# WAP: Navigating the **ACSI**



#### Presenters

- Kate Blunt, Federal Consulting Group
- Eric Behna, NASCSP
- Eric Beaton, Massachusetts Dept. of Housing and Community Development
- Troy Cucchiara, New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority
- Amanda Marcott-Thottuknal, Oklahoma Department of Commerce

# **ACSI Working Group**

- Alabama-Trent Williams
- Alaska-Mimi Burbage
- □ Georgia-Andrea Schroer
- □ Iowa-Gwen Howe
- Kansas-Scott Kuhn
- Massachusetts-Eric Beaton
- New Mexico-Troy Cucchiara
- Oklahoma-Amanda Marcott-Thottunkal
- Utah-Brad Carpenter
- Vermont-Geoff Wilcox
- Washington-Amanda Rains
- NASCSP
  - Eric Behna, Ray Judy, Kate Blunt

#### **Process**

First met as a full group and established subgroups.

Subgroups comprised of states that scored the highest in each area. Subgroups met to share examples, approaches and strategies.

Share with the WAP network via NASCSP conference.

# **Next Steps**

- ► ACSI Best Practices guide/manual- Under development by NASCSP
- ► Future webinars
- ► Linkages with DOE Solutions Summits

# Use of Template

- ► Each State administrator was asked to complete the template which covered areas such as:
  - ▶ What is the practice?
  - ► How does it work?
  - ▶ What is innovative about it?
  - ▶ When/why was it implemented?
  - What has been the impact?
  - Were there any implementation issues?
  - ► Were there any budget implications?
  - ► What would you do differently?

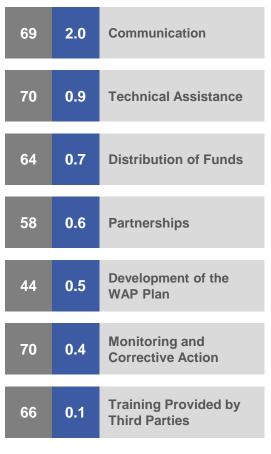
#### **2017 ACSI Survey of Sub-Grantees**

**Overview of Survey Results** 

#### **DOE WAP Sub-Grantee Customer Satisfaction Model**

#### **SATISFACTION DRIVERS**

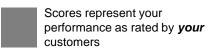
#### **FUTURE BEHAVIORS**

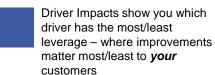


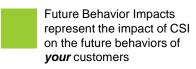
Customer
Satisfaction 67
Index

Overall Satisfaction 71
Compared to Expectations 67
Compared to Ideal 64

Meet Organization Needs	5.1	71
Mission Fulfillment	4.7	75



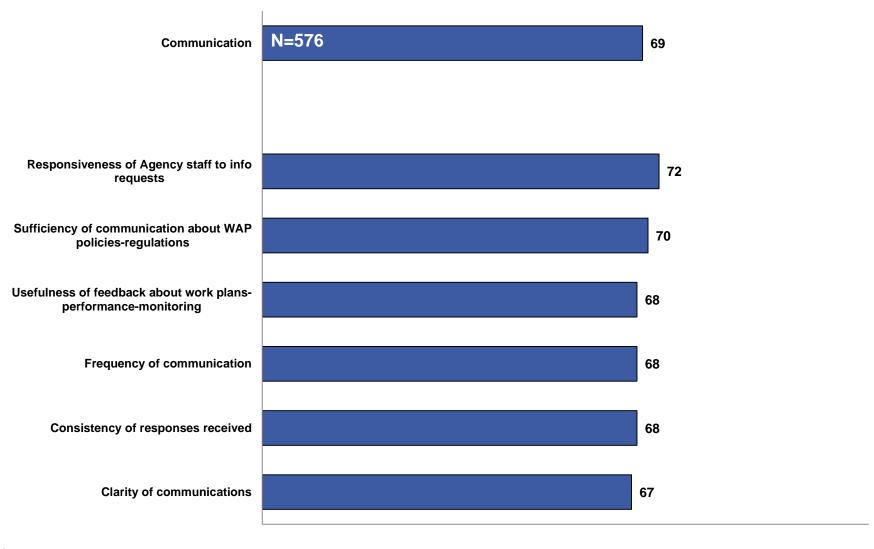






#### Communication

#### Impact 2.0



- Communication is among the higher rated components at 69. With the highest impact of 2.0, improvement in this area provides the best opportunity to increase CSI and influence the outcome measures.
- Scores among states ranged from 33 to 99.
- 'Clarity of communications' is rated lowest among the communication attributes but 'usefulness of feedback about the work plan' as well as the 'frequency of communication' and 'consistency of responses received' all warrant examination.

