



Memorandum

U.S. Department of
Transportation

Office of the Secretary
of Transportation
Office of Inspector General

Subject: **INFORMATION**: Audit Announcement –
FHWA’s Use of the Emergency Relief Program
To Improve Resilience
Federal Highway Administration
Project No. 16S3012S000

Date: September 1, 2016

From: Barry J. DeWeese
Assistant Inspector General
for Surface Transportation Audits

Reply to
Attn. of: JA-30

To: Federal Highway Administrator

The Federal Highway Administration’s (FHWA) Emergency Relief Program (ERP) provides funds to help repair or reconstruct Federal-aid highways and roads on Federal lands that sustain serious damage from catastrophic failures or natural disasters. Since fiscal year 2012, Congress has appropriated \$4 billion to the program, including \$1.9 billion in the Disaster Relief Appropriations Act of 2013¹ after Hurricane Sandy caused widespread damage in the mid-Atlantic and Northeast in October 2012. The Department of Transportation’s (DOT) current strategic plan states that in anticipation of extreme weather events, it is imperative that the Department make the transportation system more resilient, especially when rebuilding or replacing storm damaged infrastructure. Accordingly, FHWA has stated that the creation of this more resilient system is a priority and emphasizes that emergency relief projects should consider features to reduce the risk of damage from future events.

Due to the importance of protecting the Nation’s transportation assets and associated investments, we are initiating an audit of FHWA’s use of the ERP to improve the resilience of highway infrastructure. Our objective will be to assess FHWA’s processes and guidance for incorporating resilience improvements into emergency relief projects to rebuild damaged highway infrastructure.

We plan to begin this audit immediately and will contact your audit liaison to schedule an entrance conference. The audit will take place at DOT Headquarters and other sites as needed. If you have any questions or require additional information,

¹ Public Law No. 113-2 (2013). The appropriated amounts cited reflect reductions due to sequestration.

please contact me at (202) 366-5630, or Anthony Zakel, Program Director, at (202) 366-0202.

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cc: FHWA Audit Liaison, HCFB-32
DOT Audit Liaison, M-1