

## **TIPS FOR PORT SECURITY GRANT (PSG) ROUND 7 APPLICATIONS**

### **Overview**

Within DHS's overall investment strategy, two funding priorities are considered paramount: risk-based funding and regional security cooperation. Additionally all ports are placed into one of 4 tiers. Identify your port's placement in the 4 categories. This will allow you to know your competition and the funding amounts within your tier.

For the Port Security Grant Program (PSG), two overarching priorities are identified: (1) the program has shifted from a focus on security of individual facilities within ports to a port-wide risk management program that is fully integrated into the broader regional planning construct that forms the core of the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) as well as applicable statewide initiatives; and (2) with the enactment of the SAFE Port Act, a priority goal of the program is adoption of a deliberate risk management planning process, consistent with that employed in the UASI and state program. The PSGP risk formula is based on a 100 point scale comprised of threat (20 points) and vulnerability/consequences (80 points).

In addition, for Round 7, there are five specific goals that will be the highest selection criteria for PSG funds (1) enhancing maritime domain awareness, (2) enhancing prevention, protection, response, and recovery capabilities, (3) training and exercises, (4) efforts supporting implementation of TWIC, and (5) efforts in support of the national preparedness architecture.

The pool of eligible port applicants has been expanded to allow all entities covered by an Area Maritime Plan to apply, but a 4-tier system has been implemented with funding levels provided for each tier (with more funding for ports that DHS has determined to be at higher risk). It is important to identify the tier in which your port belongs.

Each of the eight port areas in Tier I (highest risk) has been designated a specific amount of money for which eligible entities within that port area may apply. All port areas within Tiers II, III, and IV compete for the funds designated for that Tier.

In some cases, multiple port areas have been grouped together to reflect geographic proximity, shared risk and a common waterway. Applications from these port clusters must be coordinated locally to reflect integrated security proposals to use PSG grant dollars.

In order to enhance the chance of success, applicants are encouraged not to request more than two times the average percentage of Infrastructure Protection Program (IPP) funds received annually from FY03 through FY06. Those who have not previously received funding should "prudently calibrate potential application amounts against funding available for the relevant eligibility tier."

The match requirement remains a minimum of 25 percent for the public sector and 50 percent for the private sector.

Applicants must develop a formal investment justification for each initiative proposed for funding and may propose up to three investments within their investment justification. (For Round 6, eligible recipients could submit one application for funding up to five projects.)

DHS plans an extensive amount of outreach and support to applicants. USCG and DHS Office of Grants and Training are going on tour to visit each of the Area Maritime Security Committees to talk about Round 7 grants.

The period for project compliance has been extended from 30 to 36 months.

## **Tips**

The following tips have been provided by AAPA members who are familiar with the PSG program.

- Download the Round 7 Port Security Grant Program Guidance and Application Kit (there are some differences from the previous rounds). Make a few copies and place in binders, you will be referring to this guidance throughout the process.
- Read the grant guidance and follow the instructions carefully, especially with regard to which national priorities are being focused on in that particular round (the focus changes for each round).
- Organize a “port team” which will work together in sections of each investment/project of the application. Port Departments which can assist usually will involve Operations, Port Security (if outside of Operations), Engineering, Trade Development, and Accounting. These Departments could answer questions according to each project investment. For example: the Operations Dept. may answer questions regarding port assets; Trade Development on questions regarding economic consequences of attack to port or port area; Port Security on Area Security Plan and Maritime Domain Awareness; Engineering on project/investment budget; Accounting on port match and assist on Quarterly Reports following awards.
- Part of the preparation for writing the grant should be registering early on the website. There have been problems associated with registering and submitting applications through the website. Once you have approval and a password, you can begin inputting your information and saving it as you go.
- If your port did not participate in the past few Rounds, your port will need to immediately apply for a DUNS number before accessing the application. The DUNS number will be required for the Central Contractor Registry (CCR). CCR registration is at <http://www.ccr.gov>. To apply for the grant after you have registered, go to <http://www.grants.gov>.
- Clearly identify the risk and ensure that the Coast Guard supports that position (past vulnerability assessments). Develop solutions that “buy down” this risk effectively.

- Develop security projects that meet the requirements and specifications and that fulfill the ports' security needs. Emphasize the criticality of the needs not only for the port but also for the area and nation (maritime domain awareness) and include the potential impact of not fulfilling that need (addresses demographic and geographical (regional) impacts).
- For applications which are submitted by a consortia of stakeholders in a port area, an MOU/MOA with the identified regulated entities will be required prior to funding and must include an acknowledgement of the layered security and roles and responsibility of all entities involved.
- Draft the application on a word document. This will allow your team to review all required sections. There will be several components in the application. Refer to Guidance package - Appendix (i.e. investment justification etc.). After completing the draft for a specific section, transfer the information into the grant application.
- To review the application and complete the application package, refer to the guidance package - pages 31- 34. The application can be completed offline which will allow you to easily amend the application during your drafting phase (pg. 33 – step 4). However, you will still need to log into Grants.gov to submit the application in step 5 (pg. 35).
- It is important to note the File Name Convention which is required in filing documents onto the application (pg. 45 in guidance):  
COTP Zone Abbreviation \_ Port Area \_ Name of Applicant \_ IJ Number
- Provide explicit detail about what the project is, what it will do, how it will improve security and mitigate the identified risks and what the impact of not doing it is (lives lost, money lost, etc.).
- Provide pictures, maps and diagrams because the reviewers will only have the benefit of what you submit so you need to make the reader feel as if they are out in the field with you.
- Identify the buzz words and key concepts in the grant guidance and incorporate them into your grant applications—words like “maritime domain awareness,” “common operating picture,” “layered security,” “multiple defense,” etc.—go a long way to showing that you understand the national priorities.
- Incorporate elements of the National Preparedness Architecture into planning, operations, and investment to the degree. See <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/odp/assessments/hspd8.htm>.
- Having a close and cordial relationship with the local Captain of the Port (COTP) as they review the grant application before it goes to DHS.

- Recognize that a grant award is only the first step of many to a successful grant project implementation. If your project is not fully developed or integrated into your port security plan/planning process it could be troublesome.
- Identify critical management skills, including project, financial, and process, that would assure successful implementation. Make sure you have the commitment and ability to implement and maintain the project.
- Port Application Checklist – Before submitting the application refer to the checklist to ensure all attachments and forms are completed and include in your application (pg. 20 in guidance) .

#### Resources:

- Several ports have indicated that the book “Winning Strategies for Developing Grant Proposals” 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition is very useful and is recognized as the “bible” of grant writing and management.
- Helpful Phone Contacts (Guidance - Appendix 3)
- DUNS Number Request Line: 1-866-705-5711
- Central Contractor Registry (CCR) – Questions on registering: 1-888-227-2423.
- grants.gov Customer Support: 1-800-518-4726
- DHS offers free Technical Assistance on Grants Management and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey and Long Beach has helped to streamline the program to be more relevant to ports and the port security grants. It does not address the grant writing process but rather life after the award which is just as important. If you make mistakes on the management side, it could negatively impact your ability to get considered in the next round.