#### What kinds of information, if any, would you like to receive from the State WAP Agency staff that you are not now getting?

Clarity on new rules and regulations well before the contract is in effect.

> Changes to Program requirements or parameters in a more concise and timely manner of when it needs to be in place.

I would like to receive calls and emails that actually check on us to see how things are going and if there is anything they can do to help. Currently we only receive calls or emails if we have done something wrong or if LHC needs something from us.

Info on trainings provided.

Consistent messages. Sometimes State WAP Agency staff - give mixed messages about expending funding, percentage of funding toward Health and Safety needs, etc.

Information from round table discussions and conferences needs to be assembled and assimilated to everyone, so when a person cannot attend an event, they still get the information.

Updates on funding issues, fast responses to technical questions. Also answers in writing.





#### What technical assistance would you recommend DOE WAP provide to the State regarding its communication efforts?

If different measures being performed on homes are a best practice, then provide materials outlining the method and policy, not just verbal communication. If a staff person leaves the subgrantees agency then all information is lost because much of the "policy" provided by the State is not written.

Community Action Agencies need to have a state wide informational meeting. We use to have a state wide meeting, agencies got together and compared how they did different things within the program to make it run better

Periodic feedback on how program is doing state-wide.

The State WAP staff needs to know they have to answer for their conduct with subgrantees from the DOE. Training needs to be provided in effective communication skills, i.e., newsletters featuring the positive accomplishments about all sub-grantees. They need to receive training in positive communication instead of being accusatory.

Hire more people so there is time to assemble a "monthly newsletter" including best practices, new information, state updates, new technical information and product data, and an open forum for subgrantee feedback & questions. This would all also be a great resource that could be provided to our clientele.

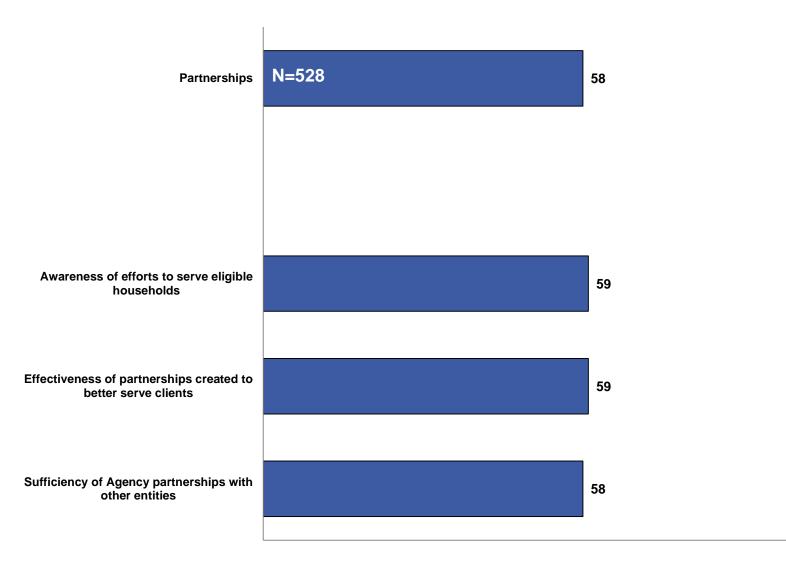
Technical assistance in the form of a symposium or webinars showing both national and regional statistics regarding Weatherization efforts is recommended.





#### **Partnerships**

#### Impact 0.6



- Partnerships, which
  has a mid-level
  impact on CSI, is
  rated low at 58 and
  should be
  considered an
  important area for
  improvement.
- Scores among states range from 29-91
- All three attributes related to Partnerships are rated below 60.



# What would you like to see the State WAP Agency do to increase partnerships with other government/non-government entities to serve eligible households?

Hold meetings with the state energy advisory board. Work more closely with the state association of community action agencies. Active participation in state association conferences and meetings.

Meetings set up with CH&A manufacturers and other larger suppliers to get a reduced rate in purchasing. Also, to meet with utility companies to negotiate a better rate or to be sponsors in a partnership toward giving to the weatherization program.

Provide agencies with a list of local entities to serve households. Provide list of clients on HEAP to agencies. Some clients send their application directly to the HEAP office and check HWAP but agencies do not get the application. If we had a list we can go into OCEAN and print that application.

This state has just merged energy and housing divisions, so they are already moving in a coordinated direction. could maybe help out with marketing to other assistance agencies and private organizations. Also better outreach could be done to make sure more qualified households are able to easily apply for these programs.

Increase marketing/awareness throughout the state.

I think the State WAP encourages partnerships, but often I feel we are just left on our own to foster and create these relationships. Without State WAP help, the ability to work with other agencies varies greatly from region to region.

