



Preparedness in Colorado

Grant Effectiveness Case Studies, August 2014



Demonstrating Grant Effectiveness

Colorado's investments provide an opportunity to understand how Federal grant programs enhance preparedness

FEMA and Colorado jointly selected projects for the case study:

- FEMA developed a list of potential projects by analyzing the state's grant funding data, investment justifications, preparedness assessment ratings, homeland security strategy, and recent disasters
- Colorado revised the list and worked with FEMA to select the projects that illustrate the biggest impact of grant funding on preparedness outcomes

FEMA conducted a site visit and interviewed representatives from:

- Colorado Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management
- Denver Office of Emergency Management
- Regional homeland security coordinators



Colorado at a Glance

Colorado's emergency preparedness initiatives target terrorism prevention and all-hazards disaster response

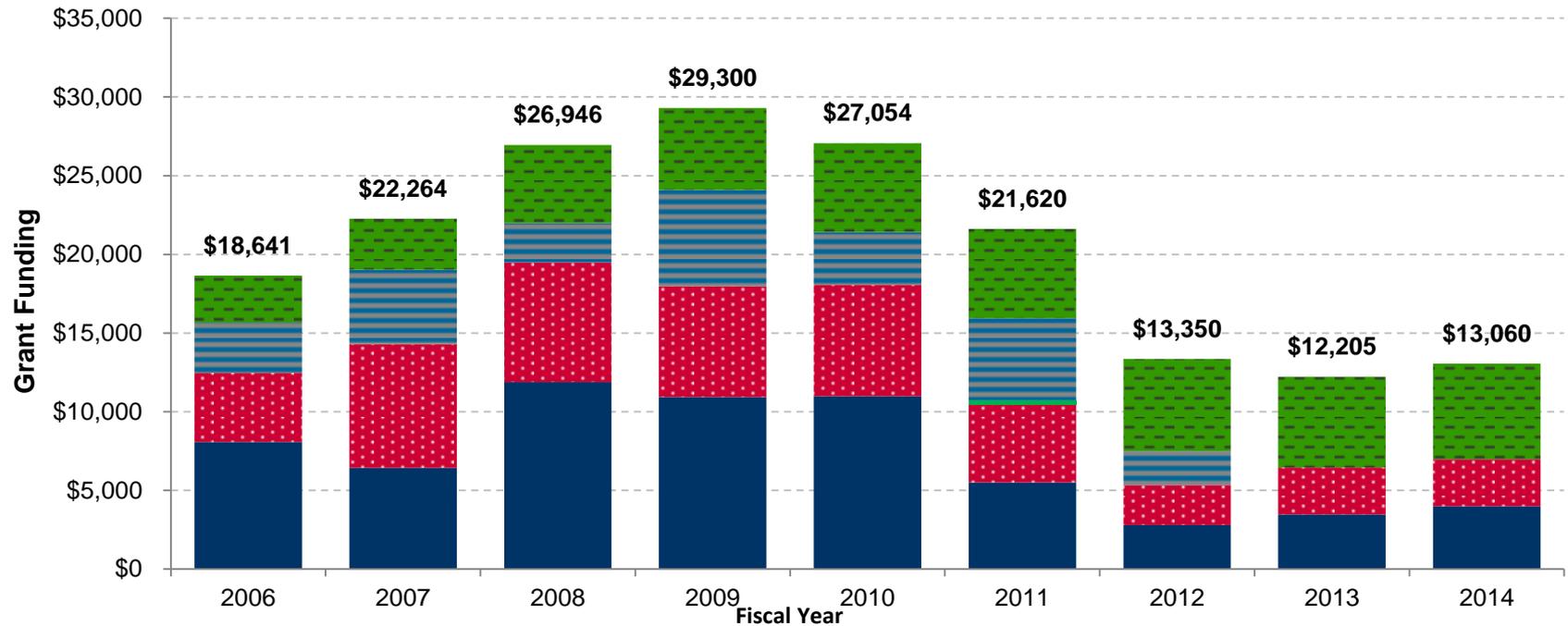
- Since 2006, CO has invested over \$180 million in Federal homeland security grants in **terrorism prevention programs**, developing an **interoperable communications system**, and equipment to support **all-hazards disaster response**
- Response to the 2013 wildfires and floods demonstrated the value of Federal preparedness grant investments



