

REGION IX - FEDERAL REGIONAL COUNCIL AND OUTER PACIFIC COMMITTEE

Prepared for the Interagency Group on Insular Areas Senior Plenary Session, February 26, 2013

The Federal Regional Council (FRC) is a consortium of nineteen separate federal Departments and Agencies representing nearly thirty different program offices in Region IX (Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, and the Outer Pacific Islands) working in partnership to better serve the public. The FRC's goal is to work in a coordinated manner to make federal programs more effective and efficient in Region IX. The FRC meets monthly and has six committees focused upon broad geographic areas and/or special populations in the vast expanse of Region IX. The six entities are the Border Committee, the Tribal Affairs Committee, the Outer Pacific Committee, and the Homelessness Committee (Regional Interagency Council on Homelessness). Executive Orders or Administration Initiatives serve as the underlying authority in guiding the work of the committees.

The Outer Pacific Committee (OPC) deals with issues related to the three U.S. Flag Territories: American Samoa (AS), the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), and Guam; and the three Freely Associated States: Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), and Republic of Palau (ROP). It includes the Guam-CNMI Build-up Committee/Task Force that was established in 2009 to address issues relating to the relocation of military personnel from Okinawa, Japan to Guam and to coordinate Federal agency support to Guam and the CNMI as they prepare for the buildup in terms of programs and technical assistance, where possible. The OPC has met regularly since 1998. By convening the participating Federal agencies, the committee believes it can achieve better outcomes for the people in the Pacific Jurisdictions. The committee's work plan for 2013 includes the following objectives: 1) Dissemination of the annual grants report; 2) Improved communications between Federal agencies on Pacific issues; 3) Program planning and coordination; 4) Improving grants and financial management in the jurisdictions; 5) Central Office/Regional Office collaboration; and 6) increased committee membership. The OPC has just completed the report, Grants to the Outer Pacific FY 2012 which will be distributed at the February 2013 meeting of the Interagency Group on the Insular Areas (IGIA) meeting in Washington, DC. This annual report includes narrative descriptions, points of contact, and eligibility and funding tables for all of the grant programs administered through those Federal departments and agencies that are based in Region IX, as well as select entities that are based in Atlanta, GA and the D.C. area. Although not a comprehensive description of all federal funding to the Outer Pacific, the document provides a good overview of the major federal financial support provided to the Pacific jurisdictions.

The FRC and OPC have coordinated in past years on the development and conduct of joint meetings of the FRC and the Micronesian Chief Executives Summit. These meetings have brought together regional administrators and other staff from Federal agencies in Region IX and the political leadership of the six U.S.-Affiliated Pacific Island (USAPI) jurisdictions to identify and strategize on a wide variety of issues and challenges to the effectiveness of Federal aid to the Pacific. The FRC and OPC continue to value the relationships with USAPI leadership that have been greatly enhanced through the conduct of these meetings.

For more information, please contact James Mason, HHS Intergovernmental Affairs at James.Mason@hhs.gov or Captain John Walmsley at John.Walmsley@hhs.gov