#### What technical assistance would you recommend DOE WAP provide to the State regarding its efforts to build linkages with government/non-government entities to serve eligible households?

Offer suggestions as to what DOE sees nationwide in best practice connections that actually work. Give best-practice examples of successful partnerships so that states can investigate within government and non/government opportunities.

I would love to know what tactics I can legally employ to try and force more cooperation between the different service providers. I often am just given lip service then ignored, or ever directly thwarted in my attempts to work together.

Helping the state to find grants for homes that are being differed due to roof leaks, drainage issues, mold, etc.so that agencies could be able to work on these homes to make them a safe and energy efficient home that our clients can live in.

Web data base that connects other entities.

Awareness training on nationally (DOE WAP) recognized best practices.

Our agency reaches out to County housing agencies to work with them on multifamily units. This leverages dollars between programs benefitting each programs bottom line and allows both organizations to better serve more clients. The state could be intentional about contacting each city or county housing authority to make them aware of the benefits of partnering with WAP agencies. The great think is this; there are virtually no deferrals because when a deficiency is found the maintenance staff for the housing authority fixes it and the weatherization process moves forward virtually uninterrupted. The per unit cost on these projects is extremely low.

A liaison or third party to provide assistance in getting the various entities to work together in the common goal of increasing the effectiveness and duration of measures and repairs installed in

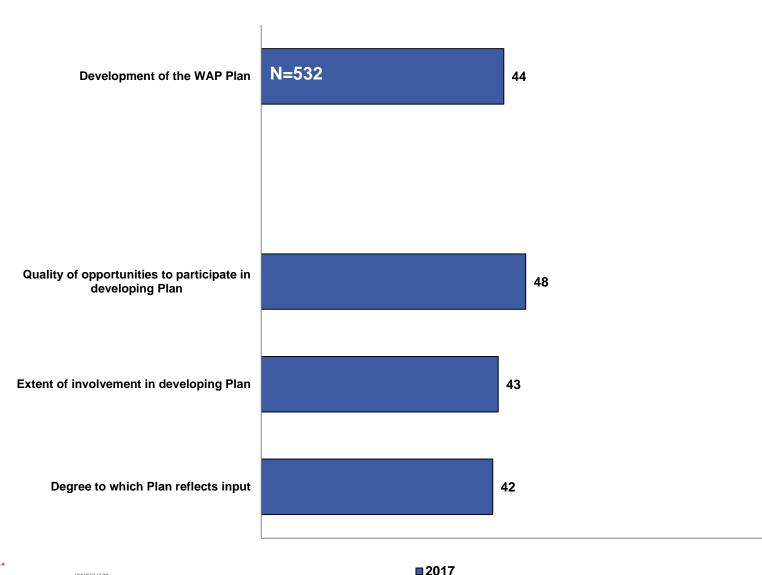
homes.





#### **Development of WAP Plan**

#### Impact 0.5



- The component score for Development of the WAP Plan is by far the lowest rated among sub-grantees (44). With an impact of 0.5, improvement in this area would not be inconsequential to improving CSI.
- Scores ranged among states from 0-80.
- The 'degree to which the Plan reflects sub-grantee input' receives the lowest rating of all attributes measured (42). This rating, along with the ratings for the other two plan development related attributes, indicate that sub-grantees are highly dissatisfied with their involvement.



#### How could the process of the developing the Plan be improved?

More regional meetings to discuss WAP options and strategies would be helpful.

Better understanding of plan requirements and more participation in development.

I would like to have more time to talk with my staff and get their perspective on the plan. The turn around time for input did not allow me the opportunity to review the plan with all my staff and discuss any impacts on the day to day work.

More involvement with the people using it and a less rigid framework.

The policy advisory council and the network should be solicited for input in June. Instead, the PAC is told what is going to be in the plan in December.

Having a roundtable discussion to get the agency's feedback and opinion on things.

Request input earlier and pay more attention to sub grantee concerns of implementing some of the newer regulations.

If each State is responsible for input while developing the Plan, each State's administrative staff should involve dissemination of topics and opportunities for input with the statewide network of service providers. I am not aware of any involvement in this particular facet of planning.



# What training and technical assistance for developing the Plan would you recommend DOE WAP provide to the State?

I believe that the DOE should lay out the minimums that are required and then have a sit down on the existing state plan for that state and here are best practices from other states or this is what seems to work. You could also have states comment on what worked and didn't work on previous state plans.

Quarterly training with special workgroups.

Training and technical assistance should be done regionally in the state to cut down on travel time.

