



Department of Energy Weatherization Assistance Program

2019 Grantee Customer Satisfaction Survey

Executive Summary
May 2019

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About CFI Group

- Founded in 1988
- Founding partner of the ACSI
- Patent holder of the modeling engine used to compute the ACSI
- Predictive analytics software and professional services
- Serving a global list of clients from 6 offices on 4 continents
- Providing “actionable” customer feedback insights based on the science of the ACSI



CFI GROUP WORLDWIDE

USA - Ann Arbor, MI

ENGLAND – London

ITALY – Milan

CHINA - Shanghai

SWEDEN – Stockholm

BRAZIL - Porto Alegre

Definitions

Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI)

The CSI is the weighted average of three questions that ask directly about customer satisfaction.

- > *Overall, how satisfied are you with the services provided by DOE WAP?*
- > *How well do the services from DOE WAP meet your expectations?*
- > *How do the services from DOE WAP compare to an ideal grant awarding agency?*

Drivers (of Satisfaction)

The aspects of the customer experience measured in the survey by a series of rated questions. Drivers for this survey include:

- > Training Provided by Third Parties
- > Grant Monitoring and Corrective Action
- > Plan Review and Acceptance
- > Communication
- > Technical Assistance

Outcome Behaviors

- > Represents the desired behaviors that result from changes in CSI.
- > Future Behaviors in this study include:
 - > *How confident are you that the DOE WAP is fulfilling its mission of supporting the Grantees in their efforts to assist low-income families?*
 - > *How much do you trust DOE WAP to work with you to meet your organization's needs?*

Future Behavior Score

- > Average respondent score for each rated future behavior.

Impact

- > Impacts are derived from a statistical analysis of the relationship between the drivers and satisfaction using the science of the ACSI methodology. Impacts quantify the relationship between each driver and the Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI). The impact is the predicted change in the CSI score that results from a 5-point change in a driver's score. For example, if the Plan Review and Acceptance driver has an impact of 1.1, we would expect CSI to increase by 1.1 points when the Plan Review and Acceptance driver score increases 5 points.

Confidence Intervals

- > A confidence interval is a range around a sample score that is likely to contain the true population score.
- > For this study, the confidence level used is 90%.

A Note About Scores

CFI Group recommends that scores be viewed on a continuum and that each organization use the results to identify strengths and areas of opportunity. To answer the question on how to interpret the strength of a particular score, one can use the below guideline.

Exceptional: 90-100

Excellent: 80-89

Good: 70-79

Average: 60-69

Below Average: Less than 60

The overall average 2018 Customer Satisfaction Index for the Federal Government is 69.

Program Overview and Methodology

Program Overview and Methodology

Background, Objectives, & Data Collection Overview

- The program objective was to measure grantee satisfaction with DOE WAP's training and technical assistance, grant monitoring, plan review and communication efforts.
- The questionnaire was developed by the Department of Energy's Weatherization Assistance Program (DOE WAP) and CFI Group.
- CFI Group hosted the survey via secure website and sent e-mail invites to state, territory, and tribal direct grantees.
- Data was collected between March 5, 2019 to April 1, 2019.
- Three survey reminder emails were sent to all non-responders.

Sample Size

- 59 surveys were sent and 48 were completed, resulting in a response rate of 81%. The average response rate for a study of this nature is 20-30%.

Executive Summary

Key Findings & Actionable Suggestions

Key Findings

Overall Findings

- The Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) for the Department of Energy's Weatherization Assistance Program (DOE WAP) improved from 67 in 2016 to 73 in 2019. This score is above the 2018 Federal Government benchmark of 69.

Grant Monitoring and Corrective Action

- Regarding *Grant Monitoring and Corrective Action*, good progress has been made since the baseline survey period (2016) resulting in performance scores for all attributes coming in at 70 or above in 2019. Comments from respondents also reflect positive progress in this area.

Actionable Suggestions

- *Grant Monitoring and Corrective Action* (72) and *Communication* (77) are the drivers that show the greatest improvement, both improving seven points compared to 2016.
- Based on current performance and impacts, the drivers considered key for further improving CSI are *Third Party Training* and *Grant Monitoring and Corrective Action*. Improving these areas will provide the greatest impact on the Customer Satisfaction Index.
- Further progress can be made by focusing on:
 - Providing clear monitoring feedback.
 - Delivering monitoring reports in a timely manner.
 - Assisting grantees with the development of corrective action plans.

Key Findings & Actionable Suggestions

Key Findings

Training Provided by Third Parties

- Performance scores for nearly all of the drivers of satisfaction show directional improvement except for *Third Party Training* (70) which is down two points.
- At the same time, the impact for *Third Party Training* increased, placing it among the top priorities for improvement.
- The specific area of concern regarding *Third Party Training* appears to be related to the 'quality of training' as the performance score has decreased from 81 to 75.


Actionable Suggestions

- For *Third Party Training*, the 'quality of the training' is rated lowest and appears to be the key area of concern among grantees. Consider the following when developing strategies for improvement:
 - Specific comments related to this training indicates there is some inconsistency in the quality of training available.
 - Respondents suggest a need for updating training and for providing training that is more targeted based on variations in geography and climate.
 - Training cost is also a concern based on low performance ratings and respondent comments. Some comments indicate the value of what is being provided is not commensurate with the cost. The travel costs associated with this training is also a concern for some.


Customer Satisfaction Index Results

SATISFACTION DRIVERS

70	1.3	Training Provided by Third Parties
72	1.2	Grant Monitoring and Corrective Action
72	1.1	Plan Review and Acceptance
77	0.9	Communication
74	0.5	Technical Assistance


 Scores represent your performance as rated by **your** customers



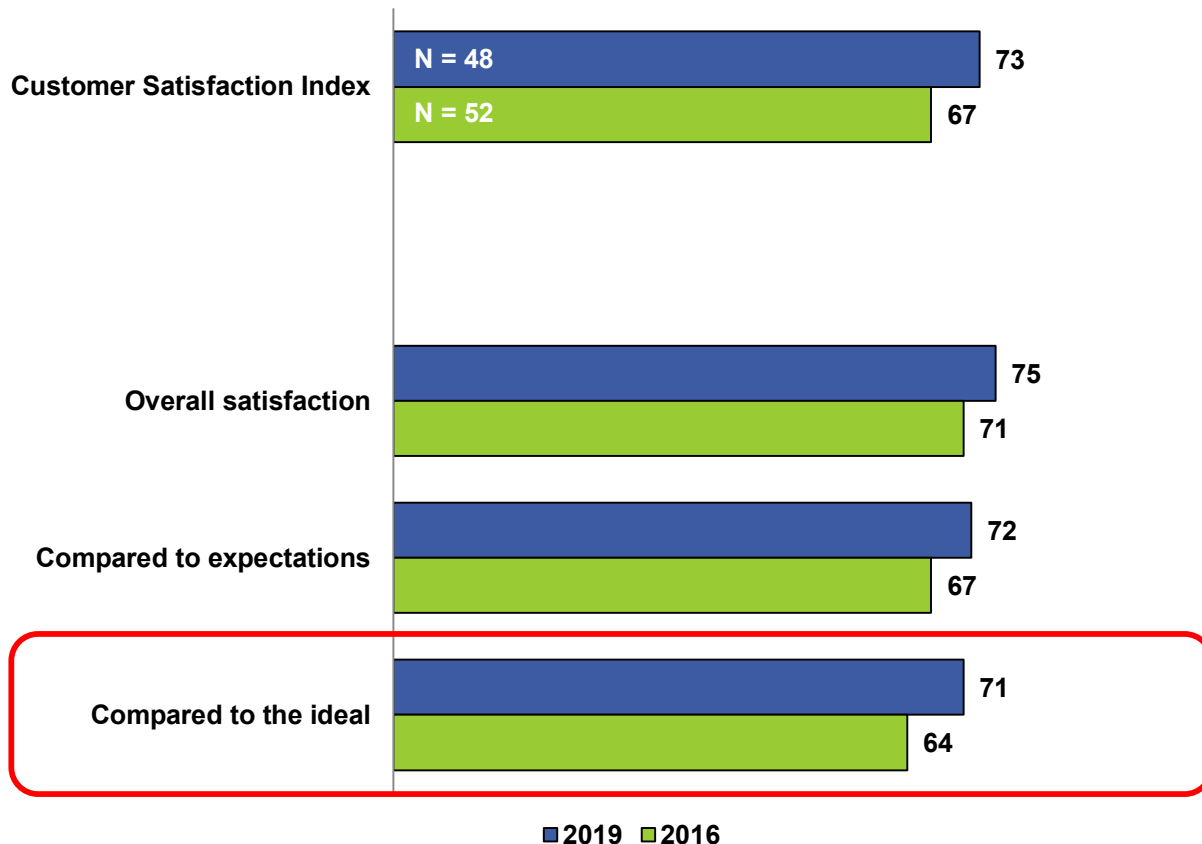
 Driver Impacts show you which driver has the most/least leverage – where improvements matter most/least to **your** customers

FUTURE BEHAVIORS

Mission Fulfillment	5.2	75
Meet Organization Needs	5.1	76

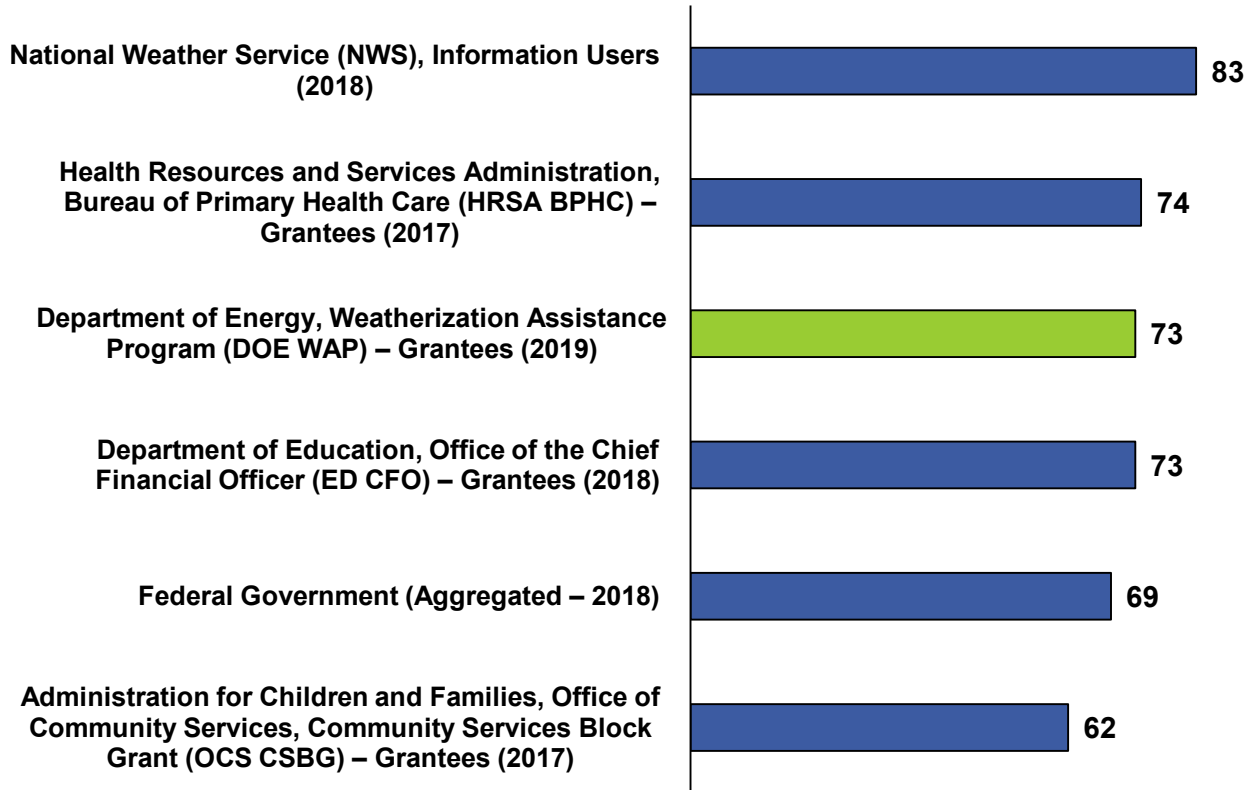
 Future Behavior Impacts represent the impact of CSI on the future behaviors of **your** customers

Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI)

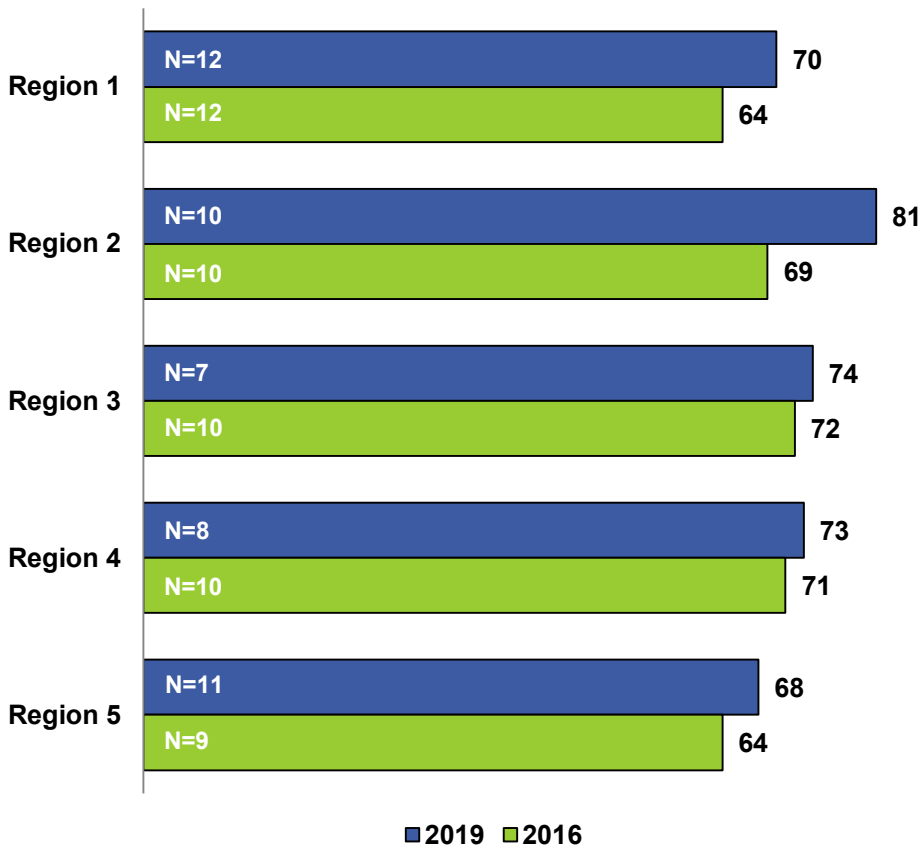


- The DOE WAP Customer Satisfaction Index (73) improved six points compared to 2016.
- Scores increased for all three areas that comprise CSI, which has driven the index higher.
- The largest score increase is for the metric which compares WAP to *the ideal grant awarding agency*. This score has improved seven points to 71.

Benchmarks

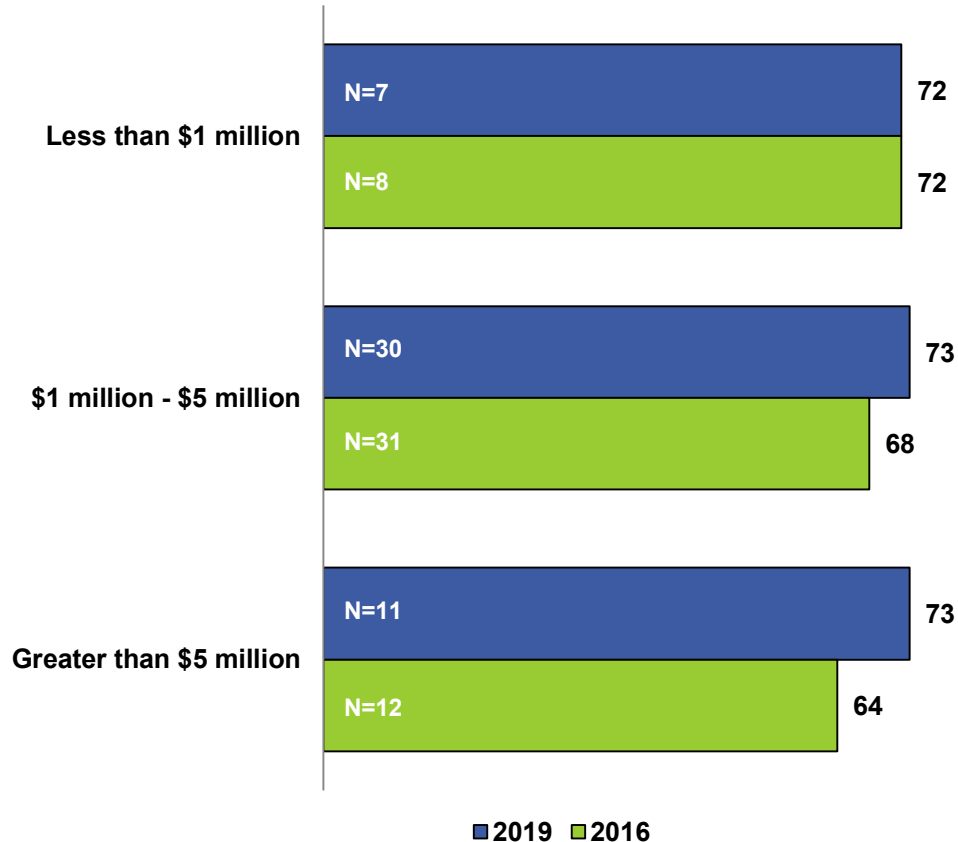


CSI by Region



- While there is still some disparity in CSI scores across the five regions, all five show signs of improved satisfaction.
- Region 2 experienced the greatest improvement over last year, up 12 points to 81.
- Region 5 remains the lowest scoring region but achieves a four-point increase in 2019.

CSI by Funding

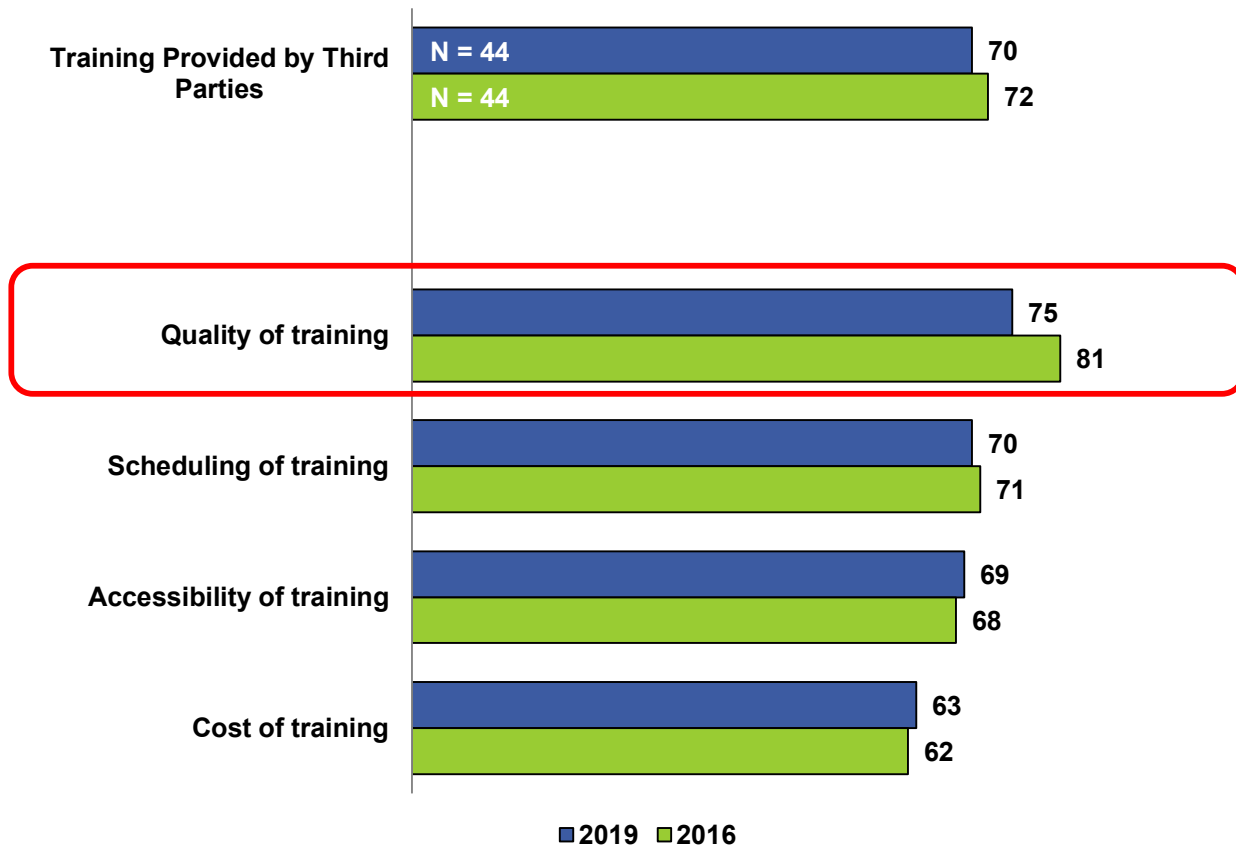


- This year's CSI for funding levels from less than \$1 million are comparable.
- CSI for both the \$1 million - \$5 million and the greater than \$5 million funding levels increase +5 points and +9 points, respectively.

Drivers of Satisfaction

Training Provided by Third Parties

Impact 1.3



- The driver score for *Training Provided by Third Parties* declined slightly and is the lowest scoring driver on the survey.
- The decline in the driver score is largely driven by a diminished score for the 'quality of training', down six points to 75 this year.
- This year, the impact for this driver is the highest of all drivers, at 1.3.

What recommendations do you have for improving the accessibility and quality of technical training provided by third-party sources?

Get rid of third-party sources for training and monitoring. The cost for these services is way too high for the benefit that they provide. DOE staff should be trained directly on how to implement their own program. The funds would be better spent on actual projects instead of high price conferences like the Home Performance Coalition conference at very expensive hotels in Chicago.

Training should be tailored to meet the needs of your geographic region.

Perhaps have a central repository of trainers (listing their areas of expertise) across the nation, so that Grantees could search the list and contact them.