Grant Funding Overview

Colorado received over \$184 million in preparedness grants from FY2006 through FY2014

Colorado Grant Awards (in thousands)



- State Homeland Security Program (SHSP)
- Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI)
- Transit Security Grant Program (TSGP)
- Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG)
- Emergency Management Performance Grants (EMPG)

Colorado Preparedness Grant Projects

Federal investments protect against terrorist threats, improve statewide communications, and enhance all-hazards response

- The **Colorado Information Analysis Center (CIAC)** serves as CO's analytic hub for all-hazards disasters
- **Terrorism awareness programs** contribute to terrorist and criminal arrests and **targeted risk assessments** protect spectator events
- **Statewide Communications System upgrades** improve interoperability and equipment availability throughout the state
- The **Regional Explosives Unit** responds to explosives calls in 33 counties
- Grant funded **exercises and equipment** bolster active shooter response
- The **Alamosa Emergency Operations Center (EOC)** enables effective responses in Colorado's San Luis Valley



CIAC All-Hazards Disaster Response

The CIAC coordinates intelligence sharing and provides analytic support for all hazards disasters around the state

- Since 2006, CO has invested more than \$3.5 million in Federal preparedness grants to support CIAC staffing and operations
- The CIAC conducts cross-state and intrastate information sharing that either assists ongoing investigations or is not directly covered by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)
 - Partnered with Montana police to assess the risks presented by theft of mining or avalanche control mountain explosives
 - Sponsors monthly classified briefings on threats to the state for law enforcement officers with a clearance and need-to-know



Federal Funding: \$3.5 Million
UASI and SHSP



Terrorism Awareness Programs

Terrorism awareness programs contribute to high-profile arrests and special event security

Terrorism Liaison Officer (TLO) Program

- Launched in 2007, the TLO Program trains law enforcement professionals to serve as their home agency's primary point of contact for terrorism information
- The statewide network of 840 TLOs contributed to the 2011 arrests of a potential bomber and a multi-state criminal group



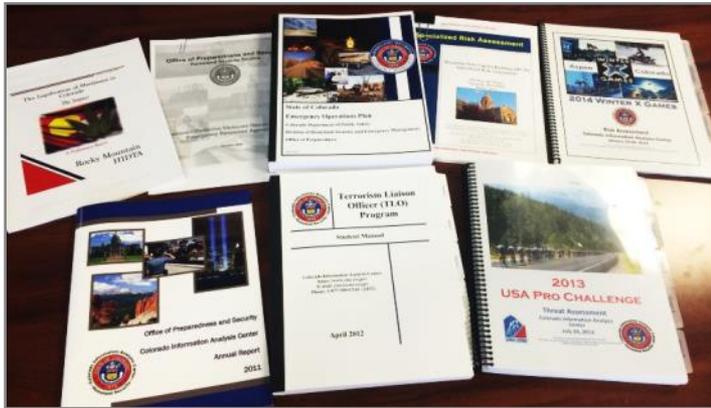
Community Awareness Program (CAP)

- Developed in partnership with the Counterterrorism Education Learning Lab (CELL), CAP trains citizens to identify and help prevent terrorism and criminal activity
- After the Boston Marathon bombings, CAP expanded outreach to communities in advance of special events, such as the X Games
- The CIAC receives roughly **100 more tips per day** during events held in communities that participated in CAP