Assistance in developing a comprehensive needs assessment for the state (addressing the housing stock, local agency needs, and services being provided by other programs) and developing a state Plan from the needs assessment.

I would recommend that the State receive training on any changes that may affect the plan and allow the State time to review those changes with the contractors so we all understand the impacts on the local programs.

The State needs to better understand energy efficiency as a whole as it relates to the WAP program. A better understanding of the devices we install, why we install them, and how they save energy would be helpful. Also, training on the energy audit process would again be helpful for the State.

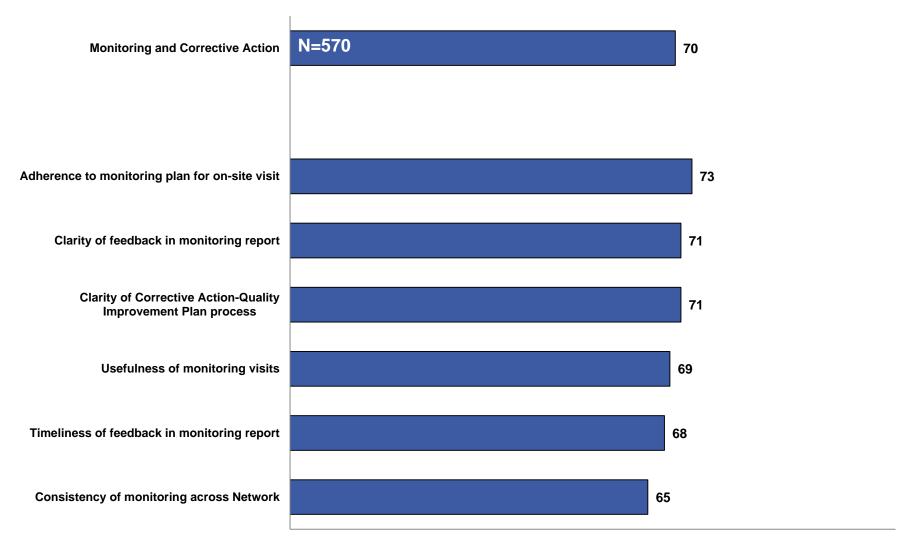
More input form the Agencies actually DOING the work and providing services is needed.

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## **Monitoring and Corrective Action**

#### Impact 0.4



**2017** 

- Corrective Action is one of the highest rated components at 70. With an impact of 0.4, efforts to improve in this area would be less fruitful than efforts in other areas in improving CSI.
- Scores among states ranged from 37-100.
- 'Consistency of monitoring across the Network' is the lowest rated attribute at 65.



#### What, if any, suggestions do you have for how to improve the monitoring process?

Have field monitors specialize;
they work across 4, very
complex programs and having a
monitor that understands and
can contribute to Wx is rare. The
breadth of technical responsibility
is too great.

Require monitors to be more open to agency needs to address local housing stock.

Greater consistency in monitoring visit and standards checked.

Feedback onsite. If a problem is seen it should be discussed there. The monitors should also welcome that open discussion onsite.

Sick and tired of the "gotcha" monitoring. Monitoring should be correct action, but willing to strive toward T&TA in the end.

Agencies should all be preforming the same type of task basically, but with guidance when not doing so, rather than making the agencies feel like its a witch hunt.

Have all QC monitors share their reports with each other. That way they would be more consistent.

Monitoring should be conducted more often than annually. Field monitoring should be held over a period of a couple of days therefore giving the monitor the opportunity to provide adequate T&TA for areas identified as needing corrective action.



# What technical assistance would you recommend DOE WAP provide to the State regarding the grant monitoring process?

Continue to devote time at training sessions (e.g. the Energy Conference, the program year policy review, and the mid-year policy review) to very specific items that WILL be considered compliance issues if they are not adhered to. I know some of this has been done recently, but I think more would be beneficial to minimize the number of "surprise" compliance issues that show up in monitoring reports.

Keep appointments as scheduled, provide an agenda, answer questions, respect agency time, and are knowledgeable about the program.

Training on exact interpretation of contract requirements and what practices are acceptable or unacceptable. A standard universal monitoring response tool needs to be developed and utilized.

DOE WAP should provide the State with clear expectations of the monitoring process. The monitors do not seem to agree on what is expected.

Make it uniform across the states.

The monitors definitely need more training about WAP measures and program administration. They are insensitive often and closed minded. They need sensitivity training as well. Many are often very defensive and looking to nail you on anything that is out of order even slightly.

