Congress enacted the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act) to promote economic recovery and increase employment and training opportunities. The Recovery Act did not specifically require coordination of activities related to infrastructure investment funded by the Act. However, ETA issued TEGL 14-08 to states and local workforce areas which provided guidance on implementation of WIA funding in the Recovery Act and encouraged collaboration between the public workforce investment system and other agencies that received Recovery Act funds. ETA also undertook several planning initiatives to coordinate workforce development activities with federal infrastructure investments.

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) audited the coordination activities that were planned and conducted at the federal, state, and local levels between workforce investment activities and federal infrastructure investments funded by the Recovery Act.

Our audit objectives were to answer the following questions:

1. What planning efforts have the Department of Labor, states, and local workforce investment agencies performed to coordinate workforce development activities with federal infrastructure investments elsewhere in the Recovery Act?
2. What projects and other cross-collaboration activities have the states, and local workforce agencies undertaken in terms of spending Department of Labor Recovery Act funding for workforce development activities that support federal infrastructure investments elsewhere in the Recovery Act?
3. What has been the impact of these coordination efforts in terms of employing or re-employing workers through these projects?

We recommended that the Assistant Secretary for Employment and Training continue to strengthen cross-collaboration efforts across federal and state agencies and encourage states and local areas to continue to pursue collaboration as part of their regular practice.

The Assistant Secretary agreed with our recommendation and provided examples of how ETA is moving in a direction consistent with the recommendation.