

The Social Security Administration's Use of Hurricane Sandy Relief Funds

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Office of Audit Report Summary

Objective

To determine whether the Social Security Administration (SSA) appropriately used Hurricane Sandy Relief Funds.

Background

In October 2012, Hurricane Sandy caused extensive damage across Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island. The storm caused approximately \$65 billion in damages.

On January 29, 2013, Congress enacted *The Disaster Relief Appropriations Act, 2013* to improve and streamline disaster assistance for individuals affected by Hurricane Sandy and for other purposes. Funding for the Act totaled \$50.5 billion, of which SSA received \$2 million.

SSA used its Hurricane Sandy funding to replace and restore items damaged or destroyed by the storm at field and regional offices. In addition, SSA provided special allowances for travel and subsistence for SSA employees affected by Hurricane Sandy.

Findings

Based on our review, we believe SSA appropriately used the Hurricane Sandy Relief Funds. Specifically, we determined that the expenditures had appropriate approvals, had proper support, and agreed with the respective per diem rates. However, we identified a nominal inaccuracy in travel and subsistence payment.

In addition, we determined that, as of September 30, 2014, SSA had \$35,776 in unpaid obligations (\$32,061 in undelivered orders and \$3,715 in delivered orders). Once SSA finalizes these outstanding obligations, SSA can deobligate the unused funds and transfer the resources to the Information Technology System no-year account.

Recommendation

We recommend that SSA determine whether repayment is required from the employee overpaid for travel and subsistence.

SSA agreed with our recommendation.