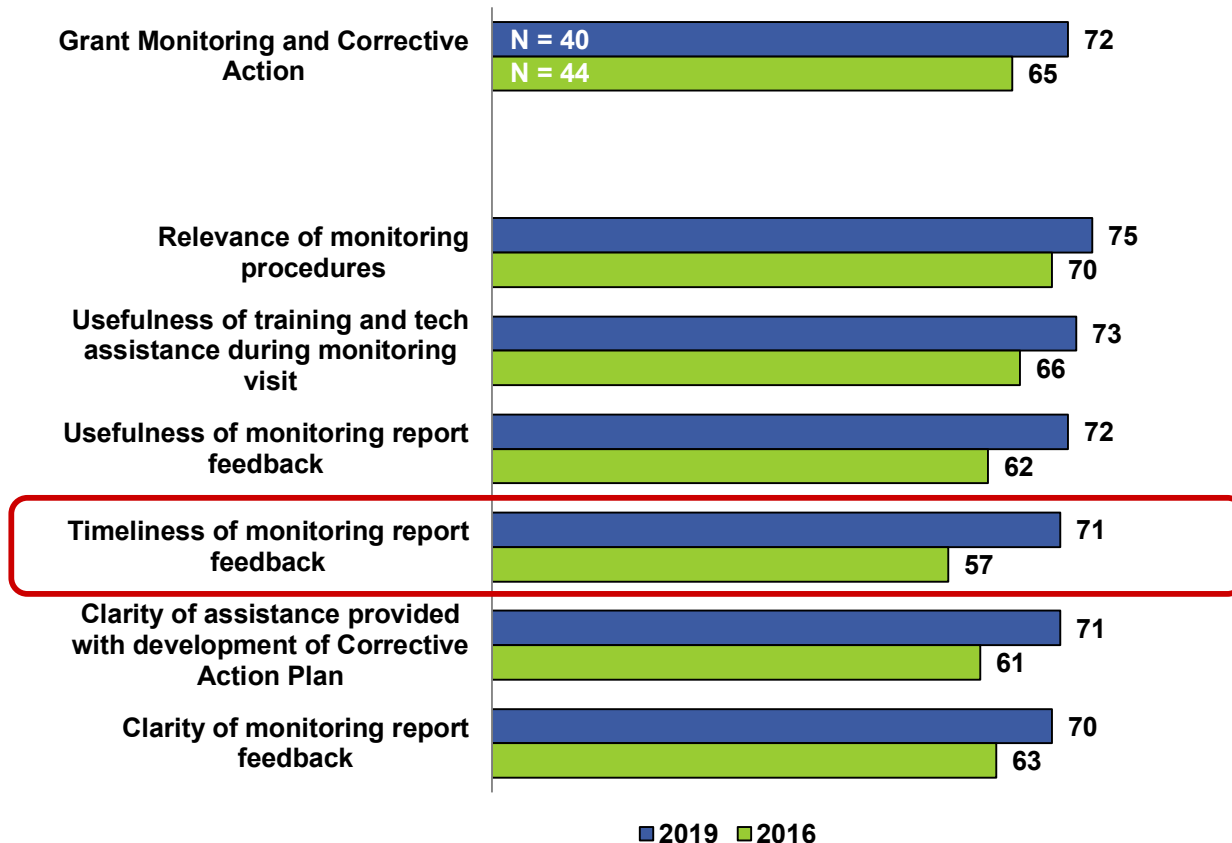
Sharing training resources with neighboring states.

They should be funded directly by DOE, not through state WAP grants.

Provide options or examples for procurement of a training center to come in provide training when state does not have a training center.

It would be helpful if DOE could keep their standardized training updated for IREC training centers as new guidance is released. Our Oklahoma training center has had to completely recreate our comprehensive trainings based on WPN 17-7, NREL JTA , and BPI 1200 standard updates because the DOE trainings available online have not been. It would also be helpful to provide training centers with guidance on how to modularize their training so that crews are not out of the field for a week at a time. Perhaps provide sample training plans and ideas for different ways to provide trainings based on topics/JTAs.

Many third party trainers offer to travel to provide training, however the perception of extensive leg work to identity and secure adequate or appropriate training and testing facilities appears to minimize the time, energy, and financial benefits of bring a training in vs traveling to them. A clear list of facility requirements publically available would be useful.



- The driver score for *Grant Monitoring and Corrective Action* improved seven points to 72 in 2019.
- The scores for all attributes that comprise this driver improved by at least five points. The area showing the greatest improvement is 'timeliness of monitoring report feedback' which has increased by 14 points to 71.

Grantees Monitored in 2017 – Score Table

	GROUP 1*		All Other Grantees (2019 Scores)
	2016 Scores	2019 Scores	
Sample Size	15	14	34
Plan Review and Acceptance	65	62	76
Ease of submitting the State Plan	65	66	75
Timeliness of response to inquiries	71	60	77
Clarity of feedback	64	62	75
Consistency of feedback	60	61	74
Usefulness of feedback	63	65	77
Relevancy of reasons for State Plan rejection	65	52	74
Grant Monitoring and Corrective Action	56	68	75
Relevance of monitoring procedures	63	72	77
Usefulness of training and tech assistance during monitoring visit	58	68	75
Clarity of monitoring report feedback	50	68	71
Usefulness of monitoring report feedback	51	66	75
Timeliness of monitoring report feedback	50	67	73
Clarity of assistance provided with development of Corrective Action Plan	56	66	74
Technical Assistance	65	66	77
Ability to answer questions	64	65	75
Timeliness of receiving requested information	64	66	78
Ability to direct you to useful resources or information	67	67	78
Responsiveness to tech assistance requests	69	67	82
Clarity and consistency of assistance provided	64	63	75
Effectiveness of tech assistance provided	60	67	77

***GROUP 1 = Grantees monitored in 2017: CA, CT, DC, IL, KY, MA, ME, MD, NA, ND, NE, NN, OR, RI, SC, TN, WV, WY**

Grantees Monitored in 2017 – Score Table (cont.)

	GROUP 1*		All Other Grantees (2019 Scores)
	2016 Scores	2019 Scores	
Sample Size	15	14	34
Training Provided by Third Parties	68	68	71
Accessibility of training	69	65	70
Scheduling of training	67	64	72
Cost of training	55	58	65
Quality of training	76	75	75
Communication	65	73	79
Effectiveness of program guidance	67	73	81
Clarity of guidance	65	72	75
Sufficiency of information provided	64	75	80
Customer Satisfaction Index	62	68	75
Overall satisfaction	65	71	76
Compared to expectations	61	67	75
Compared to the ideal	60	65	74
Mission Fulfillment	69	71	77
Meet Organization Needs	64	71	77

***GROUP 1 = Grantees monitored in 2017: CA, CT, DC, IL, KY, MA, ME, MD, NA, ND, NE, NN, OR, RI, SC, TN, WV, WY**

Grantees Monitored in 2018 – Score Table

	GROUP 2*		All Other Grantees
	2016 Scores	2019 Scores	
Sample Size	12	13	35
Plan Review and Acceptance	78	71	72
Ease of submitting the State Plan	80	70	73
Timeliness of response to inquiries	78	65	75
Clarity of feedback	80	75	70
Consistency of feedback	74	74	69
Usefulness of feedback	81	74	73
Relevancy of reasons for State Plan rejection	76	64	70
Grant Monitoring and Corrective Action	77	78	70
Relevance of monitoring procedures	80	76	75
Usefulness of training and tech assistance during monitoring visit	79	82	68
Clarity of monitoring report feedback	75	73	69
Usefulness of monitoring report feedback	75	77	70
Timeliness of monitoring report feedback	72	81	66
Clarity of assistance provided with development of Corrective Action Plan	71	76	68
Technical Assistance	78	80	71
Ability to answer questions	79	80	69
Timeliness of receiving requested information	75	77	74
Ability to direct you to useful resources or information	81	79	73
Responsiveness to tech assistance requests	78	81	76
Clarity and consistency of assistance provided	77	81	67
Effectiveness of tech assistance provided	79	81	72

***GROUP 2 = Grantees monitored in 2018: AK, CA, CT, FL, IA, IN, LA, MD, NC, NH, PR, RI, SC, WI**

Grantees Monitored in 2018 – Score Table (cont.)

	GROUP 2*		All Other Grantees (2019 Scores)
	2016 Scores	2019 Scores	
Sample Size	12	13	35
Training Provided by Third Parties	75	72	69
Accessibility of training	69	68	69
Scheduling of training	72	71	69
Cost of training	63	67	61
Quality of training	87	78	74
Communication	78	80	76
Effectiveness of program guidance	79	80	78
Clarity of guidance	79	79	73
Sufficiency of information provided	78	82	77
Customer Satisfaction Index	78	75	72
Overall satisfaction	80	76	75
Compared to expectations	77	75	71
Compared to the ideal	77	74	70
Mission Fulfillment	85	75	75
Meet Organization Needs	82	78	75

***GROUP 2 = Grantees monitored in 2018: AK, CA, CT, FL, IA, IN, LA, MD, NC, NH, PR, RI, SC, WI**

What suggestions do you have for how DOE WAP could improve its monitoring process?

Ensure relevant feedback is provided. Share best practices so we might improve.

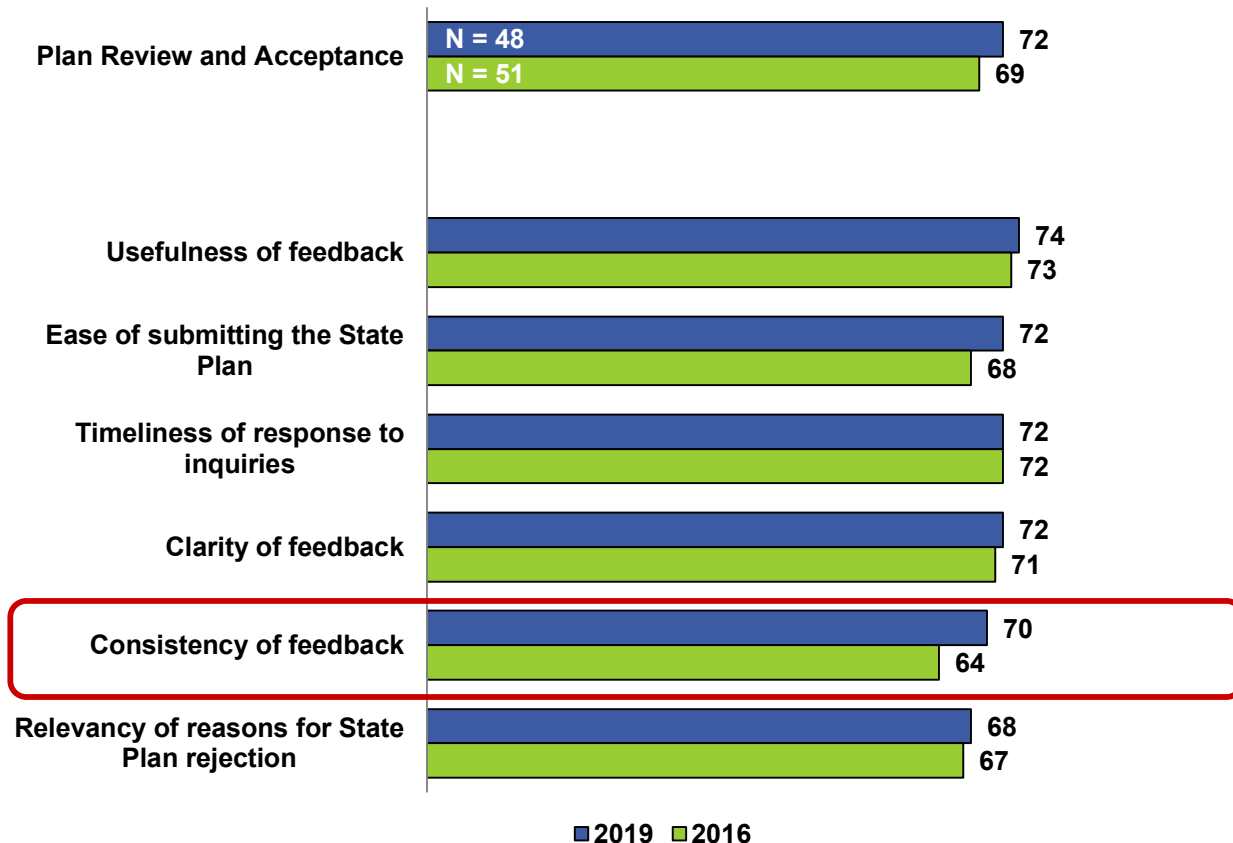
Ensure that monitoring processes are uniform across all Grantees.

Better instructions regarding the pre-monitoring visit information requested. We were not sure about what was being asked for in some instances.

It would be helpful to have the monitoring report within 30 - 60 days from date of exit. In 2016, we were monitored August 22-25, 2016, but we did not receive a monitoring report until March 2017.

Provide Grantees with any monitoring tools beyond those attached to WPN 16-4. Also supply a reference for what is being tested. Share monitoring results from other Grantees reviews to help the national network learn and correct problems sooner. Hold monitoring webinars on preparing for a review on an annual basis. Send Grantees a list of important items to implement at the start of each program year with the assumption those items will be monitored.

Updated forms. Provide feedback on common findings and best practices at national conferences.



