

BREAKOUT SESSION

Clearance Processing

- **Security clearance processing is a long-standing problem with a myriad of causes and consequences. Recent legislation (2004 Defense Authorization and National Intelligence Reform Acts) addressed a number of the issues and position the community for improvement. Critical improvement is needed in the areas of:**
 - Investigation/Adjudication backlog
 - Reciprocity/Portability
 - Standardized data and processing
 - Technology investment needs longer term

Must put teeth into the implementation of the legislation.

- **Culture of government agencies (“turf and trust”), resistance to implementation of law**
 - Government belief there are too many clearances out there now
 - Multiple implementations of DCID process
 - No government incentives to improve system
 - Challenge of sharing intelligence and law enforcement data in homeland security roles
- **Volume of investigations requested unconstrained, no filter**
- **Priority of investigations**
 - Initial investigations largest portion
- **Adjudications**
 - Backlog
 - Agency specific processes
- **Over-classification of positions, documents, info, etc**
- **No central set of rules or single responsible authority**

- **Current technology in use is a barrier**
 - Polygraph versus alternatives
 - Multiple disparate databases in use versus development of central database
 - New technology alternatives identified and considered
- **Costs to industry and the government**
 - Bench building (pool of cleared people available to work immediately on new work)
 - General overhead needs
 - Contract costs increasing (increased salaries due to “raiding”)
 - Costs of investigations (OPM “fee for service”)
 - Barriers to entry into the workforce (perceptions)
- **Portability**
 - Government to government (includes agencies, military departments,)
 - Government to industry
 - Industry to industry
 - Contract to contract
 - To and from academia

- **Clearance criteria (suitability) – not applied even-handedly and some out-dated criteria**
 - Speed versus quality of investigations/adjudications
 - Slows down but doesn't prevent approval
 - Overseas residence and travel, study
 - Marriage to a foreign national
 - Lapses in having a clearance
 - Foreign-born citizens
 - Can prevent approval
 - Criminal record
 - Finances (foreign ownership, bad credit)
 - Overcoming barriers to using folks that could contribute but aren't currently clearable:
 - Foreign-born, non-citizens

- **1. Immediately establish one central agency for all investigations (NID, OPM)**
- **2. Immediately begin shortening timelines for investigations, particularly “initials”**
- **3. Immediately establish universal Reciprocity and Portability**

Potential Actions

- **1. Immediately establish one central agency for all investigations (NID, OPM)**
 - Responsible and accountable for the investigation process
 - Phase out/sunset the “grandfathering” of current agency roles
 - Establish uniform criteria for investigations and for adjudications for those clearances where reciprocity applies
 - Includes the process by which the investigation will be conducted
 - Suitability criteria appropriate for the level of clearance to be granted
 - Recommend inter agency task force to develop the community criteria
 - Develop prioritization scheme for executing investigations (level?, agency?, etc.)
 - Translate criteria into the metrics for database (ex: # days investigation ongoing)

Potential Actions

- **2. Immediately begin shortening timelines for investigations, particularly “initials”**
 - Implement common, virtual, shared database
 - Use metrics to continuously improve timelines
 - Put more resources on issue now to work off the backlog to reach an acceptable steady state
 - PR campaign to increase understanding of new process (process buy-in, accountability, expectation management)
 - Technology
 - Use currently available technology to shorten the processes (e.g. eClearance, polygraph alternatives)
 - Technology investment for longer term solutions/suitability to assist in the process
 - Periodic Reinvestigations
 - Time period (5 years versus longer or continuous?)
 - Methods of conducting (automated vs non-automated)

- **3. Immediately establish universal Reciprocity and Portability**
 - Absolutely essential component of security clearance reform
 - Applies govt-govt, govt-ind, ind-ind, ind-govt (and academia)
 - Incentivizing implementation: Gaining agency pays for employee once paperwork submitted on already cleared employee

Recommended Actions

RECOMMENDED ACTION	RECOMMENDED ACTION ORGANIZATION	RECOMMENDED RESULT
<p>Immediately establish one central agency for all investigations</p>	<p>NID, OPM*</p>	<p>One responsible entity and one set of policies versus today's "rainbow"</p>
<p>Immediately shorten timelines for investigations</p>	<p>NID, OPM*</p>	<p>Backlog worked off and achievement of steady state, acceptable timeline goals</p>
<p>Immediately establish universal Reciprocity and Portability</p>	<p>NID, OPM*</p>	<p>Immediately recognizable and accepted clearances by all entities</p>

***National Intelligence Reform Act says the President will designate.**

Backups

Clearance Processing

- **A summary of the current studies being performed by various organizations, the difficulties being faced by government and industry, and a discussion on how to resolve some of the long delays.**

Questions Discussed

- **What are the current challenges and timing regarding the amount of time it takes to get a clearance through the investigation and adjudication process?**
- **What are the current actions in place to alleviate some of the backlog, are those measures adequate, and is there something that can be done on a non-policy basis to improve processing time?**
- **How can the overall investigation and adjudication system be improved and what are the national security implications for any changes to the system?**
- **What are the barriers to an effective, cross agency “single-adjudication” process that allows ease of transference?**
- **The “need-to-know” rules prevent a build up of ‘bench-strength’ to support growth in the industry. Engineers and scientists must work their whole career in high-clearance areas to maintain those clearances. Is this a recipe for shortages in critical skill areas?**

Breakout Session Members

Session Hosts: John Williams, Laura Reiff

- **Alan Chvotkin**
- **Susan Brandon**
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- **Ron Grogis**
- **Dave Vesely**
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- **16 total**

Potential Actions

- **Clear agency roles defined for investigations**
 - One central agency for all investigations
 - Phase out/sunset the “grandfathering” of current agency roles
- **Uniform criteria for investigations and adjudications for those clearances where reciprocity applies**
 - Includes the process by which the investigation was conducted
 - Criteria appropriate for the level of clearance to be grant
 - Recommend inter agency task force to develop the criteria
- **Database implemented with right metrics**
 - List originally offered for legislative consideration
- **Clear cost for government clearing organization once paperwork submitted**
 - For those previously/already cleared,
- **JPAS implementation for adjudications**
- **Periodic Reinvestigations**
 - Time period (5 years versus longer?)
 - Methods of conducting (automated vs non-automated)
- **Technology investment for longer term solutions/suitability**
- **PR campaign to increase understanding of new process for both current workforce and potential workforce**