In order to maintain their security clearance, soldiers must renew their investigations at regular intervals. They, their commanders, and the intelligence section, also have a duty to report any derogatory information that might affect their ability to maintain a security clearance, regardless of when the event occurs (events such as DUIs or getting heavily into debt). Additionally, the intelligence section is tasked with tracking each soldier’s security training requirements and soldiers’ travel outside of the country.

The volume of data required for each soldier can quickly overwhelm an intelligence section made up of, at most, eight soldiers. In addition to PERSEC requirements, the intelligence section must also oversee a number of other compliance programs and conduct intelligence analysis according to the commander’s direction. Therefore, I knew that anything I could do to make the storage, retrieval, analysis, and presentation of PERSEC data easier would pay huge dividends for my section.

After my initial experimentation with databases in Estonia in 2014, I built my first production database for my intelligence section’s personnel security (PERSEC) needs. While keeping track of equipment was important for the section, we did not have a lot of equipment to worry about. We did, however, have 700+ soldiers’ security clearances to manage. Implementing the Access database for personnel security enabled multiple analysts to update the information at one time and maintain version control of the data. This was not possible previously when the section relied on a myriad of Excel spreadsheets to manage the unit’s security clearances.

While I no longer have that exact database file, the section continued to use it for at least a year after I left in spring 2015. I continued to learn about databases and refine/optimize my designs in the meantime. Eventually, in 2018, I became the intelligence program manager for an intelligence section of my own. The database in this folder (created in February 2019) is an updated and improved version of the first PERSEC database I made.

I designed the database forms to look like webpages with easy to understand buttons and labels. Most soldiers had never even heard of Microsoft Access, let alone knew how to use it. Therefore, ease-of-use was my top priority. I built the queries and reports in such a way as to answer the most common questions the section had to answer at weekly staff meetings and according to the regular reports we had to send to our higher intelligence section counterparts.

Due to the intuitive design of the database and my instruction on how to use it, the section was able to spend far less time managing PERSEC information and could focus more on other tasks.

\*\*\*Note: all data in this database is made up, so it does not violate any privacy regulations\*\*\*