- The driver score for *Plan Review and Acceptance* increased three points to 72.
- While *Plan Review and Acceptance* is among the lower scoring drivers, its moderate impact makes it an area worth considering when planning future initiatives to improve CSI.
- This year, nearly all attributes associated to *Plan Review and Acceptance* improved, with 'consistency of feedback' increasing the most, from 64 to 70.

How could WAP improve the process for submitting the State Plan?

There just seemed to be too many reviewers in the mix which meant getting comments from one reviewer at one point in time and then additional comments from another reviewer at a later time. Better coordination of the process so that comments can be given by all reviewers at once would make it more efficient and eliminate redundancy.

Releasing the guidance as early in December as possible is helpful. I think our PO did a great job this year working with our agency and the FAO to make sure our plan approval was received in time.

The budget template should be simplified. This is the most cumbersome budget of any federal grant we administer.

The editing format in PAGE makes it difficult to edit the narrative. The need to move between boxes makes it slow to edit.

The State Plan process could be improved by making it easier to format, copy, and paste. For example, I have started creating the state plan outside of PAGE, because font/formatting is often inconsistent (even though PAGE indicates its the same font or font size). It would also be helpful if I could customize which parts of the State Plan are printable. It would also be helpful if we could move to a 3 year State Plan, with shorter annual plans.

What training do you need regarding the State Plan?

Overall training is not needed at this time. However, the Application Instructions are limited in scope and often don't answer our specific questions. We have had inconsistent response time and detailed understanding of our questions when we have turned to our Project Officer. Often, during the State Plan development, we are working to meet deadlines, and wait time during back and forth is not possible.

Training pertinent to the review process might be helpful.

We would benefit from better understanding how to complete the budget section, as the Administrative section can be confusing.

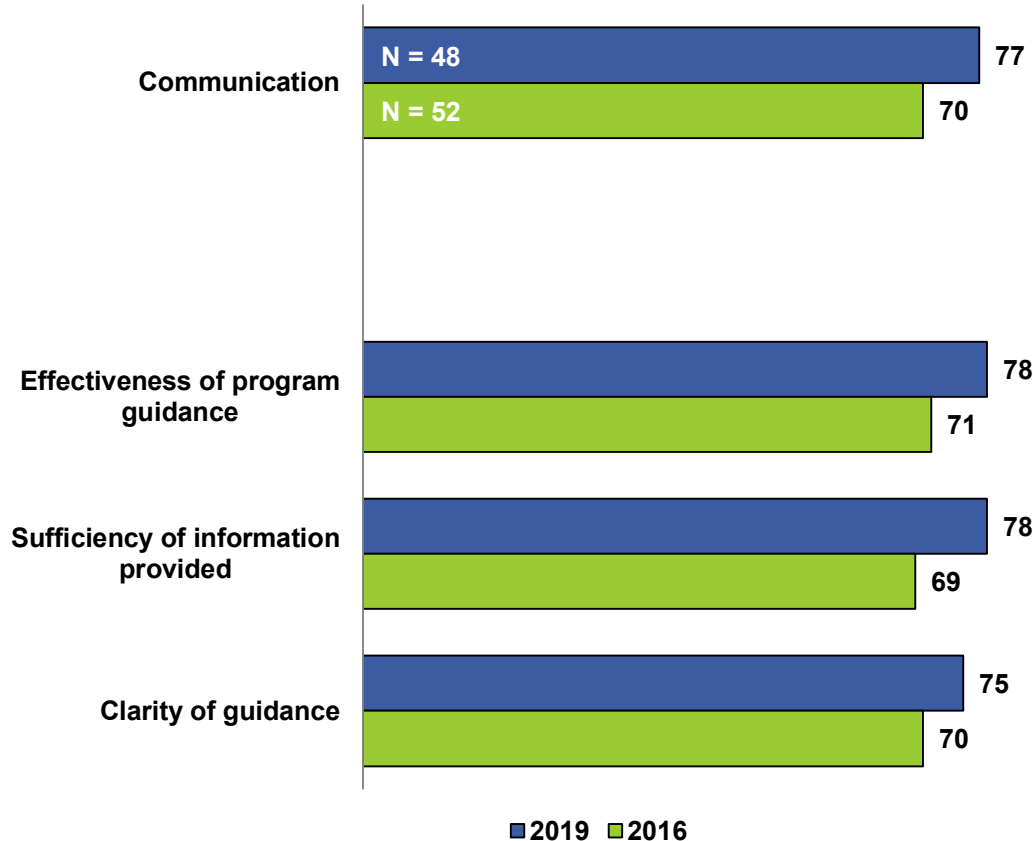
Training via webinar each year on the changes to the WAP Guidance and Application Instructions packet.

The information provided at the NASCSP conferences are plenty of training as it is.

I loved the webinar reviewing the redline WPN (19-1). If those webinars could continue at the beginning of each program year - that would be fantastic!

PAGE training, please!!!

Training on what is the minimum required information on how to complete the State Plan in PAGE. Perhaps, provide a sample State Plan.



- The score for *Communication* (77) improved seven points compared to 2016.
- While the impact for this driver is relatively low, the performance score is the highest among all the drivers measured. Efforts to maintain this high level of performance will be important for maintaining the improved CSI.
- All of the related attributes showed improvement of between five and nine points, pushing the *Communication* score upward this year.

In what areas do you need more written guidance?

Policy Advisory Council, Capacity Issues at the Local and State level, how to effectively evaluate whether training needs are being met and where gaps in training are, Deferrals, Client Education, Incidental Repairs, NEAT/MHEA.

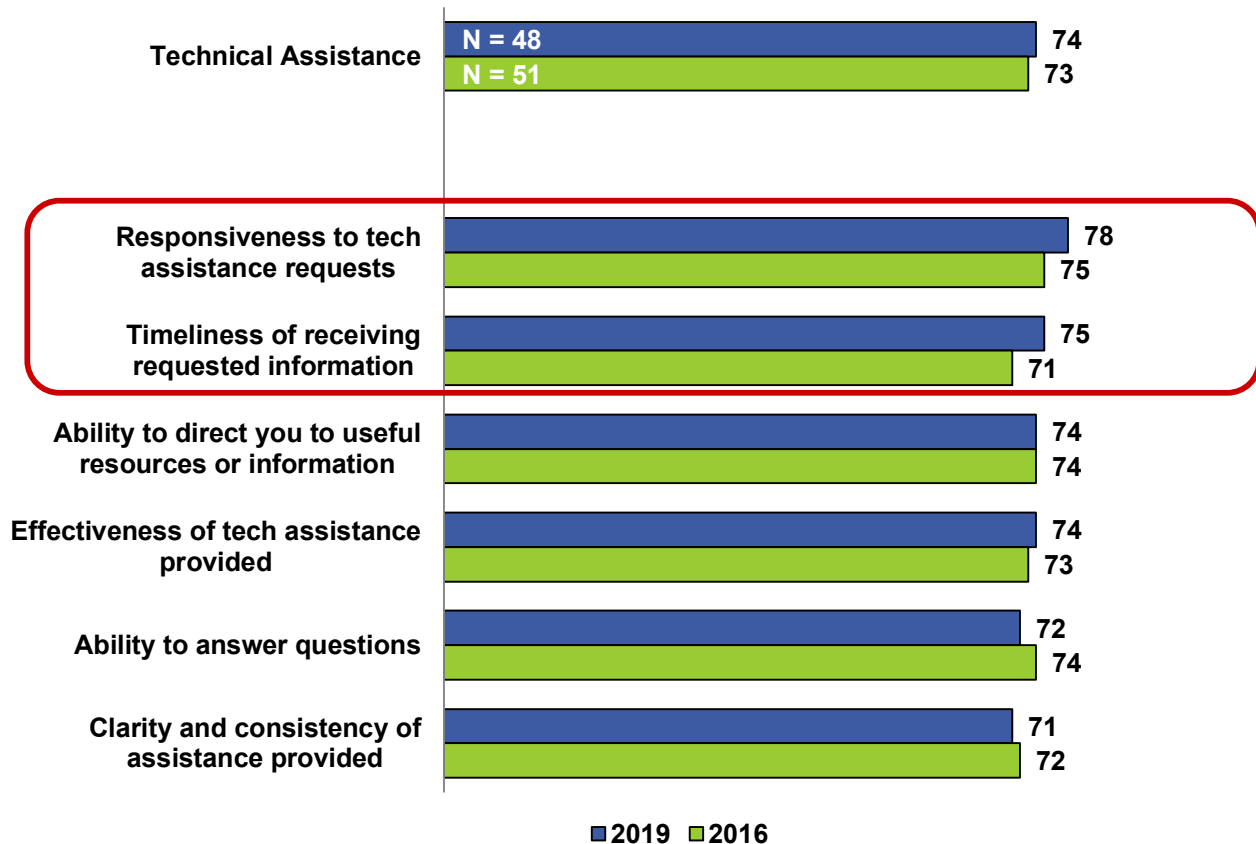
H&S Plan development, i.e. incidental repairs vs H&S vs ECMs.

We don't need more written guidance, however, we need clearer guidance.

Deferral solutions. Braided funding and how to utilize required DOE prioritization rules and encourage combined funding sources. Multi family guidance. How to address homes that have been weatherized but cannot be QCI'd due to client refusal, death of client, hospitalization, incarceration or client moved.

Often when written guidance is released, there are additional questions or clarifications that come up. A training/webinar run by DOE that addresses the changes and clarifying questions would be helpful. We have not received any guidance, clarifications or context for the guidance as items have been released, and it leaves us to guess the intention. When these items are released, it would be helpful to have webinars/guidance similar to the update sessions that occur at partnering conferences. This would increase accessibility to all grantees and could be done in a timeframe that is much closer to the release of guidance than conference sessions. exactly what the intention is.

Multi-family, as mentioned before. Additionally, we need the Special Terms and Conditions earlier than when we receive our award, because it takes our Legal team weeks to get our grant agreements back after we receive the Special Terms and Conditions, which causes a delay in getting funding to our Subgrantees.



- *Technical Assistance* remains one of the highest rated drivers of satisfaction (74). While this facet of the program has less impact on CSI than others, DOE should strive to maintain this high level of performance.
- Most *Technical Assistance* attribute scores are comparable to 2016. The two highest scoring attributes also experienced the greatest change since 2016 -- 'responsiveness to tech assistance requests' (+3) and 'timeliness of receiving requested information' (+4).

What training needs would you like DOE WAP to address?

Training on requests for materials which aren't listed in Appendix A. Suggestions for dealing with weatherization subgrantees who are at risk. Reviewing common Quality Control Inspection issues and how they're being addressed.

Help with creating forms for crews and field work, more templates and sample policy language. Training IREC accredited training centers on how to evaluate their own performance and how to identify gaps in training. It would be helpful if NEAT/MHEA program training was more available (directly from Oakridge), along with periodic FAQs and updated training videos.

As new guidance is released to the network, training on the details of that guidance, the purpose or intention and what changes DOE was working to ensure would be appreciated. We could envision a webinar being held and promoted with the states to explain the additional guidance and the intended changes/outcomes from that guidance. By doing this, it would help Grantees understand, but it would also help us ensure that Subgrantees understand the intended purpose and interpretation of changes and would expedite any changes rolling out in the field.

