PRESIDENT'S MANAGEMENT AGENDA

CAP Goal Action Plan

Security Clearance, Suitability/Fitness, and Credentialing Reform

Goal Leaders

John Ratcliffe, Director of National Intelligence, Office of the Director of National Intelligence

Joseph Kernan, Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence & Security, Department of Defense

Mike Rigas, Acting Deputy Director for Management, Office of Management and Budget and Acting Director, Office of Personnel Management

July 2020

Overview

Goal Statement

A Federal workforce entrusted to protect Government information and property and to promote a safe and secure work environment, sustained by an enhanced risk management approach. Supported by:

- Improved early detection enabled by an informed, aware, and responsible Federal workforce.
- Quality decisions enabled by improved investigative and adjudicative capabilities.
- Optimized government-wide capabilities through enterprise approaches.
- Strong partnership with Insider Threat Programs to strengthen the identification, deterrence, and mitigation of problems before they negatively impact the workforce or national security.

Urgency

Our world is changing at a pace that requires the security, suitability/fitness, and credentialing community to anticipate, detect, and counter both internal and external threats, such as those posed by trusted insiders who may seek to do harm to the Federal Government's policies, processes, and information systems.

Leadership

Goal Leaders:

- John Ratcliffe, DNI
- Joseph Kernan, USD(I&S)
- Mike Rigas, Acting DDM, OMB and Acting Director, OPM

The Security, Suitability, and Credentialing Performance Accountability Council (PAC) Principal agencies include the Office of Management and Budget, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, Office of Personnel Management, and Department of Defense. The PAC* is responsible for driving government-wide implementation of security, suitability, and credentialing reform.

* PAC members are the Office of Management and Budget, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, Office of Personnel Management, Department of Defense; the Departments of State, the Treasury, Justice, Energy, and Homeland Security; the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the General Services Administration, the National Archives and Records Administration, the National Security Council, and the Defense Counterintelligence Security Agency.

Goal Structure

Goal

A Federal workforce entrusted to protect Government information and property and to promote a safe and secure work environment, sustained by an enhanced risk management approach.

Sub-Goal	Major Strategies to Achieve Sub-Goal
1 Trusted Workforce	• Develop aligned and consistent policy for reporting potential security risks or observable behaviors of concern • Train and educate the Federal workforce on their vital role in the early detection of potential issues or risks • Build an SSC awareness campaign to reinforce the early identification of reportable behaviors • Study other related mission areas for potential information-sharing opportunities to streamline processes
2 Modern Policies & Processes	• Establish an agile, data-driven, and transparent policy-making process that simplifies traditional overly complex policy development processes • Review current end-to-end SSC processes and identify the most cost-effective and efficient methods to vet the Federal workforce • Professionalize the SSC workforce through community training, certificate programs, and collaboration with universities
3 Secure and Modern Mission-Capable IT	• Modernize the lifecycle through the use of agency federated systems and shared services • Identify enhanced security and interoperability standards and capabilities to better inform IT cost and planning decisions • Provide agencies with a mechanism to adopt modern technology, automate manual processes, reduce duplicative investments, and decrease the cyber threat footprint
4 Continuous Performance Improvement	• Establish and implement outcome-based performance metrics and measures • Develop a Research and Innovation program to inform policy, process, and technology with empirical data-driven decisions • Establish a Continuous Performance Improvement model that will continuously evaluate the performance of the SSC policies and processes

Summary of Progress

Safe Personnel Vetting During COVID-19. Agencies have adopted remote access procedures to deal with the challenges of onboarding new personnel during the coronavirus pandemic. The officials responsible for personnel vetting policy — the DNI as the Executive Agent for national security and OPM for suitability and credentialing — permitted agencies, in the case of exigent and rare circumstances, to use alternatives such as virtual interviews and remote records access to minimize face-to-face contact. This flexibility allowed background investigations to continue with minimal disruption and agencies to bring on mission-critical personnel. Additionally, OPM guidance on March 25 permitted agencies to onboard personnel even when fingerprinting was not immediately available. As the pandemic threat subsides and restrictions are eased, vetting agencies will resume normal operations and procedures consistent with national and local area guidance.

Paving the Way for Continuous Vetting. As part of the ongoing TW 2.0 initiative, the U.S. Government is moving toward a continuous vetting model that enables agencies to become aware of problematic behaviors more quickly through regularly performed automated records checks. Continuous vetting will replace the traditional periodic reinvestigations that only review the records of cleared personnel every five to ten years. To move this process forward, the ODNI and OPM as the Executive Agents for personnel vetting policies on February 3 signed Executive Correspondence that provides guidance to help agencies transition to continuous vetting from periodic reinvestigations. The Executive Correspondence instructs agencies to work with ODNI and OPM to begin streamlining their personnel vetting programs in anticipation of forthcoming policy changes aimed at improving the alignment of the processes and criteria for vetting determinations.

Summary of Progress

Investigation Backlog Eliminated; Timeliness Significantly Improves. For the first time since August 2014, the background investigation case inventory has returned to a stable state of approximately 200,000 cases. This is the result of concerted efforts, including policy changes issued by ODNI and OPM as the Executive Agents for personnel vetting, internal process improvements made by the Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency (DCSA), formerly NBIB. At its peak, NBIB's inventory has reached 725,000 cases, creating a backlog that was more than 525,000. The immense size of the backlog dramatically slowed the speed of investigations, impacting the ability of agencies to quickly onboard the personnel needed to perform critical missions. The actions taken to reduce the backlog also substantially improved timelines for completion of investigations. The average time to complete a Top Secret investigation is currently down to 79 days from a high of 411 days, meeting timeliness goals for the first time since June 2014. Timeliness for Secret investigations decreased from 173 days to 56 days.

Key Leadership in Place to Advance TW 2.0. Nominees for three strategic leadership positions critical to personnel security reform have recently assumed office. The Senate confirmed John Ratcliffe as the sixth Director of National Intelligence and William Evanina as the Director of the National Counterintelligence and Security Center, a job he held for four years before confirmation was required. The Department of Defense named William "Bill" Lietzau as Director of the Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency.

ODNI Issues Security Executive Agent Directive 8: Temporary Eligibility. The policy provides detailed minimum investigative requirements to agencies for authorizing temporary eligibility to individuals that hold sensitive positions, one-time access to classified information, and advances goals to assure the quality and integrity of personnel security vetting practices.

Key Milestones
Sub-Goal 1: Trusted Workforce

- **Challenge:** Information of concern often goes unreported in the Federal Government, which inhibits an agency's ability to address potential issues before escalation.

- **Theory of Change:** The SSC must work toward instilling a sense of shared responsibility by enabling a trusted workforce through consistent reporting requirements, employee and supervisor training, awareness campaigns for reportable behaviors, and identification of gaps in information sharing with sister missions.

Milestone Summary				
Key Milestones	**Milestone Due Date**	**Milestone Status**	**Owner**	**Recent Actions**
Identify and provide recommendations to improve cross-mission information sharing.	Mar-2018	Complete	PAC PMO, ODNI, OPM	
Expand reporting requirements to the entire workforce.	Oct-2021	On Track	OPM	

Key Milestones
Sub-Goal 2: Modern Policies & Processes

- **Challenge:** The SSC community faces an ever-changing global environment with an increasing mobile workforce, emerging global threats, and advancements in cutting-edge technology and innovations.

