General Information

Texas uses a regional approach to the State Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP), providing an allocation through each Council of Governments (COG) for regional and local projects, subject to approval by the State. The allocation to the Capital Area Council of Governments includes amounts for the State Homeland Security Program (SHSP). The Citizen Corps Program (CCP), and the Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS) are no longer administered as separate programs, but projects for these activities may be submitted under the SHSP. Specific use of SHSP funds is approved by the CAPCOG Executive Committee and awarded by the state to the selected local and regional projects.

Program Requirements

The State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) is a core assistance program that provides funds to build and/or maintain capabilities at the state and local levels and to implement the goals and objectives included in State Homeland Security Strategies, initiatives in the State Preparedness Report and goals in the Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment. Activities implemented under SHSP must support terrorism preparedness by building, enhancing, or sustaining/maintaining capabilities that relate to the prevention of, protection from, response to and recovery from terrorism in order to be considered eligible. However, many capabilities which support terrorism preparedness simultaneously support preparedness for other hazards. Grantees must demonstrate this dual-use to quality for any activities implemented under this program that are not explicitly focused on terrorism preparedness.

Law Enforcement Activities. It is anticipated that the FY 2014 requirement that at least 25% of the regional allocation for State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) programs must be spent on law enforcement activities will be continued in FY 2015.

The designated State Administrative Agency (SAA) for administering the Homeland Security Grant Program in Texas is the Texas Department of Public Safety.

Homeland Security Program Priorities

Each grant year, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) sets priorities for grants under the Homeland Security programs. Based upon priorities established by the U. S. Department of Homeland Security, the State of Texas developed and submitted five Investment Justifications for FY 2014. They are:

1. Intelligence & Information Sharing
   a. State level fusion center (required): maturation and enhancement of baseline and analytic capabilities, based on 20i3 Fusion Center Assessment gaps
b. Facilitate the implementation of plans and procedures to work in conjunction with the Texas Joint Crime Information Center (formerly titled Texas Fusion Center), and achieve and maintain baseline capabilities for Major Urban Area Fusion Centers (projects required for all Regionally Recognized Fusion Centers, if not already required to be submitted under the 2014 UASI grant)
c. Suspicious activity reporting
d. Other projects that enable interdiction and disruption of terrorist activity through enhanced understanding and recognition of pre-operational activity and other crimes, that may be precursors or indicators of terrorist activity

2. Interoperable Communications
   a. For projects that build capabilities, prioritize those required to meet P-25 standards
   b. Sustaining existing capabilities (e.g. life cycle replacement of equipment)

3. Sustaining Special Response Teams and First Responder Capabilities
   a. CBRNE/WMD detection, HAZMAT response and decontamination, Urban Search and Rescue, SWAT and other tactical teams
   b. First responder equipment sustainment needs, including PPE, WMD Pharmaceuticals, Calibration and maintenance for WMD-related detection and identification systems, and closely related investments to update or sustain current first responder equipment

4. State, Regional & Local Planning
   a. Development of state and regional risk and preparedness assessments. Core capability development planning, to include typing and tracking of equipment and special response teams (the THSSAA will require reporting on equipment and special response teams for previous and future uses of homeland security funds.)
   b. Planning and execution of training and exercises focused on terrorism prevention, protection and response
   c. Multi-jurisdictional operational planning to include plans for regional operational coordination of terrorism prevention, protection, and response capabilities
   d. Maintaining or updating Emergency Operations Plans, consistent with guidance in CPG 101.v2 and the whole community approach to security and emergency management
   e. Planning and implementation of initiatives (e.g. CERT team training) to enhance the Citizen Corps Program
   f. Public Warning Systems (note: public warning systems must be responsive to terrorism threats)
   g. WebEOC and other situational awareness and decision support tools

5. Border Security
   a. Sustaining and enhancing border security detection, prevention and response capabilities (note: communications projects should be included under Interoperable Communications rather than border security)
   b. Planning, training, exercises, and equipment to enhance interdiction capabilities against border security threats
6. Critical Infrastructure  
   a. Identifying critical infrastructure, collecting and maintaining data, and prioritizing critical infrastructure assets, clusters, and systems  
   b. Assessments of critical infrastructure vulnerabilities and interdependencies, particularly those involving multiple sites and/or sectors  
   c. Planning, training, exercises, equipment, and modeling enabling responsible jurisdictions to mitigate threats to and vulnerabilities of critical infrastructure facilities, assets, networks and systems  
   d. Analysis of critical infrastructure threats and information sharing with private sector partners  
   e. Education and communications to enhance public awareness and increase reporting of suspicious activities related to critical infrastructure

