

Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board
1717 Pennsylvania Ave, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20006

Minutes

A meeting of the Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board was held in Washington, D.C, on Friday, November 20, 2009 at 1:30 p.m. and continued until 2:30 p.m.

PRESENT

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
Calvin L. Scovel III, Inspector General U.S. Department of Transportation
Daniel Levinson, Inspector General, US. Department of Health and Human Services
Todd J. Zinser, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Commerce
Mary Mitchelson, Acting Inspector General, U.S. Department of Education
J. Russell George, Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration
Glenn A. Fine, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Justice
Eric M. Thorson, Inspector General, U.S. Department of the Treasury
Gregory H. Friedman, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Energy
Mary Kendall, Acting Inspector General, U.S. Department of the Interior
Gordon S. Heddell, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Defense

Board Staff:

Glen Walker, Executive Director
Eric M. Lippold, Assistant Director, Finance and Budget
Ed Pound, Director, Communications
Douglas Hassebrock, Assistant Director, Investigations
John Higgins, Assistant Director, Audits, Inspections and Evaluations
Mike Wood, Director, Recovery.gov

Mr. Devaney called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

By unanimous vote of the members present, Board members approved the November 6, 2009 minutes.

Mr. Devaney led a discussion on press and Congressional concerns raised over recipient reports containing incorrect or so called “phantom” congressional districts. Mr. Devaney explained that after evaluating the issue and concurring with a request from OMB to correct obvious mistakes which were causing confusion, the data was corrected in the data base and on displays on Recovery.gov to reflect correct districts or indicate unassigned where information on the district was not available. The Board issued a press release to this effect on November 18 and Mr. Devaney also testified on this matter on November 19.

Mr. George, Recovery.gov Committee Chair, informed Board members that the inbound reporting team was preparing federalreporting.gov enhancements and changes for implementation. Mr. Wood explained that some of the changes would occur prior to the January

reporting cycle and some would be implemented prior to the April reporting cycle. The planned changes include the following:

- Internal Logic/Quality Check Edits – Additional data-checking rules which will assist recipients in identifying obvious material data errors while entering new reports during reporting cycle two (January, 2010).
- Copy Forward/Forward Change – Information will be pre-populated for second quarter updates (January, 2010) for those recipients who reported during reporting cycle one (October, 2009).
- FRPIN – This enhancement will allow authorized users who may have forgotten their pin¹ a secure method to retrieve it without requiring a telephone call to the service desk.
- Enhanced Information Access – OMB will be provided the same access to data as the system provides to funding agencies during the QA process.
- Feedback Mechanism – A new feedback mechanism will be implemented to receive ongoing suggestions from the public on how FederalReporting.gov can be improved.
- Open Quality Assurance Period – The Board will publish data on the 30th as mandated by law, and extend agency checks and recipient correction periods. The open QA period after this cycle will allow agencies to identify errors, and recipients to make corrections prior to the next reporting cycle. The Board will republish corrected data on Recovery.gov on a periodic basis to reflect corrections.

Mr. Scovel, Recovery Funds Working Group Committee Chair, led a discussion on the status of the contract and grants staffing qualifications survey and the data quality initiative. Mr. Zinser provided an update on the results of the contract and grants staffing qualifications survey. Board members discussed the preliminary results of the data quality initiative and recognized the need for additional work in this area. The Board members agreed to determine what additional data quality work should be performed.

Mr. Skinner, Accountability Committee Chair, informed Board members that the hotline posters were ordered, and the hotline center would be responsible for their distribution. Mr. Skinner explained that Mr. Hassebrock continued to brief key stakeholders including OIGs on the operations center functionalities and capabilities. Mr. Skinner then provided Board members with an update on Recovery Act complaints and referrals, and briefed members on the meeting with the FBI.

The meeting concluded following a discussion on DOJ's Financial Crime task force led by Mr. Devaney and Mr. Fine.

Eric M. Lippold
Secretary

¹ FederalReporting.gov utilizes a special number known as an FRPIN to help ensure information security. It is analogous to a pin used by many of us when performing credit card transactions.