- **Theory of Change:** To successfully modernize our processes, the SSC community must develop agile capabilities that integrate the latest innovative technologies to facilitate continuous vetting of more of our trusted workforce and promote delivery of real-time information to the appropriate SSC professional responsible for making risk-based decisions.

Milestone Summary

Key Milestones	Milestone Due Date	Milestone Status	Owner	Recent Actions
Issue updated standards for denying, suspending, and revoking Federal credentials.	Jun-2018	Missed	OPM	Finalized draft is in legal review prior to publication.
Establish standards and requirements for Trusted Information Providers to provide shared data with Investigative Service Providers.	Dec-2019	Missed (Previously On Track)	ODNI, OPM	February 2020 Executive Correspondence issuance authorizes pilots to inform policy finalization; a pilot is underway. The TW 2.0 TIP Guidelines have been developed and have undergone internal policy review.
Issue Executive Branch-wide reciprocity policy for national security/sensitive positions.	Dec-2018	Complete	ODNI	

Key Milestones
Sub-Goal 2: Modern Policies & Processes

Milestone Summary				
Key Milestones	**Milestone Due Date**	**Milestone Status**	**Owner**	**Recent Actions**
Refine standards and guidelines under the new Federal vetting approach.	Dec-2019	Complete	ODNI, OPM	None*
Develop quality standards for adjudicative determinations and expand quality tools to include adjudications.	May-2021 (Previously Dec-2019)	On Track (Previously At Risk)	ODNI, OPM	Draft content developed. Interagency workshops continue to refine standards.
Provide the PAC a recommendation for the expansion of continuous vetting across the entire Federal workforce to regularly review their backgrounds to determine whether they continue to meet applicable requirements.	Sep-2019	Complete	OPM	February Executive Correspondence provides minimum standards for continuous vetting to enable departments and agencies to begin the transition away from traditional periodic reinvestigations.

* There have been no additional requests this reporting period from agencies regarding the Federal Investigative Standards, Adjudicative Guidelines, continuous vetting, or other personnel security national policy.

Key Milestones
Sub-Goal 2: Modern Policies & Processes

Milestone Summary				
Key Milestones	**Milestone Due Date**	**Milestone Status**	**Owner**	**Recent Actions**
Reduce the inventory of background investigations to a steady and sustainable state.	Mar-2021	Complete (Previously On Track)	DCSA, ODNI, OPM	Background investigation inventory eliminated in February 2020. The inventory was reduced from a high of 725K in April 2018 to its target of 200,000 in February 2020. It remains below target.
Stand up DoD background investigation capability and complete phased transition of cases from NBIB to DoD.	Oct-2021	Complete	DoD	William Lietzau named Director of the Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency on March 16, 2020.
Implement business transformation efforts to reengineer the process, enhance customer engagement, and support policy and process transformation and transition efforts.	Oct-2021	On Track	DCSA	Developed a deployment strategy for customer agencies to start incremental onboarding into the National Background Investigations Services (NBIS) IT capability.

Key Milestones
Sub-Goal 3: Secure & Modern Mission-Capable IT

- **Challenge:** The end-to-end SSC process relies heavily on data sharing and information technology (IT) to operate efficiently, effectively, and securely.

- **Theory of Change:** The SSC mission must develop and deploy a modern, secure, and mission-capable, end-to-end digital environment that builds on a foundation of government-wide standards, promotes interoperability and information sharing, and collaboration across the SSC community.

Milestone Summary

Key Milestones	Milestone Due Date	Milestone Status	Owner	Recent Actions
Implement a shared unclassified record repository to store background investigation and adjudication history.	Jan-2020	Missed (Previously On Track)	DCSA	Strategy for the rollout of shared services is being rebaselined. Existing capability continues to be provided via two legacy systems.
Implement a new electronic Application shared service capability and continue to make iterative improvements.	Oct-2019	Missed	DCSA	Service launched with early adopters; phased rollout to continue.

Key Milestones
Sub-Goal 3: Secure & Modern Mission-Capable IT

Milestone Summary				
Key Milestones	**Milestone Due Date**	**Milestone Status**	**Owner**	**Recent Actions**
Implement a shared service to provide an unclassified information exchange for ready and efficient access to data, and continue to make iterative improvements.	Sep-2020	At Risk (Previously On Track)	DCSA	Strategy for the rollout of shared services is being rebaselined. Foundational capabilities for customers account management launched with early adopter. Data services and additional capabilities in development.
Implement a shared service capability that leverages automation to determine the sensitivity and risk level of a position, and continue to make iterative improvements.	Oct-2019	Complete	DCSA	
Implement a shared service capability that supports the development of background investigation reports, and continue to make iterative improvements.	Jul-2020	At Risk (Previously On Track)	DCSA	Strategy for the rollout of shared services is being rebaselined. TW 2.0 policy changes being assessed.

Key Milestones
Sub-Goal 3: Secure & Modern Mission-Capable IT

Milestone Summary				
Key Milestones	**Milestone Due Date**	**Milestone Status**	**Owner**	**Recent Actions**
Implement a shared service capability that supports the adjudication of background investigations, and continue to make iterative improvements.	Jul-2020	At Risk (Previously On Track)	DCSA	Initial adjudication management service launched with Department of Treasury in March 2020. Enhancements in development.
Implement a shared service capability that supports security or suitability manager functions that take place after adjudication (e.g., reciprocity, visit requests), and continue to make iterative improvements.	Jul-2020	At Risk (Previously On Track)	DCSA	Initial security/suitability manager functions launched with Department of Treasury, March 2020. Enhancements in development.

Key Milestones
Sub-Goal 4: Continuous Performance Improvement

- **Challenge:** The SSC has faced challenges in monitoring performance and identifying and driving enterprise-level enhancements to policy, oversight, and operational processes.

- **Theory of Change:** To initiate the necessary culture shift across the enterprise, the SSC community must institutionalize and integrate a continuous performance improvement model that will establish outcome-based performance metrics and measures; inform policy, process, and technology with empirical-based decisions; and continuously evaluate its performance and identify efficient and effective ways to perform its mission.