These investments are similar to the investments submitted by the state in previous grant years. It is anticipated that a similar set of Investment Justifications can be expected for FY 2015. Of this list, the following are applicable to the FY 2015 HSGP regional allocation to CAPCOG. All proposed projects should fall within the scope of one of these investments (Items in parentheses are examples of activities that may be included in state, regional and/or local projects. They do not reflect priorities for projects to be funded from the CAPCOG regional allocation.):

1. Interoperable Communications (includes: Enhance Public Safety Radios; Enhance Basic Operability; Project 25 upgrades and equipment; Emergency/Disaster Communications);  
2. Intelligence and Information Sharing (includes: Enhance Intelligence and Information for locals throughout Texas; Enhance fusion center capabilities; Enhance Smart phone/mobile device capabilities; Update training and new technology);  
3. State, Regional and Local Planning (includes: Preparedness Planning; Enhance Information Sharing; Assess Planning Capabilities; Emergency Notification Systems);  
4. Sustaining Special Response Teams and First Responder Capabilities (includes: Enhance HazMat/WMD Monitoring, Detection and Response; Enhance All-Hazards Response).

Prior to the allocation of FY 2015 HSGP funding to projects, the CAPCOG Executive Committee will approve the Capital Area Council of Governments Homeland Security Task Force Strategic Plan FY 2015-FY 2019. This plan will guide the allocation of funding.

Identifying Projects for Grants

Eligibility. State of Texas guidelines state that potential sub-recipients for FY 2015 SHSP grant funds are incorporated municipalities, counties, federally recognized Indian tribes, and the regional councils of governments (CAPCOG).
Any city, county, or federally recognized Indian tribe must have completed the following in order to be eligible for FY 2015 State Homeland Security Grant Program funds:

- Emergency Management Plan—the jurisdiction must have credit from the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) for an Emergency Operations Plan at a minimum of the Intermediate level, and must complete the state-mandated certification form.

- NIMS compliance—the jurisdiction must have adopted NIMS policies and have met NIMS requirements and must complete the state-mandated certification form.

- Texas Regional Response Network (TRRN)—the jurisdiction must be participating in the TRRN and have entered any deployable assets costing more than $5,000 that were funded through the Homeland Security Grant Program and must complete the state-mandated certification form.

- A-133 Audit—Any jurisdiction spending more than $500,000 in federal or state grants during a fiscal year must have an outside audit conducted, and must complete the state-mandated certification form.

- Criminal History Reporting—As an agency of the state, the SAA, before allocating money to a county or city from any federal or state grant program for the enhancement of criminal justice programs, must certify that the county has taken or will take all action necessary to provide the Texas Department of Criminal Justice and the Department of Public Safety any criminal history records maintained by the county in the manner specified for purposes of those departments, and must complete the state-mandated certification form.

- SAM and FFATA—Each potential sub-recipient must have a DUNS number and be registered in SAM and certify that it is in compliance with The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (“Transparency Act” or “FFATA”) of 2006 and subsequent 2008 amendments, and must complete the state-mandated certification form.

**Submittal of Project Worksheets.** Prior to the beginning of the process of soliciting projects to be funded from the FY 2015 State Homeland Security Program (SHSP), the THSSAA is expected to implement a new web-based grant management system. This new system will include a new project worksheet form. This new Project Worksheet will be distributed by CAPCOG staff as soon as it is available. Accompanying this form will be instructions for completion including a timeline and deadline for submission. Projects submitted after this deadline will not be considered. As in previous years, a certifying official of the potential sub-recipient must sign the Grant Project Worksheet for submittal. This can be the county judge, mayor, city manager, chief executive officer or someone authorized in writing to do so by one of the above. If approval by the governing body is required but cannot be obtained before the deadline, the Grant Project Worksheet must be accompanied by a statement indicating that governing body approval is forthcoming.
Because of the regional focus of the homeland security program, local jurisdictions are encouraged to work through their respective emergency management coordinators when suggesting or seeking funding for a particular project. A jurisdiction may attach letters of support for a project to the Project Worksheet if desired. Such letters must be limited to two (2) pages and must clearly identify the organization that is supporting the project.

**Review and Recommendation for Funding.** CAPCOG staff will review worksheets for completeness and for project eligibility. This will include verification of a sub-recipient’s eligibility to receive SHSP funds as well as whether the expenditures proposed are allowable under federal regulations and guidelines.