#### Communications

Frequent, predictable communications from the state

MAJOR THEMES

Collaboration with subgrantees brings buy-in from subgrantees

Opportunities for less-formal interaction with state staff

# Partnerships

State WAP office is an active partner with other relevant state agencies

MAJOR THEMES State office engages with utilities and other large entities on behalf of network

State communicates regularly with stakeholders and supports network partnerships

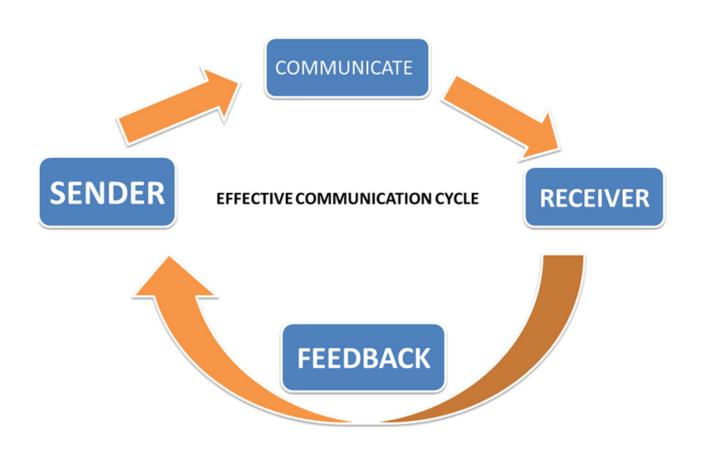
# Massachusetts Communication & Partnerships Best Practices



#### Massachusetts WAP

- ▶ DOE funded at approximately \$6+ million
- ▶ Unit production goal for PY 2017 is 900 units
- ▶ Grantee staff of 4
- ▶ 12 WAP Subgrantees and 6 subcontract agencies (total 18 local agencies)
- ► ACSI score of 89 on communication (ranked 3<sup>rd</sup>)
- ► ACSI score of 88 on partnerships (ranked 2<sup>nd</sup>)

## **Effective Communication**



#### Information Memorandums

- Development of a series of Information Memorandums (IMs) to disseminate information to the state WAP network
  - Mirrors the DOE WPN format
  - IMs detail anything the Grantee needs to pass along to the Subgrantee network:
    - DOE or state policy guidance (updated H&S plan, gas leak policy, etc.)
    - Critical meetings (State Plan preliminary meeting, Public Hearing, etc.)
    - Required reporting to Grantee (historic preservation, leveraging, etc.)
    - Annual WAP budget allocations
    - State monthly monitoring schedule for WAP and HEARTWAP

# WAP Program Meetings

- ► DHCD WAP Program Directors' Meetings
  - Typically held quarterly between Grantee WAP staff and Subgrantee WAP Directors/Program Managers
  - In-person meetings
  - Overview of many topics such as:
    - Annual production update
    - ✓ State plan overview
    - Policy changes
    - ✓ Technical updates
    - ✓ Misc. related topics like ACSI results discussion, etc.
  - Subgrantees can interact and have side conversations

# WAP Technical Meetings

- DHCD WAP technical meetings
  - Typically held quarterly between Grantee WAP technical staff and Subgrantee WAP Auditors / QCIs
  - In-person meetings
  - Overview of a variety of technical topics such as:
    - ASHRAE 62.2-2016
    - Blower Door testing
    - CAZ testing
    - New DHCD policies (vermiculite policy, gas leak policy, etc.)

## Constant Subgrantee Interaction

- Relationship between Grantee and Subgrantee needs to be collaborative and not adversarial
- Open Communication lines between Grantee and Subgrantees
  - Grantee WAP staff should respond to Subgrantee questions/inquiries with 1 business day
- Field Monitors should use time at Subgrantees to engage open communication
  - 2 Massachusetts WAP monitors are in the field 4 days per week at different agencies
  - Monitors provide updates at weekly staff meeting to WAP Program Manager

## **Partnerships**

- ► Massachusetts' WAP leverages a lot of utility funds, so MA DHCD partners with several utility & local community action agency stakeholder groups:
  - ► Low-Income Best Practices group (LIBP)
  - ► Low-Income Energy Advisory Network (LEAN)
  - Massachusetts Energy Director's Association (MEDA)
- Attend meetings and provide WAP updates to build a working relationship

## Partnerships

- ► Take the initiative to make connections!
- Connect with utility residential program staff
- Connect with other in-state offices
  - ► Manufactured housing commission
  - ► Environmental office (radon, lead, etc.)
- Connect with other states' WAP Managers (foster regional partnerships)

#### Contact

**Eric Beaton** 

Supervisor, Energy Conservation Unit

Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development

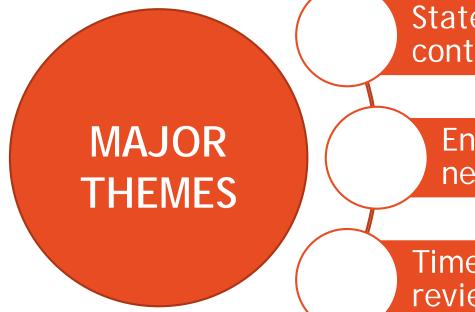
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 300, Boston, MA. 02114

