

**FAMA/FEMSA GAC
April 20, 2012 – 10am-12pm
Indiana Convention Center
Room 116-117
Indianapolis, Indiana**

Questions from FAMA and FEMSA Members

- 1. With fire apparatus sales down 40-50% over the last few years, can AFG allocate a larger percentage of the funds towards apparatus purchases?**

No. The funding level available for vehicles is established by statutory regulation at no more than 25% of the appropriated amount.

- 2. Many fire departments have some funds for a new truck but not enough for what they need. Can AFG issue “make-up” funds to close the gap between what the department can afford and what they need?**

Each department awarded an AFG grant is bound to meet to the required “cost share” based on their stated demographic situation (i.e. Urban, Suburban, Rural). AFG is not permitted to waive or otherwise assist departments with the cost share portion of the award. Awardees may however secure their portion of the cost share through other sources, including loans, so long as the vehicle in question is not used as collateral. Per federal law (CFR & FAR), for any item costing more than \$5,000 the federal government retains the first right to ownership of that item up to the amount of federal assistance provided.

- 3. Is there a way that manufacturers can have any visibility to what type of products are being funded through the “Equipment” category?** (Either visibility for what an individual grant is funding, or a break-down of all Equipment grants for the year) The allocations to this category have grown significantly and cover a wide variety of products, so it would be good to understand what it is being used for. (radios, rescue equipment, RIT equipment, compressors, thermal imaging cameras, gas detection, station modifications, etc)

The current AFG e-grant system does not provide for simple reporting of items awarded. The AFG program office is working to capture, analyze and report on specific items requested and awarded. It is important to understand that this process requires a significant amount of time to gather, sort and analyze and would not be available for some time following an application period or award cycle. It is the AFG program offices goal to continue to capture and analyze this information and make it available when appropriate.

- 4. We believe that Thermal Imaging Cameras are still eligible for funding under the Equipment Category. Can you confirm that, and also look into adding that back into the program guidance?** There are many customers that have a need, but are unaware that they can submit an application within the category.

Thermal imagers are, and continue to be an eligible item for award. Eligibility is generally listed in the Program Guidance by broad categories of products. The Program Guidance for FY12 has

already been submitted for FEMA and DHS approval and cannot be modified at this point to include thermal images by name. The AFG program office will look evaluate adding such listings to future Program Guidance documents.

5. **Can you provide any guidance in writing that confirms that hard caps no longer exist on products?** I haven't seen anything in the guidance or training yet that communicates this, and there are many, many different rumors that remain about this. If this already does exist, please direct us to where we can see the details.

The AFG program office has adopted acceptable "price ranges" for many products. Price ranges have been established based on market research and are reviewed and updated on a regular basis. It is important that applicants list, as separate line items, any ancillary and related expenses associated with the cost of the item (i.e. training, taxes, accessories, etc). Furthermore, in the event that an award was reduced by the Program Office at the time of award, the awardee retains the ability to contact the Program Office at the time of acceptance and discuss the reduction and request an adjustment.

6. **Are there any forecasts or estimate on future year allocation splits between the categories?** We have a concern that the demand for grant support for SCBA and turn-out gear will spike over the next 3 years, as customers who received grants in 2002-2005 reach the 10-year retirement mark for these products. **What is the process for predicting future need priorities?** I know the NFPA Needs analysis does a good job showing current needs, but is there any forward planning of this need?

The AFG will continue to make awards in accordance with the statutory requirements and set asides. There are no plans to pre-define allocations between products outside of the statutory requirements. Future standard changes by product will be brought to the AFG Criteria Development Committee for funding priority discussion.

7. **Is there an approved list of product types or specific products that can be purchased under Accountability funding?** If an accountability system requires a certain configuration of SCBA to function, can that SCBA be included in these grants?

No. There is not an approved list of product types or specific products eligible for purchase under accountability systems. Where applicable, it is highly preferred that products and training meet an applicable state or national standard.

8. **Inter-operating agreements and regional emergency response requirements across country require federal monies to assist local communities in procuring necessary, safe equipment to provide effective assistance; AFG should be expanded.**

We will bring this topic to the AFG Criteria Development Committee for further discussion and review.

9. **Our nation's civil defense and emergency preparedness depends upon effective cooperation from communities across the affected area and AFG plays a vital role in the support of local communities' ability to provide quality assistance to a crisis and should be expanded.**

We will bring this topic to the AFG Criteria Development Committee for further discussion and review.

- 10. The emergency service industry purchases equipment primarily from vendors located in North America and thus supports thousands of jobs; AFG should be expanded to further stimulate this private sector to provide high paying, quality jobs.**

FEMA and DHS are currently reviewing policy positions related to “Buy America.” The FY12 Program Guidance has a statement strongly encouraging awardees to purchase products made in America.

- 11. AFG is a quality federal program that has provided real and tangible benefit to the improvement of our nation's infrastructure and should be proudly marketed as an example of effective legislation.**

The Program Office strongly supports any and all efforts by FAMA/FEMSA and appropriate stakeholders to market the AFG programs.

- 12. When will the program open for 2012?**

The FY12 AFG application is currently planned for the summer of 2012. The exact application period is dependent on the FEMA and DHS approval of the proposed Program Guidance and system upgrade to deploy the current year application module.

- 13. Will there be any changes to the application from 2011?**

Yes. There will be minor changes to the application to reflect accepted recommendations by the Criteria Development Committee. The overall look, feel and functionality of the application remains consistent with the FY11 application.

- 14. Is AFG planning on doing any large survey for the program to get feedback from applicants?**

There are no current surveys planned. Furthermore, FEMA is limited by regulation as to how a survey may be conducted, if at all. However, the Program Office continues to seek feedback from all stakeholders (applicants, awardees, organizations) through various means.

- 15. What can/will be the manufacturer's role in helping departments get grants submitted?**

Departments and organizations will remain the sole party responsible for the submission of all AFG applications. Manufacturers and vendors may assist departments with providing technical information regarding product specifications. Applicants must adhere to the law as outlined in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR 44.36.13 - procurement) which outlines law as related to conflict of interest and open competition.