



Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board
1717 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 700
Washington DC 20006-4614

April 9, 2010 Minutes (DRAFT)

A meeting of the Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board was held in Washington, D.C. on Friday, April 9, 2010, at 1:30 p.m. and continued until 2:35 p.m.

ATTENDEES

Board Members:

Earl E. Devaney, Chairman, Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board
Richard Skinner, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Phyllis Fong, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Agriculture
Todd Zinser, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Commerce
Gordon S. Heddell, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Defense
J. Russell George, Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration
Daniel Levinson, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Glenn A. Fine, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Justice
Eric M. Thorson, Inspector General, U.S. Department of the Treasury
Kathleen S. Tighe, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Education
Mary Kendall, Acting Inspector General, U.S. Department of the Interior

Board Staff:

Glen Walker, Executive Director
Ed Pound, Director, Communications
John Higgins, Director, Accountability
Douglas Hassebrock, Assistant Director, Investigations
Ross Bezark, Chief of Staff, Recovery.gov
Eric Lippold, Assistant Director, Finance and Budget
Ivan Flores, Paralegal to General Counsel
Tara Porter, Board Secretary

DISCUSSION

Mr. Devaney called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. By unanimous vote of Board members present the March 5, 2010 minutes were approved.

Mr. George, Recovery.gov, Committee Chair, reported that MITRE did an assessment of the recommendations that were submitted during last year's e-town hall that shows a majority of the recommendations were implemented into the design of Recovery.gov. Upon the recommendation of the Recovery.gov Committee, the Board members present did not object to holding a second e-town hall that would focus on key topics.

Mr. Bezark, Chief of Staff, Recovery.gov, reported that the level of reporting was significantly lower than the January 2010 reporting levels. Mr. Devaney indicated that reporting appeared to be impacted by educational institutions that were on spring break during the first part of the reporting period. Mr. Devaney also indicated that FederalReporting.gov was slow in processing submissions on April 8 due to the surge in last minute reporters. In light of the circumstances, the Board members present did not object to extending reporting through April 16, 2010.

Mr. John Higgins, Director, Accountability, reported on behalf of the Recovery Funds Working Group Committee and notified the Board members that Board staff has been working with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to include an audit of the Recovery Act expenditures and job numbers as a part of the Single Audit process. Mr. Higgins outlined two new initiatives being undertaken by the Recovery Funds Working Group – a review of the Master Recovery Act Award Lists submitted by agencies and a review of the Recovery Act data that is being collected from the OIGs. Finally, Mr. Higgins indicated that OIGs are updating the FY 2010 Recovery Act Plans, which will be posted to Recovery.gov in May 2010.

Mr. Richard Skinner, Committee Chair, Accountability Committee, reported that the Board signed a memorandum of understanding with FINCEN and is working with NCIC to obtain data. Mr. Skinner also reported that the Board will share analysis of hotline information with OIGs through the LEO portal. Finally, Mr. Skinner reported that only 19 of 29 OIGs have provided complaint data to the Board. Mr. Devaney indicated that based on conversations with Assistant Attorney General Breuer, DOJ wants the same information the Board is trying to collect. Board members discussed the importance of having a single data collection effort. Board staff will work with the OIGs that have not provided complaint data to address the concerns they have in submitting the data to the Board. Board staff will also work with DOJ to ensure that the Board is collecting the information needed by DOJ.

Mr. Devaney reported that Vice President Biden held a press event at the Board's offices to announce the Presidential Memorandum directing agencies to take all actions authorized to ensure that Recovery Act recipients report. After the press event, Vice President Biden toured the Recovery Operations Center (ROC). As a result of the tour, the Vice President requested the list of Recovery Act high-risk programs that were identified by OIGs and used by the ROC to identify possible areas of risk. Mr. Devaney indicated that in providing this information he will explain that the high-risk program information was collected for the use of the Board and should not be used for any other purpose without coordinating with the appropriate OIGs.

Mr. Devaney notified the Board members that the Board's Advisory Panel has been established. The Board's Advisory Panel falls under the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA). Board members discussed the parameters under which the panel must operate in light of FACA requirements. An orientation briefing will be held for the panel members on April 21, 2010 at the Board's offices.

Mr. Devaney notified the Board members that the Office of the Vice President was looking at OIG Recovery Act expenditures to determine the rate of spending. He also notified the Board that the Government Accountability Office will highlight the Board's accountability efforts in its bi-monthly reports on the Recovery Act. In addition, Mr. Devaney notified the Board members that OMB is interested in using FederalReporting.gov and the ROC to assist with the Improper Payment initiative. Mr. Devaney indicated that once OMB makes a specific request with regard to the Improper Payment initiative he would present the request to the Board for consideration.

Mr. Devaney encouraged Board members to do presentations on behalf of the Board. Mr. Devaney postponed the discussion on the Board's financial information until the next meeting.

Tara A. Porter
Secretary