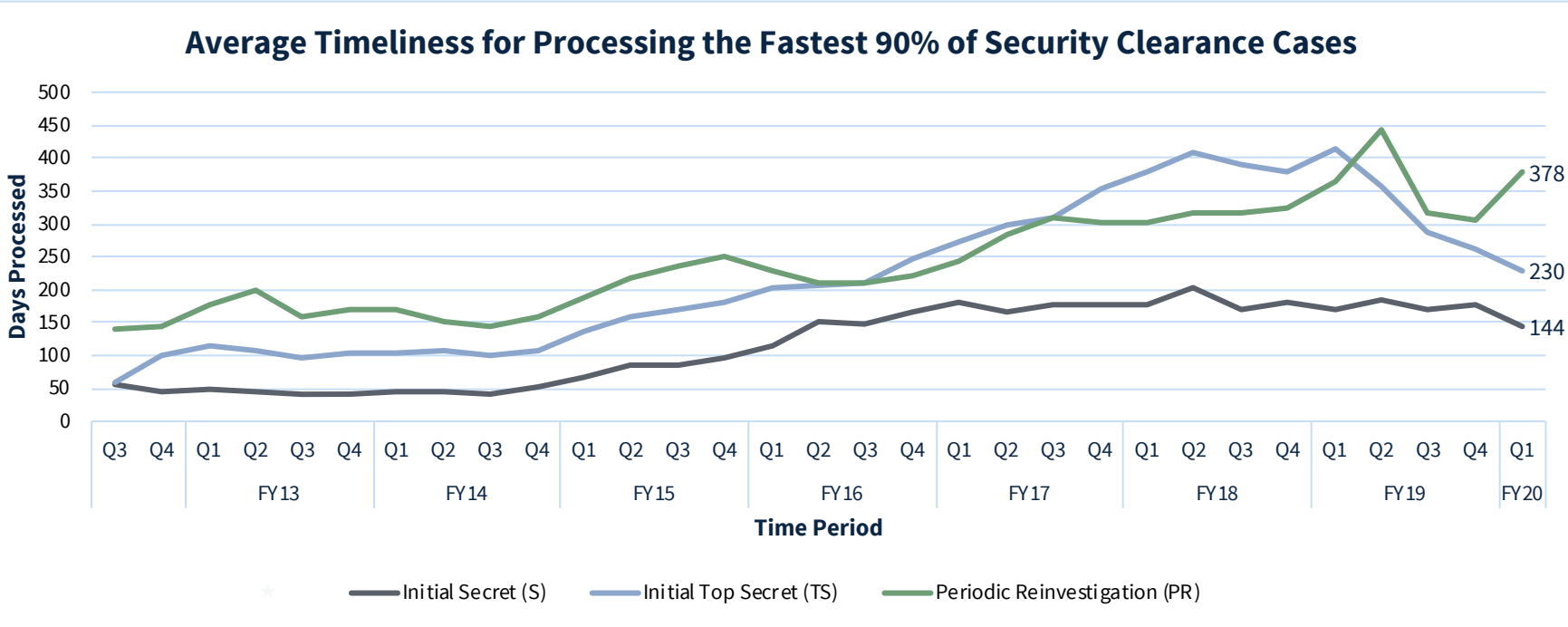
Milestone Summary

Key Milestones	Milestone Due Date	Milestone Status	Owner	Recent Actions
Improve public transparency of progress and performance.	Apr-2019	Complete	PAC PMO, ODNI, OPM	
Improve decision-making by increasing access to research findings across the Executive Branch.	May-2019	Complete	PAC PMO, ODNI, OPM	
Continue to mature the research & innovation program to support SSC priorities.	Oct-2019	Complete	PAC PMO, ODNI, OPM	

Key Indicator: Portfolio

Focus Area	Key Indicator Title	Description
Timeliness	End-to-End Process Timeliness (2 slides)	Average number of days to complete end-to-end processing for the national security population
	Background Investigation Timeliness	Average number of days to complete Secret and Top Secret background investigations
	Number of Cases Meeting Timeliness Standards	Average percentage of end-to-end cases that are meeting timeliness standards
Volume	DCSA Investigations Inventory (2 slides)	Total inventory of pending DCSA investigations by progress to goal and by anticipated workload effort
	DCSA Investigations Case Flow	Total number of cases closed and scheduled per month, which drives changes to the Investigations Inventory
	DCSA Investigator Headcount	Total number of investigators performing investigations for DCSA per year by both Federal and contractor population
Risk	DoD National Security Population Eligibility and Access	Total number of Federal, military, and contractor personnel eligible for a national security position and personnel currently in access for the Defense Department
	DoD Continuous Evaluation Enrollment	Total number of DoD personnel enrolled in the Department's Continuous Evaluation (CE) Program
	Out-of-Scope National Security Population (2 slides)	Total number of Federal workforce eligible for a national security position with out-of-scope (outdated) investigations by security clearance level

Key Indicator: End-to-End Process Timeliness



End-to-end cases from the time of agency initiation of information collection from an applicant to the date adjudication is reported in a repository.
Q2 metrics collection delayed as a result of COVID-19. Data will be reported once available or upon next quarterly report.

Key Indicator: End-to-End Process Timeliness

Government-wide end-to-end processing timeliness continues to improve.

Government-Wide Security Clearance Performance

(PAC Methodology)

Fastest 90%

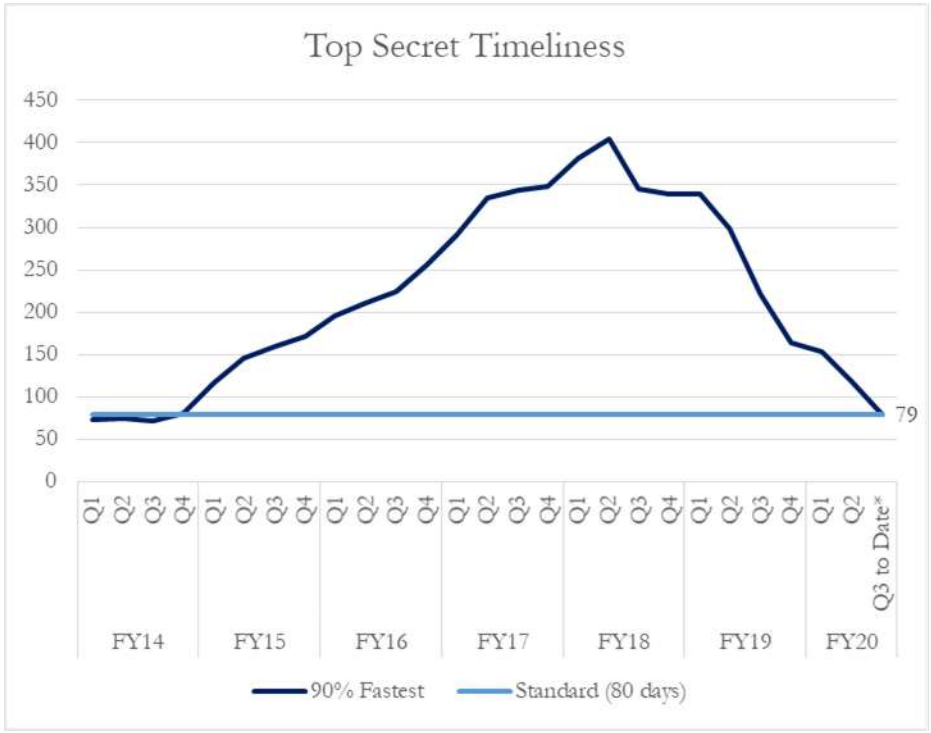
		Initiate				Investigate				Adjudicate				End-to-End (Initiate + Inv. + Adj.)			
		Average Days				Average Days				Average Days				Average Days			
		Q2 19	Q3 19	Q4 19	Q1 20	Q2 19	Q3 19	Q4 19	Q1 20	Q2 19	Q3 19	Q4 19	Q1 20	Q2 19	Q3 19	Q4 19	Q1 20
Initial Secret Cases	Volume 485,485	Goal: 14 Days				40 Days				20 Days				74 Days			
		13	16	10	11	139	117	121	94	31	36	45	39	183	169	176	144
Initial Top Secret Cases	Volume 154,499	Goal: 14 Days				80 Days				20 Days				114 Days			
		18	20	20	17	298	225	195	166	40	43	47	47	356	288	262	230
Periodic Reinvestigations	Volume 306,717	Goal: 15 Days				150 Days				30 Days				195 Days			
		17	16	17	18	322	219	198	205	104	84	90	154	443	318	305	378
Total	946,701	Red Text: Goal Not Met								Blue Text: Goal Met							

As of 03/04/20

Q2 metrics collection delayed as a result of COVID-19. Data will be reported once available or upon next quarterly report.

