

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 23, 2005

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STANDARDS OF GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY IMPROVING

Association of Government Accountants recognizes government entities for high standards in accountability and reporting

Alexandria, VA – Levels of Federal Government accountability and reporting are trending upwards, despite new reporting complexities that make it very difficult for departments and agencies to create integrated performance reports. This is the conclusion drawn by Association of Government Accountant (AGA) assessors who recently awarded the Certificate of Excellence in Accountability Reporting (CEAR) to government agencies and departments who have achieved the highest standards in accountability reporting.

Of the 21 departments or agencies that submitted their Performance and Accountability Reports (PAR), eleven have been awarded the 2004 Certificate of Excellence in Accountability Reporting. Among these are the Social Security Administration, the Departments of Interior, Labor, Education, Energy and State, the Federal Aviation Administration, the General Accounting Office, the General Services Administration, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Patent and Trademark Office.

Producing high-quality PARs has never been more important as the Office of Management and Budget guides the effort to implement the President's Management Agenda, with the idea of bringing a more business-like approach to federal government operations. With improved financial management as one of the five goals of the agenda, OMB is requiring agencies to accelerate financial reporting. For fiscal year 2004, agencies faced a Nov. 15 reporting deadline, which is 45 days after fiscal year end.

With such tight deadlines, the CEAR Program's rigorous review will be even more valuable to agencies. This year's recipients were chosen for giving readers a clear assessment of program performance, the cost of meeting program goals, and a vivid picture of the agency's finances. In all, 21 agencies submitted their fiscal year 2004

PARs for review, demonstrating their commitment to the President's Management Agenda and improved financial and performance reporting.

For the past eight years, AGA has helped agencies meet the requirements of OMB and the Reports Consolidation Act to combine performance and financial information. This combined information is valuable for supporting budget requests, helping managers improve program efficiency, and communicating results so that ordinary citizens can easily evaluate government programs and their costs.

AGA, along with others from the government performance and accountability community, will honor the 11 federal agencies and the individuals most responsible for producing the award-winning reports at a black-tie event on Sept. 14, 2005. If you would like to attend the event, or if you would like further information about the CEAR Program, please contact Julie Bryant, Director of Performance Reporting, at 800.242.7211, ext. 307, or jbryant@agacgfm.org.

The AGA is a 15,000-member professional association devoted to meeting the continuing professional education needs of accountability professionals at all levels of government, the private sector and academia. For more information about the Association, or the Certified Government Financial Manager (CGFM) program, call 800.242.7211 or visit www.agacgfm.org.

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