



At a Glance

Why We Did This Project

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Office of Inspector General (OIG) conducted this audit to determine whether the EPA has the needed and required homeland security and emergency response (HS/ER) equipment, whether the EPA efficiently manages and tracks that equipment, and whether the equipment is readily available for potential homeland security or emergency response incidents.

The EPA's Office of Emergency Management, within the agency's Office of Land and Emergency Management, works with federal partners to maintain capabilities to respond to emergencies. The EPA's Office of Homeland Security, within the Office of the Administrator, provides agencywide leadership and coordination for planning, prevention, preparedness and response to homeland security incidents. Also, within the EPA, four special teams and all 10 regions respond to homeland security or emergency response incidents.

This report addresses the following:

- *Operating efficiently and effectively.*

Address inquiries to our public affairs office at (202) 566-2391 or [OIG WEBCOMMENTS@epa.gov](mailto:OIG_WEBCOMMENTS@epa.gov).

List of [OIG reports](#).

EPA Can Improve Incident Readiness with Better Management of Homeland Security and Emergency Response Equipment

What We Found

The EPA needs to improve its management of HS/ER equipment. Specifically:

- The EPA did not identify the HS/ER equipment needed to respond to a nationally significant incident.
- The EPA did not fully use its agencywide equipment system to track the availability of EPA-owned HS/ER equipment.
- The EPA's special teams need to address the status of HS/ER equipment that is unused or broken.

The EPA needs to improve its management of its HS/ER equipment, worth over \$40 million, so that it can adequately track the equipment it needs to fulfill its responsibilities during an incident in a cost-effective manner.

While the EPA has successfully responded to past incidents, there is a risk that—until it identifies a list of HS/ER equipment it needs to meet its responsibilities during an incident—the agency may not have the correct equipment to respond to future incidents. Also, while the EPA spends \$554,310 annually on the Agency Asset Management System (AAMS), which has the ability to manage and track the EPA's equipment, the agency is not using this functionality. Instead, the EPA spent an additional \$2,365,938 to track the equipment outside of AAMS, making it difficult for the EPA to have an accurate inventory of HS/ER equipment. Compounding this problem is the mismanagement of unused or broken equipment.

Recommendations and Planned Agency Corrective Actions

We recommend that the agency create and maintain an official agencywide list of the equipment needed for incidents, maintain one official agencywide management and tracking system for HS/ER equipment, update AAMS to include missing equipment, implement controls to verify and record the status of unused or broken equipment, and verify the implementation of internal controls to justify the agency keeping unused or broken equipment.

The EPA agreed with two recommendations but did not provide corrective actions, and it disagreed with the remaining three recommendations. Thus, all recommendations in this report are unresolved with resolution efforts in progress.