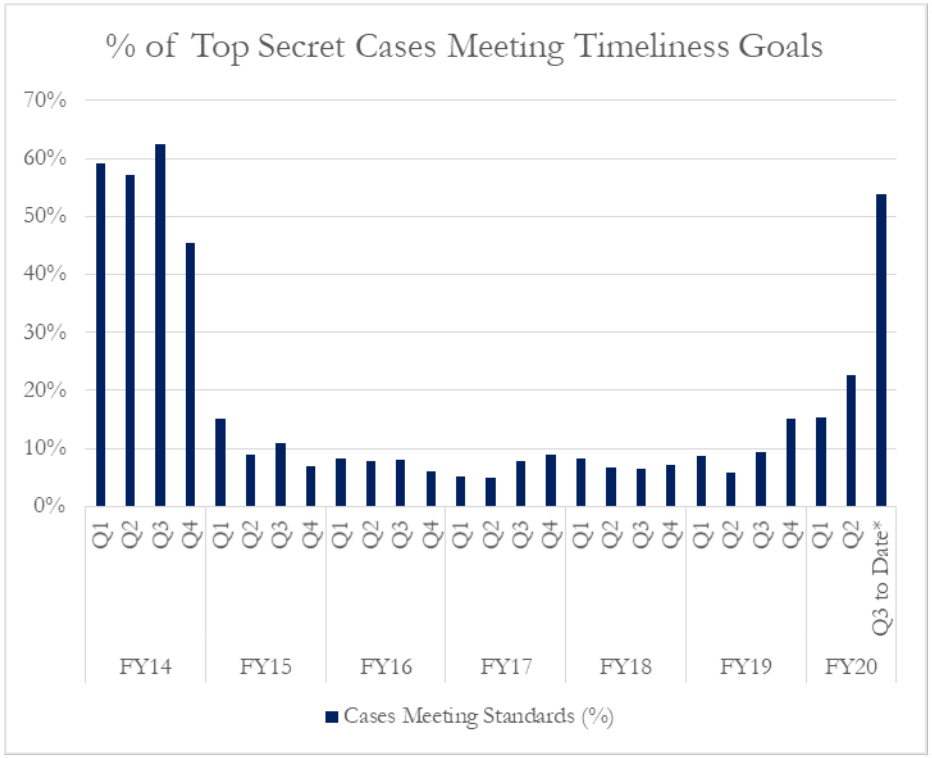
Key Indicator: Timeliness Metrics

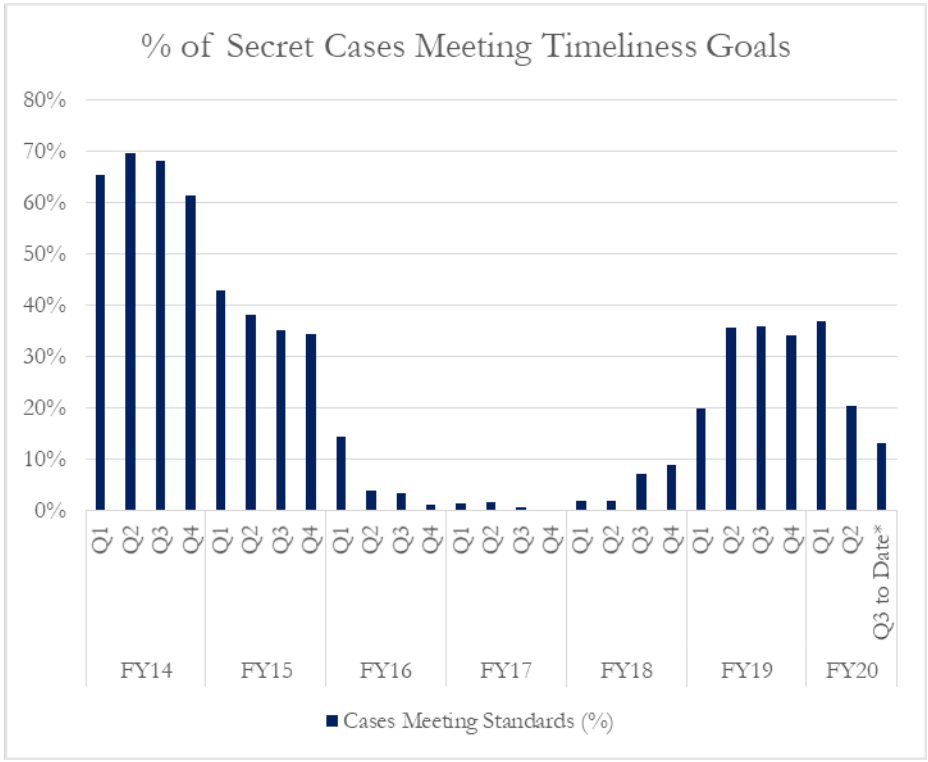
Background investigation timeliness continues to improve. Top secret meeting standard during Q3.


Top Secret Timeliness
450
400
350
300
250
200
150
100
50
0
79
Q1 Q2 Q3 Q4 Q1 Q2 Q3 Q4 Q1 Q2 Q3 Q4

Key Indicator: Number of Cases Meeting Timeliness Standards

The number of top secret cases meeting timeliness standards continues to increase.





Charts reflect only DCSA data and are current as of 6/22/20.

Key Indicator: DCSA Investigations Inventory

The DCSA inventory has achieved the target level of 200K and has maintained this inventory level.

