

USIS Uses Lean Six Sigma To Produce Efficient, Timely, And Quality Federal Investigations

Six Sigma is a well-known business management strategy, initially implemented by Motorola, that today enjoys widespread application in many sectors of industry and government. Six Sigma seeks to improve the quality of process outputs by identifying and removing the causes of errors and variation in manufacturing; “Lean” adds speed to a Six Sigma process by focusing on waste reduction and improving the flow of operational processes.

A year ago, [USIS](#), the largest provider of security investigations to the federal government, responded to a federal executive order to advance policies to streamline the often lengthy [background checks](#) and adjudications performed on federal employees and contractors who need security clearances. USIS went to work on how to accommodate a higher volume of investigations and adjudications in a shorter timeframe—all while ensuring quality results and without increasing costs.

So far, [USIS](#) is outperforming the 2009 mandated cycle times on three federal contracts. It has dramatically reduced cycle time and increased productivity on current BI contracts by implementing cutting-edge technologies and incorporating Lean Six Sigma principles. Deploying business management technologies with a strong emphasis on metrics tracking is central to USIS’ strategy. Combined with data collection and cleansing and a support staff that provides vital information to case managers and field investigators, this approach has significantly streamlined the investigative process. Centralized work planning, manpower modeling, automated workload allocation, work zoning, and other business planning tools all play a part in making sure the right people are in the right place at the right time, thereby maximizing case efficiency and reducing cycle time.

In addition, [USIS](#)’ proprietary Case Tracking Management System called “Orion” serves as the foundation for end-to-end automation, from the electronic submission of the clearance application to transmission of case files to agencies. Paperless processing saves time by providing instant access to all case file documents and information. For example, investigators can immediately access and print signed release forms as needed. The result is significantly improved cycle time. Orion is able to interface with other third-party government and commercial systems using the latest secure protocols and is fully scalable to meet future national security clearance demands.

[USIS](#) is committed to safeguarding national security and preserving strict requirements for obtaining security clearances. Its focus is to do things better and faster with fewer resources while ensuring the highest quality product for its customers consistent with its overall national security mission.

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