, as of the date of this memorandum, OVW has finalized 55 Recovery Act STOP program awards totaling \$139,745,928. However, our review found that no award has been made to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, a U.S. territory that OVW had previously announced would receive about \$630,000 in Recovery Act STOP program funds. Also, GMS did not contain a Recovery Act STOP program application submitted by the Northern Mariana Islands.² Because the Northern Mariana Islands has not received a Recovery Act STOP program grant, OVW has not yet awarded all the Recovery Act STOP program funds.

Although the deadline for states and territories to apply for awards under OVW's Recovery Act STOP program solicitation was March 13, 2009, the Recovery Act stipulates that agencies have until September 30, 2010 to obligate their supplemental appropriation. As a result, even though the territorial government of the Northern Mariana Islands may not have submitted an application to receive a STOP formula award, we believe that OVW should follow up with appropriate officials from the Northern Mariana Islands and determine whether the unawarded \$630,000 can still be used to enhance this territory's economy and its response to violent crimes against women.

On October 7th and 21st, we discussed this matter with the Associate Director of OVW's State and Community Liaison Division. The Associate Director stated that she would look into why these Recovery Act funds have not been awarded. We request that OVW advise us of the actions it intends to take regarding the unawarded Recovery Act funds discussed in this memorandum within 15 days. If you would like to discuss the information in this memorandum, please contact me on (202) 616-4633 or Troy M. Meyer, Regional Audit Manager, Washington Regional Audit Office, on (202) 616-4524.

² While the Northern Mariana Islands did not receive a Recovery Act STOP award, it did receive a regular FY 2009 appropriation STOP award, as did all other states and territories.

cc. Karol V. Mason
Deputy Associate Attorney General

Helaine Greenfield
Deputy Associate Attorney General

Rodney D. Samuels
Audit Liaison
Office on Violence Against Women

Darlene Johnson
Associate Director
State and Community Liaison Division
Office on Violence Against Women




U.S. Department of Justice

Office on Violence Against Women

Washington, D.C. 20530

November 16, 2009

FROM: Catherine Pierce
Acting Director
Office on Violence Against Women 

TO: Raymond J. Beaudet
Assistant Inspector General for Audit
Office of the Inspector General

SUBJECT: Office on Violence Against Women
Recovery Act STOP Program to the Commonwealth of the
Northern Mariana Islands

This memorandum is in response to your correspondence dated October 28, 2009 pertaining to \$630,000 in unawarded Recovery Act STOP Program Funds. Per your request, the Office on Violence Against Women contacted Jerome Ierome, Executive Director of the Criminal Justice Planning Agency, to determine whether the unawarded \$630,000 can be used by the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to enhance the territory's economy and response to violent crimes against women.

The Criminal Justice Planning Agency of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands has opted to not utilize the \$630,000 in unawarded Recovery Act STOP Program Funds. In the attached memorandum, Mr. Ierome explains the reasoning behind the agency's decision to not apply for the funding.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Rodney Samuels of my staff at (202) 514-9820.

Attachment

cc: Troy M. Meyer
Regional Audit Manager
Washington Regional Audit Office

Karol V. Mason
Deputy Associate Attorney General
Office of the Associate Attorney General

Jerome Ierome
Executive Director, Criminal Justice Planning Agency
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

Darlene Johnson
Associate Director
Office on Violence Against Women

Kotora Padgett
Accounting Officer
Office on Violence Against Women

Rodney D. Samuels
OVW Audit Liaison
Office on Violence Against Women



Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
CJPA - Criminal Justice Planning Agency
Criminal Justice Statistical Analysis Center



April 16, 2009

To: Ms. Catherine Pierce
Acting Director
Office on Violence Against Women
U.S. Department of Justice
800 K Street, Suite 920
Washington, D.C. 20530

Subject: *Decision for CNMI-CJPA opted not to apply for STOP: VAWA Recovery Act Funds 09*


Dear Ms. Pierce:

After soliciting input, consultation and much discussion through meeting with our CNMI STOP VAWA Sub-grants Program and direct Recipients, the CNMI has opted to not apply for the STOP VAWA Recovery Act 09 funds, made available through the Office on Violence Against Women. This decision was earlier transmitted to our OVW Program Manager, Ms. Rudelle Handy from the Criminal Justice Planning Agency office through Ms. Shirlynn Perez, CJPA-VAWA Program Coordinator. Our Program supported decision was based on the following:

- 1) From the SAA Programmatic and Financial obligations of these funds, we have carefully considered the effect if we did not apply for the funds such as, if services to victims be disrupted or discontinued but in fact, the current VAWA formula level of funds that we have from FY: 2007-08, we were and are able to support and secure funds for new personnel in the Attorney General Prosecutor's Office and the Department of Public Safety, Domestic Violence Unit and that the funds that we have presently, has sufficiently helped the CNMI programs to recruit additional personnel required and needed, as well as to support other means allowed to assure that all sub-recipients and programs are operating without disruption of direct services;
- 2) That the CNMI still has a significant amount of past and current funds through VAWA that we have yet to fully expend and that applying for the Recovery Act funds will delay spending of the funds that we have already have and force sub-grant programs and CNMI-CJPA to continue requesting OVW for extension;
- 3) CNMI-CJPA is also anticipated probable justification for annual FY 09 STOP VAWA allocation, which solicitation is noted to be made available in next several months.

Should you have any questions or need further information, please feel free to contact me at your convenience.

Sincerely,


Jerome Ierome
Executive Director
Criminal Justice Planning Agency

Cc: *Rudelle Hardy*
CNMI-OVW Program Manager