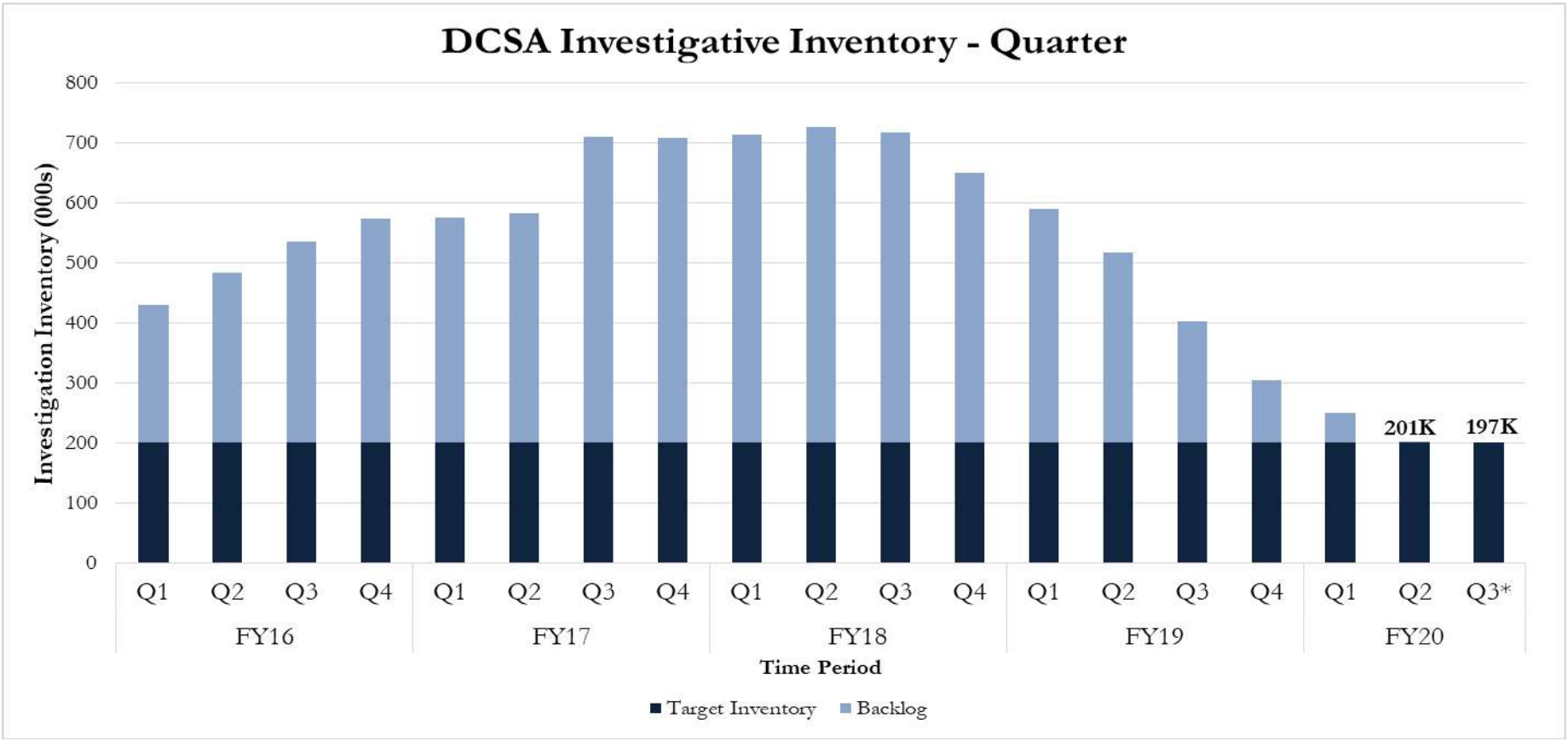
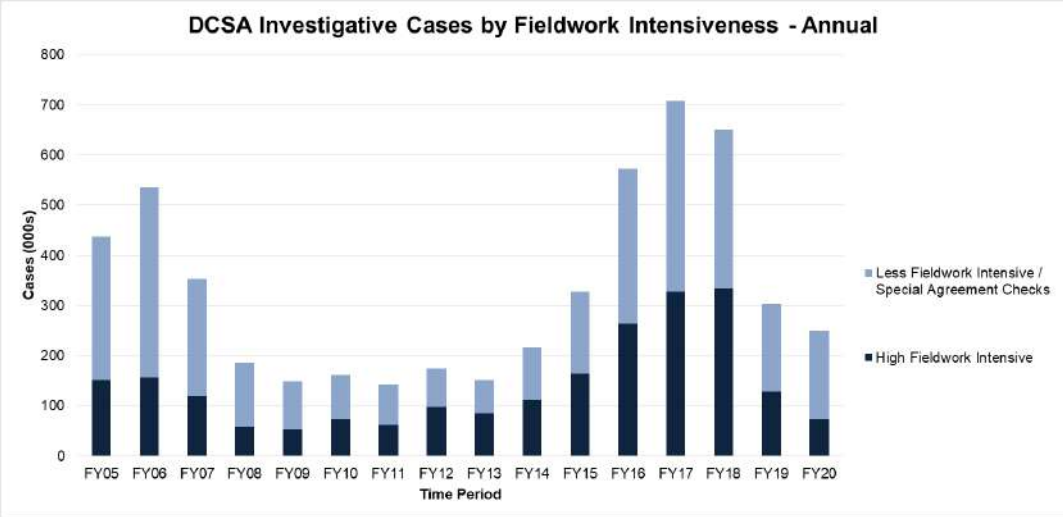


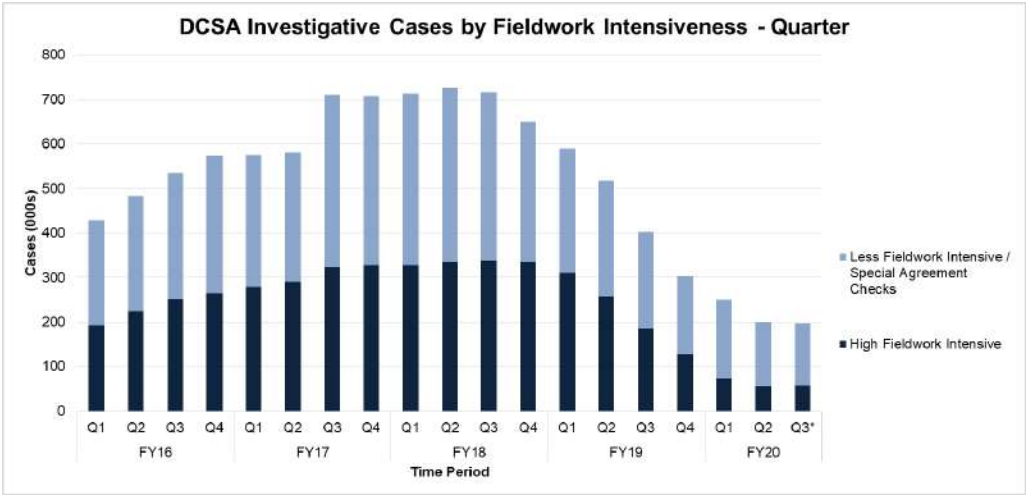
Chart reflects only DCSA data and is current as of 6/22/20.

Key Indicator: DCSA Investigations Inventory



High Fieldwork Intensive – Cases that typically require investigators to do more extensive work in the field (i.e., case issues that require manual follow-up). These are used for higher risk positions.

Less Fieldwork Intensive/Special Agreement Checks – Cases that typically require little to no work in the field (i.e. automated fingerprint checks or clean cases). These are used for lower risk positions.



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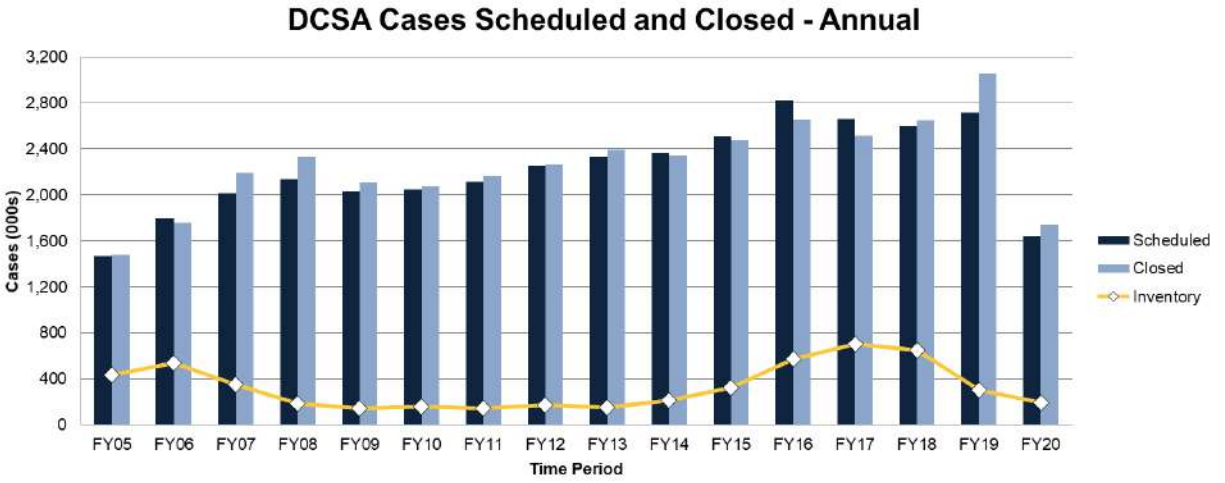
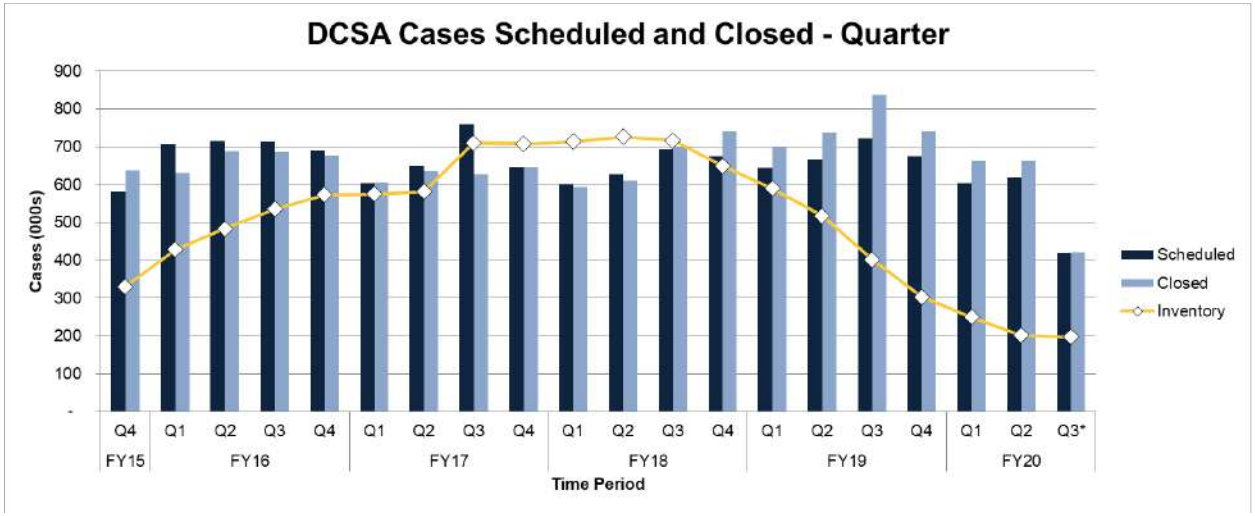
Key Indicator: DCSA Investigations Case Flow