617-573-1428

eric.beaton@state.ma.us

# Questions and Discussion

# State Plan Development



State plan development a continuous process

Engagement of subgrantee network and PAC in the process

Timely submission and prereviews from project officer

# Oklahoma DOE WAP State Plan Development Best Practices







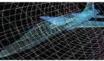














# **State Plan DOE Regulations**

#### 10 CFR 440.14(a)

A State Plan must be drafted and a State must provide <u>at least 10</u> days notice to Subgrantees and the public, of a hearing, to receive comments on a proposed State plan. The State must prepare a transcript of the hearing.





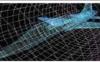














#### **State Plan DOE Regulations**

#### 10 CFR 440.14(b)

#### A drafted State Plan must include:

- Identify weatherization projects
- Be made available throughout the State prior to hearing
- Type of weatherization work, area to be served
- Estimated amount of energy to be conserved, number of units
- Tentative Allocation and Subgrantee Budgets
- Planned Production Units
- State Plan Implementation Plan



















#### **State Plan DOE Regulations**

#### 10 CFR 440.14(b)

#### A drafted State Plan should include (continued):

- Effectiveness analysis of weatherization projects
- Project Selection methods
- Prioritization methods
- Sources of labor
- Leveraged resources
- ACPU (Average Cost Per Unit)
- Admin funds allocation procedure to Subgrantees
- Energy Audit procedures
- Definitions (low income, children)





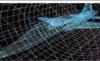














#### **State Plan DOE Regulations**

#### 10 CFR 440.14(b)

After the public hearing, a final State Plan, to include a copy of the public hearing transcript, must be submitted as part of the DOE application.

















#### **OK State Plan Development BEFORE ACSI**

- State Plan Process Begins October
  - Oklahoma is an April 1 state
- Upcoming State Plan dates are sent to Subgrantees (December)
- State Plan is first reviewed by ODOC staff (December/January)

- Draft sent to Subgrantees before public (mid January)
- Policy Advisory Council reviews (mid January)

















#### **OK State Plan Development BEFORE ACSI**

- DOE Project Officer Informal Review (end of January/early Feb)
- Draft State Plan released to Public (10 days before public hearing)
- Public Hearing held (early to mid February)
- Updates made to State Plan after comment review
- Submit to DOE (mid to end of February)

















#### Why does it work for OK?

- Subgrantees are all Community Action Agencies
- Strong ODOC partnership with Subgrantees
  - Ongoing communication at all levels
  - Administer multiple grants
- Strong State partnership with CAA Oklahoma Association (EDs)
  - Unique partnership, very close relationship
- State WAP presence at monthly weatherization advisory council meetings
- Discussion about State Plan with Subgrantees frequently





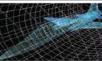














#### **New Program Manager Helps**

 Written State Plan calendar/process, including deadlines and contact persons, both internally and externally

PAC Save the Date: December 1st

Kim – New Pioneer promo of Public Hearing (Jan 23); Bryan – Website with Public Hearing – put docs live?

January 3<sup>rd</sup> – Important Dates Email Out to Subgrantees

- Supportive ODOC management and organizational structure
- Utilizing DOE's Training Resources
   e.g. DOE Planning Calendar Training Presentation

















#### **New Program Manager Helps**

- Constant communication with DOE Project Officer
  - Bi-weekly prescheduled phone calls
- Googling other States' plans
- Preexisting, easily fillable Excel spreadsheets for PAGE budget
- Asking lots of questions both internally and externally





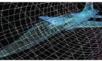














#### Feedback from ACSI Survey

- "Our state does an excellent job in forming the state plan with input from all our Subgrantees and networking group"
- "the WAP association conducts monthly meetings with State WAP in attendance

   this provides the agency staff with excellent opportunities for communication"
- "Need webinars for additional participation"
- "Request input earlier and pay more attention to sub grantee concerns of implementing some of the newer regulations."
- "Need to have more time to review the Plan"



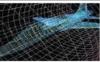














#### **DOE18 State Plan Process Changes Based on ACSI**

- Allowed for a 30 day public comment period (January 18<sup>th</sup> February 16<sup>th</sup>)
- Held a webinar for Subgrantees to walk them through the State Plan documents.





