

## LOS ANGELES FIRE DEPARTMENT

BRIAN CUMMINGS  
FIRE CHIEF

October 24, 2012

BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS  
FILE NO. 12-150

TO: Board of Fire Commissioners

FROM: Brian Cummings, Fire Chief 

SUBJECT: STATUS OF AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT  
(ARRA) GRANT FUNDS APPLIED FOR BY THE LOS ANGELES  
FIRE DEPARTMENT

FINAL ACTION:	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved w/Corrections	<input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn
	<input type="checkbox"/> Denied	<input type="checkbox"/> Received & Filed	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

**Recommendation:** That the Board:

1. Receive and File this report.

**Summary:** The Board of Fire Commissioners recently requested staff to prepare a written report on the Los Angeles Fire Department's (LAFD) efforts to secure funds under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009. The following report provides details of the ARRA program, the Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) – Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) program, and the results of the FY2009 SAFER Grant application submitted by the LAFD.

Congress established the AFG program in 2000 through an amendment to the Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974. In 2009, Congress approved the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. In many cases, the ARRA program was designed to route funds to states and local communities through already established federal grant programs.

There was one fire-related ARRA grant which was the 2009 SAFER program that allowed for the hiring of new firefighters or rehiring of laid-off firefighters. LAFD applied for this grant to hire 38 new firefighters at \$7.56 million. The grant application was not approved. As with most of the ARRA competitive grants, the agency/department applications outnumbered the level of funds available. The priority for this ARRA grant program was to rehire firefighters laid off, particularly in areas where communities were in need of basic coverage. The LAFD has not, at any time, laid off any firefighters.

**Background:** Recognizing the increasing responsibilities of fire departments and seeing a need for additional support to improve fire safety and provide emergency medical services (EMS), Congress established the AFG program in 2000 through an amendment to the Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974, in the FY2001 National Defense Authorization Act (Public Law (P.L.) 106-398).

This Act established a new office in the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to administer a program of competitive grants directly to fire departments. The Act authorized funding for hiring and training firefighting personnel, acquisition of firefighting vehicles and other equipment, prevention, public education, improved EMS capabilities, and a variety of other uses.

The ARRA of 2009, commonly referred to as the Stimulus or The Recovery Act, is an economic stimulus package enacted by the 111th United States Congress in February 2009 and signed into law on February 17, 2009, by President Barack Obama.

To respond to the recession of the late-2000s, the primary objective for ARRA was to save and create jobs almost immediately. In many cases, the ARRA program was designed to route funds to states and local communities through already established federal grant programs.

In late FY2008-09, the LAFD was advised that it would be eligible to apply for grant funds under the SAFER program. SAFER grants were created to provide funding directly to fire departments and volunteer firefighter interest organizations to help them increase the number of trained, "front line" firefighters available in their communities. The goal of SAFER is to enhance the local fire departments' abilities to comply with staffing, response, and operational standards established by the NFPA and OSHA (NFPA 1710 and/or NFPA 1720 and OSHA 1910.134).

Under new guidelines established by FEMA for the 2009 SAFER Grant program, the LAFD would be eligible, for the first time, to apply under the program for the purpose of hiring new firefighters.

A total of \$210 million was appropriated for the SAFER grants in 2009. Of that total, up to ninety percent (90%), or \$189 million, was available to be awarded for the purposes of hiring firefighters. The LAFD submitted an application for \$7.56 million.

The LAFD was not selected to receive a grant award under the FY2009 SAFER Grant program as priority was given to rehire laid off firefighters in communities that were in need of basic coverage. It should be noted that the LAFD submitted a competitive SAFER Grant application to fund two recruit training classes in FY2013-14. This grant application totaled \$18.6 million. It is anticipated that the LAFD will be notified of the outcome of the FY2012 SAFER grant application by early to mid-calendar year 2013.

**Fiscal Impact Statement:** The actions taken by the Board of Fire Commissioners, with regard to this report, will have no fiscal impact on the FY2012-13 LAFD General Fund budget.

**Conclusion:** The LAFD is committed to leveraging grant dollars to improve the services it provides to the residents of Los Angeles and surrounding communities. The LAFD has made application under the SAFER program every year it has been eligible to do so. Most recently, the LAFD submitted a competitive SAFER Grant application to fund two recruit training classes in FY2013-14. This grant application totaled \$18.6 million.

Board report prepared by William R. Jones, Senior Management Analyst II, Contracts and Grants Section, Administrative Services Bureau