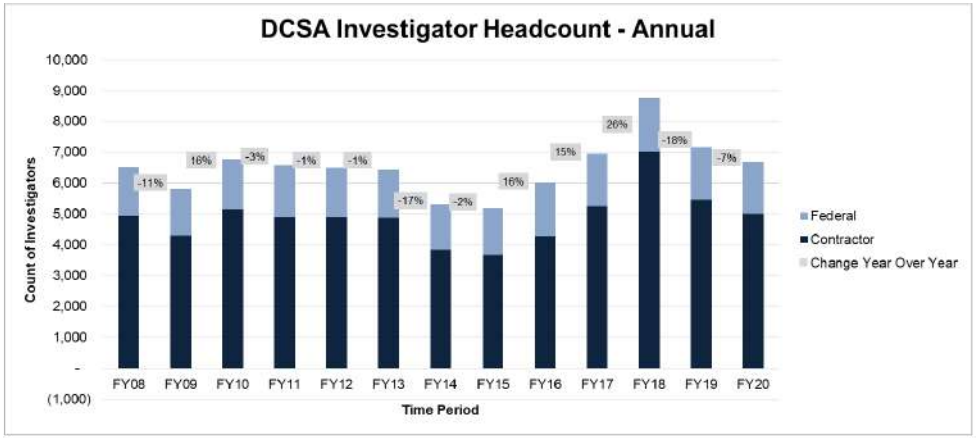


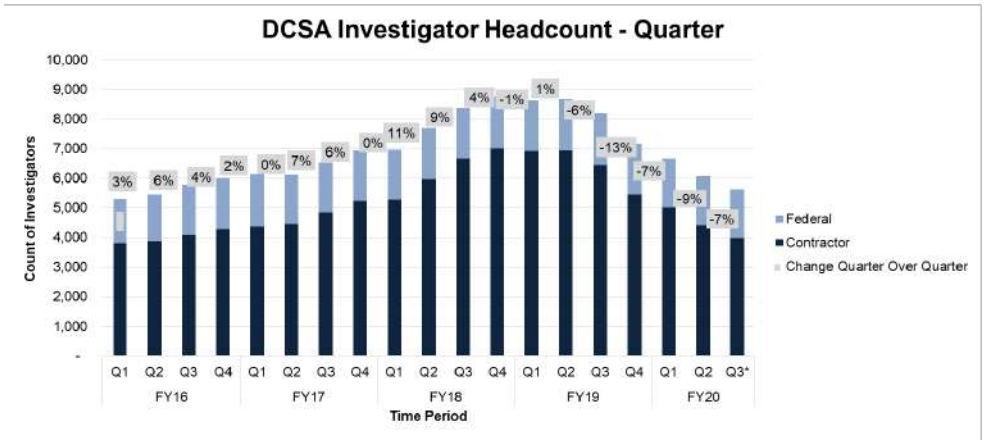


Charts reflect only DCSA data and are current as of 6/22/20.

Key Indicator: DCSA Investigator Headcount

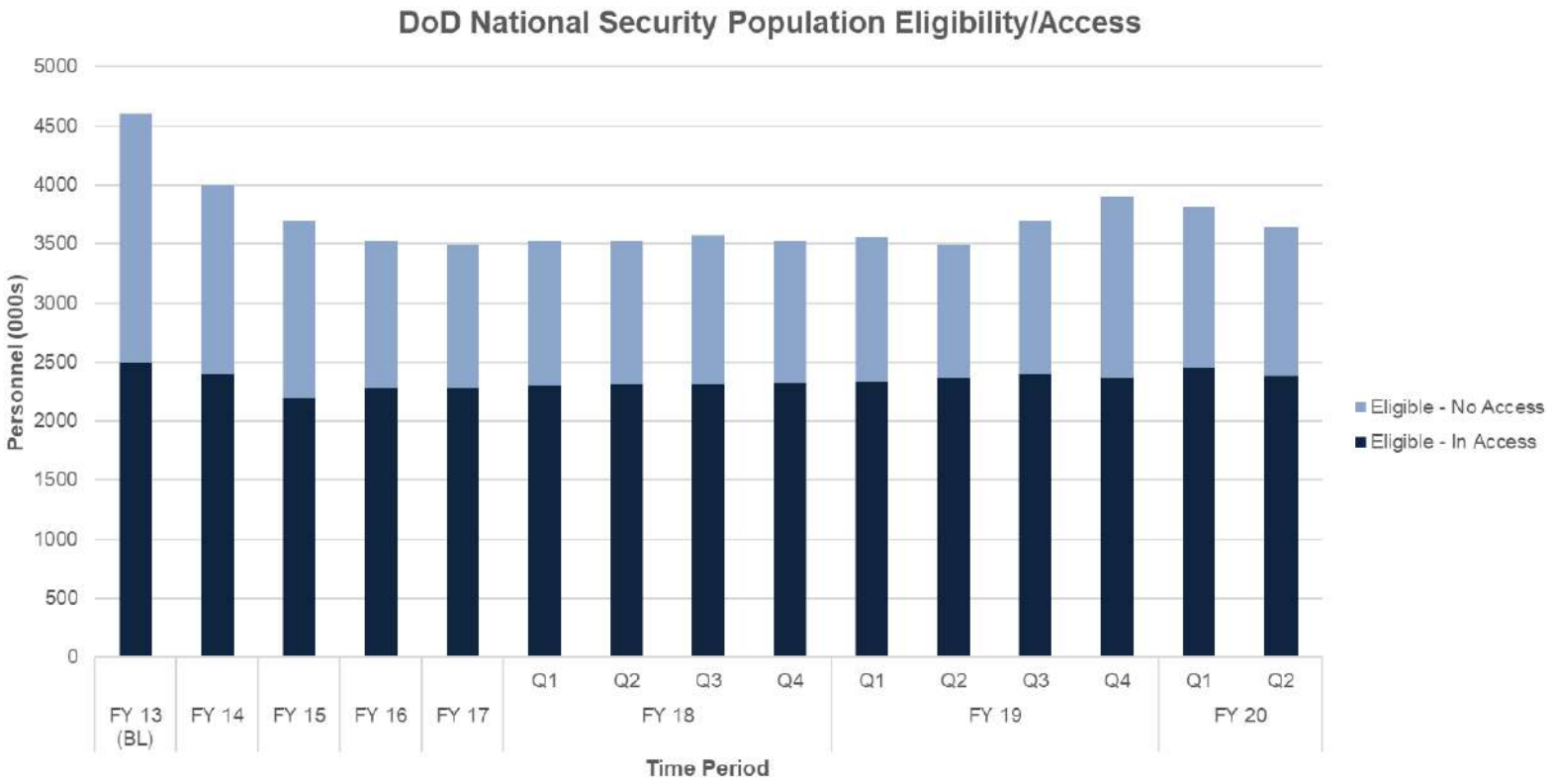
DCSA successfully increased its workforce capacity to decrease the inventory and will continue to maintain a healthy workforce capacity as it stabilizes its inventory.