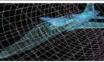












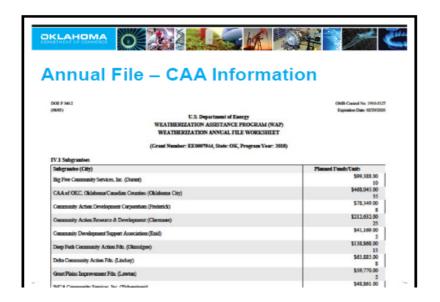




#### **DOE WAP Oklahoma 2018 State Plan**

- SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance)
- Annual File (CAA information and allocations)
- Budget and Budget Justification (Overall
- · Master File (Policy and Procedures)









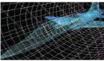




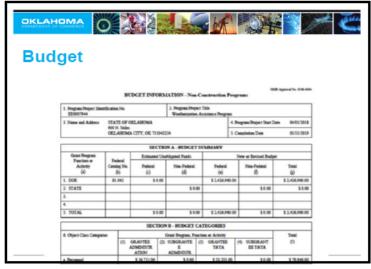




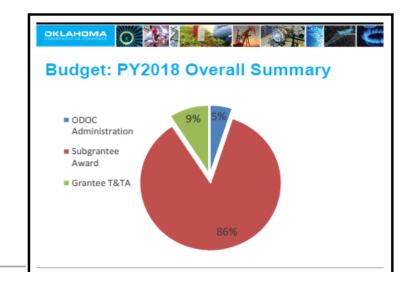


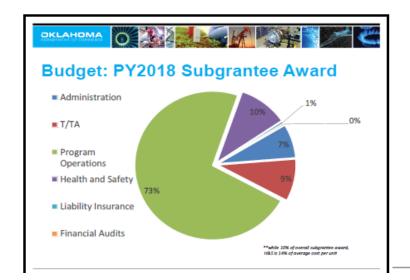












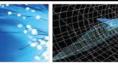














#### **Future State Plan Process Improvements**

- Begin planning process earlier (instead of October, start May)
- Set the next PAC to meet in June beginning of DOE 19 planning
- Continue to improve on State Plan training opportunities for Subgrantees
- Brainstorm other ways to involve Subgrantees much earlier in the planning process.

# DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

# Questions and Discussion

#### Monitoring

State monitoring is consistent and tied to clear standards

MAJOR THEMES State monitoring is focused on program improvement

State monitoring procedures minimize burden on all parties

# IMPORTANCE OF MONITORING

Troy Cucchiara, MFA

# Prime the Mind

• Why do we even need to monitor?

# If you were a funder....

- What would be your biggest priority?
- Responsible use of funds
- Adherence to regulations
- Prevent fraud



## What can be learned from being monitored?

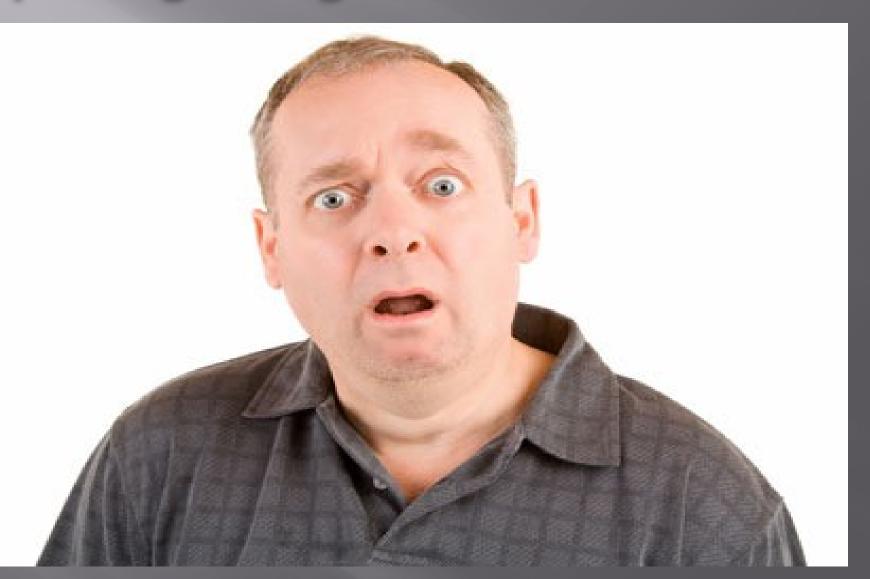
- External Audits
- Funder Monitoring

What was fair or unfair about their approach?