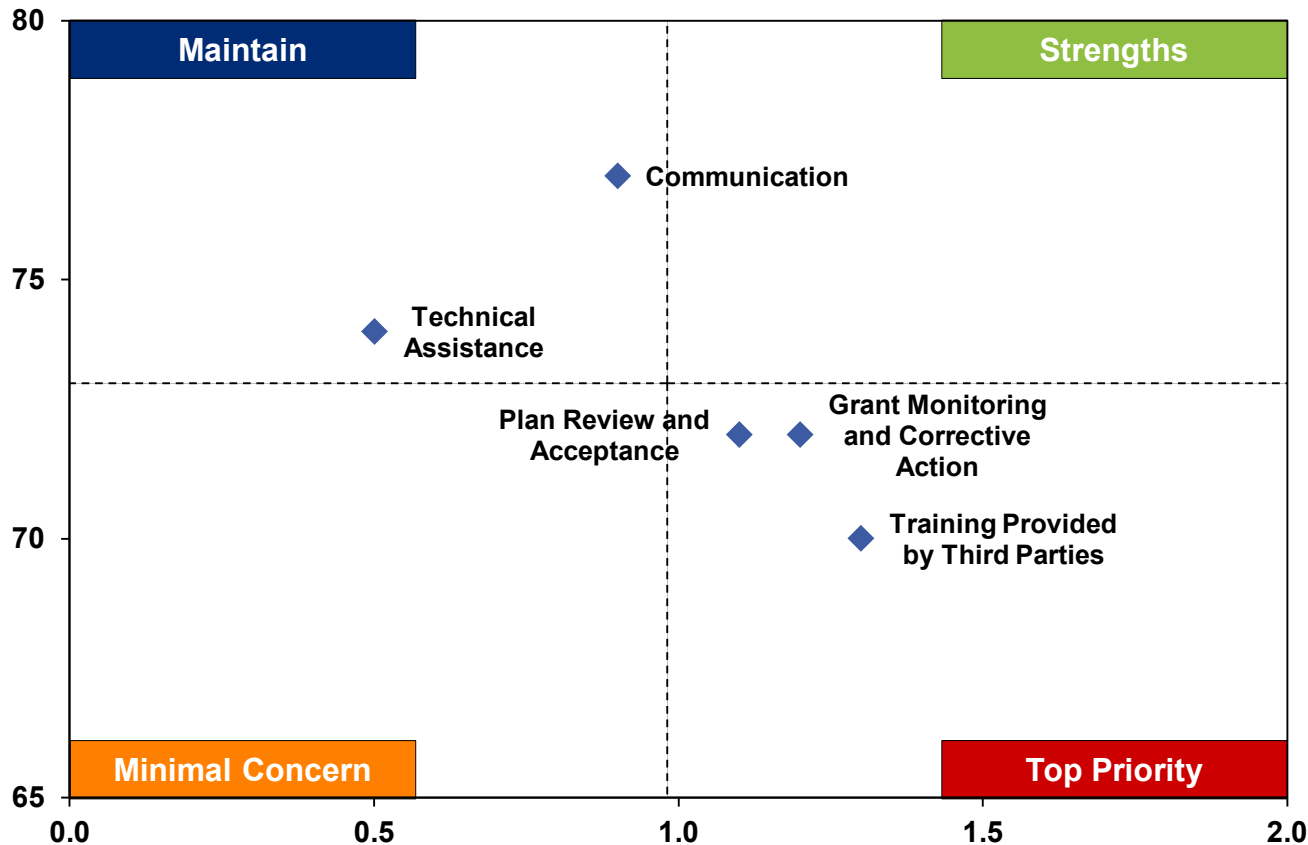
More training on H&S Plan development and relationship to budget.

Procurement training, both for fiscal and programmatic staff.

More training on the NEAT tool, and on procurement protocols.

More information and structure around multi-family. Regarding submitting requests and suggestions for training and processes to accomplish multi-family projects at a state level.

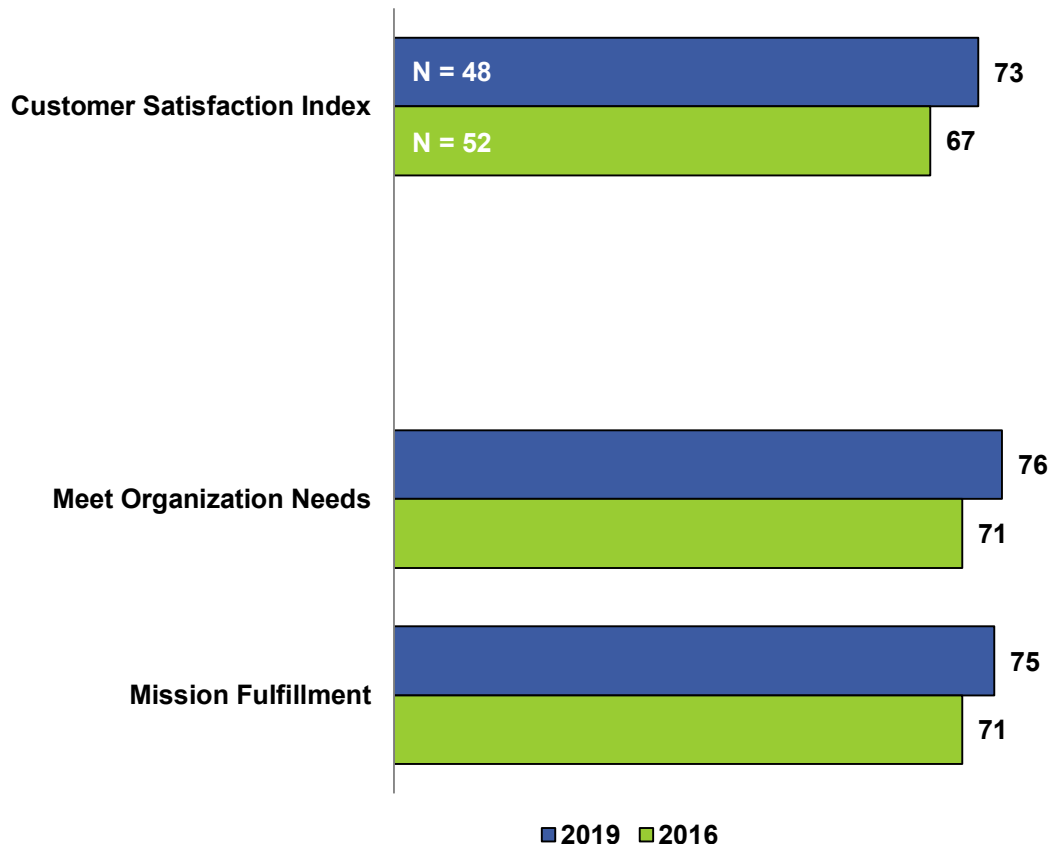
Priority Matrix



- The two areas offering the greatest opportunity for improvement are:
 - *Training Provided by Third Parties*
 - *Grant Monitoring and Corrective Action*
- These areas show below-average performance and above-average impact on CSI.
- The relatively high *Communication* score of 77 represents an area that is important to maintain going forward.

Future Behaviors

Future Behaviors



- As would be expected given the increase in the CSI, both future behavior scores improved compared to 2016.
- The score for how much grantees 'trust DOE WAP to work with you to meet your organization's needs' improved by five points to 76.
- The score for 'how well DOE WAP is fulfilling its mission of supporting the Grantees in their efforts to assist low-income families' improved by four points to 75.

Do you have any additional comments?

DOE has shown quantifiable effort in improving the communication and quality of assistance with WAP over the past 2 years.

It seems as though every year there are more and more regulations/requirements added to the program making it increasingly difficult for sub-grantees to deliver the program as the boots on the ground. Would it be possible to ease up and if programs are non-compliant, then place additional regulations/requirements on those programs?

DOE appears to be listening to the network in the changes they are making in existing policy and through the topics being discussed in the re-authorization.

The increased and improved communication, responsiveness at a leadership level, and overall efforts for continuous improvement by all staff are worthy and notable. We had a difficult contracting process and challenges with the transition to less experienced project officer, but have confidence that leadership are working to improve upon this year and to address our concerns.

Weatherization is a complex program that is constantly evolving. DOE is doing a good job so keep it up. DOE staff and Project Officers should get into the field as frequently as possible. This helps to see the challenges of the program and how changes to policies actually impact the work performed and the services provided. DOE's accessibility to state is great. Their presence and approachability at national conferences and training events is highly appreciated. We've appreciated the efforts made to increase communication. An area of continued focus is on the consistency and knowledge of Project Officers with the desired outcome of more uniformity.

Over the years, the investment that DOE has made toward assisting Grantees has significantly improved. Consistently in messaging from Project Officers is more evident when talking with other Grantees. We are finally all beginning to hear the same message.

Respondent Demographics

Respondent Demographics

	2016			2019		
	Percent	Frequency	CSI	Percent	Frequency	CSI
Geographic Region						
1	24%	12	64	25%	12	70
2	20%	10	69	21%	10	81
3	20%	10	72	15%	7	74
4	20%	10	71	17%	8	73
5	18%	9	64	23%	11	68
Number of Respondents		51			48	

Grantee Type						
State	92%	47	66	92%	44	72
Territory	8%	4	87	8%	4	81
Number of Respondents		51			48	

Funding						
Less than \$1 million	16%	8	72	15%	7	72
\$1 million - \$5 million	61%	31	68	63%	30	73
Greater than \$5 million	24%	12	64	23%	11	73
Number of Respondents		51			48	

Appendix A: Questionnaire

**U.S. Department of Energy
Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)
Satisfaction Survey 2019
Grantee**

Introduction

The U.S. Department of Energy's Weatherization Assistance Program (DOE WAP) seeks feedback from our Grantees. We expect the results of this survey to provide DOE WAP with information to inform our training and technical assistance efforts and assist us in identifying areas for improvement in service delivery.

Your participation, while voluntary, is critical for us to understand how well we are delivering service to you. This information will be used by DOE WAP to make improvements to ensure the best possible customer experience.

This survey is being administered by CFI Group, an independent third-party research group. Your answers will remain anonymous and will be combined with those from other respondents to identify opportunities for improvement.

This survey will take approximately 10-12 minutes and will be open through March 29, 2019. It is authorized by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget Control No. 1090-0007 which expires on September 30, 2021.

Plan Review and Acceptance

Please think about the State Plan most recently submitted to DOE WAP and the response you received from DOE WAP. Using a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is *poor* and 10 is *excellent*, please rate the following:

1. Ease of submitting the State Plan
2. Timeliness of DOE WAP response to your inquiries
3. Clarity of the feedback from DOE WAP
4. Consistency of the feedback from DOE WAP
5. Usefulness of the feedback from DOE WAP
6. Relevancy of reasons given for rejection of the State Plan

Open-Ended Question

7. How could WAP improve the process for submitting the State Plan?
8. What training do you need regarding the State Plan?

Grant Monitoring and Corrective Action

Please think about the monitoring activities conducted by DOE WAP. Using a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is *poor* and 10 is *excellent* please rate the following:

9. Relevance of the monitoring procedures
10. Usefulness of the training and technical assistance provided during the monitoring visit
11. Clarity of feedback provided in the monitoring report

Appendix A: Questionnaire

12. Usefulness of feedback provided in the monitoring report
13. Timeliness of feedback provided in the monitoring report
14. Clarity of the assistance DOE WAP personnel provided in the development of any Corrective Action Plan

Open-Ended Question

15. What suggestions do you have for how DOE WAP could improve its monitoring process?

Technical Assistance Provided by DOE WAP Staff

Please think about the Technical Assistance provided by DOE WAP staff. Using a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is *poor* and 10 is *excellent*, please rate the following:

16. Ability of DOE WAP staff to answer your questions about grant policies, procedures and regulations, performance and best practices
17. Timeliness of receiving requested information
18. Ability of DOE WAP staff to direct you to useful resources/information that address your concerns
19. Responsiveness of DOE WAP staff to your requests for technical assistance
20. Clarity and consistency of assistance/guidance provided
21. Effectiveness of the technical assistance provided by DOE WAP staff

Open-Ended Question

22. What training needs would you like DOE WAP to address?

Training Provided by Third Parties

Please think about the training provided by third-party sources, i.e., the Accredited Training Centers or other independent trainers. Using a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is *poor* and 10 is *excellent*, please rate the following:

23. Accessibility of training
24. Scheduling of training
25. Cost of training
26. Quality of training

Open-Ended Question

27. What recommendations do you have for improving the accessibility and quality of technical training provided by third-party sources?

