



FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) has introduced a new document, the HMA Application Review Tool (ART) Version 1.0, which has a two-fold purpose. It is both an instrument to facilitate FEMA’s review of HMA subapplications as well as a transparent reference to guide State Applicants and local communities in developing more complete HMA grant applications. The goal of the HMA ART is to further reduce the uncertainty of Applicants and FEMA reviewers on the level of completeness of an application.

This document seeks to identify and provide answers to frequently asked questions about the HMA Application Review Tool (ART), including its intended use and function.

1. What is the intent of the HMA ART? What part of the review does it not address?

The purpose of the HMA ART is to create a transparent method of determining whether or not an application has all of the required elements for submission to FEMA. The HMA ART also captures those elements that may need to be submitted to FEMA after the initial application, during pre-award reviews, post-award, and even during closeout. The principle objective is to eliminate, to the extent possible, questions related to “what is required and when”.

The HMA ART does not speak to the ‘quality’ of the required elements, only whether or not the elements are in place at the appropriate time. It is important to note that this tool does not imply that by providing all of the required elements a grant award is guaranteed. Submitted documents must still be of a quality to establish the eligibility, feasibility and cost-effectiveness of the proposed mitigation activity, and there may be additional ranking factors that are considered in selecting grants for award.

2. Who created the HMA ART? Who are its intended users?

The HMA ART was drafted by FEMA with input by State and local partners who sit on the External Stakeholders Workgroup. The development of this tool has been a multi-year effort, as similar preliminary versions of this document have been in use for years by FEMA HMA staff to guide the initial review of subapplications. The HMA ART, however, represents the first comprehensive tool that will be used nationwide by FEMA during all HMA application reviews and also shared with the States and local communities to assist with application development. The intended users of the HMA ART are all stakeholders in the mitigation community, including FEMA, State, and local communities. The same document that will be used by FEMA staff to perform initial Review reviews on subapplications will be available to State and local officials during the open application period.

3. What are some of the benefits of the HMA ART?

The HMA ART, when used in concert with the HMA Guidance and applicable regulations, will convey the following benefits:

- Increased level of confidence on the part of Applicants in submitting complete applications for FEMA review;
- Improved accuracy of FEMA reviewers in establishing that applications received are complete and therefore merit further review;
- Greater efficiency by FEMA reviewers during the review process, and
- Assured consistency across all FEMA Regions and Headquarters, assuring a fair and even review process nationwide.

4. When will the HMA ART be available for States to use?

The HMA ART will be released simultaneously with the opening of the FY2012 Non-Disaster Application Period for the Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM), Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA), Repetitive Flood Claims (RFC), and Severe Repetitive Loss (SRL) grant programs in early June 2011.

5. Are States required to use or submit the HMA ART to FEMA as part of the application process? Should it be attached to the eGrants application or otherwise submitted?

No, States are not required to use this optional tool or submit it to FEMA. States and local communities are encouraged, however, to make use of it as it will be the same tool used by FEMA to review the completeness of the application. A completed HMA ART can be provided to FEMA as an attachment to the subapplication if so desired.

6. What programs does the HMA ART apply to? What project activity types does it cover?

The HMA ART may be used for ALL HMA programs, including PDM, PDM-Joint Explanatory Statement (JES), FMA, RFC, SRL, and the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). The HMA ART is composed of two main pieces: General Requirements sections and Project-Specific sections. The General Requirements sections contain information that is required for all FEMA HMA grants. The Project-Specific sections contain specific required elements to be submitted in support of applications for the following mitigation activity types:

- Acquisition
- Structural Elevation
- Mitigation Reconstruction
- Drainage Projects
- Seismic Projects
- Wildfire Projects
- Safe Room Projects

The HMA ART Version 1.0 will be fully evaluated following the completion of the HMA FY2012 Reviews in order to further improve the utility of this tool. Additional information about the FEMA HMA Application Review Tool (ART) Version 1.0 can be obtained by sending an email to FEMA's HMA Program at HMAProgram@fema.gov.