July 2013

Recovery Act: OSHA Activities Under the Recovery Act

WHAT OIG FOUND
OSHA obligated $7.7 million under the Department of Labor’s Recovery Act and disbursed $7.2 million of the funds on Recovery Act related activities. OSHA did not obligate the remaining $5.9 million in Recovery Act funds.

OSHA obligated $2.2 million in funding, and disbursed $1.6 million of these funds for contracts and orders. Of this, $0.6 million was used to collect injury and illness data from approximately 20,000 high-risk designated construction firms. OSHA could not provide evidence the additional data was used to target 200 additional inspections as identified in the OSHA Recovery Act Plan.

OSHA made $3.7 million available to State Plan states to increase inspection and enforcement activities at Recovery Act-funded projects. OSHA disbursed $1.2 million to 7 of the 27 State Plan states.

OSHA obligated and disbursed $4.3 million for salaries and expenses related to federal Recovery Act enforcement activities. Recovery Act coded data in OSHA’s information databases show OSHA exceeded its goal to increase federal Recovery Act inspections for FYs 2009, 2010, and 2011. However, 21 percent of the inspections sampled during this audit did not contain documentation to support such coding.

WHAT OIG RECOMMENDED
We recommended the Assistant Secretary for Occupational Safety and Health: 1) develop a framework for implementing temporarily-funded inspection programs; and 2) identify and record the source of an inspection in its information databases.

The Assistant Secretary accepted our recommendations and agreed to develop a framework for implementing the recommendations.