# Preparing Subgrantees for Monitoring

- List
- Hov
- Mon
- Mon
- Reg
- Che

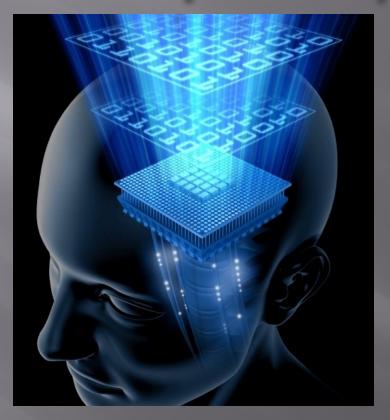
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# Monitoring Tool Example

- Fiscal Checklist
- General Monitoring Tool
- Programmatic Monitoring Tool
- Technical Monitoring Tool

### Transparency



Think of an example in your mind where there was a lack of transparency



### Three Possibilities

Found it and did nothing



Did not find it



Found it and did something



#### Number of existing Subgrantees in NM



# Breakdown of Subgrantee monitoring categories in NM

- Desk Monitoring
- Fiscal
- Programmatic
- Technical
- Unit Inspection

# Desk Monitoring

- All units reviewed prior to approval, payment, or reporting
- Obvious items that look out of range are questioned
- Results in constant dialogue
- Prevents ineligible costs
- Can flag units of later inspection
  - Examples of insulation and furnace

# Fiscal Monitoring

- Follows 2 CFR 200
- The same monitoring process and tool is used for all federal programs
- Include fiscal test
- External auditor findings are reviewed and followed up on when necessary

# Think of a program you do not support



- Think of all your criticisms of that program
- Can they be applied to your program?
- Find weaknesses and improve
- Can you think like and auditor for the fiscal monitoring piece?

# Programmatic Monitoring

- Program specific
- Based on production, 10 CFR 440, WPNs, and 2 CFR 200
- Include looking at other funding source requirements
- Previous year findings and concerns corrective plan is reviewed for application

# What do you want?

- Program to succeed
- Find unbiased facts

- Find smaller and smaller things to strengthen
- May need to change hats for training

# Technical Monitoring

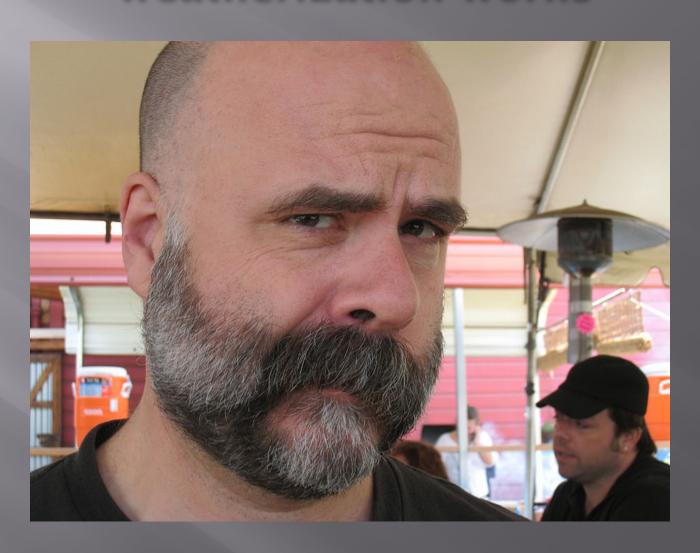
- Health and Safety is big player
- Based on 10 CFR 440, WPNs, local codes, and SWS
- Monitoring tool review before and after visits
- File and audit review
- Site visits include assessment, work in progress, and final inspection
- Usually results in Tier 2 training
- Previous findings and concerns are reviewed

# Technical Monitoring



Habits either show themselves or someone deserves an Oscar.

# Think of someone who does not believe weatherization works



# Think of someone who does not believe weatherization works

- Does the agency's work prove them otherwise?
- Is the agency operating in a safe manner?
- Can all the funds spent be justified?
- Are your methods of monitoring strong enough to turn this person around, even if there are findings?

# Unit Inspections

- Follows Quality Work Plan, 5 to 10 percent QCI
- Selected either randomly or from desk monitoring
- Agencies given 2 to 4 week notice
- Detailed file review
- All diagnostic tests and envelope examination
- Client interviewed
- Corrections may be in the near to immediate future
- Tier 1 training may result
- Transparency works both ways

# Finding or Not?

- What do you consider finding?
- Is it just a word, what does it mean to your Subgrantees?
- What about when agency has been struggling through something
- Or when an agency has reached out to you for guidance ahead of time
- When it is just bad luck and not a pattern

# Finding Etiquite

- Should be clear and concise
- Good justification for the finding
- Included in post interview
- Attach a reference

# Writing the Letter

- Think of how it feels to receive a letter with similar
- Corrective action
- Training
- Include best practices noticed
- Send within decent time frame (we send within 30 days)
- Be clear about when response is expected
- Follow up

# Questions and Discussion