Risk Assessments

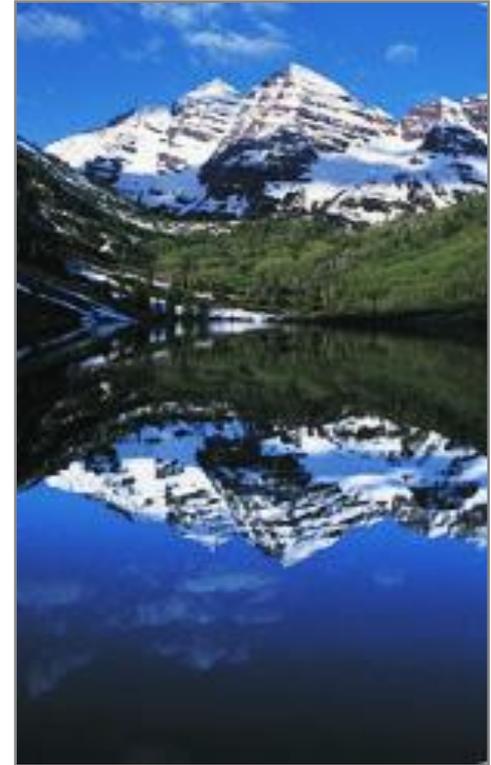
In 2013, the CIAC conducted 50 risk assessments and 60 threat reviews for special events to inform security and policy decisions



- The Boston Marathon bombings demonstrated the vulnerability of large public gatherings
- The CIAC responded by strengthening event-specific risk assessments for all special events with over 10,000 spectators
- The CIAC uses threat, vulnerability, and consequence data tailored for the towns and communities hosting the event to inform recommendations
 - Reports include relevant crime data, such as missing cars, people of interest, and stolen weapons in the area
- In addition to special events, the CIAC develops risk assessments for policy proposals to help the public safety community prepare for consequences

Risk Assessments Protect High-Profile Spectator Events

- The risk assessment for the 2013 Pro Challenge—a 500+ mile professional cycling race through the Rocky Mountains—recommended mobile scanners to quickly inspect suspicious packages without calling in experts
- During a fast, downhill section of the race, a spectator called in an unattended bag in the middle of a bridge the cyclists would cross in minutes
 - A security officer immediately retrieved the mobile device and scanned the bag
 - After a clean scan and quick inspection, the officer removed the bag just 12 seconds before the athletes reached the bridge



The risk assessment enabled officials to avert disrupting the event while taking necessary steps to avoid a Boston-like attack

CIAC Contributes to High Profile Arrests

The CIAC partnered with law enforcement to interdict and arrest an al-Qaeda-trained terrorist and the Aurora shooter

- In 2009 the CIAC assisted in interdicting CO resident Najibullah Zazi, an al-Qaeda-trained terrorist who was planning to attack the New York City (NYC) subway
 - The FBI asked the CIAC to help monitor Zazi
 - When Zazi began driving for the CO border at over 100 mph, the FBI asked the **CIAC to work with state troopers to pull him over—they learned Zazi was traveling to NYC**
 - Combining this information with other intelligence, the FBI realized Zazi was targeting NYC and took necessary precautions to keep the city safe
- The CIAC and law enforcement partners **established an intelligence cell** in the immediate aftermath of the 2012 Aurora theater shooting
 - The cell searched for accomplices and potential follow-on attacks using the agencies' combined databases, social media, and thousands of public tips



The CIAC Partners with Texas Fusion Center to Resolve Criminal Manhunt

- After the assassination of a CO cabinet member, the CIAC distributed a request for information with a description of the suspect's car
 - Two days later, the Texas Department of Public Safety Fusion Center reported that a suspect driving a similar car had shot a Texas corrections officer



- CIAC analysts coordinated with Texas and CO authorities to **link the suspect in Texas to the assassination**
 - Analysts also discovered the suspect compiled a hit-list of public safety personnel related to the CO-based white supremacy gang known as the 2-11 crew
- At the governor's request, the CIAC led a risk analysis to determine if anyone was still in danger and helped law enforcement arrest 2-11 crew associates

Through the national network of fusion centers, the CIAC located the assassin of a CO Cabinet official

The CIAC Supports Disaster Response

- After the March 2012 North Fork fire, CO identified a need to strengthen communications between first responders and the governor’s office—the CIAC offered to help in future disasters
- **High Park fire (June 2012):**
 - The CIAC’s mobile analytics team mapped raw reports and social media inputs to identify at-risk areas, then submitted this information to emergency responders and the governor’s office in “flash reports”
 - As a result, **responders quickly identified staffing and resource needs** to mitigate the fire’s spread and the **governor received up-to-the minute status updates** detailing response operations and evacuation efforts
- **Colorado floods (2013):**
 - CIAC teams used social media and geographic information systems mapping capabilities to **locate stranded survivors** and **protect critical infrastructure**