Communication

Please think about DOE WAP's communication efforts. Using a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is *poor* and 10 is *excellent*, please rate the following:

28. Effectiveness of program guidance provided
29. Clarity of guidance provided
30. Sufficiency of information provided by DOE WAP to keep you informed

Open-Ended Question

Appendix A: Questionnaire

31. In what areas do you need more written guidance?

Overall Satisfaction

32. Overall, how satisfied are you with the services provided by DOE WAP? Please use a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is *very dissatisfied* and 10 is *very satisfied*?
33. How well do the services from DOE WAP meet your expectations? Please use a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 means *falls short of your expectations* and 10 means *exceeds your expectations*.
34. How do the services from DOE WAP compare to an ideal grant awarding agency? Please use a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 means *not very close to the ideal* and 10 means *very close to the ideal*.

Outcome Behaviors

35. How confident are you that DOE WAP is fulfilling its mission of supporting the Grantees in their efforts to assist low-income families? Please use a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 means *not very confident* and 10 means *very confident*.
36. How much do you trust DOE WAP to work with you to meet your organization's needs? Please use a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 means *do not trust at all* and 10 means *trust completely*.

Open-Ended Questions

37. Is there anything else you would like to comment on?

Closing

Thank you very much for providing your input. Your feedback is greatly appreciated.

Appendix B: National Score Tables

Respondent Score and Impact Table

	2016	2019	Aggregate Impact
	Scores		
Sample Size	52	48	
Plan Review and Acceptance	69	72	1.1
Ease of submitting the State Plan	68	72	--
Timeliness of response to inquiries	72	72	--
Clarity of feedback	71	72	--
Consistency of feedback	64	70	--
Usefulness of feedback	73	74	--
Relevancy of reasons for State Plan rejection	67	68	--
Grant Monitoring and Corrective Action	65	72	1.2
Relevance of monitoring procedures	70	75	--
Usefulness of training and tech assistance during monitoring visit	66	73	--
Clarity of monitoring report feedback	63	70	--
Usefulness of monitoring report feedback	62	72	--
Timeliness of monitoring report feedback	57	71	--
Clarity of assistance provided with development of Corrective Action Plan	61	71	--
Technical Assistance	73	74	0.5
Ability to answer questions	74	72	--
Timeliness of receiving requested information	71	75	--
Ability to direct you to useful resources or information	74	74	--
Responsiveness to tech assistance requests	75	78	--
Clarity and consistency of assistance provided	72	71	--
Effectiveness of tech assistance provided	73	74	--

Respondent Score and Impact Table

	2016	2019	Aggregate Impact
	Scores		
Sample Size	52	48	
Training Provided by Third Parties	72	70	1.3
Accessibility of training	68	69	--
Scheduling of training	71	70	--
Cost of training	62	63	--
Quality of training	81	75	--
Communication	70	77	0.9
Effectiveness of program guidance	71	78	--
Clarity of guidance	70	75	--
Sufficiency of information provided	69	78	--
Customer Satisfaction Index	67	73	N/A
Overall satisfaction	71	75	--
Compared to expectations	67	72	--
Compared to the ideal	64	71	--
Mission Fulfillment	71	75	5.2
Meet Organization Needs	71	76	5.1

Appendix C: Verbatim Responses

Appendix C: Verbatim

Q7. How could WAP improve the process for submitting the State Plan ?

- *All rejection items should be noted first time.*
- *Ask for a three-year plan at the beginning of each award cycle, with annual updates.*
- *Continue providing instructions on changes to the State Plan sections in a timely manner.*
- *Continue to take steps to be consistent, such as what's required in H&S Plan and/or the amount of detail required in any given section of the Plan. Overall, DOE program staff do a good job with Plan support and the assistance from the PAGE helpdesk is readily accessible and positive.*
- *DOE's sharing of the annual formula Grant Program Assessment tool is greatly appreciated. The tool's clarity and functionality can be an area of improvement. Highlighting the annual changes to the tool would also be beneficial*
- *Editor in PAGE could be improved.*
- *Estimating carryover is often difficult. Then building a budget based on an estimated amount seems ridiculous to me. Should be able to build a budget based just on allocation then modify after actual amount of carryover is known.*
- *Give quicker responses in regards to the documentation sent in.*
- *Having the grant application information out in November was terrific for the Program Year 2018. The delay in the 2019 appropriations set many back. Improving the release of the grant application information as early as possible has been helpful.*
- *I think the Grant officer is overloaded at the submission time. The Project Officer reviewed quickly but the grants officer took a while. I know they all go in at once and I think they were shorthanded this year which threw a huge workload onto two people. Other than that, they are all trying to help us.*
- *If the grant is on a 3-year cycle, why could we not submit once and only amend the budget every year according to the new funding? This is the single most convoluted federal grant application process there is. My peers literally laugh at what we have to do. We write policy manuals 100's of pages long only to have to re-write them in "narrative" for the application. The budget is the worst part of the process.*
- *If there are new project or contracting officers, connect them with a mentor to assist them in understanding the unique nature of formula grants.*
- *Improve the budget process.*
- *Improve the formatting capabilities of PAGE. Make sure the instructions match the PAGE questions. Updates from project officers on the approval progress would be helpful.*
- *Incorporate application instructions into the corresponding section in PAGE. It is time consuming and difficult to keep going back and forth between the two when they are separate. Additionally, having to go back and forth can lead to application errors that create waste of time for both DOE and the State.*
- *It would be helpful to receive all feedback/concerns/issues initially, so they can all be addressed at one time and not received in pieces over a period of time. It would also be helpful if DOE can develop another way to submit documents into PAGE as the current process is very time consuming. Suggestion that Grantees are only required to submit the core State Plan for each 3-year cycle with annual addendums/updates required specific to those items that change each year (e.g., T&TA, annual allocations budgets).*
- *Lessen the frequency that certain sections of the State Plan have to be submitted. Annual submission of the Budget and Annual File but the Master File including the T&TA and H/S Plans should be submitted when there are significant updates or at the beginning of the Grant period only.*

Appendix C: Verbatim

- *Make one plan for the entire grant period. Then only create updates as needed based on DOE guidance. If guidance has not changed, no updating of the plan would be required for the subsequent year. (I understand the budgets would need completed for each year of the grant.)*
- *No suggestion. Process is fine.*
- *No suggestions at this time.*
- *One review for the 3-year grant period. Gather all requests for edits and send one master request instead of back and forth from different reviewers.*
- *Only require an updated Budget annually but the rest of the plan would be effective for the three-year Award period. It could be the state's option to change any part of the plan which would need to be changed.*
- *PAGE has improved, and DOE information has helped, but where it's not a program used frequently, it's a little difficult to maneuver through when first starting the process. I'd say continued webinars and information on entering the information is always helpful.*
- *PAGE is not very user friendly and makes updating challenging at times. Use an evergreen format so plans don't need to go through an annual process and we update budget only. Do plans every 2-3 years, not every year.*
- *PAGE user-ability: After saving information in the Master File, it would be helpful if PAGE returned to the last edited section (as opposed to the top of the page). We recognize that the rounding differences complicate the process, but PAGE requires submission of an approximate budget, rather than the actual.*
- *Process works pretty well in PAGE. DOE could inform PAGE staff early enough of changes to the WAP application, so the changes can be made early enough before Grantees try and submit.*
- *Reduces the amount of information requested. Does DOE really need to know the level of detail of information requested. For instance, the percentage breakdown of an employee's fringe benefits?*
- *Releasing the guidance as early in December as possible is helpful. I think our PO did a great job this year working with our agency and the FAO to make sure our plan approval was received in time.*
- *Respond faster.*
- *Simplify the budget process. We don't have to go into nearly as much detail for HUD grants. We spend a lot of time getting numbers to balance across rows and down columns when those numbers don't necessarily have any intrinsic meaning. Also, don't ask for so much detail on health and safety.*
- *Submit the Master Plan once for each grant which would be once every three years and submit the Annual Plan and Budget every year.*
- *Submitting the state plan is not a problem so the way it is now is good.*
- *The budget template should be simplified. This is the most cumbersome budget of any federal grant we administer.*
- *The editing format in PAGE makes it difficult to edit the narrative. The need to move between boxes makes it slow to edit.*
- *The State Plan process could be improved by making it easier to format, copy, and paste. For example, I have started creating the state plan outside of PAGE, because font/formatting is often inconsistent (even though PAGE indicates it's the same font or font size). It would also be helpful if I could customize which parts of the State Plan are printable. It would also be helpful if we could move to a 3-year State Plan, with shorter annual plans.*

Appendix C: Verbatim

- *The timing of the release of WPN 19-4 has been difficult and disruptive to our preparation of the PY19 State Plan. WPN 19-4 outlined multiple submissions expected from DOE within the "near future" without that timeframe being defined. Due to this ambiguous timeframe, we had to prioritize other projects over our planned time of working on the PY19 State Plan. The submission process for these supplemental submissions has created a timing issue to get everything processed ahead of the PY19 State Plan and any back and forth with our DOE contacts on that. The PAGE System can be cumbersome to work with and formatting can be difficult. If a Microsoft Word/Excel document upload was an option, that would streamline preparation and entering it into the system.*
- *There just seemed to be too many reviewers in the mix which meant getting comments from one reviewer at one point in time and then additional comments from another reviewer at a later time. Better coordination of the process so that comments can be given by all reviewers at once would make it more efficient and eliminate redundancy.*
- *WAP can help by improving the formatting so if a portion of the Master Plan is copied into Word for offline editing, it does not change the font when pasting back into PAGE.*
- *We appreciate how early the guidance has been released in the last couple of program years. No areas of improvement identified.*
- *We're an April 1 state, so having the guidance and instructions earlier would be helpful.*

Q8. What training do you need regarding the State Plan?

- *Any training explaining the application instructions to provide clarity on expectations and process. H&S template guidance was inconsistent. Sections that were already addressed in the body of the State Plan were included in the Template, so there was redundancy and duplication of effort. Parts of the detail section were no different than the WPN 17-7 guidance, so we checked the box for concurrence with guidance. Later were told that all sections had to have narrative detail added. Some of our policies are a combination of concurrence with guidance, being stricter than guidance or having limitations to meeting guidance due to State Statute. Suggestion: allow Grantees to state that they "concur with Guidance except for specific items", and only provide narrative for sections that are not specifically addressed in the guidance, such as how training is provided.*
- *Aside from PAGE updates and information, none.*
- *Budget.*
- *Figuring out the Health and Safety percentage when the state chooses to include it as a separate budget line item. 15% (or whatever requested %) multiplied by the Direct Services figure but you can't figure out the Direct Services figure without removing the Health and Safety amount, which is what you are trying to figure out. So, you can use 15% multiplied by the ACPU but you need to know the number of units which also requires a Direct Services figure divided by the ACPU, but the Direct Services amount should be without the Health and Safety funds. 15% of the allocation wouldn't work because the Health and Safety is specific to the Direct Services amount. We understand how to get the % requested and the optional matrix/chart within the plan is helpful for that but it doesn't help with the overall figure because you still need to know the number of estimated units for the chart which is computed with Direct Services divided by the ACPU which once again is without the Health and Safety figure which is yet to be calculated.*
- *Getting from NASCSP.*
- *Health and safety plan development.*
- *I loved the webinar reviewing the redline WPN (19-1). If those webinars could continue at the beginning of each program year - that would be fantastic!*

Appendix C: Verbatim

- *I'm pretty comfortable with the process.*
- *Interpretive guidance. What is DOE's goal for each of the sections? What is DOE looking for?*
- *More webinar training with time zone applicable to Territories*
- *N/A*
- *No suggestions at this time.*
- *No training needed.*
- *None at this time.*
- *None that we're aware of at this time.*
- *None, I've been doing this a long time and I know what I need to know.*
- *None.*
- *None.*
- *None.*
- *None.*
- *None.*
- *None.*
- *None.*
- *None. DOE does a sufficient job of providing training and information regarding submittal and expectations of the State Plan.*
- *Overall training is not needed at this time. However, the Application Instructions are limited in scope and often don't answer our specific questions. We have had inconsistent response time and detailed understanding of our questions when we have turned to our Project Officer. Often, during the State Plan development, we are working to meet deadlines, and wait time during back and forth is not possible.*
- *PAGE training, please!!!*
- *Provide more detailed information that DOE is looking for in the areas of interest.*
- *The information provided at the NASCSP conferences are plenty of training as it is.*
- *Training on how to make it an effective tool, rather than just an annual requirement.*
- *Training on what is the minimum required information on how to complete the State Plan in PAGE. Perhaps, provide a sample State Plan.*
- *Training pertinent to the review process might be helpful.*
- *Training via webinar each year on the changes to the WAP Guidance and Application Instructions packet.*
- *We are satisfied with the existing training resources available from DOE regarding the State Plan.*
- *We would benefit from better understanding how to complete the budget section, as the Administrative section can be confusing.*
- *Would be useful to know more about budget breakdown.*

Appendix C: Verbatim

Q15. What suggestions do you have for how DOE WAP could improve its monitoring process?