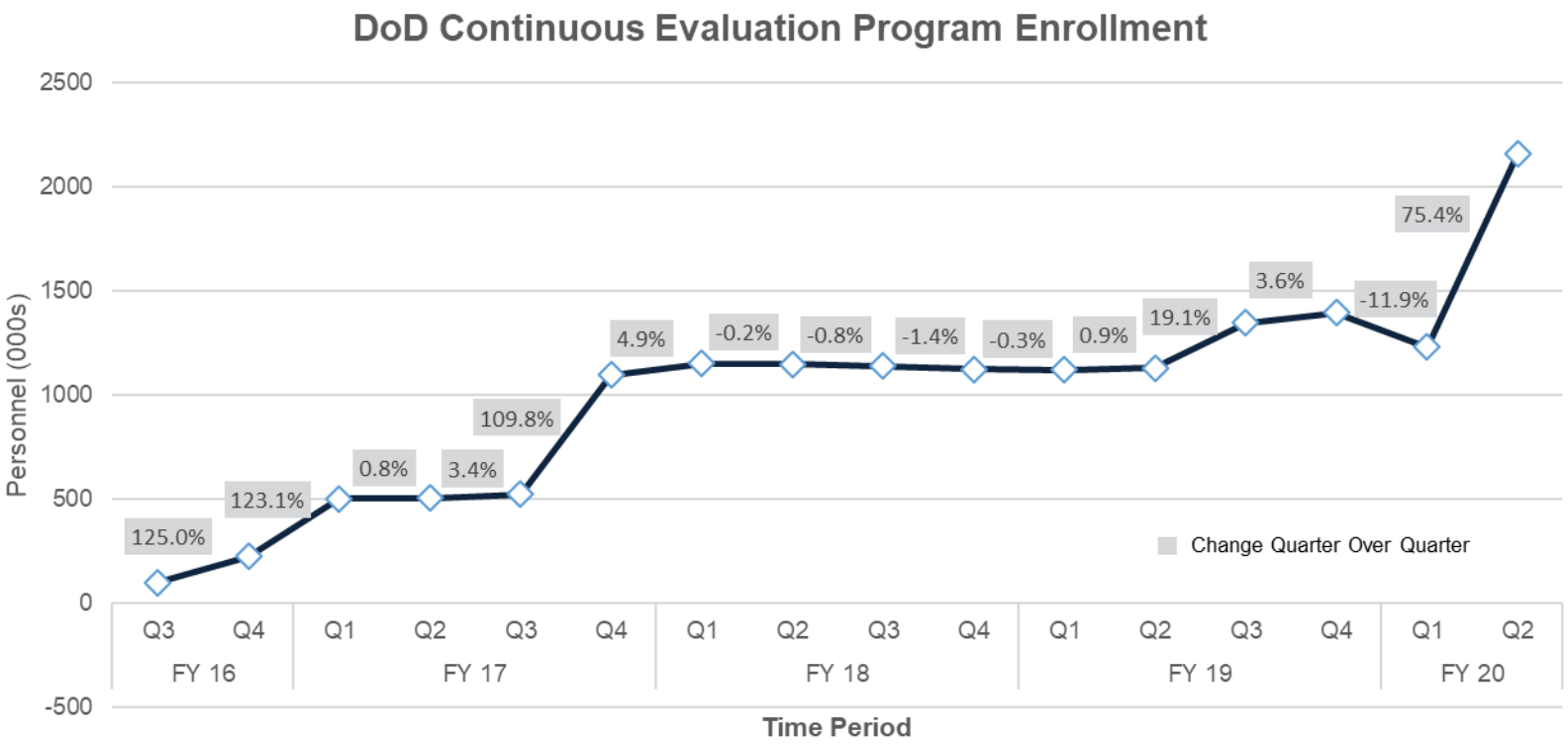
Charts reflect only DCSA data and are current as of 6/22/20.

Key Indicator: DoD National Security Population Eligibility & Access



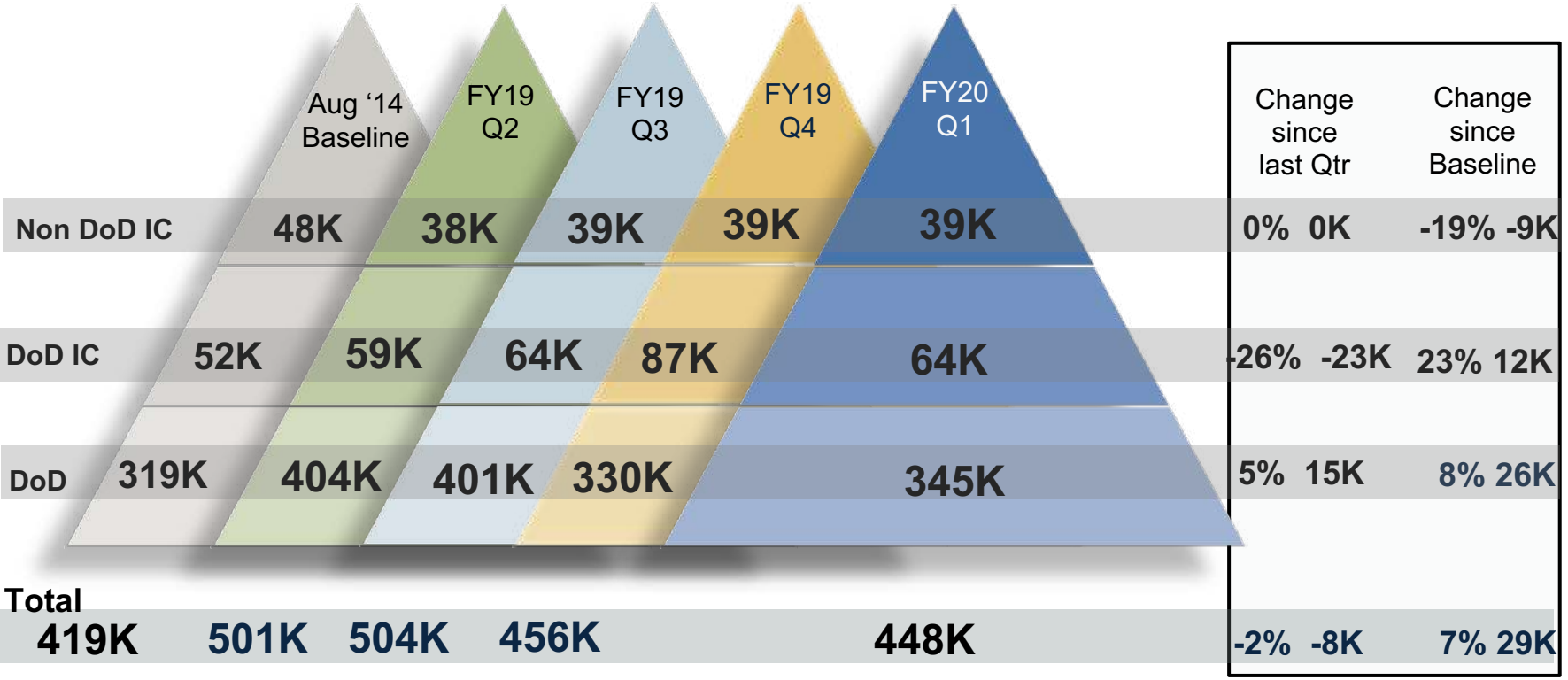
Change in DoD Clearance (in thousands)											
	FY 13 (Baseline)	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20Q1	FY20Q2	Number Decreased (from baseline)	FY13-FY20Q2 % change
Eligible - In Access	2500	2400	2200	2280	2280	2318	2362	2456	2380	-120	-5%
Eligible - No Access	2100	1600	1500	1250	1210	1211	1539	1357	1262	-838	-40%
Total	**4600**	**4000**	**3700**	**3530**	**3490**	**3529**	**3901**	**3813**	**3642**	**-958**	**-21%**