**Committee Consideration.** If time permits, the Project Worksheets will be submitted to the committees of the CAPCOG Homeland Security Task Force to be discussed and prioritized.

Although the final outcome of this process is a prioritization of projects, committee consideration will also focus on addressing any needed modifications to project submittals in order to ensure that they meet regional goals. Modifications may be made to Project Worksheets during this process if agreed upon by the proposing jurisdiction and the respective committee.

Projects will be prioritized based upon criteria as set out by each committee. Priority shall be given to projects that are consistent with the Capital Area Council of Governments Homeland Security Task Force Strategic Plan FY2015-FY 2019. Projects that are outside the scope of the strategic plan may be considered if the committee determines that all or some of the following criteria are met and recommends a corresponding amendment to the strategic plan:

- Compatibility with regional goals and approach;
- Role or importance to regional response planning;
- Immediacy of need;
- Cost effectiveness;
- Enhancement of existing systems or capabilities;
- Ability to sustain the project after the grant funding expires;
- Ability to meet state priorities.

Applicants for grant funds will be informed and invited to the committee meetings when the project proposals are to be discussed. They shall be given an opportunity to provide clarification about the details of their project proposals if requested by the committee.

**Prioritization of Projects.** Chairs of the HSTF committees will meet jointly with the HSTF Strategic Directions Committee to review and prioritize all projects proposed and eligible for funding.

It is anticipated that the state will continue its previous guidance that risk will be a key factor in determining the prioritization of all projects. The state guidance document for previous years focused on the terrorism risk, stating, “Risk is defined as the product of three principal variables:

- Threat – the likelihood of an attack occurring;
• Vulnerability – the relative exposure to an attack;
• Consequence – the expected impact of an attack.”

CAPCOG will use a risk-informed funding strategy in prioritizing projects. Because of the more restrictive approach to the types of projects that will be approved (e.g., emphasis on sustaining existing capabilities rather than developing new capabilities), the opportunities for applying this risk formula will be reduced. If choices must be made between two or more projects, risk will be used as a component of the prioritization process.

**Drafting of Investment Justifications.** CAPCOG staff will review the prioritized list of projects and group them according to their relation to state and federal homeland security priorities and investment strategies. If specific federal and state priorities and strategies have not been announced, the FY 2014 priorities and strategies will be used as the basis for this grouping. Using forms or other media provided by the state, CAPCOG staff will draft Investment Justifications (IJs) for FY 2015.

**Performance Period and Closeout**

**Responsibilities.** Sub-recipients of SHSP grant funds are responsible for meeting grant deadlines, ordering required equipment, reporting online or to data calls as required by the state, complying with audits, maintaining records, and all other sub-recipient requirements as specified in the agreement with the state. In addition to regional planning and grant administration duties as required by the state, CAPCOG staff members provide support to the sub-recipients to include informing them of state and federal guidance and deadlines, assisting with eligibility requirements, assisting with online reporting, providing liaison with the THSSAA, compiling information from or for data calls, supporting the HSTF and committees, and coordinating among projects and/or among jurisdictions involved in a project.

**Reporting on Grant Progress.** Sub-recipients will report on grant progress to the THSSAA and CAPCOG each quarter of the performance period (January, April, July, October).

**Unused Funds.** At any point during the performance period, the sub-recipient may request to use funds for another project. This may occur whether these funds remain from costs savings in an initial project or whether needs have changed and the initial project is unnecessary or of a lower priority. Using grant funds for another purpose other than the project initially awarded will require approval of the HSTF and the CAPCOG Executive Committee.

Sub-recipients will report on unused funds to CAPCOG six months prior to the close of the performance period. CAPCOG may request that funds that remain uncommitted or unobligated three months prior to the close of the performance period be released to CAPCOG for reallocation to other projects in the region.
If the amount of unused funds is less than $1,000, CAPCOG’s Director of Homeland Security is authorized to approve the proposed use of the funds. If the amount of unused funds is greater than or equal to $1,000 but less than $5,000, the HSTF is authorized to approve the proposed use of the funds. If the amount of unused funds is greater than or equal to $5,000, the HSTF shall make a recommendation to the CAPCOG Executive Committee for approval of the proposed use of the funds.

Schedule

_The schedule for the various phases of this process is dependent upon the schedule announced by the THSSAA. An update to this process containing a detailed schedule will be distributed as soon as the state’s schedule is available._