- *Better instructions regarding the pre-monitoring visit information requested. We were not sure about what was being asked for in some instances.*
- *Digitize parts of it.*
- *Ensure relevant feedback is provided. Share best practices so we might improve.*
- *Ensure that monitoring processes are uniform across all Grantees.*
- *Have the grantee perform a self-evaluation of their program in advance of the monitoring to identify perceived areas of strength and priority areas for improvement. Ensure that the representatives sent to perform the monitoring are well-versed in the identified areas that the grantee wants to improve. Allow grantees the opportunity to provide an evaluation of the monitoring process. We've had good and bad monitoring experiences and aren't expecting "no findings" monitoring reports to consider the monitoring experience to be good. We want honest objective feedback to fuel our continuous improvement goals. The last person [REDACTED] who did monitoring from SMS was an impossible personality to work productively with. This was the exception to the rule...most all of the other people who have come to monitor (DOE staff and subcontracted personnel alike have been very professional and good to work with).*
- *Improve consistency of technical assistance provided when more than one field monitor is assigned to a state. Different field monitors seemed to monitor under varying standards.*
- *It has been several years since we have been monitored by DOE.*
- *It would be helpful to have the monitoring report within 30 - 60 days from date of exit. In 2016, we were monitored August 22-25, 2016, but we did not receive a monitoring report until March 2017.*
- *Monitoring is more valuable for the grantees when both the project officer and the technical monitor are both face to face with the grantee rather than sending documents back and forth through email.*
- *More uniform guidance and feedback from Project Officers would be helpful. As a note, states often communicate about their monitoring process and findings, and the monitoring results and feedback sometimes appear to be inconsistent.*
- *N/A*
- *No comment, all is good.*
- *No suggestions for improvements. Comment on effectiveness: Use of photos in the DOE Monitor field inspection report was very helpful.*
- *No suggestions.*
- *None.*
- *None.*
- *Our monitoring was great because we got to spend a lot of time with our Project Officer. it really clarifies expectations when you work side by side. He got to meet people in all levels of the agencies and the state.*
- *Provide additional assistance for accomplishing items in the Corrective Action Plan. We had to get a contract with NASCSP to help us, and we're still not done with some of the items.*
- *Provide Grantees with any monitoring tools beyond those attached to WPN 16-4. Also supply a reference for what is being tested. Share monitoring results from other Grantees reviews to help the national network learn and correct problems sooner. Hold monitoring webinars on preparing*

Appendix C: Verbatim

for a review on an annual basis. Send Grantees a list of important items to implement at the start of each program year with the assumption those items will be monitored.

- Share monitoring tools. Again, explanation of exactly what DOE is looking for when monitoring.*
- Since our state has not been monitored since the previous ACSI Survey, the previous six questions are not relevant.*
- Some issues reported as Findings are more suited as recommendations.*
- The Field/Technical report was slow to be sent. The Programmatic/Fiscal report was returned very quickly. The onsite process went well from planning to exit.*
- The information requested prior to the monitoring visit is extensive. Much of it seems to be reviewed during and after the visit. Since a lot of time is invested in the preparation, maybe more time for PO review should be built in prior to the visit so that the visit can be focused on anything that may have been unclear or needed further explanation. Also, it would be helpful to have a pre-monitoring meeting to discuss the information being requested and making sure that everyone is on the same page for exactly what needs to be collected and submitted for review.*
- The last monitoring visit was done right after ARRA period, so it would be nice to have an on-site monitoring for the Territories so that we know that we are still doing the correct procedures.*
- The method of trying to make the technical monitoring issues fit into the administrative monitoring questionnaire didn't make sense to me. It made responding to the report difficult.*
- The procedure is correct.*
- The state has not been monitored by DOE for 3.5 years. It's hard to answer the questions based on the old monitoring. I feel that DOE has made improvements and the next state monitoring will reveal the DOE process improvements.*
- Timeliness of responses on the monitoring needs to be improved. Contract monitors need to be more subjective and less rigid.*
- Try to understand how the State's Program work and focus on a few areas of importance. It seems heavy with unnecessary paperwork. Also, get rid of paid consultants from [REDACTED]. DOE staff should be able to understand and explain in detail their own program.*
- Updated forms. Provide feedback on common findings and best practices at national conferences.*
- We were not monitored (on-site) this year. The monthly calls with our program officer, were useful and covered relevant monitoring questions.*

Q22. What training needs would you like DOE WAP to address?

- 2 CFR 200.*
- As new guidance is released to the network, training on the details of that guidance, the purpose or intention and what changes DOE was working to ensure would be appreciated. We could envision a webinar being held and promoted with the states to explain the additional guidance and the intended changes/outcomes from that guidance. By doing this, it would help Grantees understand, but it would also help us ensure that Subgrantees understand the intended purpose and interpretation of changes and would expedite any changes rolling out in the field.*
- Advanced Wx Assistant training.*
- Defining allowable incidental repairs. Sub-grantee Monitoring. Leveraging.*
- Develop training for southern (primarily hot and humid) climates.*

Appendix C: Verbatim

- *Help with creating forms for crews and field work, more templates and sample policy language. Training IREC accredited training centers on how to evaluate their own performance and how to identify gaps in training. It would be helpful if NEAT/MHEA program training was more available (directly from Oakridge), along with periodic FAQs and updated training videos.*
- *Implementation side of things. We develop a Training Plan and a Health and Safety Plan, but we need more on going the next step and implementing those plans.*
- *Information on the equipment/supply process, including procurement requirements and how Grantees should manage the equipment/supplies, such as inventory and disposal expectations. 1 or 2-day QCI refreshers: stress how to identify missed opportunities, not just confirming installed measures. ASHRAE for small multi-family buildings. Building code and safety code resources. Grantee and Subgrantee Contractor management and in progress inspections. How to motivate contractors to perform at highest standards.*
- *Keep sending information pertaining to the EA/QCI certification changes that have occurred.*
- *Maybe let's get back into a good discussion on Comprehensive vs. Specific Training. I'd like to see us maybe designate the Comprehensive as required for certain credentials but everything else that is pertinent to a person's technical development be calculated as CEU classes. There is too much confusion with the multiple categories.*
- *More information and structure around multi-family. Regarding submitting requests and suggestions for training and processes to accomplish multi-family projects at a state level.*
- *More training on H&S Plan development and relationship to budget.*
- *More training on QCI and energy audits.*
- *More training on the NEAT tool, and on procurement protocols.*
- *Need a cohesive and consistent training on vehicle inventory/disposition for all states.*
- *Need more opportunities for training within our state. Going to national conferences is very difficult for us, and we are typically only able to send one or two people, if any at all. Funding is not the issue.*
- *New policies and applications.*
- *None at this time.*
- *None.*
- *Procurement training, both for fiscal and programmatic staff.*
- *Program Management for Sub-grantees and dealing with contractors.*
- *Programmatic, fiscal and administrative training sessions.*
- *Provide options or examples for procurement of a training center to come in provide training when state does not have a training center.*
- *Q&A on the DOE onsite monitoring tool for Grantees and Subgrantees.*
- *Remove mandatory Tier 1/Comprehensive & Tier 2/Specific and for a needs-based approach.*
- *SHPO Agreements.*
- *Technical trainings like blower door, CAZ testing, worst case drafting, etc. Trainings on any policy changes that occur.*
- *The answer would be too complex to be address in this survey. The DOE WAP needs to be simplified and left to the States to determine how best to operate their program.*

Appendix C: Verbatim

- *The mandated training premise--by accredited training providers--seems fundamentally flawed. Quality work being observed during monitoring should be the end all be all. If a grantee is able to demonstrate quality work is being performed during monitoring, then it shouldn't matter how (or by who) training is being facilitated. We have had terrible, mediocre and quite good trainings from "accredited" training providers. The clinical notion that as long as accredited training is provided the actual work performed will be of a high quality has not proven itself true in our opinion. We are able to address our actual program needs and opportunities for improvement much more effectively with trainings that are tailor made to unique needs. We get the most actual program improvement from non- IREC accredited trainings. We hope the accredited training provider mandate is reevaluated and is only applicable in the future when a grantee gets put on a quality improvement or corrective action plan.*
- *The procedure is excellent.*
- *The training is not needed on the state level. In some cases, DOE staff need to be provided training, so they can readily answer questions without delay.*
- *Training and technical assistance by DOE staff has been inconsistent this year. It has been difficult to get timely/relevant answers, except when going directly to [REDACTED] (who is fantastic at responding with a solid depth of knowledge). When we reach technical staff, responses are thorough, but it is difficult to get quick answers.*
- *Training for Administrative staff in dealing with clients, promoting program, client education, etc. Training program for Subgrantee Agency Program Managers.*
- *Training on requests for materials which aren't listed in Appendix A. Suggestions for dealing with weatherization subgrantees who are at risk. Reviewing common Quality Control Inspection issues and how they're being addressed.*

Q27. What recommendations do you have for improving the accessibility and quality of technical training provided by third-party sources?

- *Consider geographical realignment of training providers/centers throughout the US. It is very costly to send WX staff to accredited training providers which are located out of state (particularly regions in west where states are larger).*
- *Continue to provide online trainings and webinars.*
- *Get rid of third-party sources for training and monitoring. The cost for these services is way too high for the benefit that they provide. DOE staff should be trained directly on how to implement their own program. The funds would be better spent on actual projects instead of high price conferences like the Home Performance Coalition conference at very expensive hotels in Chicago. And do get me started on the whole BPI scam.*
- *Improve travel budgets of training centers so trainers could come to non-training center states.*
- *It would be helpful if DOE could keep their standardized training updated for IREC training centers as new guidance is released. Our Oklahoma training center has had to completely recreate our comprehensive trainings based on WPN 17-7, NREL JTA, and BPI 1200 standard updates because the DOE trainings available online have not been. It would also be helpful to provide training centers with guidance on how to modularize their training so that crews are not out of the field for a week at a time. Perhaps provide sample training plans and ideas for different ways to provide trainings based on topics/JTAs.*
- *More regional facilities in the Northeast.*
- *Need assistance with a training facility that can accommodate the pacific islands either in Hawaii or west coast.*
- *No comments.*