Key Indicator: DoD Continuous Evaluation Enrollment



Key Indicator: Out-of-Scope National Security Population

TS and TS/SCI "Out of Scope" Populations



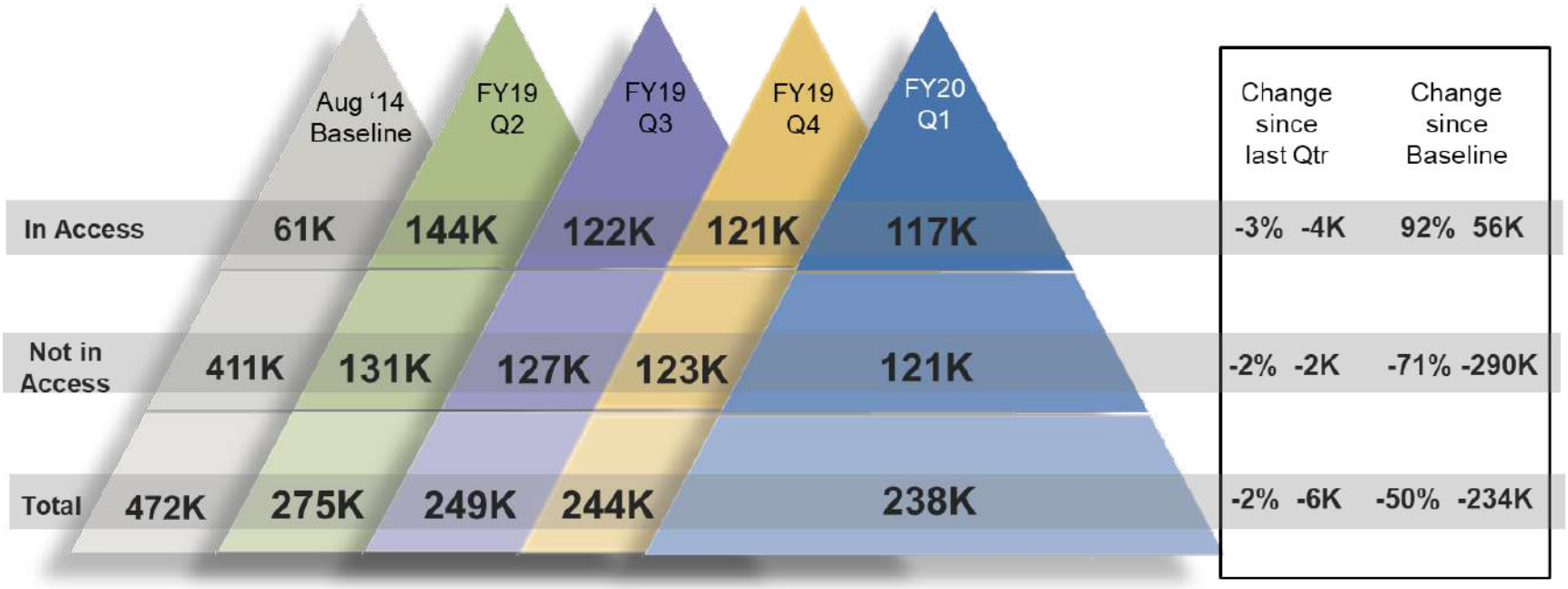
Overall change since baseline: 7% 29K

As of 03/03/2020

Q2 metrics collection delayed as a result of COVID-19. Data will be reported once available or upon next quarterly report.

Key Indicator: Out-of-Scope National Security Population

DoD Secret "Out of Scope" Populations



	Change since last Qtr		Change since Baseline	
In Access	-3%	-4K	92%	56K
Not in Access	-2%	-2K	-71%	-290K
Total	-2%	-6K	-50%	-234K

Overall change since baseline: -50% -234K

As of 03/03/2020

Q2 metrics collection delayed as a result of COVID-19. Data will be reported once available or upon next quarterly report.

Contributing Programs

PAC Member Agencies

- Office of Management and Budget
- Office of Personnel Management
- Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency
- Department of Homeland Security
- Department of State
- Federal Bureau of Investigation
- National Archives and Records Administration
- Office of the Director of National Intelligence
- Department of Defense
- Department of Energy
- Department of Justice
- Department of the Treasury
- General Services Administration
- National Security Council

PAC Ex Officio and Other Contributing Agencies

- Agency for International Development
- Department of Agriculture
- Department of Health & Human Services
- Department of Labor
- Drug Enforcement Administration
- National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency
- National Security Agency
- Social Security Administration
- Central Intelligence Agency
- Department of Commerce
- Department of Housing & Urban Development
- Department of Transportation
- Environmental Protection Agency
- National Reconnaissance Office
- Nuclear Regulatory Commission
- Defense Intelligence Agency
- Department of Education
- Department of Interior
- Department of Veterans Affairs
- National Aeronautics & Space Administration
- National Science Foundation
- Small Business Administration

Acronyms

CE – Continuous Evaluation

DCSA – Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency

DDM – Deputy Director of Management

DNI – Director of National Intelligence

DoD – Department of Defense

EA – Executive Agent

EIB – Enterprise Investment Board

IRTPA – Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004

IT – Information Technology

ODNI – Office of the Director of National Intelligence

OMB – Office of Management and Budget

OPM – Office of Personnel Management

PAC – Performance Accountability Council

PMO – Program Management Office

SSC – Security, Suitability/Fitness, and Credentialing

SecEA – Security Executive Agent

Suit & CredEA – Suitability & Credentialing Executive Agent

USD(I&S) – Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security