Statewide Communications Systems

- **Trunked Radio System**

- Prior to 2005, CO used a mix of non-compatible local and regional radio systems, making cross-agency communications difficult
- Using \$33 million in SHSP funds, CO established a statewide interoperable trunked radio system

The system provides for the first time **interoperable, continuous coverage** for 95 percent of the state, supporting daily operations and large-scale emergencies



**Federal Funding: \$33 Million
SHSP**

Statewide Communications Systems

- Radio and Satellite Phone Caches

- CO lacked the radios to fulfill local agency requests during large disasters
- The state invested over \$250,000 in Federal and state-matching funds in communications equipment caches
 - DHSEM manages a lending system of 100 grant-purchased radios, 25 satellite phones, and two cell-on-wheels
- DHSEM fulfilled all communications equipment requests for response and recovery efforts for the 2013 wildfires and floods

Federal and State-Matching
Funding: \$250,000 SHSP



Amateur Radio Emergency Service

The grant-funded Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) partnership protected a district of 80,000 during the 2013 floods

- CO used EMPG funding to purchase amateur radio equipment for EOCs and mobile communications vehicles throughout the state
- During the 2013 floods, **150 ARES volunteers in Colorado's Northeast Region** deployed to assist response efforts
 - When flood water encroached upon a wastewater facility serving 80,000 people, ARES used two grant-funded repeaters to establish a microwave SCADA network and take remote control of the plant
 - In accordance with mutual aid agreements developed through SHSP funding, ARES volunteers maintained sole control of the facility for four months—**preventing any wastewater from spilling into the floodwater**



South Central Regional Explosives Unit

The team of explosives experts conducted more than 260 operations across 33 counties from 2010-2012



- Prior to the creation of the Regional Explosives Unit, rural town officials called retired miners and mountaineers to assess suspicious packages and explosive threats
- Colorado invested nearly \$500,000 in SHSP grant funding to create and equip the South Central Regional Explosives Unit
 - Federal preparedness grants support more than 90 percent of the unit's funding



The unit also **trains local police** on initial safety and control tactics (e.g., establishing a perimeter)

**Federal Funding: \$500,000
SHSP**

Regional Explosives Unit Protects Local Communities

- The unit responds to any explosives-related request, including improvised explosive devices, pipe bombs, found explosives, and suspicious packages
- The unit supported a barricaded active shooter response in downtown CO Springs
 - Specialized equipment helped officers deliver tear gas and search the suspect's house without putting them in danger
- The unit recently **deployed in response to a Russian training artillery device** with a cell phone trigger
 - A grant-funded Andros F6A bomb robot defused the explosive
 - Assailants **shot the robot seven times in the last year** and partially destroyed it when an explosive detonated



The use of a bomb robot dramatically shortens response time, reduces property damage, and enhances officer safety

Denver Area Equipment and Exercises

Grant investments have enhanced cooperation, increased officer safety, and improved operations for active shooter events

Operation Mountain Guardian (2011)

- The grant-funded, full scale exercise modeled after the 2008 Mumbai attack helped over 1,000 players resolve coordination challenges

Douglas County active shooter (2012)

- A grant-funded BearCat armored vehicle **safely retrieved seven officers under fire** and continued pursuing the suspect

Aurora theater shooting (2012)

- Grant-funded bomb teams **searched the shooter's car and apartment, which was staged to explode** upon entry



Alamosa EOC

EOC investments enable coordinated responses during bacterial outbreaks and wildfires

- Without an EOC, CO's rural San Luis Valley managed response operations out of ad hoc facilities, often local schools lacking communications equipment and adequate space
- The six county region established the Alamosa EOC using \$200,000 in SHSP grant funding
 - Counties pool resources to cover regular maintenance costs
- During the 2008 waterborne Salmonella outbreak in Alamosa, the EOC activated for two weeks
 - Served as the Joint Information Center and **acted as a central hub for responders** who deployed to support from around the state
- The EOC also supported response efforts for the 2013 West Fork fire and hosts over 90 trainings and meetings each year



Federal Funding: \$200,000 SHSP



FEMA