Appendix C: Verbatim

- *No recommendations.*
- *No recommendations.*
- *No specific training recommendations - overall, strong. Also, the third-party technical assistance from [REDACTED] has been fantastic. NASCSP staff has improved in being responsive to all policy questions and their conference, including utilization of DOE staff, has also improved. Letting the network drive the training topics has been useful.*
- *None.*
- *None.*
- *Not a one size fits all for training needs due to variations in housing stock, climate, etc. Build in as much flexibility as possible with the training to account for this, especially in the technical areas.*
- *DOE needs to develop a process that will allow for contractors to get paid while attending the BPI trainings. A lot of vendors/contractors cannot miss work to attend trainings because they are a small company and cannot lose the work while attended the trainings. Allow some legacy trainers who do not have IREC accreditation to conduct Comprehensive (Tier One) training in their field of expertise. Examples of trainers who have presented at WAP conferences for years: [REDACTED], [REDACTED].*
- *Perhaps have a central repository of trainers (listing their areas of expertise) across the nation, so that Grantees could search the list and contact them.*
- *Provide options or examples for procurement of a training center to come in provide training when state does not have a training center.*
- *Remove the requirement that comprehensive training must be provided by Accredited Training providers. It is too expensive and onerous to go through the accreditation.*
- *Sharing training resources with neighboring states.*
- *Sub-grantees have experienced challenges with getting training scheduled for things like QCI re-certification. There seems to be inconsistency in quality of training between the various accredited facilities. BPI changes often seem to have the effect of increasing the costs to grantees and sub-grantees. BPI communications need to be clearer and consistent. Who oversees BPI policies and services related to WAP?*
- *The nearest IREC accredited training center is several states away. We hear that training centers are able to travel and provide onsite training but it's unclear on what's required for them to do so. Additional information and actual examples of how to get and conduct onsite training is desired.*
- *The procedure is good, analyze the costs.*
- *The training at NASCSP is often not specific enough. It's often very general and doesn't get into the details of certain things. Also, NASCSP staff are not always timely or thorough enough in providing T&TA resources and guidance.*
- *These questions, in my mind, are outside the control of DOE as it is asking about "third party" training sources. The network of IREC certified trainers is, as a whole, very expensive to use.*
- *They should be funded directly by DOE, not through state WAP grants.*
- *Training center has done an excellent job of working with our non-training center state. We also do peer exchange and other training outside the offerings of the training center.*
- *Training should be tailored to meet the needs of your geographic region.*
- *We are all for mandated certifications for staff but advocate against the Accredited training/training providers approach.*

Appendix C: Verbatim

- *We are looking forward to having an additional accredited training center in the national network as one is being created in Michigan. With the clarification on Comprehensive training curriculum needing to be from or approved by an accredited training center, we will appreciate having an additional resource to approve these curriculums, as we anticipate this will occupy some time of many accredited training centers.*
- *We are planning training in our state; reduce travel to third-party trainers.*
- *We are pleased with the accessibility and quality of the technical training by third party sources.*
- *We would like to have an in-state accredited training center. Our current relationship and quality of training with our third-party provider is top notch.*
- *What if DOE were the central repository for training requests that would be funneled off to the nearest accredited training facility to the requestor's location?*

Q31. In what areas do you need more written guidance?

- *2 CFR 200 requirements.*
- *Better protocols for managing poor performance and financial stability in community action agencies.*
- *Can't think of any at this time.*
- *Deferral solutions. Braided funding and how to utilize required DOE prioritization rules and encourage combined funding sources. Multi-family guidance. How to address homes that have been weatherized but cannot be QCI'd due to client refusal, death of client, hospitalization, incarceration or client moved.*
- *DOE does a good job with Program Notices and then using the Memorandums to provide additional information on issues.*
- *DOE has previously provided FAQ's for some WPN's. These have been beneficial and should continue where applicable.*
- *Energy audit.*
- *H&S Plan development, i.e. incidental repairs vs H&S vs ECMs.*
- *How subgrantees can earn program support to meet their staff demands.*
- *I believe that the staff would love to speak more plainly but they are constrained by the system they work in. There seems to be a constant concern of General Council. The concern that everything they say "will be used against them" no different they we have done to us by our subgrantees comes up too.*
- *Multi-family processes including application through the entire project. How to choose multi-family project and have successful completions. Allowable cost for supplies, outreach materials and direct program vs admin cost.*
- *Multi-family, as mentioned before. Additionally, we need the Special Terms and Conditions earlier than when we receive our award, because it takes our Legal team weeks to get our grant agreements back after we receive the Special Terms and Conditions, which causes a delay in getting funding to our Subgrantees.*
- *No suggestions.*
- *None at this time.*
- *None that I can think of.*
- *None that we can think of at this time.*
- *None that we can think of.*

Appendix C: Verbatim

- *None, too much information to absorb.*
- *None.*
- *None.*
- *Not a specific area, but some of the guidance could provide examples so that it's clearer.*
- *Often when written guidance is released, there are additional questions or clarifications that come up. A training/webinar run by DOE that addresses the changes and clarifying questions would be helpful. We have not received any guidance, clarifications or context for the guidance as items have been released, and it leaves us to guess the intention. When these items are released, it would be helpful to have webinars/guidance similar to the update sessions that occur at partnering conferences. This would increase accessibility to all grantees and could be done in a timeframe that is much closer to the release of guidance than conference sessions.*
- *Policy Advisory Council, Capacity Issues at the Local and State level, how to effectively evaluate whether training needs are being met and where gaps in training are, Deferrals, Client Education, Incidental Repairs, NEAT/MHEA.*
- *Sometimes there is too much guidance and some guidance is confusing (i.e. multi-family guidance, for example). In general, we are being kept very well informed and most guidance is clear and understandable.*
- *The Poverty Income Guidelines need to be released in a timelier manner. Need more guidance in the application instructions, to be more specific/clearly stated what is to be uploaded into the SF424.*
- *There has been a noted increase in the quality and consistency of DOE communication. The use of memo's and WPN's to clarify policy has been particularly useful. Thank you!*
- *We don't need more written guidance; however, we need clearer guidance.*
- *We don't really need more written guidance so much as we'd advocate for improved policies. A couple areas of recommended focus:*
 - *Simplify guidance about allowable energy saving investment versus non-energy saving investment. Current approach of having (1) ancillary measures, (2) incidental repair measures and (3) health and safety measures, all of which are managed differently could likely be simplified and potentially yield better results for the program. Looking at establishing a range of allowable ratios between Energy Savings and Non-Energy Savings work on individual projects could potentially be much more straight forward and allow workscope composition and deferral decisions to be made in a much more consistent manner across all projects.*
 - *Update appendix A to include the basics...it's ridiculous how long it's been since that has been updated (spray foam insulation, LEDs?).*
 - *Reevaluate the Accredited training mandate.*
- *We need less guidance from DOE. I cringe every time a DOE WAP Memo comes out.*

Q37. Is there anything else you would like to comment on?

- *DOE appears to be listening to the network in the changes they are making in existing policy and through the topics being discussed in the re-authorization. The increased and improved communication, responsiveness at a leadership level ([REDACTED]), and overall efforts for continuous improvement by all staff are worthy and notable. We had a difficult contracting process and challenges with the transition to less experienced project officer, but have confidence that leadership are working to improve upon this year and to address our concerns.*

Appendix C: Verbatim

- *DOE has shown quantifiable effort in improving the communication and quality of assistance with WAP over the past 2 years.*
- *DOE officers and staff have been very proactive in working with the states. I think they have really reached out to all of us in the past several years. Right now, in this funding climate there are lots of barriers to success with programs that work with low income, but DOE has been a champion of this program. I am not in agreement with all decisions but overall there has been a great partnership established and I feel that I can express myself honestly.*
- *DOE should always realistically assess the costs of new requirements when implemented and work to increase funding accordingly. Otherwise, it negatively impacts the funds available for the weatherization of homes.*
- *DOE WAP has been very supportive of our program and we are very grateful for the great working relationship.*
- *I appreciate DOE's efforts to be more open to Grantee input. I appreciate that the Grant Guidance is trying to be released as early as possible. I appreciate that DOE works with NASCSP and that NASCSP has regional conference calls that DOE participates on.*
- *I do believe they are doing the best they can within the confines of the system. They made the right move to promote [REDACTED], she is making improvements and they need to support her efforts. She's got it in her blood and she loves this program enough to do anything she can to make it better. Including this survey where people are going to throw stones. One challenge is most of the staff has no experience in operating the program below the federal level. It's very easy to sit back in DC or Golden and recite 2 CFR 200 or 10 CFR 440 and expect exacting compliance when you've never had to actually implement it in the field. To have a Project Officer take 1 or 2 classes in ASHRAE or WA 8.9 and then proclaim that everyone is doing it wrong is a bit unnerving as well. Most state's program are combination of DOE, LIHEAP and utility funds. When trying to address DOE's requirements Grantee's are also still trying to juggle that with several other sets of rules. DOE has to make sure they protect DOE's interests, but we are still the ones trying to make it work in the field to get services to the client.*
- *I think that DOE staff do quite an amazing job within the parameters of a program structure that I do not think makes a whole lot of sense. I would score the individual staff and their efforts much higher than I score how well the program is currently structured to operate.*
- *I understand the DOE is one of the best agencies.*
- *It seems as though every year there are more and more regulations/requirements added to the program making it increasingly difficult for sub-grantees to deliver the program as the boots on the ground. Would it be possible to ease up and if programs are non-compliant, then place additional regulations/requirements on those programs? Additionally, it makes no sense that certain newer technology efficiencies cannot be used by the States without a waiver (LEDs, spray foam insulation etc.) and that every state has to request their own waiver. This is burdensome and illogical. We should be incorporating new technologies into the program at the federal level not by state waivers.*
- *Looking forward to the roof repairs and window replacement guidance. Our State PAC and public comment on the reweatherization date being unrealistic every year.*
- *National staffing would be improved with the addition of another program staff person!*
- *No further comments.*
- *No.*
- *None.*
- *None.*
- *Our state agency is very pleased with the working relationship we have with DOE/DOE staff.*

Appendix C: Verbatim

- Overall, we appreciate the services of the US DOE WAP program staff though would benefit from more timely releases of the funding, and continued support on increased support for integrating LIHEAP and WAP.
- Re-evaluate the amount of funds awarded versus the burdens associated with the administration and compliance of the DOE WAP grant. Northern states who receive larger grants are not as impacted as southern states in which this is the smallest grant received. DOE WAP Program staff do not have to repeat instructions given to the Grantee over and over and over. It is heard the first time.
- Thank you for the opportunity to provide input.
- Thank you for working to continuously improve and taking the input from the national network.
- Thank you very much for the opportunity to provide feedback. I appreciate DOE's continuous improvement culture, and their openness to feedback. DOE has done a great job increasing communication with states and local agencies. Oklahoma appreciates all the efforts.
- The DOE WAP program has been taken over by the "Global Warming" crowd and has lost its focus on what are the important aspects of the program. I mean really, we had to ask permission to install LED bulbs. DOE should spend its time assisting States with information about the most recent products available that could be installed as energy conservation measures and provide an updated list of items that States may consider as options. Lastly, get rid of the ASHRAE fans, they are neither an energy saving measure nor a health and safety measure. The requirement for these fans is nothing more than special interest politics, taking funding away from more important measures. At best, their installation should be optional.
- The program has become too complicated and cumbersome. DOE needs to review program rules and guidance to find ways to back off requirements such as ASHRAE 62.2 and QCI. It's getting too expensive to run the program in a cost-effective manner, and that makes it harder to leverage other funding (LIHEAP agency and utilities don't want to be subject to excessive DOE rules).
- The WAP office has been good to work with. Efforts to modernize the statutory framework that governs the program would be helpful. We recognize the improvements DOE has made since the last ACSI. Well done!
- Use technical monitors from similar climates to monitor field work. Too much time is spent educating the monitor on the methods and process used when they are from a different climate. Create more opportunities for states to interact with project officers at national event.
- We appreciate the help received from [REDACTED] for technical assistance and the timely responses from our current project officer.
- We appreciate the support and help that we have received from the DOE staff this year.
- We need the Special Terms and Conditions earlier than when we receive our award, because it takes our Legal team weeks to get our grant agreements back after we receive the Special Terms and Conditions, which causes a delay in getting funding to our Subgrantees. DOE is good at issuing guidance but doesn't always close the loop in terms of how guidance can be implemented at the state office level and in the field.
- Weatherization is a complex program that is constantly evolving. DOE is doing a good job so keep it up. DOE staff and Project Officers should get into the field as frequently as possible. This helps to see the challenges of the program and how changes to policies actually impact the work performed and the services provided. DOE's accessibility to state is great. Their presence and approachability at national conferences and training events is highly appreciated. We've appreciated the efforts made to increase communication. An area of continued focus is on the consistency and knowledge of Project Officers with the desired outcome of more uniformity.

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